



**Karl Konsdorf**, Manager of Research, Analytics and Reporting

## SAS® empowers more than 2,000 Sinclair staff members with data-informed insight

### ■ Industry

Education

### ■ Business Issue

Sinclair needed to:

- Centralize its data and reporting environment.
- Provide users immediate access to data, reports and analysis.
- Empower users to become more data-informed.

### ■ Solution

SAS® Business Analytics

### ■ Benefits

- Users have access to reliable, accurate information and reports.
- Reporting that once took months/weeks is now available immediately.
- More than 2,000 Sinclair staff members use the decision-support portal to become more data-informed.
- Officials utilize analytics for everything from identifying at-risk students to evaluating server capacity levels.

Sinclair Community College uses SAS Business Analytics to manage its growth and better educate its 26,000 students. With SAS, the school can rapidly open new class sections, study why students succeed, disseminate critical budgeting information quickly and manage the accreditation of 54 programs efficiently.

With five campuses, 175 degree and certificate programs and a popular online division, Sinclair has earned accolades as it grows rapidly. It is on Community College Week's Top 100 Community Colleges and its successes have been featured in national publications. A *New York Times* article featured Sinclair as a lifeline in tough economic times for displaced workers and high school graduates requiring additional skills for entry-level jobs. The college's enrollment has grown 30 percent since 2006. The college manages numerous programs, including helping high schools prepare students for college, transitioning its own graduates to four-year institutions, retraining unemployed workers, and retaining students at risk of dropping out. The college takes a data-driven approach to meeting these goals. To do that efficiently, it needed a robust data warehouse, business reporting and analytics platform.

"We are always looking for better ways to serve our students and help them reach their educational goals," says Karl Konsdorf, the college's Manager of Research, Analytics and Reporting. The college chose SAS Business Analytics to gather, report and analyze data. Administrators who once spent most of their time gathering data to create

reports – for budgeting or accreditation – are now freed to use data to make improvements. "No other software has the power and capability to provide us the insights that we get from SAS," Konsdorf says.



**Sinclair  
Community  
College**

### Putting Meaningful Data into Users' Hands

Sinclair needed a way to put data and reports into the hands of users. The solution it developed is the data analysis warehousing intelligence portal (known as DAWN). More than 2,000 staff members now have access to the DAWN data, with their portal view aligned to what each needs to see. The portal, along with advanced analytics derived from it, is managed by an 11-person Business Intelligence Competency Center team. Efficiency gains are huge, says Konsdorf, who manages the center. "In the past, we could only send enrollment reports once a week because it took too long to generate the reports. Now it's done automatically," Konsdorf says. This is critical in the weeks leading to a new quarter when departments must quickly determine what classes students are seeking, whether they need to open additional sections, or move classes with smaller enrollments to smaller classrooms to free up space, or even cancel certain classes and redeploy faculty to more sought-after classes.

"DAWN gives us a chance to really do something with the information, rather than just scrambling around to

“No other software has the power and capability to provide us the insights that we get from SAS.”

**Karl Konsdorf, Manager of Research, Analytics and Reporting**

get the information,” says Sue Merrell-Daley, Sinclair’s Dean of Business and Public Services. It also gives professors relevant details that can help students succeed. “Faculty members can run a roster report where they see which students are first-time students. We just couldn’t do that before we had SAS.”

### Automated Reporting

“We used to be the gatekeeper of information,” explains Mike Barhorst, Director of Budget and Analysis. “We would get requests and then query our ERP system and manually manipulate the information. It would take three or four hours. Now it’s automated.” Barhorst can also write one general ledger report for 130 people, “and it’s limited to just the information that they’re allowed to see. To generate 130 unique reports – that would be a week’s worth of a technician’s time.

“When folks can answer questions themselves, and not rely on an intermediary, we can focus more attention on actually analyzing data,” Barhorst says of DAWN.

When Merrell-Daley gets ready for accreditation visits, she needs to provide data for areas like full-time vs. part-time faculty, classes taken online vs. on campus, and full-time vs. part-time students. “Before we had DAWN, we had to gather all of this manually,” Merrell-Daley says. “And sometimes we couldn’t get the numbers to add up.”

### DAWN Drives Decision Making

With SAS fueling DAWN, the college:

- Identifies registered students at risk of being de-registered because of nonpayment. The school contacts students to remind them of deadlines and ways to drop individual classes. The school has halved the registered student dropout rate, a key factor in maintaining state funding and increasing the graduation rate.
- Predicts when its rapidly growing online program will begin to run short of computing capacity, helping the college secure funding for computing resources before the college has to cap online courses or inconvenience online students.
- Prepares accreditation data in one week with one staff member vs. two staff members taking a month to prepare a report. With 54 separately accredited programs, this saves a great deal of time.
- Uses student survey data to provide a benchmark to instructors. They can see how they rate against other instructors in their department and other departments.
- Mines data to predict which critical introductory classes have students most likely to struggle and offers those students additional services.
- Looks at how students do in online courses vs. in-person courses to make sure online offerings are equal in quality to traditional classes.

- Continually monitors its student/teacher ratios and teacher qualification ratios (full time vs. part time and level of advanced degree). Both ratios are critical to providing high quality instruction that meets accreditation needs and is accomplished cost-efficiently. The data is delivered to department chairs in a way that makes it easy for them to understand if they’re going outside parameters in assigning courses to different instructors.

### Expanding the Use of Analytics

The school is planning to transition from a quarter- to a semester-based calendar year in 2012. To ease the transition, Konsdorf’s team will use SAS to build future capability planning schedules and produce individualized recommendations to help each student understand how to make the transition without delaying graduation.

But perhaps the more critical future use of SAS is to help students, taxpayers and government officials understand the value that Sinclair delivers. Konsdorf plans to incorporate wage data from Ohio’s Department of Job and Family Services so there is a link to how paying tuition (in the case of students) or funding (in the case of legislators) leads to better-paying jobs and economic growth for the Dayton region. “We want to be able to show the economic value we have been able to provide to the community,” Konsdorf said.



**SAS Institute Inc. World Headquarters +1 919 677 8000**

To contact your local SAS office, please visit: [www.sas.com/offices](http://www.sas.com/offices)

SAS and all other SAS Institute Inc. product or service names are registered trademarks or trademarks of SAS Institute Inc. in the USA and other countries. ® indicates USA registration. Other brand and product names are trademarks of their respective companies. 103134\_S64956.1110

The results illustrated in this article are specific to the particular situations, business models, data input, and computing environments described herein. Each SAS customer’s experience is unique based on business and technical variables and all statements must be considered non-typical. Actual savings, results, and performance characteristics will vary depending on individual customer configurations and conditions. SAS does not guarantee or represent that every customer will achieve similar results. The only warranties for SAS products and services are those that are set forth in the express warranty statements in the written agreement for such products and services. Nothing herein should be construed as constituting an additional warranty. Customers have shared their successes with SAS as part of an agreed-upon contractual exchange or project success summarization following a successful implementation of SAS software.