

2010-11

# Graduating Student Survey Report



Institutional Research and Effectiveness  
St. Petersburg College

March 2012



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## Graduating Student Survey Report Produced by

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2010-11 Graduating Student Survey Report  
Institutional Research and Effectiveness

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## Executive Summary

### *Introduction*

The evaluation and assessment processes at St. Petersburg College (SPC) are centered on mission-driven outcomes in program and service areas. Analysis of outcome results is ongoing and captured in various assessment reports. Institutional effectiveness at SPC assesses all degree programs and courses, regardless of mode of delivery.

### *Graduating Student Survey*

The Graduating Student Survey (GSS) is part of a comprehensive college-wide assessment program developed to examine the demographic profile of the responding graduates, assess their perceptions of the educational experience at the College and determine how the educational process at the College has changed their behavior and/or their knowledge as it relates to some specific areas of inquiry (educational outcomes).

In 2010, an overall evaluation of the number and types of questions that students were asked upon graduating from the institution was conducted, resulting in revisions to the GSS. The new GSS is embedded in the graduation application process, and aligned with the Entering Student Survey which was revised in 2008. In an effort to minimize the overall number of questions and reduce duplication, demographic information is no longer being asked within the GSS. The demographic information for the survey was extracted from PeopleSoft, the student database system, as part of the graduation application process. The GSS was available to students applying for graduation on-line during all three terms of academic year 2010-11. One-thousand four-hundred and four students completed the survey.

### *Student Demographic and Academic Information*

The demographic profile and academic background of the 1,404 survey respondents (N) to the Graduating Student Survey are summarized below:

- The largest age category for survey participants was “20 - 24” (30.3%), while almost forty-two percent (41.7%) of survey respondents were ‘30 and older.’ By comparison, the percentage of students ‘30 and older’ was thirty-four percent (34.1%) at the end of the fall 2009 semester [Source: 2010-11 Factbook, Table 22].
- Almost two-thirds (68.1%) of the survey respondents were female. This is slightly higher than the percentage of actual female completers (62.8%) for 2009/10 [Source: 2010-11 Factbook, Table 29].
- The ethnicity of seventy-four percent (74.1%) of the respondents was “White.” Twelve percent (12.1%) of the responding students were “Black/ Non-Hispanic” and five percent (5.3%) were “Hispanic”. These percentages were similar to actual completers for 2009/10 [Source: 2010-11 Factbook, Table 29].
- Half (50.6%) of the respondents indicated that they enrolled in the college to pursue an associate of arts degree. Twenty-five percent (25.2%) of the students reported completing a baccalaureate degree, twenty percent (19.9%) an associate of science degree, and four percent (4.2%) a certificate program as the degree they are applying for at SPC.
- Three-quarters (75.1%) of respondents stated that they “Fully” achieved their educational goal while at the College. An additional twenty-four percent (24.3%) stated that they “Somewhat” achieved their goal.



- Almost two-thirds (64.8%) of respondents indicated that they planned to continue their education. Of those, most indicated they would be going on to an “In-state public College/University” most commonly the University of South Florida (24.7%). The next highest selected institution was the SPC Baccalaureate Program with 10.7% of the survey respondents.
- About three percent (3.4%) of graduates plan to join the military.
- Seventy-four percent (74.1%) of the responding graduates were working while they pursued their education at SPC, while eighteen percent (17.9%) were employed forty hours per week or more. About fifty percent (49.4%) are working in areas associated with their studies.

#### *Preparedness*

Graduating students were asked to address how well prepared they were in twelve academic areas. Students believe that their education has best prepared them in “Courses in Your Major Area” with a 4.32 rating on a 5-point scale. Students believe they were less prepared for “Employment after SPC” (3.91). Overall, students gave all areas of preparedness ratings above a 3.90 on a 5-point scale, which surpassed the College’s criterion of three or higher on a 5-point rating scale.

By comparison, eleven areas showed decreases from the previous year, while “Employment after SPC” showed an increase of +0.03.

#### *Assistance Utilization*

When asked the question “Did you receive any assistance to help you attend SPC from any of these programs?” Two percent (2.1%) received assistance from “English as a Second Language,” one percent (1.4%) received assistance from “Wages,” one percent (1.4%) received assistance from “Vocational Rehab,” and nearly one percent (0.7%) received assistance from “Workforce Investment Act.” A total of five percent (5.6%) of responding graduates received support from these programs during the 2010/11 academic year.

#### *SPC Recommendation*

Ninety-eight percent (97.9%) of respondents stated that they would recommend the College to others, while two percent (2.1%) stated that they would not.

#### *Student Success*

Graduating students were asked to select all the factors that assisted them in achieving student success from a list of thirteen areas. Over half of the students (58.5%) selected ‘Career Goal’ as a factor that impacted their success. This was followed by ‘Job While in College’ which was selected by over one third (32.6%) of the students, and ‘Selecting a Major’ (29.2%).

#### *Primary Reason for Time Off*

When graduating students were asked: “If you took two or more consecutive semesters off from SPC, please indicate the primary reason for doing so,” the most often selected reason (26.2%) was “Job responsibilities/schedule”, which was selected by twenty-six percent of the students. This was followed by “Family responsibilities including childcare,” selected by over twenty-three percent (23.6%) of the students.



### *Educational Outcomes*

The Educational Outcomes Questionnaire was administered as part of the Graduating Student Survey. This year one thousand four hundred and four graduating students completed the questionnaire.

The primary purpose of the questionnaire is to evaluate the habits, practices and/or knowledge of graduating students in four areas: "Computer and Technology Competency", "Civic Activities", "Humanities Activities", and "Lifelong Learning" and then compare their responses to those of entering students.

The rating for this section is based on a 5-point scale with (5) representing the highest possible rating and (1) representing the lowest possible rating.

A two-tailed T-test was used to determine whether the changes in the means between the 2010-11 Entering Student Survey and the 2010-11 Graduating Student Survey were significant. Of the eleven categories, nine of the mean scores were significantly different at an alpha of .05. Moreover, all of the questions related to each of the groups exhibited improvements.

In the area of **Computer and Technology Competency**, students were asked to rate their competency in various computer skill areas.

- All three skill areas displayed mean increases from the Entering Student Survey to the Graduating Student Survey in 2010-11.
- The highest mean increase in the area of Computer and Technology Competency was "Word Processing" (+0.61).

In the area of **Civic Activities**, students were asked in which activities they currently participate.

- All three skill areas displayed mean increases from the Entering Student Survey to the Graduating Student Survey in 2010-11.
- The highest increase in the area of Civic Activities was "Vote in an Election" (+0.50).

In the area of **Humanities Activities**, students were asked in which activities they participated.

- All three skill areas displayed mean increases from the Entering Student Survey to the Graduating Student Survey in 2010-11.
- The skill area of "Visiting an Art Museum" had the largest mean increase (+0.36) of the three activities.

In the area of **Lifelong learning**, students were asked which Lifelong learning activities they anticipated participating in following graduation.

- Both skill areas displayed mean increases between the Entering Student Survey and the Graduating Student Survey in 2010-11.
- The highest mean increase in the area of Lifelong Learning was "Enrolling in College or Personal Enrichment Classes" (+0.45).



### *Conclusion*

St. Petersburg College (SPC) developed the Graduating Student Survey (GSS) as part of a comprehensive college-wide assessment program. The key purposes of the GSS is to examine the demographic profile of the responding graduates, assess their perceptions of the educational experience at the College and determine how the educational process at the College has changed their behavior and/or their knowledge as it relates to four educational outcome areas.

SPC students believe that their education has best prepared them in "Courses in Your Major Area," "Ethical Understanding and Behavior," "Humanities," and "Courses in a Four-Year Program." All eleven areas scored a four or greater on the 5-point rating scale. Students believe they were less well prepared for "Employment after SPC" (3.9). Nevertheless, students gave all areas of preparedness ratings above 3.9 on a 5-point scale, which indicates that they are well satisfied with the preparation they received in all these academic areas.

Ninety-eight percent of students would recommend the College to others. Seventy-five percent of students were fully satisfied with the educational goals they achieved while at the College and twenty-four percent were somewhat satisfied.

Over half of the students (58.5%) selected 'Career Goal' as a factor that impacted their success. This was followed by "Job While in College" which was selected by over one third (32.6%) of the students, and 'Selecting a Major' (29.2%).

Graduating students were asked to complete an education outcomes questionnaire and the responses were compared with those of the Entering students to gauge how the educational experience at SPC has impacted students in eleven individual categories divided into four educational outcomes areas. The rating for "Educational Outcomes" is based on a 5-point scale with five representing the highest possible rating and one representing the lowest possible rating. A two-tailed T-test was used to determine whether the changes in the mean scores between the 2010-11 Entering Student Survey and the 2010-11 Graduating Student Survey were significant. Of the eleven categories, nine of the mean scores were significantly different at an alpha of .05. Of the eleven defined groupings, all of them showed improvements between the 2010-11 Entering Student and Graduating Student Surveys.



## SPC Mission Statement

The mission of St. Petersburg College is to provide accessible, learner-centered education for students pursuing selected baccalaureate degrees, associate degrees, technical certificates, applied technology diplomas and continuing education within our service area and globally, while retaining leadership as a comprehensive, sustainable, multi-campus postsecondary institution and as a creative partner with students, communities, and other educational institutions to deliver rich learning experiences and to promote economic and workforce development. St. Petersburg College fulfills its mission led by an outstanding, diverse faculty and staff and enhanced by advanced technologies, distance learning, international education opportunities, innovative teaching techniques, comprehensive library and other information resources, continuous institutional self-evaluation, a climate for student success, and an enduring commitment to excellence.

## Introduction

In a holistic approach, the effectiveness of any educational institution is the aggregate value of the education it provides to the community it serves. For over seventy-five years, St. Petersburg College (SPC) has provided a wide range of educational opportunities and services to a demographically diverse student body producing tens of thousands of alumni who have been on the forefront of building this county, state and beyond. This is due, in large part, to the College's institutional effectiveness.

## *Institutional Effectiveness*

Institutional Effectiveness is the integrated, systematic, explicit, and documented process of measuring performance against the SPC mission for the purposes of continuous improvement of academic programs, administrative services, and educational support services offered by the College.

Operationally, the institutional effectiveness process ensures that the stated purposes of the College are accomplished. In other words did the institution successfully execute its mission, goals, and objectives? At SPC, the Offices of Planning, Budgeting and Research work with all departments and units to establish measurable statements of intent that are used to analyze effectiveness and to guide continuous quality improvement efforts. Each of St. Petersburg College's units is required to participate in the institutional effectiveness process.





The bottom-line from SPC's institutional effectiveness process is improvement. Once SPC has identified what it is going to do then it acts through the process of teaching, researching, and managing to accomplish its desired outcomes. The level of success of SPC's actions is then evaluated. A straightforward assessment process requires a realistic consideration of the intended outcomes that the institution has set and an explicit evaluation of the evidence that the institution is achieving that intent.

There is no single right or best way to measure success, improvement or quality. Nevertheless, objectives must be established, data related to those objectives must be collected and analyzed, and the results of those findings must be used to improve the institution in the future. The educational assessment is a critical component of St. Petersburg College's institutional effectiveness process.

#### *Evaluation and Assessment Processes*

The evaluation and assessment processes at SPC are centered on mission-driven outcomes in the following program and service areas: (i) 28 organizational units comprising 37 academic programs (lower division); (ii) 9 Colleges and Schools comprising 24 baccalaureate programs (upper division), and (iii) key administrative and educational support services. Analysis of outcome results is on-going and captured in various assessment reports. Institutional effectiveness at SPC assesses all degree programs and courses, regardless of mode of delivery. SPC also evaluates all student services to ensure students are provided the best support possible to ensure student success.

The following are the key assessments used in the evaluation and assessment processes of SPC's Institutional Effectiveness.

- Academic Program Assessments include internally and externally developed direct measures for General Education (e.g., Educational Testing Service's Proficiency Profile [formerly MAPP]), AAS/AS Program Assessments, BAS/BS Program Assessments, and Program Reviews. Outcome results for the academic programs are documented in three types of assessment reports as follows: the Academic Program Viability Report (APVR) is completed on an annual basis; the Academic Program Assessment Report (APAR) is completed on a 3-year cycle; and the Comprehensive Academic Program Review (CAPR), which is also completed on a three-year cycle.



- Academic/Student Services Assessments include indirect measures through the Entering Student Survey, Enrolled Student Survey, Graduating Student Survey, Recent Alumni Survey, Employer Survey, and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). Administrative and educational support services are evaluated annually. Results of college-wide student surveys are further refined and augmented through additional departmental-specific assessments.

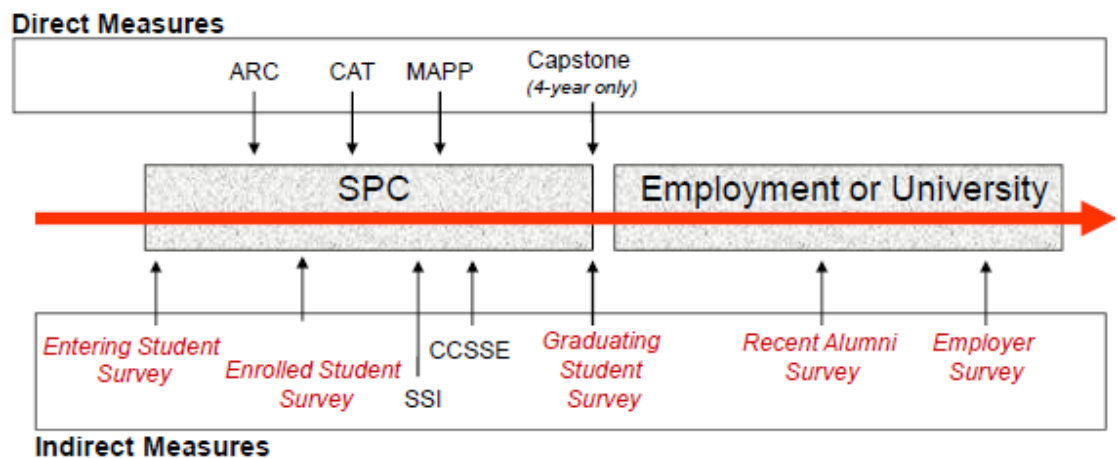


Figure 1: Student Assessment Points

Other Assessments include the President’s Annual Evaluation portion of the Year-End Report on Strategic Directions and Institutional Objectives (SD-IOs), State Accountability Measures, Core Effectiveness Indicators, environmental scan/trends analysis, and other department/function-specific assessments.



## Graduating Student Survey

The Graduating Student Survey (GSS) is part of a comprehensive college-wide assessment program developed to examine the demographic profile of the responding graduates, assess their perceptions of the educational experience at the College and determine how the educational process at the College has changed their behavior and/or their knowledge as it relates to some specific areas of inquiry (educational outcomes).

In 2010, an overall evaluation of the number and types of questions that students were asked upon graduating from the institution was conducted, resulting in revisions to the GSS. The new GSS is embedded in the graduation application process, and aligned with the Entering Student Survey which was revised in 2008. In an effort to minimize the overall number of questions and reduce duplication, demographic information is no longer being asked within the GSS. The demographic information for the survey was extracted from PeopleSoft, the student database system, as part of the graduation application process. The GSS was available to students applying for graduation on-line during all three terms of academic year 2010-11. One-thousand four-hundred and four students completed the survey.

The survey has seven sections and an appendix:

- Section A Student Demographic and Academic Information
  - Section B Preparedness
  - Section C Assistance Utilization
  - Section D SPC Recommendation
  - Section E Student Success
  - Section F Primary Reason for Time Off
  - Section G Educational Outcomes
- Appendix Survey Instrument

The ratings for Section B: Preparedness is based on a 5-point scale with (5) representing "Excellent" and (1) representing "Poor".

The rating for Section G: Educational Outcomes is based on a 5-point scale with (5) representing the highest possible rating and (1) representing the lowest possible rating. Various descriptors were used to characterize these scales depending on the specific questions asked but in all cases the scales were converted to the aforementioned numeric scale for analysis.



## Student Demographic and Academic Information

The demographic profile and academic background of the 1,404 survey respondents (N) to the Graduating Student Survey are summarized in the following narrative, tables, and charts.

### Age

The largest age category for survey participants was “20 - 24” (30.3%), while almost forty-two percent (41.7%) of survey respondents were ‘30 and older.’ By comparison, the percentage of students ‘30 and older’ was thirty-four percent (34.1%) at the end of the fall 2009 semester [Source: 2010-11 Factbook, Table 22].

Table 1

#### Age

Age		
	N	%
19 and under	118	10.3%
20 - 24	346	30.3%
25 - 29	202	17.7%
30 - 39	218	19.1%
40 - 49	167	14.6%
50 - 59	84	7.4%
60 and over	7	0.6%

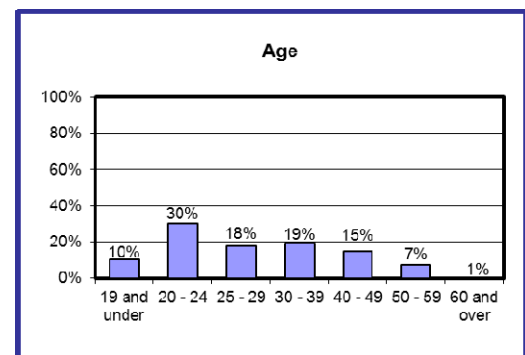


Figure 2: Age

### Gender

Almost two-thirds (68.1%) of the survey respondents were female. This is slightly higher than the percentage of actual female completers (62.8%) for 2009/10 [Source: 2010-11 Factbook, Table 29] and, as such, may impact the reported results.

Table 2

#### Gender

Gender		
	N	%
Male	353	31.9%
Female	752	68.1%

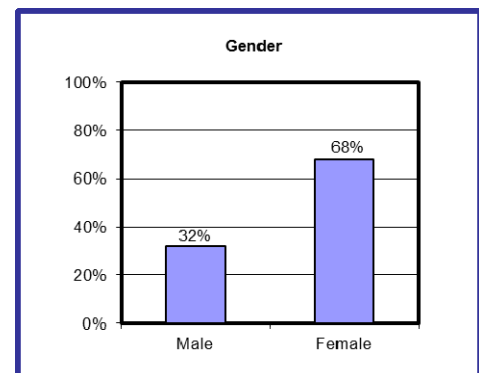


Figure 3: Gender



### Primary Campus

Almost a quarter (24.0%) of the respondents selected *St. Pete-Gibbs* as their primary campus. The next largest percent of respondents selected the *Clearwater* campus (21.8%), and *eCampus* and *Tarpon Springs* with 20.9% and 12.8% of the responses, respectively.

Table 3  
Primary Campus

Please select the campus where you received most of your instruction and services.		
	N	%
St. Pete-Gibbs	337	24.0%
Clearwater	306	21.8%
eCampus	294	20.9%
Tarpon Springs	180	12.8%
Health Center	177	12.6%
Seminole	69	4.9%
Allstate Center	20	1.4%
SPC Downtown	17	1.2%
SPC Mid-town	4	0.3%

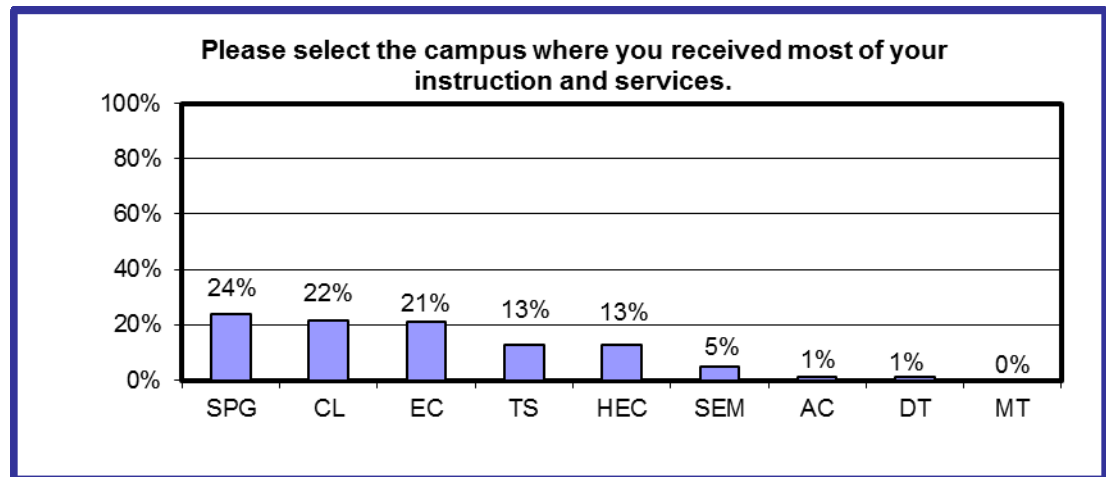


Figure 4: Primary Campus

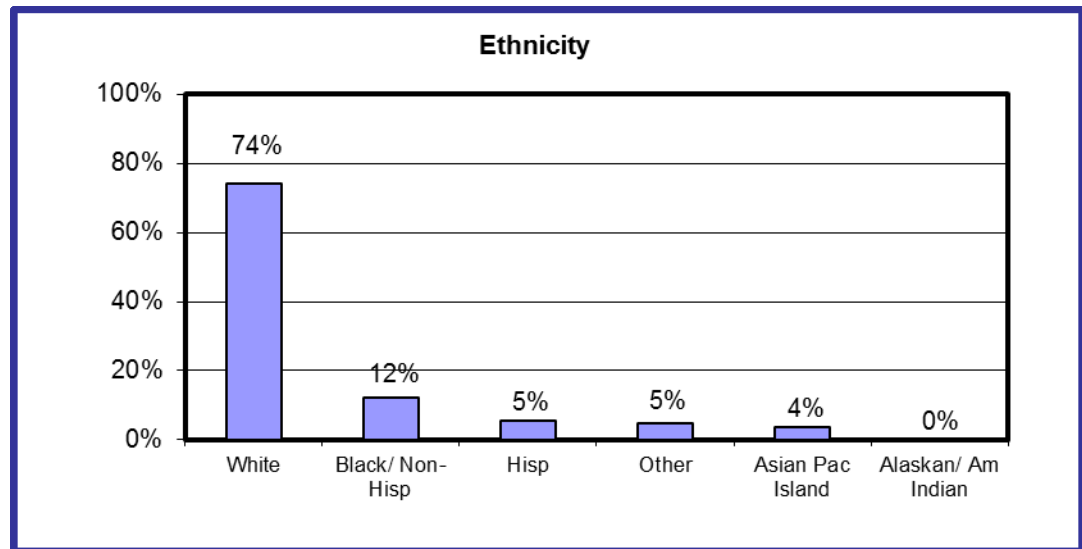


### *Ethnicity*

The ethnicity of seventy-four percent of the respondents (74.1%) was “White.” Twelve percent (12.1%) of the responding students were “Black/ Non-Hispanic”, and five percent (5.3%) were “Hispanic.” These percentages were similar to actual completers for 2009/10 [Source: 2010-11 Factbook, Table 29].

**Table 4**  
*Ethnicity*

Ethnicity		
	N	%
White	846	74.1%
Black/ Non-Hispanic	138	12.1%
Hispanic	61	5.3%
Other	52	4.6%
Asian Pacific Islander	41	3.6%
Alaskan/ American Indian	4	0.4%



*Figure 5: Ethnicity*



### *Degree Type*

Half (50.6%) of the respondents indicated that they enrolled in the college to pursue an associate of arts degree. Twenty-five percent (25.2%) of the students reported completing a baccalaureate degree, twenty percent (19.9%) an associate of science degree, and four percent (4.2%) a certificate program as the degree they are applying for at SPC.

Table 5  
*Degree Type*

Which award are you applying for?		
	N	%
Associate in Arts Degree	694	50.6%
Baccalaureate	345	25.2%
A.S. or A.A.S. Degree	273	19.9%
Certificate or Technical Diploma	58	4.2%

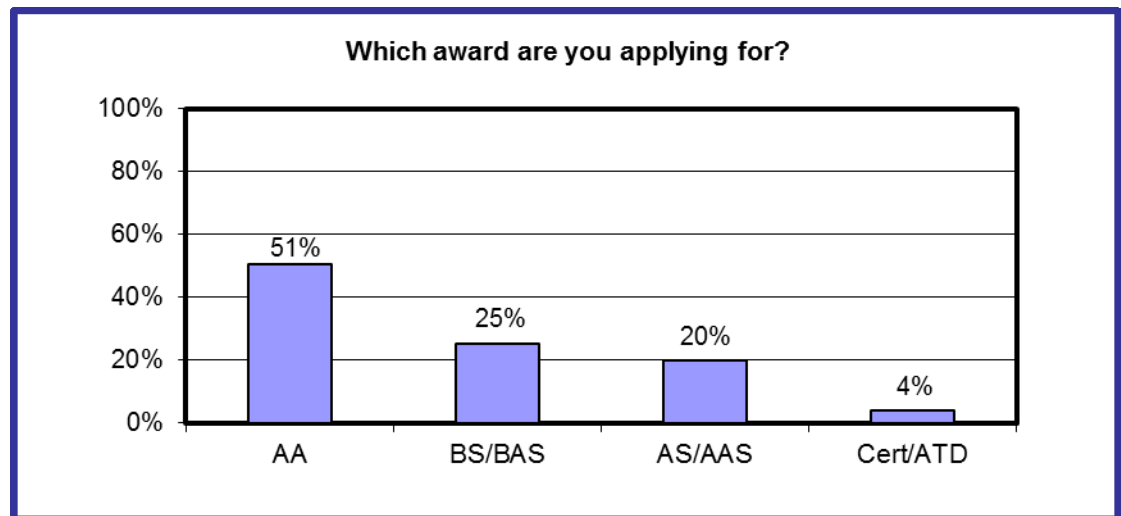


Figure 6: *Degree Type*

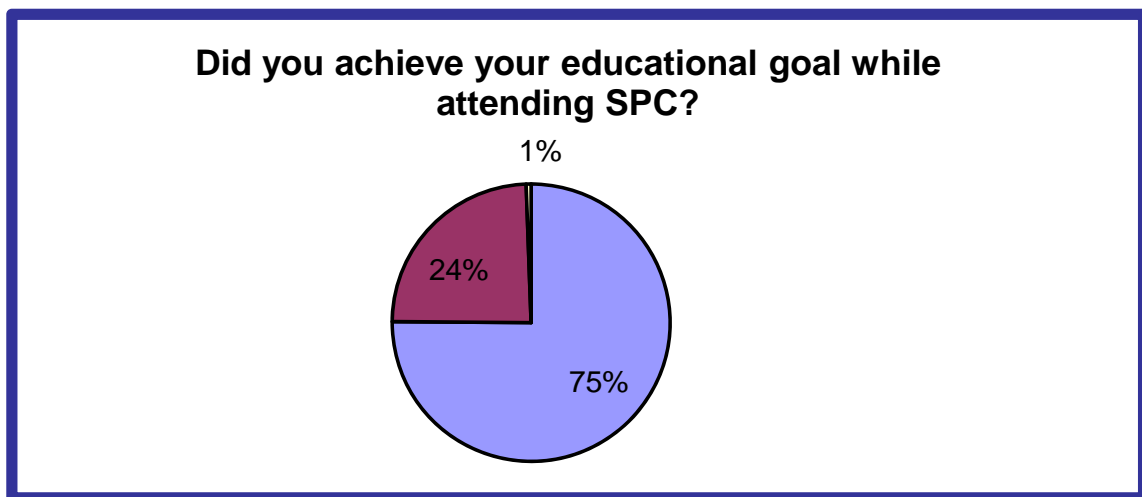


### *Achieve Goal*

Three-quarters (75.1%) of respondents stated that they “Fully” achieved their educational goal while at the College. An additional twenty-four percent (24.3%) “Somewhat” achieved their goal.

Table 6  
*Achieve Goal*

Did you achieve your educational goal while attending SPC?		
	N	%
Fully	1051	75.1%
Somewhat	340	24.3%
Not at all	8	0.6%



*Figure 7: Achieve Goal*

### *Military after Graduating*

Approximately three percent (3.4%) of survey respondents plan to enter the military after graduating.

Table 7  
*Military after Graduating*

Do you plan to enter the military?		
	N	%
Yes	47	3.4%
No	1340	96.6%





### Employment Status

The majority of student respondents (74.1%) were working while they pursued their education at SPC, while eighteen percent (17.9%) were employed forty hours per week or more.

Table 8  
Working Status

What is your employment status?		
	N	%
Not employed	359	25.9%
15 or fewer hours per week	180	13.0%
16 to 30 hours per week	246	17.8%
31 to 39 hours per week	351	25.4%
40 or more hours per week	248	17.9%

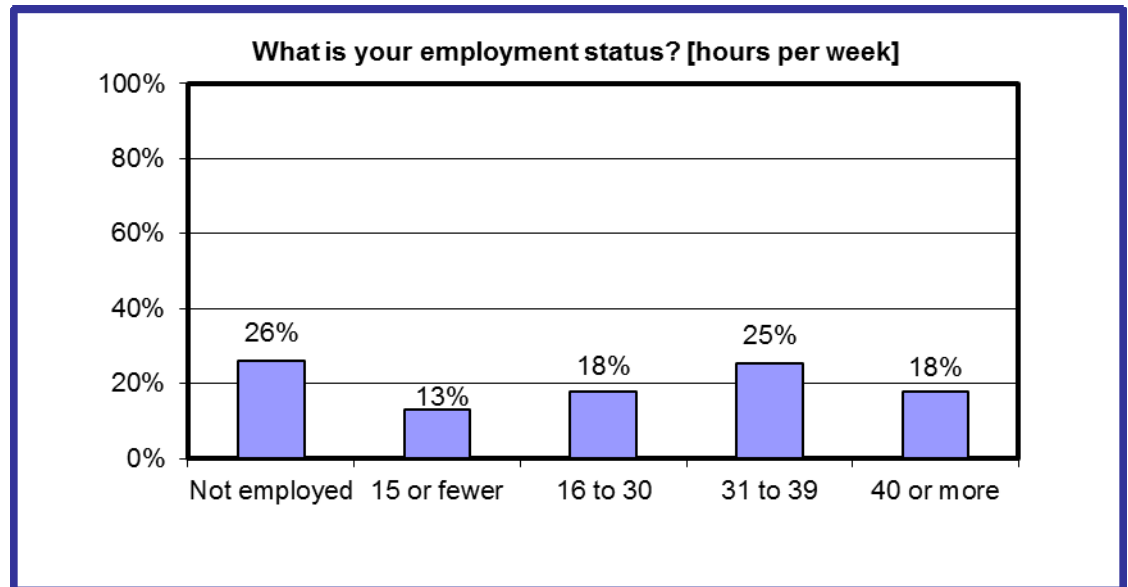


Figure 8: Employment Status

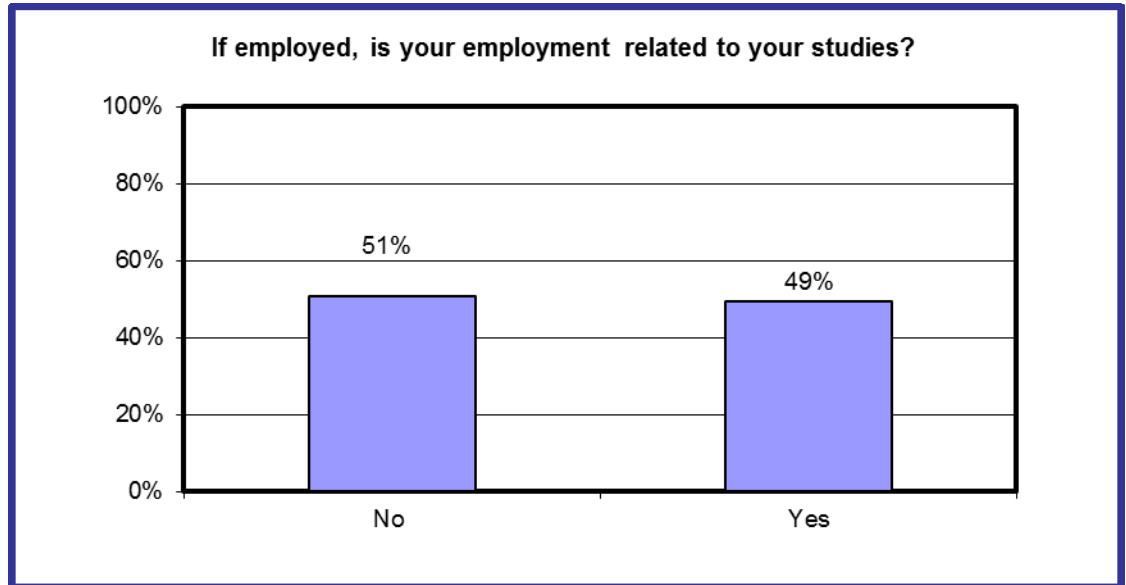


### *Employment Related to Studies*

Almost half (49.4%) of employed respondents are working in areas associated with their studies.

**Table 9**  
*Employment Related to Studies*

If employed, is your employment related to your studies?		
	N	%
No	565	50.6%
Yes	552	49.4%



*Figure 9: Employment Related Studies*



### *Continuing Education*

Almost two-thirds (64.8%) of respondents indicated that they planned to continue their education.

Table 10  
*Continuing Education*

Do you plan to attend another college?		
	N	%
Not Continuing	490	35.3%
Continuing Education	900	64.8%

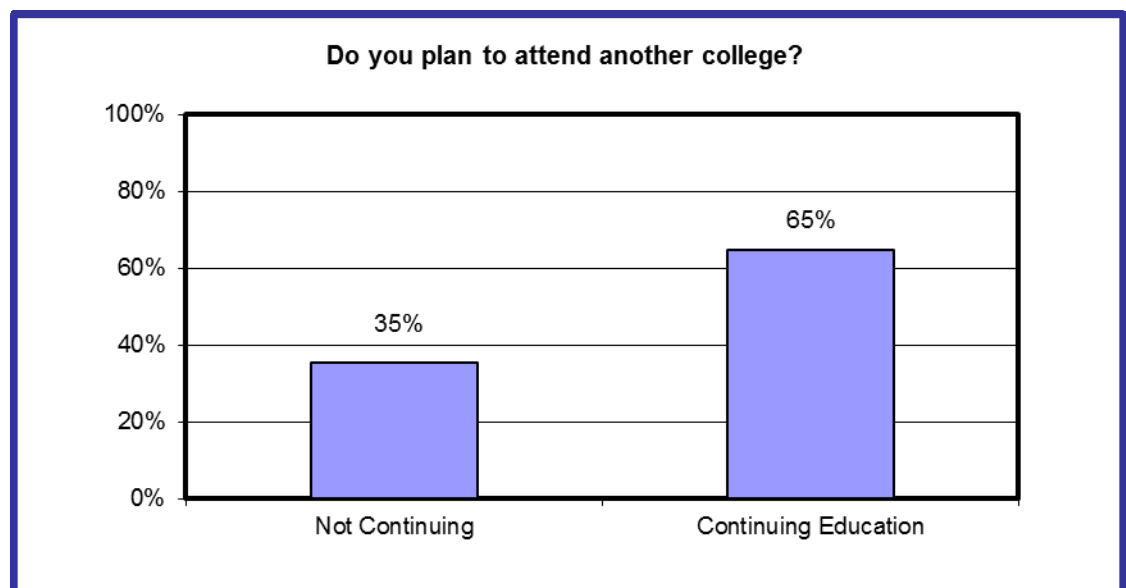


Figure 10: *Continuing Education*



### *Next School*

Most of the respondents who are continuing their education indicated they would be going on to an “In-state public College/University” with University of South Florida as the most commonly selected institution (24.7%). The next highest institution selected was SPC Baccalaureate Program with over ten percent (10.7%) of the survey respondents.

Table 11  
*Next School*

If you answered, "Yes" to the above question, what college will you be attending?	N	%
University of South Florida	341	24.7
SPC Baccalaureate Program	148	10.7
Other	90	6.5
University of Florida	59	4.3
Private university or college in Florida	55	4.0
Public University or college outside of Florida	54	3.9
Florida State University	40	2.9
Private university or college outside of Florida	32	2.3
SPC University Partnership	31	2.2
Florida public university or college not listed	31	2.2
University of Central Florida	28	2.0
Other Community College	7	0.5



## Preparedness

Graduating students were asked to address how well prepared they were in twelve academic areas. Table 12 lists each of the twelve areas, in descending order, by mean level of perceived preparedness. Students believe that their education has best prepared them in “Courses in Your Major Area” with a 4.32 rating on a 5-point scale.

The next ten preparation areas had means of a four or greater which indicates that students believe they are well prepared in these areas. Students believe they were least prepared for “Employment after SPC” (3.91).

Overall, students gave all areas of preparedness ratings above 3.90 on a 5-point scale, which surpassed the College’s criterion of three or higher on a 5-point rating scale.

Table 12  
*Satisfaction with Preparedness*

Please tell us how well you believe SPC has prepared you in each of the following areas:	Mean	St. Dev.
Courses in Your Major Area	4.32	0.85
Ethical Understanding and Behavior	4.26	0.85
Humanities	4.21	0.87
Courses in a Four-Year Program	4.19	0.88
Composition/Writing	4.18	0.85
Communications/Speech	4.17	0.85
Social and Behavioral Sciences	4.16	0.88
Natural Sciences	4.09	0.89
Reading	4.09	0.87
Computer Competency	4.03	0.94
Mathematics	4.00	0.93
Employment After SPC	3.91	1.02



Table 13 compares student ratings from the current year's survey (2010/11) with the previous year's survey (2009/10). The converted values are shown below with the original seven-point scale values in parentheses. Eleven areas showed decreases from the previous year; the only exception was "Employment after SPC," which had a +0.03 increase.

**Table 13**  
*Satisfaction with Preparedness Differences from Last Year*

Please tell us how well you believe SPC has prepared you in each of the following areas:	2009/10	2010/11	
	Mean	Mean	Difference
Courses in Your Major Area	4.41 (6.17)	4.32	-0.09
Ethical Understanding and Behavior	4.35 (6.09)	4.26	-0.09
Humanities	4.32 (6.05)	4.21	-0.11
Courses in a Four-Year Program	4.30 (6.02)	4.19	-0.11
Composition/Writing	4.29 (6.01)	4.18	-0.11
Communications/Speech	4.46 (6.25)	4.17	-0.29
Social and Behavioral Sciences	4.29 (6.00)	4.16	-0.13
Natural Sciences	4.13 (5.78)	4.09	-0.04
Reading	4.19 (5.87)	4.09	-0.10
Computer Competency	4.11 (5.76)	4.03	-0.08
Mathematics	4.11 (5.76)	4.00	-0.11
Employment After SPC	3.88 (5.43)	3.91	+0.03



## Assistance Utilization

When asked the question “Did you receive any assistance to help you attend SPC from any of these programs?” Two percent (2.1%) received assistance from “English as a Second Language”, one percent (1.4%) received assistance from “Wages,” one percent (1.4%) received assistance from “Vocational Rehab,” and nearly one percent (0.7%) received assistance from “Workforce Investment Act.” A total of five percent (5.6%) of responding graduates received support from these programs during the 2010/11 academic year.

Table 14  
*Assistance Utilization*

While at SPC did you receive assistance from any of the following governmental programs?		
	N	%
English as a Second Language	30	2.1%
Wages	20	1.4%
Vocational Rehab	20	1.4%
Title 1 Workforce Investment Act	10	0.7%

## SPC Recommendation

Ninety-eight percent of respondents (97.9%) stated that they would recommend the College to others, while two percent (2.1%) stated that they would not.

Table 15  
*SPC Recommendation*

Would you recommend SPC to others?		
	N	%
No	29	2.1%
Yes	1364	97.9%



## Student Success

Graduating students were asked to select all the factors that assisted them in achieving student success from a list of thirteen areas. Over half of the students (58.5%) selected “Career Goal” as a factor that impacted their success. This was followed by “Job While in College” which was selected by over one third (32.6%) of the students, and “Selecting a Major” (29.2%).

The two factors that students selected as having the least impact on their success were “Tutoring: Reading” (1.9%), and “Tutoring: Writing” (3.1%).

**Table 16**  
*Student Success*

Which of the following impacted your success as a student? (Select all that apply)*	N	%
Career Goal	822	58.5%
Job While in College	458	32.6%
Job After Graduation	218	15.5%
Selecting a Major	410	29.2%
Career Guidance	254	18.1%
Internship	144	10.3%
Help with Study Skills	198	14.1%
Help with Computer Skills	110	7.8%
Help with Oral Communication skills	119	8.5%
Help with Test Anxiety	92	6.6%
Tutoring: Math	206	14.7%
Tutoring: Writing	44	3.1%
Tutoring: Reading	26	1.9%

\*Note: The sum of the percentages is greater than 100% due to the multiple select.





## Primary Reason for Time Off

When graduating students were asked: “If you took two or more consecutive semesters off from SPC, please indicate the primary reason for doing so”, the most often selected reason (26.2%) was “Job responsibilities/schedule”, which was selected by twenty-six percent of the students. This was followed by “Family responsibilities including childcare”, selected by over twenty-three percent (23.6%) of the students.

It should be noted that the majority of students (972) did not respond to this item.

Table 17  
*Primary Reason for Time Off*

Some students are unable to maintain continuous enrollment while attending SPC. If you took two or more consecutive semesters off from SPC, please indicate the primary reason for doing so.	N	%
Job responsibilities/schedule	113	26.2%
Family responsibilities including childcare	102	23.6%
Finances	67	15.5%
Health or personal problems	67	15.5%
Availability of courses	49	11.3%
Not eligible for financial aid	18	4.2%
Availability of SPC services	11	2.5%
Transportation	5	1.2%



## Educational Outcomes

The Educational Outcomes Questionnaire was administered as part of the Graduating Student Survey in 2010-11. This year one-thousand four hundred and four graduating students completed the questionnaire. The primary purpose of the questionnaire is to evaluate the habits, practices and/or knowledge of graduating students in four areas: "Computer and Technology Competency", "Civic Activities", "Humanities Activities", and "Lifelong Learning", and then compare their responses to those of the entering students. The rating for this section is based on a 5-point scale with (5) representing the highest possible rating and (1) representing the lowest possible rating.

Tables 18-21 present a comparison of mean scores of the eleven educational outcome areas, which are divided into four outcomes or learning categories. A two-tailed T-test was used to determine whether the changes in the mean scores between the 2010-11 Entering Student Survey and the 2010-11 Graduating Student Survey were significant. Of the eleven categories, nine of the mean scores were significantly different at an alpha of .05. Moreover, all of the questions related to each of the learning categories exhibited improvements.



### *Computer and Technology Competency*

In the area of Computer and Technology Competency, students were asked to rate their competency in various computer skill areas. All three skill areas displayed mean increases from the Entering Student Survey to the Graduating Student Survey in 2010-11. The highest mean increase in this area was “Word Processing” (+0.61).

Table 18  
*Computer and Technology Competency*

Computer and Technology Competency	2010/11		
	Entering Mean	Graduating Mean	Mean Difference
Please rate your competency in the following skill areas (5-point scale).			
Word Processing	3.81	4.42*	+0.61
Internet	4.30	4.64*	+0.34
E-mail	4.44	4.70*	+0.26

*\*Significant difference from Entering to Graduating at Alpha = 0.05*



### *Civic Activities*

In the area of Civic Activities, students were asked in which activities they currently participate. All three skill areas displayed mean increases from the Entering Student Survey to the Graduating Student Survey in 2010-11. The highest mean increase in the area of Civic Activities was “Vote in an Election” (+0.50).

Table 19  
*Informed and Responsible Citizens*

Civic Activities In what activities do you currently participate? (5-point scale).	2010/11		
	Entering Mean	Graduating Mean	Mean Difference
Vote in an election	3.09	3.59*	+0.50
Volunteer in community service activities	2.82	3.10*	+0.28
Participating in campaigns or forums	1.82	2.04*	+0.22

*\*Significant difference from Entering to Graduating at Alpha = 0.05*



### *Humanities Activities*

In the area of Humanities Activities, students were asked in which activities they participated. All three skill areas displayed mean increases from the Entering Student Survey to the Graduating Student Survey in 2010-11. "Visiting an Art Museum" had the largest mean increase (+0.36) of the three activities.

Table 20  
*Humanities Activities*

Humanities Activities In which of the following activities do you participate? (5-point scale).	2010/11		
	Entering Mean	Graduating Mean	Mean Difference
Visiting an art museum	2.49	2.85*	+0.36
Attend a concert, dance performance or live drama	2.98	3.05	+0.07
Creating a painting, sculpture or other work of visual art	2.27	2.30	+0.03

*\*Significant difference from Entering to Graduating at Alpha = 0.05*



### *Lifelong Learning*

In the area of Lifelong Learning, students were asked which lifelong learning activities they anticipated participating in following graduation. Both skill areas displayed mean increases from the Entering Student Survey to the Graduating Student Survey in 2010-11. The highest mean increase in the area of Lifelong Learning was “Enrolling in College or Personal Enrichment Classes (+0.45).

Table 21  
*Lifelong Learning*

Lifelong Learning Which of the following life-long learning activities will you participate in following graduation? (5-point scale).	2010/11		
	Entering Mean	Graduating Mean	Mean Difference
Enrolling in college or personal enrichment classes	3.37	3.82*	+0.45
Participate in continuing education	3.70	4.05*	+0.35

*\*Significant difference from Entering to Graduating at Alpha = 0.05*



Table 22 displays the five education outcomes areas with the largest mean increases between the 2010-11 Entering Student Survey and the 2010-11 Graduating Student Survey. The greatest individual improvement was in the category “Word Processing” where graduating students scored a 0.61 point improvement over the entering students.

**Table 22**  
*Education Outcomes with Greatest Improvement*

Please rate your competency in the following skill areas (5-point scale).	2010/11		
	Entering Mean	Graduating Mean	Difference
Word Processing	3.81	4.42	+0.61*
Vote in an election	3.09	3.59	+0.50*
Attend college or personal enrichment classes	3.37	3.82	+0.45*
Visiting an art museum	2.49	2.85	+0.36*
Participating in continuing education	3.70	4.05	+0.35*

*\*Significant difference from Entering to Graduating at Alpha = 0.05*

Nine of the eleven areas resulted in a statistically significant increase in mean scores between the 2010-11 Entering Student and Graduating Student Surveys.



Table 23 displays the six education outcomes areas with the smallest mean increases between the 2010-11 Entering Student and Graduating Student Surveys. The smallest individual improvements were in the categories “Creating a painting, sculpture, or other work of visual art” and “Attend concert, dance performance, or live drama,” where graduating students scored a 0.03 and a 0.07 point improvement over the entering students, respectively.

**Table 23**  
*Education Outcomes with Smallest Improvement*

Please rate your competency in the following skill areas (5-point scale).	2010/11		
	Entering Mean	Graduating Mean	Difference
Creating a painting, sculpture, or other work of visual art	2.27	2.30	+0.03
Attend a concert, dance performance, or live drama	2.98	3.05	+0.07
Participating in campaigns or forums	1.82	2.04	+0.22*
Email	4.44	4.70	+0.26*
Volunteer in community service activities	2.82	3.10	+0.28*
Internet	4.30	4.64	+0.34*

*\*Significant difference from Entering to Graduating at Alpha = 0.05*





## Conclusion

St. Petersburg College (SPC) developed the Graduating Student Survey (GSS) as part of a comprehensive college-wide assessment program. The key purposes of the GSS is to examine the demographic profile of the responding graduates, assess their perceptions of the educational experience at the College and determine how the educational process at the College has changed their behavior and/or their knowledge as it relates to four educational outcome areas.

SPC students believe that their education has best prepared them in "Courses in Your Major Area," "Ethical Understanding and Behavior," "Humanities," and "Courses in a Four-Year Program." All eleven areas scored a four or greater on the 5-point rating scale. Students believe they were less well prepared for "Employment after SPC" (3.9). Nevertheless, students gave all areas of preparedness ratings above 3.9 on a 5-point scale, which indicates that they are well satisfied with the preparation they received in all these academic areas.

Ninety-eight percent of students would recommend the College to others. Seventy-five percent of students were fully satisfied with the educational goals they achieved while at the College and twenty-four percent were somewhat satisfied.

Over half of the students (58.5%) selected "Career Goal" as a factor that impacted their success. This was followed by "Job While in College" which was selected by over one third (32.6%) of the students, and "Selecting a Major" (29.2%).

Graduating students were asked to complete an education outcomes questionnaire and the responses were compared with those of the Entering students to gauge how the educational experience at SPC has impacted students in eleven individual categories divided into four educational outcomes areas. The rating for "Educational Outcomes" is based on a 5-point scale with five representing the highest possible rating and one representing the lowest possible rating. A two-tailed T-test was used to determine whether the changes in the mean scores between the 2010-11 Entering Student Survey and the 2010-11 Graduating Student Survey were significant. Of the eleven categories, nine of the mean scores were significantly different at an alpha of 0.05. Of the eleven defined groupings, all of them showed improvements between the 2010-11 Entering Student and Graduating Student Surveys.



## Contact Information

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## Appendix: Graduating Student Survey



### Graduating Student Survey 2010-11

In order to understand the needs and expectations of our students and improve College Services, we would like your opinion about certain key areas and activities of SPC.

This survey can be completed and submitted **ONLY** once.

Please complete the questionnaire below and click **Submit**.

\* 1. Please select the campus where you received MOST of your instruction and services.

2. Did you achieve your educational goal while attending SPC?

3. Would you recommend SPC to others?

4. Do you plan to attend another college or university?

5. If you answered, "Yes" to the above question, what college will you be attending (If not listed, please specify in the space below)?



6. Do you plan to enter the military?

7. What is your employment status?

8. If employed, is your employment related to your studies?

9. Which award are you applying for?

10. While at SPC did you receive assistance from any of the following government programs?

11. Which of the following impacted your success as a student? *(Select all that apply)*

- Career goal
- Job while in college
- Job after graduation
- Selecting a major
- Career guidance
- Internship
- Help with study skills
- Help with computer skills
- Help with oral communication skills
- Help with test anxiety
- Tutoring: Math
- Tutoring: Writing
- Tutoring: Reading



**12.** Some students are unable to maintain continuous enrollment while attending SPC. If you took two or more consecutive semesters off from SPC, please indicate the primary reason for doing so

### **13. College Preparation**

Please tell us how well you believe SPC has prepared you in each of the following areas:

Reading

**14.** Composition/Writing

**15.** Communication/Speech

**16.** Computer Competency

**17.** Ethical Understanding and Behavior

**18.** Humanities (awareness of different philosophies, cultures, arts and music)

**19.** Social and Behavioral Sciences (Economics, Psychology, Government, etc.)

**20.** Natural Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, etc.)



**21. Mathematics**

**22. Courses in your major area**

**23. Courses in a four-year program**

**24. Employment after SPC**

**25. Computer and Technology Competency**

Please rate your level of competency in each of the following skill areas.  
Using computer software (word processing, spreadsheets, etc.)

**26. Communicating through the Internet (email, chat, instant messaging, etc.)**

**27. Acquiring information/conducting research through the Internet**

**28. Civic Activities**

How often do you participate in the following activities?

Vote in an election

**29. Volunteer in community service activities**



**30. Participate in campaigns or forums**

**31. Humanities Activities**

How often do you participate in the following activities?

Attend a concert, dance performance, or live drama

**32. Visit an art museum**

**33. Create a painting, sculpture, or other work of art**

**34. Life-long Learning**

How often do you participate in the following activities?

Participate in continuing education

**35. Attend college or personal enrichment classes**

• \*Student ID#

If you have any questions or comments about this survey, please contact Technical Support at [onlinehelp@spcollege.edu](mailto:onlinehelp@spcollege.edu) or call (727) 341-4357



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