

## AtD Focus Group Results

Ouachita Technical College utilized a modified Nominal Group Technique to conduct a focus group with 25 minority male students (24 African American & 1 Hispanic) at Malvern High School on Thursday, September 18, 2008, to gather input regarding their personal interests, impressions of Ouachita Technical College and writing habits.

Repeated themes that emerged regarding personal interests include: Interest in sports; electronic communications (predominantly texting but also e-mailing); and the use of social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace.

One of the main reasons the Focus Group was conducted was to determine male minority student's interest and impressions of Ouachita Technical College. The Focus Group offers unique insights and is significant for this very reason. To encourage male students to enroll, participants advised that OTC: Offer targeted scholarships for Malvern High School graduates; Do more targeted community outreach activities & events (BBQ's etc...); and Advertise more. To encourage minority male students to enroll, participants suggested: Enhancing OTC's image because it's too plain, needs more color, perhaps even a new logo; Let people know you can go to OTC then transfer to other schools (i.e. Henderson, UCA); also offer sports (i.e. basketball, football). More specific detail follows. Another topic that came up but is not prominently captured below is the discussion on transferability of credits and the confusion caused by "Technical" in OTC's name.

### 1. My favorite movie is:

#### (Written results)

Friday--2	Tokyo Drift
The Matrix	Minority Report
Apocalypto	Belly
Grind	Bloodline

### 2. In my free time, I like to:

#### (Written results)

Entertainment (Watch TV, Watch Movies, Play Xbox, Make Music); Sports (Play Basketball, Soccer, Skateboard); Sleep, Model, Stretch, Hang with Friends (Go walking at night with friends); Work; Make Money; & Girls.

### 3. In my free time, I like to read about:

#### (Written results)

E-mail; Text Message; Social Networking Sites (Facebook, MySpace); Sports Skateboarding; Girls; News & Business.

### 4. My greatest strength in writing is:

#### (Written results)

Ability to Rhyme, Use of Proper Grammar, Spelling, Body Paragraph, Homework, and a Good understanding of writing tasks.

**And my greatest challenge in writing is:**

Essay, Writing Paragraphs, A thesis sentence, Writing Research Papers, and Expressing detail

- 5. I use writing during the day to:**
- 9 said Send text messages
  - 1 said Keep a diary
  - 6 said Create music/lyrics
  - 9 said Email my friends
  - 4 said On my job
  - 2 said Other: Modeling/School

**6. What are the most positive things you know about OTC?**

**Oral reports (top three suggestions):**

- 1) Its Growing
- 2) Cost (relatively inexpensive)
- 3) Good automotive & welding programs/Teach good skills/Close to home (all tied)

**Other oral responses:** Cost; Close to home (It's in Malvern, In a Small Town); Growing/Good programs (Construction classes, automotive and welding programs) arithmetic courses, and a Great community college.

**7. What negative perceptions might you have of OTC?**

**Oral reports (top three suggestions):**

- 1) No dorms
- 2) Hard to stay focused because it's so close to friends
- 3) No athletics

**Other oral responses:** Heard there are racist teachers; It's too close to home, Want to go away; More like high school, Last option, Need a change of scenery, Nobody new, No fraternities and More degree options.

**(Written results)**

No sports (6 Responses), Too close to home/parents (3 Responses); No Basketball; Racism (3 Responses); Like high school (2 Responses); Small (2 Responses); No dorms; They don't have good art or band programs; and Low level.

**8. Do you plan to go to college? Circle yes or no. What do you want to study/major in?**

**Oral reports (top three suggestions):**

- 1) Electronics
- 2) Business Administration
- 3) Engineering

Other oral answers included: Audio production; Automotive; Coaching; Criminal Justice; Dental Hygiene; Diesel Mechanics; Fashion Manufacturing; Music; Underwater welding; Registered Nursing.

**(Written results)**

15 Yes/ 0 No

Animal Science; Art & Music; Automotive; Business Administration (2 Responses)/Management; Criminal Justice (2 Responses); Fashion merchandising; Medical field, traveling RN; Everything; & I don't know (2 Responses).

**9. What could OTC do to encourage high school graduates and others to enroll?**

**Oral reports (top three suggestions):**

- 1) Offer Scholarships for MHS grads
- 2) Do more targeted community outreach activities & events/parties geared to us
- 3) Advertise more

Other oral answers included: Sponsor more high school ads; Build on/Relocate; and Have Fraternities on campus

**(Written results)**

Advertise (3 Responses); Get a football squad; Have more degree options; Make it bigger and no girls/Make it bigger and more girls

#### **10. What could OTC do to encourage male students of color to enroll?**

##### **Oral reports (top three suggestions):**

- 1) Image is too plain/more color/need a new logo
- 2) Let people know you can go to OTC then transfer to other schools (Henderson, UCA)
- 3) Offer sports (basketball, football)

Other ideas: Offer community activities such as parties or BBQ, perhaps before a game.

##### **(Written results)**

More sports (4 Responses), offer Basketball (3 Responses) or Football (2 Responses) or Baseball; I don't know (2 Responses); and They should try and tell more people about their school.