

2005-06 RECENT ALUMNI SURVEY
 A RESEARCH BRIEF

Research Briefs

The dissemination of relevant information is a critical component of the performance improvement process. Research briefs are one mechanism used by St. Petersburg College (SPC) for this purpose. Research Briefs are short publications prepared by the Department of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (IRE) that are intended to provide relevant important information regarding a variety of College-related topics. These topics include, but are not limited to, student achievement, state accountability measures, institutional survey results, student enrollment, and faculty/adjunct compensation.

Introduction

As in previous years, SPC has conducted a Recent Alumni Survey designed to measure alumni satisfaction with SPC’s vocational programs. Specifically, the Recent Alumni Survey was designed to gain insight into alumni perceptions of the quality of career preparation, and determine the current activities of former students such as employment information and educational status. In addition, the data are collected for state required annual Placement & Follow-up Report and supplemental information to meet workforce criteria.

Respondents of the Recent Alumni Survey have included graduates from Associate in Arts (AA), Associate in Science/Associate in Applied Science (AS/AAS) and certificate programs (CT, ATC, PSAV, PSVC). In Fall 2002, SPC began offering Bachelor of Science (BS) and Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degrees. These technical programs focus on preparing students to enhance their skills, knowledge, reach higher levels of income, and increase personal and professional growth. Since Summer 2003, Bachelor degree graduates have been included in the Recent Alumni Survey process.

Data Collection

The Recent Alumni Survey was administered to 2005-06 program completers which included individuals who graduated from a Bachelor (BS, BAS), Associate (AA, AS, AAS), Certificate (CT, ATC, PSAV, PSVC) or Applied/Advanced (ATD) degree program. The graduates were first contacted by mail, and then followed up with phone calls to those who did not respond to the earlier mailings.

Recent Alumni Surveys were sent out to 3,756 program completers. There were 982 surveys returned for an overall response rate of 26.1%. It should be noted that this was the second year for an online survey to be included as part of the follow-up process with 231 graduates responding to the survey online. Table 1 summarizes the response rate by degree program.

Table 1
Number of Graduates Surveyed and Responding by Awards

Awards	Number Graduated	Percent of Total	Number Responded	Percent Responded
BS/BAS	342	9.1	89	26.0
AA	1,938	51.6	638	32.9
AS/AAS	783	20.9	178	22.7
CT/ATD/ATC/PSAV/PSVC	693	18.4	77	11.1
TOTAL	3,756	100	982	26.1

Results

This research brief focuses on the 982 graduates who responded to the survey. Nine hundred and sixty-five graduates (98.3%) responded to the question, "What was your main goal in completing a degree or certificate at SPC"? The majority of survey respondents (60.7%) indicated their main goal in completing a degree or certificate was to 'Continue my education'. This was followed by 16.3% selecting 'Change career fields', 8.2% selecting 'Earn more money', and 4.2% selecting 'Obtain employment'. Table 2 summarizes the item responses by type of degree awarded.

Table 2
What was your main goal in completing a degree or certificate at SPC?

Goals	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/ PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL
Change career fields	14	56	62	25	157 16.3%
Continue my education	41	481	48	16	586 60.7%
Earn more money	4	41	23	11	79 8.2%
Get a promotion	10	5	14	3	32 3.3%
Meet certification/training needs	6	10	11	10	37 3.8%
Obtain employment	5	13	14	8	40 4.2%
Other	7	18	6	3	34 3.5%
Total Responses	87	624	178	76	965 100.0%

For the 959 graduates responding to the question, "Which of the following were you able to accomplish after obtaining your degree or certificate?" Six hundred eighty-one respondents (71.0%) indicated that their SPC degree allowed them to 'Continue my education'. This was followed by 24.4% indicating 'Earn more money', 18.7% indicating 'Change career fields' and 14.1% indicating 'Meet certification-training needs.' [Note: The total exceeded 100% because this question allowed multiple responses by survey respondents.]

Table 3 displays survey respondent satisfaction levels on the question "How well did SPC help you meet your above goal?" The majority of respondents (96.5%) indicated they were satisfied with the help they received from SPC in meeting their above goal(s). Almost half (47.6%) of survey respondents indicated that SPC did 'Very well' in helping them meet their goal, 37.9% indicated 'Exceptionally well', and 11.0% thought that SPC did 'Adequately' well.

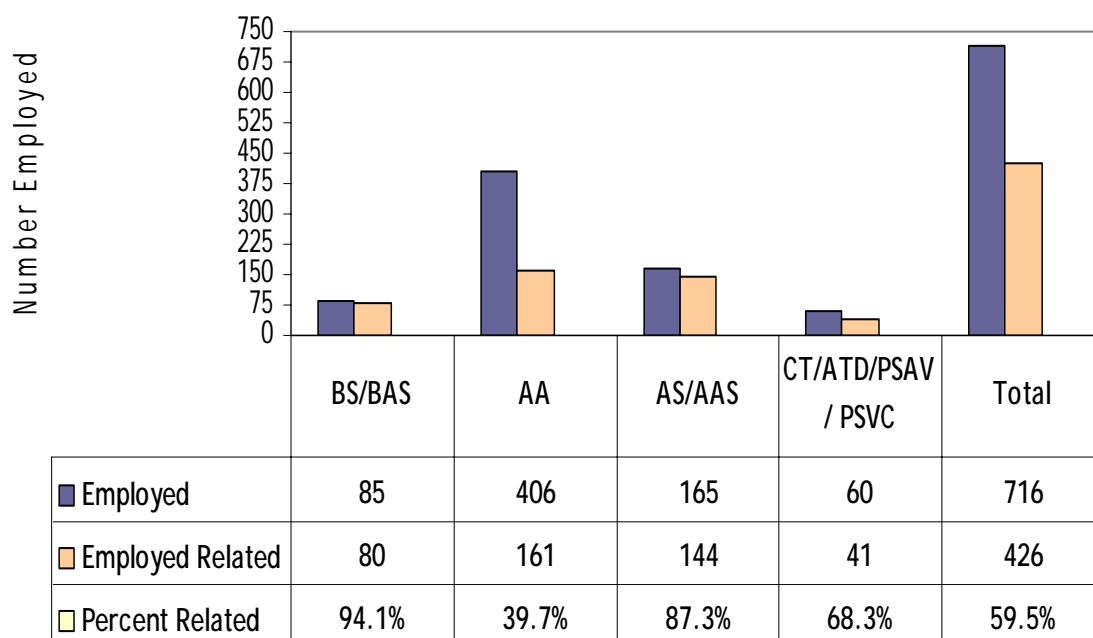


Table 3
How well did SPC help you meet your above goal?

Prepared for Current Position	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/ PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL
Exceptionally Well	43	232	67	22	364 37.9%
Very Well	40	307	80	30	457 47.6%
Adequately	5	62	23	16	106 11.0%
Poorly	0	5	3	4	12 1.3%
Not At All	1	12	3	5	21 2.2%
Total Responses	89	618	176	77	960

When graduates were asked about their current employment status, almost three-quarters (72.9%) of the respondents were currently employed. Over one-half of those employed (59.5%) indicated that their current position was related to their educational field as shown in Figure 1. As expected, the completers of workforce degree programs (BS, BAS, AS, AAS, CT and ATD programs) reported higher field related employment levels (68.3% - 94.1%) than graduates of the AA program (39.7%). In addition to employment and education status, thirteen respondents indicated they were in active military service.

Figure 1
What is your current employment status?





For alumni employed, over half (53.9%) provided their wage per hour and one quarter (25.7%) reported annual earnings. Although the amounts earned varied by program, the most frequently reported wage per hour was between \$10.00 and \$12.49. The hourly wage for the AS graduates employed in a field related to their studies was higher than AA graduates. For those who reported annual income, the most frequently reported range was \$30,000 to \$39,999. Table 4 summarizes wage per hour and annual salary. Samples of job titles reported by graduates are shown in Table 5.

Table 4

Please provide your earnings by selecting one of the categories below.

Hourly Wages

Hourly Wage	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/ PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL	PERCENT
Less than \$7.50	0	15	3	0	18	4.7%
\$7.51 - \$9.99	1	42	3	1	47	12.2%
\$10.00 - \$12.49	1	66	13	5	85	22.0%
\$12.50 - \$14.99	1	36	19	9	65	16.8%
\$15.00 - \$17.49	3	19	10	7	39	10.1%
\$17.50 - \$19.99	0	9	12	3	24	6.2%
\$20.00 - \$22.49	3	9	34	3	49	12.7%
\$22.50 - \$24.99	3	4	13	1	21	5.4%
\$25.00 or more	15	10	13	0	38	9.8%
Total Responses	27	210	120	29	386	99.9%

Annual Salary

Annual Earnings	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/ PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL	PERCENT
\$20,000 - \$29,999	1	15	1	2	19	10.3%
\$30,000 - \$39,999	24	19	10	8	61	33.1%
\$40,000 - \$49,999	5	12	13	8	38	20.7%
\$50,000 - \$59,999	13	8	14	4	39	21.2%
\$60,000 - \$69,999	4	2	0	1	7	3.8%
\$70,000 or more	8	5	3	4	20	10.9%
Total Responses	55	61	41	27	184	100.0%

Table 5

Job Title

BS/BAS	AA/AS/AAS	CT/ATD
Science Teacher	Fire Safety Inspector	Pretrial Clerk
Dental Hygienist	Legal Assistant	Crime Scene Investigator
Adjunct Clinical Instructor	Payroll Technician	Autopsy Assistant
Teacher Partner (Title I)	Building Inspector	Family Support Worker II
Kindergarten Teacher	Administrator	Parent Educator
Mathematics Teacher	Technical Quality Lab	HIM Support Technician
Elementary Teacher	Specialist	Insurance Administrator
Exceptional Education Teacher	Teacher-Team Leader	Detention Deputy



Of the 968 survey respondents, two thirds (66.8%) reported that they were continuing their education. The majority of the AA graduates (84.2%) are continuing their education with most of those enrolled full-time (70.6%). One third (37.5%) of combined AS and Certificate completers are continuing their education, however, the majority of those are enrolled part-time. Over one quarter (25.8%) of the baccalaureate graduates are continuing their education. Tables 6 and 7 summarize continuing education and enrollment status by awarded SPC degree.

Table 6

Are you continuing your education at SPC or another college/university?

	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/ PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL
Continuing Education	23	531	58	35	647 66.8%
Respondents	89	631	174	74	968

Table 7

If so, what is you enrollment status?

	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/ PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL
Enrollment Status					
Part-time	12	146	33	22	213 32.9%
Full-time	7	375	24	8	414 64.0%
Unknown	4	10	1	5	20 3.1%
Respondents	23	531	58	35	647 100.0%

The majority of students are continuing their education in Florida. Table 8 displays the number of respondents who indicated that they are continuing their education at Florida state universities and colleges. Of the respondents furthering their education, over one-third are re-enrolling at SPC (36.2%), and an additional third are transferring to the University of South Florida (36.1%). Table 9 provides areas of study in which the 2005-06 graduates were enrolled.

Table 8
Institutions where students are continuing their education

Institutions	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/ PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL
SPC	2	166	37	24	229 36.2%
USF	6	210	9	3	228 36.1%
UF	0	47	0	1	48 7.6%
UCF	0	13	1	0	14 2.2%
FSU	1	19	0	0	20 3.2%
Other In-State	5	50	6	1	62 9.8%
Out of State	7	20	3	1	31 4.9%
Total Responses	21	525	56	30	632 100.0%

Table 9
Degree Program (Sample Areas of Studies SPC Graduates are Enrolled in)

BS/BAS	AA/AS/AAS	CT/ATD
MS Reading MS Network Management MS CRNA MS Educational Leadership MS Nursing MS Information Security MS Business Administration MS Adult Education	BS Criminal Justice BAS Dental Hygiene Environmental Science Policy Exceptional Student Education Finance International Business Mass Communications	Associate in Arts Associates in Nursing BA Technology Mgmt BAS Public Safety Emergency Admin & Mgt Quality Compliance Nursing Technology Management

The graduates' level of satisfaction in regards to how well SPC did in prepared them to continue their education is shown in Table 10. For those 647 graduates continuing their education, almost all (96.0%) responded to the question "How well did SPC prepare you for continuing your education?" Satisfaction levels were notable with 98.7% of the graduates indicating that their SPC studies prepared them 'at least' adequately to continue their education.

Table 10
How well did SPC prepare you for continuing your education?

Prepared for continued Education	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/ PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL
Exceptionally Well	9	173	20	10	212 34.1%
Very Well	11	263	26	15	315 50.7%
Adequately	2	68	10	6	86 13.9%
Poorly	0	4	0	1	5 0.8%
Not At All	0	2	0	1	3 0.5%
Total Responses	22	510	56	33	621 100.0%

As shown in Table 11, eight hundred and ninety-eight respondents (96.6%) indicated they would recommend SPC to others.

Table 11
Would you recommend your program at SPC to others?

Recommend Program	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/ PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL
Yes	86	593	154	65	898 96.6%
No	3	11	8	10	32 3.4%
Total Responses	89	604	162	75	930 100.0%

Midway through the 2005-06 Recent Alumni survey administration process, the College began including additional survey questions to assess the graduates' level of satisfaction in areas of general education outcomes. Graduates were asked to rate their preparation of general education skill areas on a 7-point Likert scale.

Based on the results, graduates felt SPC adequately prepared them in the majority of their general education skills areas as shown in Table 12. Two outcomes received mean scores of 6.0, 'Courses in your major area' and 'Life-long Learning', while the remaining eleven received mean scores between 5.4 and 5.9.

Table 12
College Preparation Ratings for Recent Graduates

General Education Outcomes (Seven point rating scale with seven being the highest)	Item Ratings		
	N	Mean	SD
College preparation:			
Reading	381	5.8	1.16
Composition/Writing	396	5.9	1.16
Communication/Speech	400	5.9	1.21
Computer Competency	383	5.7	1.30
Ethical Understanding Behavior	405	5.9	1.19
Humanities (awareness of different philosophies, cultures)	399	5.9	1.17
Social Behavioral Sciences (Economics, Psychology, etc.)	393	5.8	1.17
Natural Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, etc.)	396	5.7	1.26
Mathematics	395	5.8	1.25
Courses in your major area	375	6.0	1.27
Courses in a four year program	237	5.8	1.38
Employment after SPC	213	5.4	1.45
Life-long Learning	327	6.0	1.24

Conclusion

The results show that SPC programs are providing the needed training and education for students to obtain employment and continue their education.

Nearly three-quarters (72.9%) of graduates who responded are currently in the labor market and over one-half of those (59.5%) are employed in a field related to their studies. A majority of graduates employed earn an hourly wage higher than \$12.50 an hour or an annual salary of greater than \$30,000.

Over one-third of the respondents are continuing their education with the vast majority (95.1%) of those continuing their education within the State of Florida. SPC graduates also provided high satisfaction ratings in the areas of general education outcomes associated with the general education skills.