

2006-07 Recent Alumni Survey A Research Brief

Research Briefs

Research Briefs are short publications prepared by the Department of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (IRE) that are intended to provide relevant information which assists in the performance improvement process used by St. Petersburg College (SPC). Research Brief topics include, but are not limited to, student achievement, state accountability measures, institutional survey results, student enrollment, and faculty/adjunct compensation.

Introduction

SPC annually conducts the Recent Alumni Survey to measure alumni satisfaction with SPC's education programs. The Recent Alumni Survey specifically collected information related to career preparation, preparation for continuing education, and the current employment information and educational status of former students. The data collected is used for the state required annual Placement & Follow-up Report and as supplemental information to meet continuous improvement initiatives in workforce programs.

Responses

The Recent Alumni Survey was administered to 3,953 graduates from Associate in Arts (AA), Associate in Science/Associate in Applied Science (AS/AAS), certificate programs (CT, ATC, PSAV, PSVC), Bachelor of Science (BS), and Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degrees. The 2006-07 graduates were first contacted by Email and asked to complete an online survey. Those who did not respond to the initial email or reminder email, were followed up with a paper survey sent in the U.S. mail. Six hundred fifty-eight surveys were returned for an overall response rate of 16.7%. Table 1 summarizes the response rate by degree or certificate awarded.

Table 1

Respondents by degree or certificate awarded

Degree or Certificate Awarded	Number Responded	Number Graduated	Percent Responded
BS/BAS	151	503	30.0%
AA	276	1,901	14.5%
AS/AAS	154	840	18.3%
CT/ATD/ATC/PSAV/PSVC	77	709	10.9%
TOTAL	658	3,953	16.7%

This was the third year graduates were initially contacted electronically. The survey of 2006-07 graduates received 300 (45.5%) of the 658 responses online. This is an

improvement from the survey of 2005-06 and 2004-05 graduates which had 231(23.5%), and 100 (6.6%) online returns, respectively. The percent of responses received online has increased over the past three years, but the overall response rate to the survey has declined as shown in Table 2. This decrease in overall response rate is attributed to the changes in survey procedure. Prior to the online process, a follow-up phone call was made to ensure recent alumni completed the mailed survey. While there was a decrease when this costly method was removed, more recent surveys continue to show a steady increase in response rate.

Table 2
Three year return rate

Graduate Year Surveyed	Number Surveyed	Number Responded	Percent Responded	Number of Online Responses	Percent of Responses Online
2006-07	3,953	658	16.6%	300	45.5%
2005-06	3,756	982	26.1%	231	23.5%
2004-05	3,417	1,494	43.7%	100	6.6%

Results

The majority of respondents, from all degree and certificate programs, indicated continuing education to be the main goal of completing a degree or certificate. 'Change career fields' was the second most frequently selected goal among respondents as a whole. A closer look at the respondents by program shows a slightly greater percent of students from the AS/AAS and certificate programs selected 'obtain employment' than those students from the BS/BAS and AA degree. While a greater percent of the BS/BAS and AA degree graduates selected 'continued education' as the main goal in completing their program at SPC, as seen in Table 3.

Table 3
Main goal in completing a degree or certificate at SPC by program

What was your main goal in completing a degree or certificate at SPC?	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/ PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL
Change career fields	21.3%	7.1%	32.4%	32.3%	19.1%
Continue my education	46.7%	74.4%	22.3%	30.9%	51.0%
Earn more money	10.7%	6.0%	14.9%	7.4%	9.3%
Get a promotion	4.0%	1.9%	2.7%	5.9%	3.0%
Meet certification/training needs	5.3%	1.4%	9.5%	7.4%	4.9%
Obtain employment	8.0%	5.3%	11.5%	11.8%	8.1%
Other	4.0%	3.8%	6.8%	4.4%	4.6%
Total Responses	150	266	148	68	632

Participants were allowed multiple responses to the question, "Which of the following were you able to accomplish after obtaining your degree or certificate?" 'Continue my education' was selected most often (62.8%) as an accomplishment. Followed by 'Earn

more money' which was selected 31.0%, 'Change career fields' 21.5%, 'Obtain employment' 21.0%, and 'Meet certification/training needs' 17.7%.

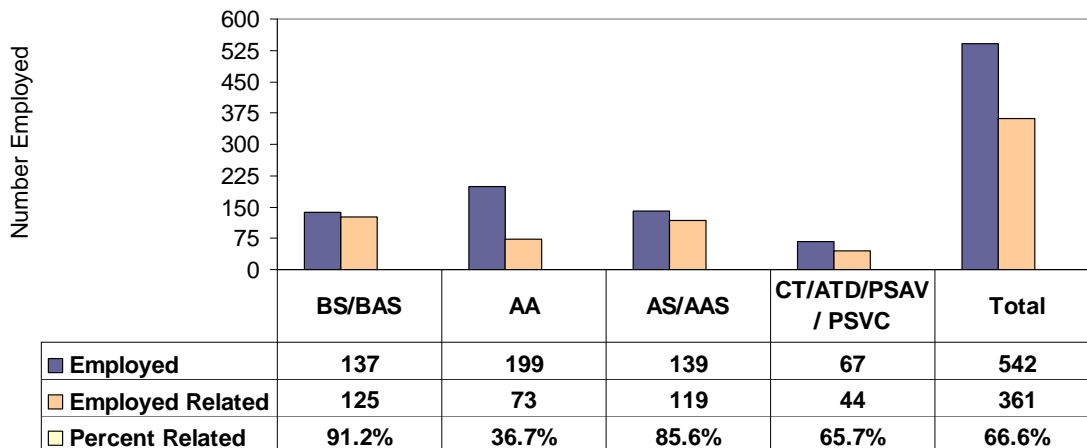
The majority of respondents (97.1%) indicated they were satisfied with the help they received from SPC in meeting their above goal(s), when asked "How well did SPC help you meet your above goal?" Almost half (47.1%) of survey respondents indicated that SPC did 'Very well' in helping them meet their goal, and 37.1% indicated 'Exceptionally well'. Table 4 provide details of level of responses by degree program.

Table 4
Satisfaction by degree or certificate awarded

How well did SPC help you meet your above goal?	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL
Exceptionally Well	46.0%	38.0%	32.4%	25.9%	37.1%
Very Well	41.3%	48.3%	48.0%	51.9%	47.1%
Adequately	8.7%	11.8%	17.5%	15.8%	12.9%
Poorly	0.7%	0.3%	0.6%	2.5%	0.8%
Not At All	3.3%	1.4%	1.2%	3.8%	2.1%
Total Responses	150	271	154	77	652

Results from the survey indicated the majority (82.4%) of the respondents were currently employed. Sixty-seven percent (66.6%) of those employed indicated their current position was related to their educational field (see Figure 1). The completers of workforce degree programs (BS/BAS, AS/AAS, and certificate programs) reported higher field related employment levels (65.7% - 91.2%) than graduates of the AA program (36.7%). Eight respondents indicated they were in active military service.

Figure 1
What is your current employment status?



The majority (98.7%) of employed alumni provided their wage per hour and/or approximate annual equivalents earnings. Although the amounts earned varied by program, the most frequently reported wage for the respondents was \$25.00 or more (\$52,000 or more). Table 5 summarizes wage per hour and annual salary.

Table 5
Hourly wage by degree or certificate awarded

Hourly Wage/ Approximate Annual	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/ PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL
Less than \$10.00 (less than \$21,000)	1.4%	25.5%	2.1%	4.5%	10.8%
\$10.00 - \$14.99 (\$21,000 - \$30,999)	4.4%	42.3%	17.3%	24.2%	24.1%
\$15.00 - \$19.99 (\$31,000 - \$41,999)	32.5%	15.3%	23.1%	19.6%	22.2%
\$20.00 - \$24.99 (\$42,000 - \$51,999)	10.3%	7.1%	33.3%	25.7%	17.0%
\$25.00 or more (\$52,000 or more)	51.1%	9.6%	23.9%	25.7%	25.7%
Total Responses	135	196	138	66	535

More than half (61.1%) of the 658 survey respondents reported continuing their education. The majority of the AA graduates (87.0%) reported continuing their education. Over one quarter (28.7%) of the baccalaureate graduates are continuing their education. Fifty percent of AS/AAS and Certificate completers reported continuing their education. Of those continuing their education, 63.5% of AA students were enrolled full-time. The majority (63.7%) of AS/AAS and certificate programs were enrolled part time. Tables 6 and 7 summarize continuing education and enrollment status by awarded SPC degree.

Table 6
Continuing education by degree or certificate awarded

Are you continuing your education at SPC or another college/university?	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/ PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL
Continuing Education	28.7%	87.0%	47.0%	58.4%	61.1%
Respondents	146	271	151	77	645

Table 7
Enrollment status by degree or certificate awarded

Enrollment Status	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/ PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL
Part-time	52.3%	32.6%	56.3%	75.5%	43.9%
Full-time	28.5%	63.5%	26.7%	13.3%	47.5%
Unknown	19.0%	3.8%	16.9%	11.1%	8.6%
Respondents	42	236	71	45	394

The majority of students (91.7%) reported continuing their education in Florida. Thirty-nine percent of the respondents furthering their education indicated re-enrolling at SPC and 30.8% reported transferring to the University of South Florida. Table 8 displays a detail of the Florida state universities and colleges respondents indicated attending.

Table 8
Institutions where students are continuing their education

Institutions	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/ PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL
SPC	14.8%	31.1%	64.9%	75.8%	39.3%
USF	7.0%	43.1%	8.7%	0	30.8%
UF	0	7.1%	0	3.4%	5.0%
UCF	3.7%	2.2%	1.7%	0	2.1%
FSU	0	4.0%	0	0	2.7%
Other In-State	37.0%	7.1%	17.5%	13.7%	11.8%
Out of State	37.0%	5.3%	7.0%	6.8%	8.3%
Total Responses	27	225	57	29	338

The 394 graduates continuing their education were asked “How well did SPC prepare you for continuing your education?” Satisfaction levels were notable with 99.2% of the graduates indicating that their SPC studies prepared them ‘at least’ adequately to continue their education. Details by degree or certificate awarded can be seen in Table 9.

Table 9
Satisfaction with SPC preparation for continued education by degree or certificate awarded

How well did SPC prepare you for continuing your education?	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/ PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL
Exceptionally Well	47.3%	31.1%	24.2%	22.2%	30.5%
Very Well	34.2%	54.7%	52.8%	48.8%	51.7%
Adequately	18.4%	14.1%	21.4%	24.4%	17.0%
Poorly	0	0	1.4%	4.4%	0.8%
Total Responses	38	234	70	45	387

When asked, ‘Would you recommend your program at SPC to others’ four hundred and eighty-six respondents* (96.8%) selected yes. Table 10 provides a break down by degree program or certificate awarded.

Table 10
Recommending SPC program to others by degree of certificate awarded

Would you recommend your program at SPC to others?	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/ PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL
Yes	100%	97.2%	97.1%	90.3%	96.8%
No	0	2.7%	2.8%	9.6%	3.2%
Total Responses	83	252	105	62	502

* Note: Revised: 09-01-09

The 2006-07 Recent Alumni survey administration process included 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 5-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 11. Twenty-one outcomes received mean scores of 4.0 or higher, while the remaining four received mean scores between 3.7 and 3.9. Two were in the area of Mathematical and computational skills and two were in the use of technology.

Table 11
College Preparation Ratings for Recent Graduates

General Education Outcomes (Five point rating scale with five being the highest)	Item Ratings		
	N	Mean	SD
Communicating clearly and effectively with others through:			
Speaking	643	4.1	0.75
Listening	636	4.2	0.72
Reading	633	4.2	0.78
Writing	635	4.2	0.76
Your use of mathematical and computational skills:			
Comfortable with mathematical calculations	635	3.9	0.90
Using computational skills appropriately	634	4.0	0.84
Accurately interpreting mathematical data	633	3.9	0.84
Using the following forms of technology:			
Email	635	4.6	0.68
Word Processing	636	4.4	0.77
Spreadsheets	630	3.7	1.08
Databases	633	3.7	1.03
Internet Research	633	4.4	0.76
Thinking logically and critically to solve problems:			
Gathering and assessing relevant information	637	4.3	0.68
Inquiring about and interpreting information	635	4.2	0.72
Organizing and evaluating information	633	4.3	0.71
Analyzing and explaining information to others	635	4.2	0.75
Using information to solve problems	630	4.3	0.69

Table 11 continued
College Preparation Ratings for Recent Graduates

General Education Outcomes	Item Ratings	Mean	SD
(Five point rating scale with five being the highest)	N		
Working effectively with others in a variety of settings:			
Participating as a team player (e.g., group projects)	631	4.3	0.79
Working well with individuals from diverse backgrounds	630	4.4	0.73
Using ethical courses of action	629	4.5	0.67
Demonstrating leadership skills	629	4.3	0.79
Appreciating the importance of lifelong learning:			
Showing an interest in career development	634	4.5	0.72
Being open to new ideas and challenges	633	4.5	0.66
Willingness to take on new responsibilities	634	4.5	0.69
Pursuing additional educational opportunities	634	4.4	0.76

Conclusion

Results from the 2007 Recent Alumni Survey (2006-07 SPC Graduates) indicated that over eighty percent (82.4%) of graduates who responded are currently in the labor market. Over two-thirds of those (66.6%) are employed in a field related to their studies. The AS and Certificate programs reported the highest rate of relate employment (79.1%).

Wage earnings varied by degree or certificate awarded, BS/BAS respondents reported highest earning most often, AS/AAS and certificate programs both reported the majority of respondents (56.8%) in \$42,000-\$51,999 or \$52,000 ranges, and the majority of AA degrees respondents reported the lower wage earnings. However, AA degree respondents reported the largest rates of continued education (87.0%) and 63.5% of those are enrolled full-time. As a whole, the majority of SPC graduates are pursuing further education (61.1%).

SPC graduates also provided high satisfaction ratings in the areas of general education outcomes associated with the general education skills. Recent alumni (99.2%) reported SPC had prepared them "adequately" for continued education and the majority of respondents (96.8%) would recommend their program to others.