2010-11 EMPLOYER SURVEY RESULTS
A RESEARCH BRIEF

Research Briefs

Research Briefs are short publications prepared by the Departments of Academic Effectiveness and Assessment (AEA) and Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) 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 an Employer Survey designed to measure employer satisfaction with SPC graduates. Specifically, the Employer Survey was designed to gain insight into an employer's perceptions of the quality of hired SPC graduates and identify an employer's willingness to support various college activities such as student training or placement.

The focus of the Employer Survey is to evaluate graduates from Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Applied Science (BS/BAS), Associate in Science/Associate in Applied Science (AS/AAS), and Certificate programs. These programs focus on preparing students to enhance their skills, knowledge, reach higher levels of income, and increase personal/professional growth.

Data Collection

The Recent Alumni Survey was administered to 2010-11 SPC graduates. Graduates were asked to provide the name and address of their employer and whether they would allow SPC to contact their employer. The Employer Survey was then sent to employers of SPC graduates who were working in a field related to their education. Although employers are surveyed one time per graduate, some graduates may have earned multiple awards. Therefore, the number of surveys administered and responses received are reported for each degree or certificate the student was awarded.

The survey includes questions relating to the employer's perception of their employee's (recent SPC graduate) aptitude in key general education competencies and foundational skill areas. Additional questions include the employee's major job responsibilities, employee wage information, willingness of the employer to hire another SPC graduate, and any additional skills or areas of knowledge that this employee should have obtained while at SPC. The last section of the survey contains a list of opportunities for employer involvement at SPC.

Three-hundred and twenty-eight (328) employer surveys were sent out to employers. One-hundred and twenty-three (123) surveys were returned resulting in an overall

response rate of 37.50%. Employers of upper-division alumni had a 35.90% response rate, and employers of lower-division alumni had a response rate of 39.85%. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the number of recent alumni surveys and employer surveys sent and returned by upper and lower division classification. It should be noted that of the one-hundred and ninety-five (195) employer surveys sent to employers of upper-division graduates, one-hundred and nineteen (119) were sent to employers of College of Education graduates. This group of recent alumni does not need to provide employer contact information or give permission to contact them, as the contact information is already supplied by the state of Florida. The State requires that all College of Education graduate employers be surveyed. Graduates of programs other than the College of Education must provide their permission to SPC before the College can survey the employer.

Table 1
Response rate by program

Program Type	Alumni Surveys Sent	Alumni Surveys Returned	Employer Surveys Sent	Employer Surveys Returned	Return Rate
Lower Division Programs (AS/AAS, and LD Certificate Programs)	1584	402	133	53	39.85%
Upper Division Programs (BS/BAS and UD Certificate Programs)	1001	287	195	70	35.90%

The employer survey included questions that enabled employers to rate graduates' achievement in the following categories: communication, computational, technical, problem solving, people skills, and lifelong learning.

Results

Key findings from the 2010-11 Employer Survey include:

- Ninety-nine percent (99.11%) of the employers responding indicated they would hire another SPC graduate.
- Almost forty percent (39.25%) of the employers responding to the question regarding hourly compensation indicated their employees earn between $15.00 and $19.99 per hour ($31,000 to $41,999 annually).
- Approximately fifty percent (52.03%) of respondents expressed an interest in participating in one or more of the College's five suggested employment activities. The most popular areas of interest among those willing to participate were providing opportunities for student co-op/internship placement (51.56%), providing input about education/training needs for the employer's workforce area (48.44%), and providing opportunities for job placement of graduates (34.38%). [Note: The total may exceed 100% because this question allowed multiple responses by survey respondents.]

Of the twenty-five key general education competencies and foundational skill areas, five received mean scores of 4.50 or higher on a 5-point Likert scale (5 indicates "excellent"), with the remaining twenty receiving mean scores between 4.09 and

4.49. This response scale also included a "Not Applicable" (NA) rating. The three categories with satisfaction levels consistently over 4.3 were:

- Communicate clearly and effectively with others
- Use mathematical and computational skills
- Appreciate the importance of lifelong learning

The outcomes with the highest mean rating (4.53) were "E-mail" from the "Use the following forms of technology" area and "Open to new ideas and challenges" from the "Appreciate the importance of lifelong learning" area. The outcome with the lowest mean rating (4.09) was "Demonstrates leadership skills" from the "Work effectively with others in a variety of settings" area. Overall employer ratings of the graduates' general education outcomes are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
2010-11 Overall Employer Responses

General Education Outcomes	*Item Ratings*			
(Five point rating scale with five being the highest)	*N*	*Mean*	*SD*	*N/A**
Communicate clearly and effectively with others through:				
Speaking	123	4.38	0.74	0
Listening	121	4.39	0.75	0
Reading	117	4.50	0.64	4
Writing	117	4.34	0.73	3
Use mathematical and computational skills:				
Comfortable with mathematical calculations	107	4.33	0.70	15
Uses computational skills appropriately	108	4.33	0.72	12
Accurately interprets mathematical data	106	4.39	0.68	15
Use the following forms of technology:				
E-mail	117	4.53	0.73	5
Word Processing	98	4.49	0.71	22
Spreadsheets	79	4.20	0.85	41
Databases	85	4.26	0.76	35
Internet Research	98	4.49	0.71	22
Think logically and critically to solve problems				
Gathers and assesses relevant information	120	4.27	0.81	1
Inquires and interprets information	118	4.31	0.79	2
Organizes and evaluates information	120	4.28	0.80	0
Analyzes and explains information to others	119	4.23	0.80	1
Uses information to solve problems	120	4.28	0.76	0
Work effectively with others in a variety of settings:				
Participates as team player (e.g., groups projects)	121	4.48	0.84	1

General Education Outcomes	Item Ratings			
(Five point rating scale with five being the highest)	*N*	*Mean*	*SD*	*N/A**
Works well with individuals from diverse backgrounds	121	4.44	0.75	0
Uses ethical courses of action	121	4.52	0.72	0
Demonstrates leadership skills	120	4.09	0.93	1
Appreciate the importance of lifelong learning:				
Shows interest in career development	119	4.52	0.70	2
Open to new ideas and challenges	121	4.53	0.67	0
Willing to take on new responsibilities	120	4.49	0.79	1
Pursues additional educational opportunities	116	4.41	0.78	4

Note: The survey allowed employers to select N/A if a competency was non-applicable for an employee.

Table 3 displays a breakdown of each outcome for the lower division technical programs (AS/AAS, and LD Certificate Programs). The table includes the number of responses and the mean response for each outcome. Employers indicated high levels of satisfaction with lower division graduates' general education outcomes. All outcomes received mean scores between 4.04 and 4.38.

Table 3
Employer Survey Response for Lower Division (AS/AAS, and LD Certificate Programs)

General Education Outcomes	Item Ratings			
(Five point rating scale with five being the highest)	*N*	*Mean*	*SD*	*N/A**
Communicate clearly and effectively with others through:				
Speaking	53	4.19	0.86	0
Listening	51	4.24	0.89	0
Reading	49	4.33	0.77	2
Writing	49	4.14	0.89	2
Use mathematical and computational skills:				
Comfortable with mathematical calculations	45	4.20	0.79	7
Uses computational skills appropriately	45	4.29	0.76	6
Accurately interprets mathematical data	44	4.27	0.79	7
Use the following forms of technology:				
E-mail	50	4.38	0.83	3
Word Processing	38	4.32	0.81	13
Spreadsheets	30	4.13	0.90	21
Databases	35	4.14	0.77	16
Internet Research	42	4.40	0.73	9

General Education Outcomes	Item Ratings			
(Five point rating scale with five being the highest)	*N*	*Mean*	*SD*	*N/A**
Think logically and critically to solve problems				
Gathers and assesses relevant information	51	4.18	0.89	1
Inquires and interprets information	50	4.22	0.84	1
Organizes and evaluates information	51	4.14	0.89	0
Analyzes and explains information to others	51	4.10	0.90	0
Uses information to solve problems	51	4.14	0.83	0
Work effectively with others in a variety of settings:				
Participates as team player (e.g., groups projects)	53	4.38	0.86	0
Works well with individuals from diverse backgrounds	52	4.33	0.81	0
Uses ethical courses of action	52	4.37	0.79	0
Demonstrates leadership skills	51	4.04	0.98	1
Appreciate the importance of lifelong learning:				
Shows interest in career development	51	4.33	0.84	2
Open to new ideas and challenges	53	4.34	0.78	0
Willing to take on new responsibilities	53	4.28	0.95	0
Pursues additional educational opportunities	52	4.21	0.89	1

Note: The survey allowed employers to select N/A if a competency was non-applicable for an employee.

Table 4 displays a breakdown of each outcome for the upper division programs (BS/BAS and UD Certificate Programs). Employers indicated high levels of satisfaction with general education outcomes for upper-division graduates. Thirteen outcomes received mean scores of 4.50 or higher, and twelve received mean scores between 4.13 and 4.49.

Table 4
Employer Survey Response for Upper Division Programs (BS/BAS and UD Certificate Programs)

General Education Outcomes (Five point rating scale with five being the highest)	Item Ratings			
	N	Mean	SD	N/A*
Communicate clearly and effectively with others through:				
Speaking	70	4.53	0.61	0
Listening	70	4.50	0.61	0
Reading	68	4.62	0.49	2
Writing	68	4.49	0.56	1
Use mathematical and computational skills:				
Comfortable with mathematical calculations	62	4.42	0.62	8
Uses computational skills appropriately	63	4.37	0.70	6
Accurately interprets mathematical data	62	4.47	0.59	8
Use the following forms of technology:				
E-mail	67	4.64	0.62	2
Word Processing	60	4.60	0.62	9
Spreadsheets	49	4.24	0.83	20
Databases	50	4.34	0.75	19
Internet Research	56	4.55	0.69	13
Think logically and critically to solve problems				
Gathers and assesses relevant information	69	4.33	0.74	0
Inquires and interprets information	68	4.37	0.75	1
Organizes and evaluates information	69	4.39	0.71	0
Analyzes and explains information to others	68	4.32	0.70	1
Uses information to solve problems	69	4.39	0.69	0
Work effectively with others in a variety of settings:				
Participates as team player (e.g., groups projects)	68	4.56	0.82	1
Works well with individuals from diverse backgrounds	69	4.52	0.70	0
Uses ethical courses of action	69	4.64	0.64	0
Demonstrates leadership skills	69	4.13	0.91	0
Appreciate the importance of lifelong learning:				
Shows interest in career development	68	4.66	0.54	0
Open to new ideas and challenges	68	4.68	0.53	0
Willing to take on new responsibilities	67	4.66	0.59	1
Pursues additional educational opportunities	64	4.58	0.64	3

Note: The survey allowed employers to select N/A if a competency was non-applicable for an employee.

Conclusion

Overall, results suggest that employers are satisfied with St. Petersburg College graduates' performance in the workplace. Employers rated most individuals as exhibiting a high level of preparatory skills as indicated by the above average ratings in all skill areas.

In summary, the survey outcomes indicate that the AS/AAS degree, the BS/BAS degree, and the Certificate programs are achieving their intended objective of adequately preparing students for the workplace, by enhancing their skills, increasing their knowledge, and instilling a desire to build on personal and professional growth.