

Mini Assessment Conference & Court Reporter (COU) Program

INTRODUCTION

This report examines a highly focused set of questions pertaining to the long-term need and viability of the Conference & Court Reporting (COU) program. National, state and regional trends in employment, earnings, employee qualifications, job growth, educational opportunities, enrollment and degrees specific to the occupation were investigated. Information presented in this report was collected from well-established and validated external as well as internal sources. Collectively, this information addresses issues pertinent to the College's decision-making process.

MAJOR FINDINGS

- Job opportunities are expected remain stable through 2008. Technology coupled with no foreseeable expansion of the court system in Southeast Michigan are impacting this trend.
- Programs approved by and individuals certified by the National Court Reporting Association have the best chance to succeed.
- The median annual salary was \$25,430 in 1998, and ranged from \$17,060 to over \$39, 070. However, large proportions of these workers are self-employed and/or work part-time.
- OCCs program is one of four public post-secondary programs in the state. The number of private programs is unknown.
- Annual statewide enrollment has ranged between 100 and 200 students over the past five years. Meanwhile, the number of graduates has ranged between 8 and 17 students (annually).
- In the last ten years, there have been 2 associate degrees and 3 certificates in Conference & Court Reporting at OCC.
- Enrollment in BIS courses has declined by more than half (63%) since 1990-91.

• QUESTIONS & ISSUES

- What is the annual credit hour production and revenue generated by the program?
- What are the annual costs associated with sustaining the program?
- Is the program currently NCRA approved?
- To what extent does the program utilize the technology typically used in the industry?
- Is the need for qualified individuals to work in this field being met by other organizations?
- What level of enrollment is necessary to sustain the program? Is this level practical and justifiable

given labor market trends for this occupation?

SUPPORTING DATA

Employment

National: Court reporters medical transcriptionists, and stenographers held 110,000 jobs in 1998. More than 1 in 4 are self-employed. Of those who worked for a wage or salary, about one-third worked for State and local governments, a reflection of the large number of court reporters working in courts, legislatures, and various agencies. About one-fourth worked for hospitals and physicians' offices. Other stenographers and court reporters worked for colleges and universities, secretarial and court reporting services, temporary help supply services, and law firms. (Source: *Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics*)

State: There were approximately 2,400 Court Reporters in the state of Michigan in 1999. (Source: *Michigan Occupational Information System*)

Regional: Overall employment is projected to grow more slowly than average (0 to 9 percent decline through 2006), as growth among medical transcriptionists is offset by the decline among stenographers. Certified medical transcriptionists and court reporters should have the best prospects. (Source: *Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics*)

Training, Qualifications, Advancement

A high school diploma is sufficient for stenographers; employers prefer medical transcriptionists who have completed a vocational school or community college program; and court reporters generally complete a 2- or 4-year post-secondary school program. (Source: *Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics*)

Court reporters generally complete a 2- or 4-year training program, offered by about 300 post secondary vocational and technical schools and colleges. About 110 programs have been approved by the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA), all of which teach computer-aided transcription and real-time reporting. NCRA-approved programs require students to capture 225 words per minute. Court reporters in the Federal Government generally must capture at least 205 words a minute.

Some States require court reporters to be notary publics, or to be a Certified Court Reporter (CCR); reporters must pass a State certification test administered by a board of examiners to earn this designation. The National Court Reporters Association confers the designation, Registered Professional Reporter (RPR), upon those who pass a two-part examination and participate in continuing education programs. Although voluntary, the RPR designation is recognized as a mark of distinction in this field. (Source: *Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics*)

Earnings

National: Court reporters, medical transcriptionists, and stenographers had median earnings of about \$25,430 in 1998. The middle 50 percent earned between \$21,000 and \$31,470; the lowest paid 10 percent earned less than \$17,060 and the highest paid 10 percent earned over \$39,000.

Court reporters generally earn higher salaries than stenographers or medical transcriptionists, and many supplement their income by doing additional freelance work. According to a National Court Reporters Association survey of its members, average earnings for court reporters were about \$54,000 annually in 1997. (Source: *Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics*)

Regional: Salary ranges in Michigan by county are as follows:

Annual Salaries

County	Circuit Court	District Court
Oakland/ Pontiac	\$45,801	\$25,588 - \$40,483
Kent/ Grand Rapids	\$37,929 - \$46,968	\$27,050 - \$34,476
Saginaw	\$37,874	\$22,532 - \$27,272
Kalamazoo	\$33,294 - \$43,282	\$22,864 - \$27,750
Ingham	\$35,131 - \$51, 317	\$27,600 - \$27,489
Berrien	\$35,131 - \$51, 317	\$24,986 - \$28,806
Jackson	\$22,669 - \$30,659	\$23,614
Muskegon	\$42,407	\$22,799 - \$28,920
Monroe		\$20,924 - \$25,233
Grand Traverse	\$33,562 - \$42,515	\$19,442 - \$28,100
Genesee/ Flint	\$33,214 - \$42,494	\$33,097 - \$38,880
Wayne/ Detroit	\$39,889 - \$48,827	\$38,863 - \$46,546

(Source: Michigan Occupational Information System)

Job Outlook/Forecast

National: Overall employment of court reporters, medical transcriptionists, and stenographers is projected to grow **as fast as average** for all occupations through 2008. Employment growth among medical transcriptionists should be offset by the decline among stenographers, and the number of court reporters should remain fairly stable. Employment of court reporters should be stable. The growing number of conventions, conferences, depositions, seminars, and similar meetings in which proceedings are recorded should create demand for court reporters. Although many of these events are videotaped, a written transcript must still be created for legal purposes or if the proceedings are to be published. Also, the trend to provide instantaneous written captions for the deaf and hearing impaired should strengthen demand for steno-captioners. In addition, demand should grow for court reporters willing to freelance or take depositions for court reporting service bureaus. However, budget constraints should limit the ability of Federal, State, and local courts to expand, even in the face of rising numbers of criminal court cases and civil lawsuits. Competition for entry-level jobs is increasing, as more workers are attracted to the occupation. Opportunities should be best for those who earn National Court Reporters Association certification. *(Source: Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics)*

State: The expectation is that the demand for Court Reporters will decline due to increased recognition of video recordings as legal records. Little to no change is expected for Court Reporters, as there is no expectation for growth in the number of judges in Michigan. *(Source: Michigan Occupational Information*

System)

Education/Training Opportunities

Similar Programs

Elsa Cooper Institute of Court Reporting (Southfield, Michigan)

Enrolls approximately 100 students per year and graduates between 35-40 students per year. Students completing the 2-year day program and 4-year evening program receive an Associates Degree.

Academy of Court Reporting (Southfield, Michigan)

Graduates between 70 and 80 students per year in their 2-year day time program and in their 3-year evening program.

Michigan Post-Secondary Institutions with Similar Programs

Institution	Program Title/ Contact Number
Gogebic Community College	
Lansing Community College	
Oakland Community College	
Central Michigan University	
Elsa Cooper Institue of Court Reporting	(248) 352-1600
Academy of Court Reporting	

(Source: Michigan Department of Education, Program Inventory)

Enrollment

Annual State-Wide Enrollment

Academic Year	State-Wide Enrollment	Percent Change	OCC Enrollment	Percent Change
1993-94	199		95	
1994-95	144	-27.6	52	-45.3
1995-96	116	-19.4	40	-23.1
1996-97	107	-7.8	40	0.0
1997-98	132	23.4	47	17.5

(Source: Michigan Department of Education, IPEDS: Year-End Enrollments)

Graduates

Annual Statewide Degrees

Academic Year	State-Wide Graduates	Percent Change	OCC Graduates	Percent Change
1993-94			1	
1994-95	8		1	0.0
1995-96	17	240	0	-100.0
1996-97	11	-35.3	1	100.0
1997-98	16	45.5	0	-100.0

(Source: Michigan Department of Education, IPEDS: Degrees Awarded)