

## 2007-08 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 4,046 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 2007-08 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. One thousand and twenty-seven surveys were returned for an overall response rate of 25.4%. 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	209	589	35.5%
AA	512	2,022	25.3%
AS/AAS	212	793	26.7%
CT/ATD/ATC/PSAV/PSVC	94	642	14.6%
TOTAL	1,027	4,046	25.4%

*Note: Individual students were surveyed only once, even if they had received multiple degrees.*

This was the fourth year graduates were initially contacted electronically. The survey of 2007-08 graduates received 536 (52.2%) of the 1,027 responses online. This is an improvement from the surveys administered to 2006-07 and 2005-06 graduates, which resulted in 300 (45.6%), and 231 (23.5%) online returns, respectively. In addition to the increase of online responses over the past three years, the overall response rate showed an increase of almost nine percent (8.8%) in 2007-08 over the previous year, as depicted in Table 2.

Table 2  
*Three year return rate*

Graduate Year Surveyed	Number Surveyed	Number Responded	Percent Responded	Number of Online Responses	Percent of Responses Online
2007-08	4,045	1,027	25.4%	536	52.2%
2006-07	3,953	658	16.6%	300	45.6%
2005-06	3,756	982	26.1%	231	23.5%

## Results

The majority of respondents (54.1%) from all degree and certificate programs reported that continuing education was 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 greater percent of students from the AS/AAS and certificate programs selected 'Obtain employment', 'Meet certification/training needs' and 'Earn more money', than those students from the BS/BAS and AA degrees combined. In contrast, a greater percent of the BS/BAS and AA degree graduates selected 'Continue my education' as the main goal in completing their program at SPC, than those students from the AS/AAS and certificate programs 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	26.1%	7.9%	30.1%	15.2%	16.7%
Continue my education	39.9%	76.4%	19.6%	38.0%	54.1%
Earn more money	8.4%	4.5%	16.6%	9.8%	8.2%
Get a promotion	6.4%	1.2%	3.5%	3.3%	2.9%
Meet certification/training needs	7.4%	2.2%	12.6%	13.0%	6.3%
Obtain employment	8.4%	3.4%	11.1%	16.3%	7.1%
Other	3.4%	4.4%	6.5%	4.4%	4.6%
Total Responses	203	504	199	92	998

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 (64.6%) as an accomplishment, followed by 'Earn more money' which was selected 25.2%; 'Meet certification/training needs' 19.5%; 'Change career fields' 18.5%; and 'Obtain employment' 18.5%.

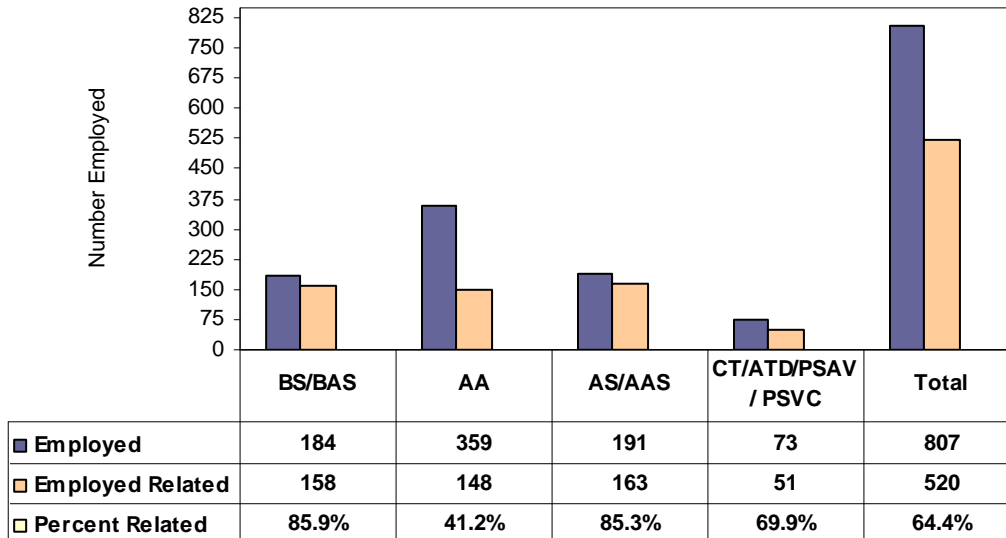
The majority of respondents (97.2%) indicated that they were satisfied with the help they received from SPC in meeting their above goal(s). When asked "How well did SPC help you meet your above goal", almost half (46.5%) of survey respondents indicated that SPC did 'Very well' in helping them meet their goal, and 36.1% indicated 'Exceptionally well' as depicted in Table 4.

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	41.1%	35.5%	35.8%	20.4%	36.1%
Very Well	38.8%	48.6%	50.0%	44.1%	46.5%
Adequately	15.8%	14.6%	10.8%	15.8%	14.6%
Poorly	3.3%	0.4%	0.5%	2.2%	1.2%
Not At All	1.0%	0.8%	2.8%	5.4%	1.7%
Total Responses	209	512	212	93	1,026

Results from the survey indicated that the majority of the respondents (79.2%) were currently employed. Sixty-four percent (64.4%) of those employed indicated their current position was related to their educational field as shown by Figure 1. The completers of workforce degree programs (BS/BAS, AS/AAS, and Certificate) reported higher field related employment levels (69.9% to 85.9%) than graduates of the AA program (41.2%). Seven respondents indicated they were in active military service.

Figure 1  
*What is your current employment status?*



The majority of employed alumni (98.5%) 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 between \$10.00 and \$14.99 (\$21,000 to \$30,999 annually). 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)	6.0%	29.7%	4.8%	11.3%	16.7%
\$10.00 - \$14.99 (\$21,000 - \$30,999)	8.2%	37.9%	21.3%	21.1%	25.7%
\$15.00 - \$19.99 (\$31,000 - \$41,999)	31.3%	17.8%	15.4%	26.8%	21.1%
\$20.00 - \$24.99 (\$42,000 - \$51,999)	11.0%	8.5%	36.7%	15.5%	16.4%
\$25.00 or more (\$52,000 or more)	43.4%	6.2%	21.8%	25.4%	20.1%
Total Responses	182	354	188	71	795

More than half (63.7%) of the 1,027 survey respondents, and the vast majority of AA graduates (88.8%) reported that they were continuing their education. Almost one-third (31.6%) of the baccalaureate graduates, and forty-three percent (43.2%) of AS/AAS and Certificate completers also reported continuing their education. Of those continuing their education, the majority (68.8%) of AA students were enrolled full-time, while the majority (60.6%) of AS/AAS and certificate students 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	31.6%	88.8%	39.7%	51.1%	63.7%
Respondents	209	509	204	90	1,012

Table 7  
*Enrollment status by degree or certificate awarded*

Enrollment Status	BS/BAS	AA	AS/AAS	CT/ATD/ PSAV/PSVC	TOTAL
Part-time	48.5%	27.9%	59.3%	63.0%	36.4%
Full-time	28.8%	68.8%	28.4%	34.8%	57.2%
Unknown	22.7%	3.3%	12.3%	2.2%	6.4%
Respondents	66	452	81	46	645

The majority of students (92.6%) reported continuing their education in Florida. Almost forty percent (39.5%) of the respondents furthering their education indicated re-enrolling at SPC, and 33.3% reported transferring to the University of South Florida. Table 8 presents details of various 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	15.8%	33.4%	74.6%	66.7%	39.5%
USF	21.1%	41.6%	7.0%	0.0%	33.3%
UF	0.0%	3.4%	0.0%	5.1%	2.9%
UCF	2.6%	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%
FSU	2.6%	4.1%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%
Other In-State	28.9%	10.3%	8.5%	17.9%	11.8%
Out of State	28.9%	4.8%	9.9%	10.3%	7.4%
Total Responses	38	437	71	39	585

The 645 graduates continuing their education were asked "How well did SPC prepare you for continuing your education?" Satisfaction levels were notable with 98.5% of the graduates indicating that their SPC studies prepared them 'at least' adequately to continue their education. Details of students' satisfaction 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	49.2%	31.5%	27.6%	9.1%	31.2%
Very Well	27.9%	51.8%	46.1%	56.8%	49.1%
Adequately	19.7%	16.0%	23.7%	29.5%	18.2%
Not at all	1.6%	0.2%	1.3%	0.0%	0.5%
Poorly	1.6%	0.5%	1.3%	4.5%	1.0%
Total Responses	61	444	76	44	625

When asked, 'Would you recommend your program at SPC to others', seven hundred and eighty-one respondents (97.4%) 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	95.7%	98.5%	97.9%	91.3%	97.4%
No	4.3	1.5%	2.1%	8.7%	2.6%
Total Responses	115	473	145	69	802

The 2007-08 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, three received a mean of 3.8, while the remaining one received mean score of 3.9.

Table 11

*College Preparation Ratings for Recent Graduates*

<i>General Education Outcomes</i> (Five point rating scale with five being the highest)	<i>Item Ratings</i>		
	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Communicating clearly and effectively with others through:</i>			
Speaking	1015	4.1	0.77
Listening	1012	4.3	0.74
Reading	1013	4.3	0.77
Writing	1007	4.2	0.76
<i>Your use of mathematical and computational skills:</i>			
Comfortable with mathematical calculations	1012	3.9	0.89
Using computational skills appropriately	1014	4.0	0.85
Accurately interpreting mathematical data	1012	3.8	0.89
<i>Using the following forms of technology:</i>			
Email	1014	4.6	0.67
Word Processing	1010	4.5	0.77
Spreadsheets	1012	3.8	1.05
Databases	1010	3.8	1.03
Internet Research	1006	4.5	0.73
<i>Thinking logically and critically to solve problems:</i>			
Gathering and assessing relevant information	1013	4.3	0.67
Inquiring about and interpreting information	1014	4.3	0.69

<i>General Education Outcomes</i> (Five point rating scale with five being the highest)	<i>Item Ratings</i>		
	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Organizing and evaluating information	1010	4.4	0.69
Analyzing and explaining information to others	1008	4.2	0.74
Using information to solve problems	1007	4.3	0.70
Working effectively with others in a variety of settings:			
Participating as a team player (e.g., group projects)	1012	4.3	0.76
Working well with individuals from diverse backgrounds	1013	4.4	0.68
Using ethical courses of action	1015	4.5	0.68
Demonstrating leadership skills	1013	4.3	0.80
Appreciating the importance of lifelong learning:			
Showing an interest in career development	1014	4.5	0.69
Being open to new ideas and challenges	1014	4.5	0.67
Willingness to take on new responsibilities	1011	4.5	0.69
Pursuing additional educational opportunities	1012	4.5	0.71

## Conclusion

Results from the 2008 Recent Alumni Survey (2007-08 SPC Graduates) indicated that over seventy-nine percent (79.2%) of the graduates who responded are currently in the labor market. About two-thirds of those (64.4%) are employed in a field related to their studies. The AS and Certificate programs reported the highest rate of related employment (81.1%).

Wage earnings varied by degree or certificate awarded; BS/BAS respondents reported highest earnings most often, AS/AAS and certificate programs both reported that the majority of respondents (53.7%) earned between \$42,000 and \$51,999, or above; while the majority of AA degree respondents reported lower wage earnings. However, AA degree respondents reported the highest rate of continued education (88.8%), and 68.8% of those were enrolled full-time. As a whole, the majority of SPC graduates are pursuing further education (63.7%).

SPC graduates also reported high levels of satisfaction in the areas of general education outcomes associated with the general education skills. Recent alumni (98.5%) reported SPC had prepared them at least adequately for continued education and the majority of respondents (97.4%) would recommend their program to others.