2015-16 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 2015-16 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.

Two-hundred and sixty-four (264) employer surveys were sent out to employers. One-hundred and sixty-four (164) surveys were returned resulting in an overall response

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rate of 62.1%. Employers of upper-division alumni had a 63.1% response rate, and employers of lower-division alumni had a response rate of 60.0%. 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 seventy-nine (179) employer surveys sent to employers of upper-division graduates, one-hundred and thirty-three (133) 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)	2583	345	85	51	60.0%
Upper Division Programs (BS/BAS and UD Certificate Programs)	1272	231	179	113	63.1%

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 2015-16 Employer Survey include:

- Ninety-six percent (96.1%) of the employers responding indicated they would hire another SPC graduate.
- Thirty-five percent (34.9%) 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).
- Over half (52.4%) 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 (61.6%) and serving on an advisory committee (52.3%). [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, six received a mean score of 4.3 on a 5-point Likert scale (5 indicates "excellent"), and eighteen received mean scores between 4.1 and 4.2, with the remaining one receiving a mean score of 3.9. This response scale also included a "Not Applicable" (NA) rating. The category with satisfaction levels consistently at 4.2 or higher was:

- Communicate clearly and effectively with others

The outcomes with the highest mean rating (4.3) were "Speaking" and "Reading" from the "Communicate clearly and effectively with others" category, "E-mail" and "Word Processing" from the "Use the following forms of technology" category, and "Works well with individuals from diverse backgrounds" and "Uses ethical courses of action" from the "Work effectively with others in a variety of settings" category. The outcome with the lowest mean rating (3.9) was "Demonstrates leadership skills" from the "Work effectively with others in a variety of settings" category. Overall employer ratings of the graduates' general education outcomes are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
2015-16 Overall Employer Responses

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	163	4.3	0.8	1
Listening	162	4.2	1.0	1
Reading	160	4.3	0.8	4
Writing	161	4.2	0.9	3
Use mathematical and computational skills:				
Comfortable with mathematical calculations	143	4.1	1.0	18
Uses computational skills appropriately	147	4.1	1.0	15
Accurately interprets mathematical data	142	4.1	1.0	19
Use the following forms of technology:				
E-mail	158	4.3	0.9	4
Word Processing	148	4.3	0.8	13
Spreadsheets	129	4.1	1.0	31
Databases	127	4.1	1.0	33
Internet Research	141	4.2	0.9	20
Think logically and critically to solve problems				
Gathers and assesses relevant information	161	4.1	0.9	3
Inquires and interprets information	161	4.1	1.0	3
Organizes and evaluates information	161	4.1	1.0	3
Analyzes and explains information to others	160	4.1	1.0	4
Uses information to solve problems	160	4.1	1.0	4
Work effectively with others in a variety of settings:				
Participates as team player (e.g., group projects)	161	4.2	1.0	3
Works well with individuals from diverse backgrounds	162	4.3	0.9	2
Uses ethical courses of action	159	4.3	0.9	5

General Education Outcomes *(Five point rating scale with five being the highest)*	Item Ratings			
	N	*Mean*	*SD*	*N/A**
Demonstrates leadership skills	161	3.9	1.0	2
Appreciate the importance of lifelong learning:				
Shows interest in career development	163	4.2	0.9	1
Open to new ideas and challenges	162	4.2	0.9	2
Willing to take on new responsibilities	162	4.2	1.0	2
Pursues additional educational opportunities	161	4.1	0.9	3

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 satisfaction with lower division graduates' general education outcomes. Twenty-four outcomes received mean scores between 4.1 and 4.4, and the remaining one received a mean score of 3.9.

Table 3
Employer Survey Response for Lower Division (AS/AAS, and LD 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	51	4.3	0.8	0
Listening	50	4.2	1.0	0
Reading	50	4.4	0.8	1
Writing	50	4.4	0.8	1
Use mathematical and computational skills:				
Comfortable with mathematical calculations	43	4.1	0.9	6
Uses computational skills appropriately	46	4.1	1.0	4
Accurately interprets mathematical data	43	4.1	0.9	6
Use the following forms of technology:				
E-mail	48	4.4	0.8	3
Word Processing	44	4.3	0.8	6
Spreadsheets	38	4.3	1.0	11
Databases	37	4.2	1.0	12
Internet Research	42	4.3	0.9	8

General Education Outcomes (Five point rating scale with five being the highest)	Item Ratings			
	N	Mean	SD	N/A*
Think logically and critically to solve problems				
Gathers and assesses relevant information	50	4.2	0.9	1
Inquires and interprets information	50	4.1	1.0	1
Organizes and evaluates information	50	4.2	1.0	1
Analyzes and explains information to others	50	4.2	0.9	1
Uses information to solve problems	50	4.1	1.0	1
Work effectively with others in a variety of settings:				
Participates as team player (e.g., group projects)	51	4.3	1.0	0
Works well with individuals from diverse backgrounds	51	4.4	1.1	0
Uses ethical courses of action	49	4.4	0.9	2
Demonstrates leadership skills	51	3.9	1.0	0
Appreciate the importance of lifelong learning:				
Shows interest in career development	51	4.3	0.9	0
Open to new ideas and challenges	50	4.3	1.0	1
Willing to take on new responsibilities	50	4.3	1.1	1
Pursues additional educational opportunities	49	4.3	0.9	2

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 satisfaction with general education outcomes for upper-division graduates. Twenty-four outcomes received mean scores between 4.0 and 4.3, while the remaining one received a mean score of 3.8.

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	112	4.2	0.8	1
Listening	112	4.1	1.0	1
Reading	110	4.3	0.8	3
Writing	111	4.2	0.9	2

General Education Outcomes (Five point rating scale with five being the highest)	Item Ratings			
	N	Mean	SD	N/A*
Use mathematical and computational skills:				
Comfortable with mathematical calculations	100	4.1	1.0	12
Uses computational skills appropriately	101	4.1	0.9	11
Accurately interprets mathematical data	99	4.1	1.0	13
Use the following forms of technology:				
E-mail	110	4.2	0.9	1
Word Processing	104	4.2	0.9	7
Spreadsheets	91	4.0	1.0	20
Databases	90	4.1	1.0	21
Internet Research	99	4.2	0.9	12
Think logically and critically to solve problems				
Gathers and assesses relevant information	111	4.0	0.9	2
Inquires and interprets information	111	4.0	0.9	2
Organizes and evaluates information	111	4.0	1.0	2
Analyzes and explains information to others	110	4.0	1.0	3
Uses information to solve problems	110	4.0	1.0	3
Work effectively with others in a variety of settings:				
Participates as team player (e.g., group projects)	110	4.2	1.0	3
Works well with individuals from diverse backgrounds	111	4.2	0.9	2
Uses ethical courses of action	110	4.2	0.9	3
Demonstrates leadership skills	110	3.8	1.0	2
Appreciate the importance of lifelong learning:				
Shows interest in career development	112	4.2	0.9	1
Open to new ideas and challenges	112	4.2	0.9	1
Willing to take on new responsibilities	112	4.1	0.9	1
Pursues additional educational opportunities	112	4.1	0.9	1

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.