

2011-12

Graduating Student Survey Report



Institutional Research and Effectiveness
St. Petersburg College



February 2013



Department of Academic
Effectiveness and
Assessment
St. Petersburg College
P.O. Box 13489
St. Petersburg, FL 33733
(727) 712-5237
FAX (727) 712-5411

Graduating Student Survey Report Produced by

Department of Academic Effectiveness and Assessment

Amy Eggers, M.A.
Research Analyst

Maggie Tymms, B.S.
Associate Director, Academic Effectiveness and Assessment

Sabrina Crawford, M.A.
Executive Director, Institutional Research and Effectiveness

James Coraggio, Ph.D.
AVP, Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Grants

The Board of Trustees of St. Petersburg College affirms its equal opportunity policy in accordance with the provisions of the Florida Educational Equity Act and all other relevant state and federal laws, rules and regulations. The college will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, or against any qualified individual with disabilities in its employment practices or in the admission and treatment of students. Recognizing that sexual harassment constitutes discrimination on the basis of sex and violates this Rule, the college will not tolerate such conduct.

Data and information contained herein cannot be used without the express written authorization of St. Petersburg College. All inquiries about the use of this information should be directed to the Executive Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness at St. Petersburg College.

2011-12 Graduating Student Survey Report
Institutional Research and Effectiveness

© Copyright St. Petersburg College, February 2013. All rights reserved.





Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
SPC Mission Statement	5
Introduction.....	5
Institutional Effectiveness.....	5
Evaluation and Assessment Processes	6
Graduating Student Survey.....	8
Student Demographic and Academic Information	9
Preparedness	18
Assistance Utilization	20
SPC Recommendation	20
Student Success	21
Primary Reason for Time Off.....	22
Educational Outcomes	23
Conclusion.....	30
Contact Information	31
Appendix: Graduating Student Survey.....	32





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 2011-12. One-thousand eight-hundred and sixty-two students completed the survey.

Student Demographic and Academic Information

The demographic profile and academic background of the 1,862 survey respondents (N) to the Graduating Student Survey are summarized below:

- The largest age category for survey participants was “20 - 24” (29.9%), while almost forty-three percent (42.7%) of survey respondents were ‘30 and older.’ By comparison, the percentage of students ‘30 and older’ was thirty-five percent (34.8%) at the end of the fall 2010 semester [Source: 2011-12 Factbook, Table 22].
- Over two-thirds (67.3%) of the survey respondents were female. This is slightly higher than the percentage of actual female completers (63.2%) for 2010/11 [Source: 2011-12 Factbook, Table 29].
- The ethnicity of seventy-one percent (70.8%) of the respondents was “White.” Eleven percent (11.1%) of the responding students was “Black/ Non-Hispanic” and eight percent (8.4%) were “Hispanic”. These percentages were similar to actual completers for 2010/11 [Source: 2011-12 Factbook, Table 29].
- More than half (51.9%) of the respondents indicated that they enrolled in the college to pursue an associate of arts degree. Twenty-four percent (24.3%) of the students reported completing a baccalaureate degree, seventeen percent (17.0%) an associate of science degree, and four percent (4.4%) a certificate program as the degree they are applying for at SPC.
- Almost three-quarters (73.1%) of respondents stated that they “Fully” achieved their educational goal while at the College. An additional twenty-six percent (26.4%) stated that they “Somewhat” achieved their goal.



- Two-thirds (66.1%) 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 (28.3%). The next highest selected institution was the SPC Baccalaureate Program with 10.6% of the survey respondents.
- About three percent (2.8%) of graduates plan to join the military.
- Seventy-seven percent (76.5%) of the responding graduates were working while they pursued their education at SPC, while twenty percent (20.2%) were employed forty hours per week or more. About fifty percent (49.6%) 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 4.3 rating on a 5-point scale. Students believe they were less prepared for “Employment after SPC” (3.8). Overall, students gave all areas of preparedness ratings above a 3.7 on a 5-point scale, which surpassed the College’s criterion of three or higher on a 5-point rating scale.

By comparison, all twelve areas showed decreases from the previous year.

Assistance Utilization

When asked the question “Did you receive any assistance to help you attend SPC from any of these programs?” About two percent (1.8%) received assistance from “Vocational Rehab”, two percent (1.5%) received assistance from “Wages”, two percent (1.5%) received assistance from “English as a Second Language”, and one percent (1.1%) received assistance from “Workforce Investment Act.” A total of five percent (5.9%) of responding graduates received support from these programs during the 2011/12 academic year.

SPC Recommendation

Ninety-eight percent (98.0%) 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 (56.9%) 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 (34.9%) of the students, and ‘Selecting a Major’ (28.8%).

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 was “Job responsibilities/schedule”, which was selected by twenty-four percent of the students (24.1%). This was followed by “Family responsibilities including childcare,” selected by about twenty-three percent (22.7%) of the students.



Educational Outcomes

The Educational Outcomes Questionnaire was administered as part of the Graduating Student Survey. This year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two 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 2011-12 Entering Student Survey and the 2011-12 Graduating Student Survey were significant. Of the eleven categories, ten of the mean scores were significantly different at an alpha of .05. Moreover, nine 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 2011-12.
- The highest mean increase in the area of Computer and Technology Competency was "Word Processing" (+0.5).

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 2011-12.
- The highest increase in the area of Civic Activities was "Vote in an Election" (+0.4).

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

- One skill area displayed a mean increase from the Entering Student Survey to the Graduating Student Survey in 2011-12.
- The only skill area with a mean increase was "Visiting an Art Museum" (+0.3).

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 2011-12.
- The highest mean increase in the area of Lifelong Learning was "Enrolling in College or Personal Enrichment Classes" (+0.4).



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 “Composition/Writing.” Nine areas scored a four or greater on the 5-point rating scale. Students believe they were less well prepared for “Employment after SPC” (3.8). Nevertheless, students gave all areas of preparedness ratings above 3.7 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-three percent of students were fully satisfied with the educational goals they achieved while at the College and twenty-six percent were somewhat satisfied.

Over half of the students (56.9%) 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 (34.9%) of the students, and ‘Selecting a Major’ (28.8%).

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 2011-12 Entering Student Survey and the 2011-12 Graduating Student Survey were significant. Of the eleven categories, ten of the mean scores were significantly different at an alpha of .05. Of the eleven defined groupings, nine of them showed improvements between the 2011-12 Entering Student and Graduating Student Surveys.



SPC Mission Statement

The mission of St. Petersburg College is to promote student success and enrich our communities through education, career development and self-discovery. 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.

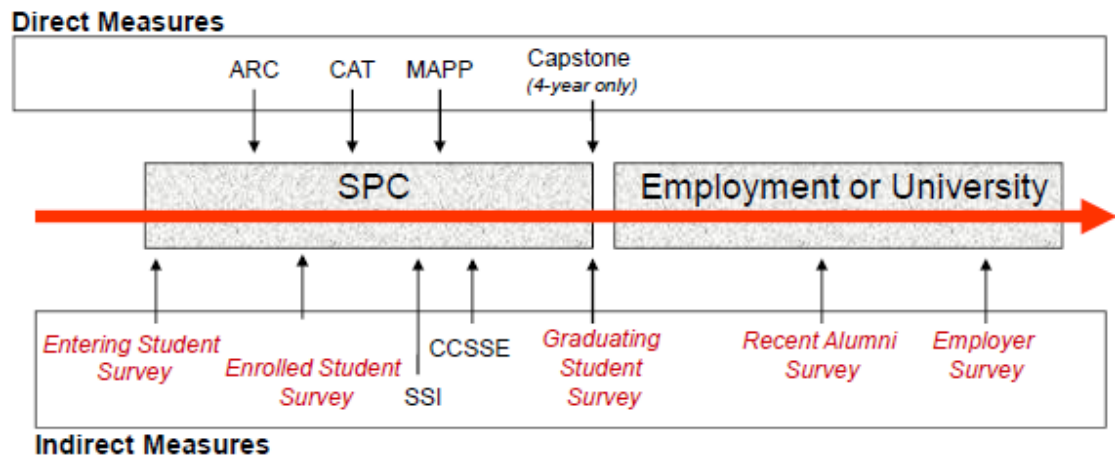


Figure 1: Student Assessment Points

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 2011-12. One-thousand eight-hundred and sixty-two 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 1,862 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” (29.9%), while almost forty-three percent (42.7%) of survey respondents were ‘30 and older.’ By comparison, the percentage of students ‘30 and older’ was thirty-five percent (34.8%) at the end of the fall 2010 semester [Source: 2011-12 Factbook, Table 22].

Table 1
Age

Age		
	N	%
19 and under	161	10.3%
20 - 24	469	29.9%
25 - 29	269	17.2%
30 - 39	365	23.3%
40 - 49	213	13.6%
50 - 59	85	5.4%
60 and over	6	0.4%

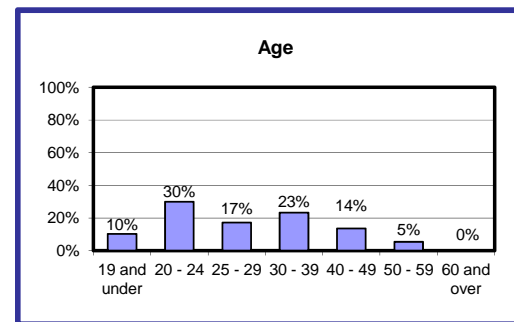


Figure 2: Age

Gender

Over two-thirds (67.3%) of the survey respondents were female. This is slightly higher than the percentage of actual female completers (63.2%) for 2010-11 [Source: 2011-12 Factbook, Table 29] and, as such, may impact the reported results.

Table 2
Gender

Gender		
	N	%
Male	489	32.7%
Female	1006	67.3%

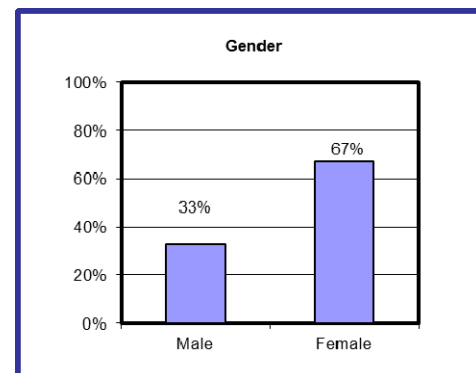


Figure 3: Gender



Primary Campus

Almost a quarter (20.8%) of the respondents selected *St. Pete-Gibbs* as their primary campus. The next largest percent of respondents selected the *Clearwater* campus (19.9%), and *eCampus* and *Tarpon Springs* with 19.4% and 15.4% 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	387	20.8%
Clearwater	371	19.9%
eCampus	362	19.4%
Tarpon Springs	287	15.4%
Health Center	254	13.6%
Seminole	136	7.3%
SPC Downtown	33	1.8%
Allstate Center	28	1.5%
SPC Mid-town	4	0.2%

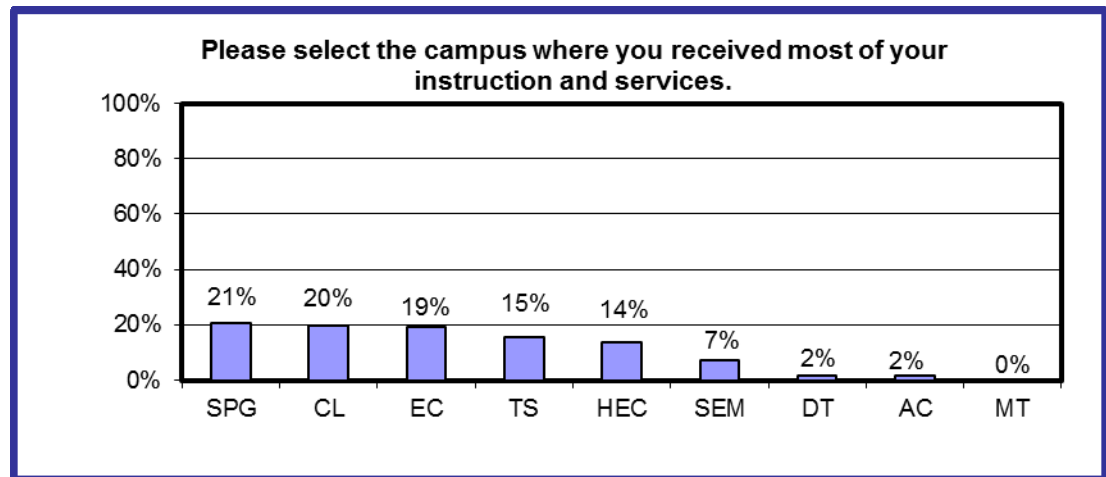


Figure 4: Primary Campus



Ethnicity

The ethnicity of seventy-one percent of the respondents (70.8%) was “White.” Eleven percent (11.1%) of the responding students was “Black/ Non-Hispanic”, and eight percent (8.4%) were “Hispanic.” These percentages were similar to actual completers for 2010/11 [Source: 2011-12 Factbook, Table 29].

Table 4
Ethnicity

Ethnicity		
	N	%
White	1110	70.8%
Black/ Non-Hispanic	174	11.1%
Hispanic	131	8.4%
Other	80	5.1%
Asian Pacific Islander	68	4.3%
Multi	3	0.2%
Alaskan/ American Indian	2	0.1%

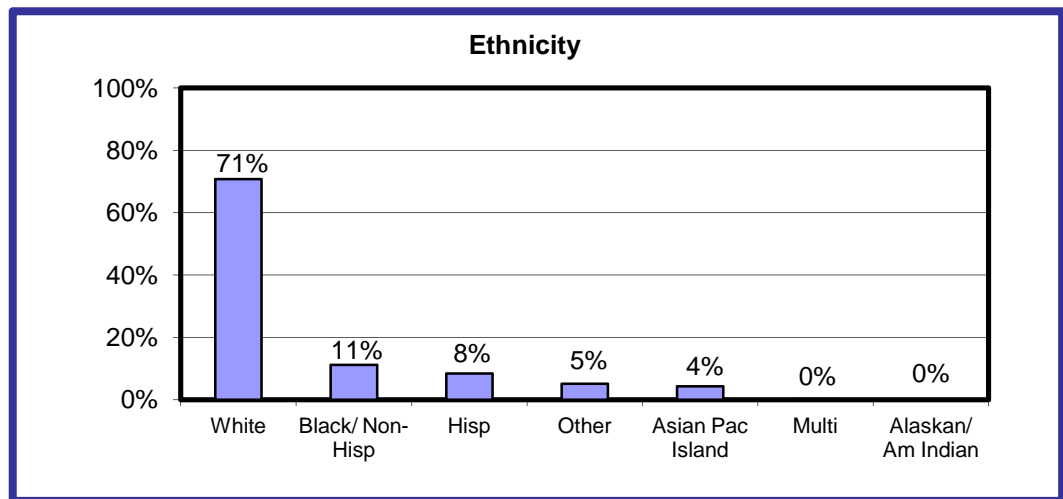


Figure 5: Ethnicity



Degree Type

More than half (51.9%) of the respondents indicated that they enrolled in the college to pursue an associate of arts degree. Twenty-four percent (24.3%) of the students reported completing a baccalaureate degree, seventeen percent (17.0%) an associate of science degree, and four percent (4.4%) 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	955	51.9%
Baccalaureate	447	24.3%
A.S. or A.A.S. Degree	313	17.0%
Certificate or Technical Diploma	80	4.4%

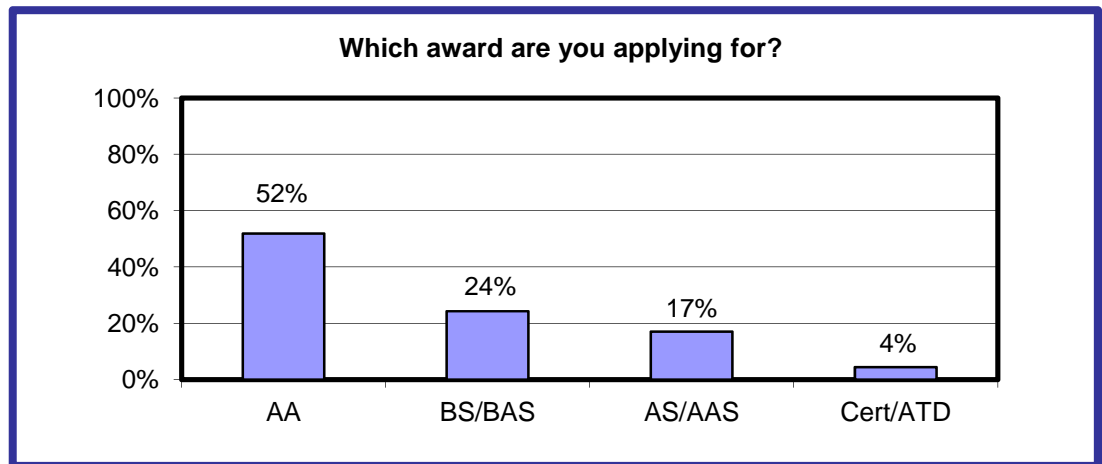


Figure 6: Degree Type



Achieve Goal

Almost three-quarters (73.1%) of respondents stated that they “Fully” achieved their educational goal while at the College. An additional twenty-six percent (26.4%) “Somewhat” achieved their goal.

Table 6
Achieve Goal

Did you achieve your educational goal while attending SPC?		
	N	%
Fully	1358	73.1%
Somewhat	490	26.4%
Not at all	9	0.5%

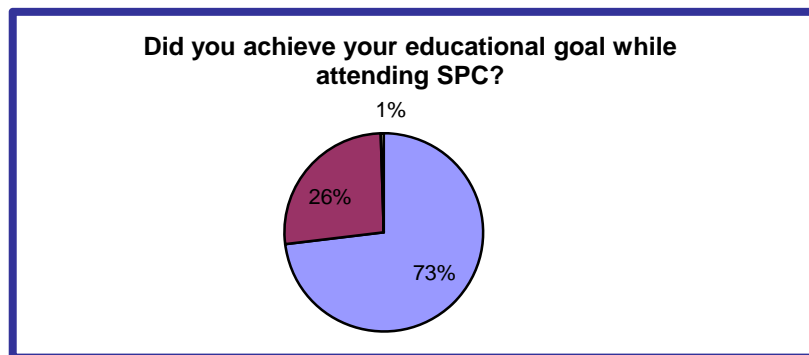


Figure 7: Achieve Goal

Military after Graduating

Approximately three percent (2.8%) of survey respondents plan to enter the military after graduating.

Table 7
Military after Graduating

Do you plan to enter the military?		
	N	%
Yes	51	2.8%
No	1790	97.2%



Employment Status

The majority of student respondents (76.5%) were working while they pursued their education at SPC, while twenty percent (20.2%) were employed forty hours per week or more.

Table 8
Working Status

What is your employment status?		
	N	%
Not employed	434	23.5%
15 or fewer hours per week	177	9.6%
16 to 30 hours per week	392	21.2%
31 to 39 hours per week	471	25.5%
40 or more hours per week	374	20.2%

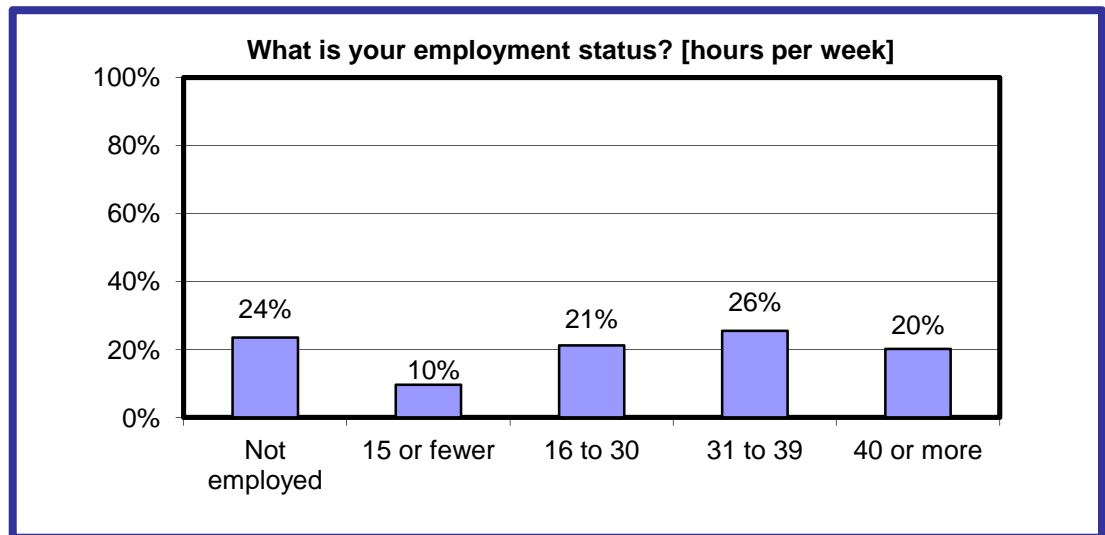


Figure 8: Employment Status



Employment Related to Studies

Almost half (49.6%) 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	769	50.4%
Yes	758	49.6%

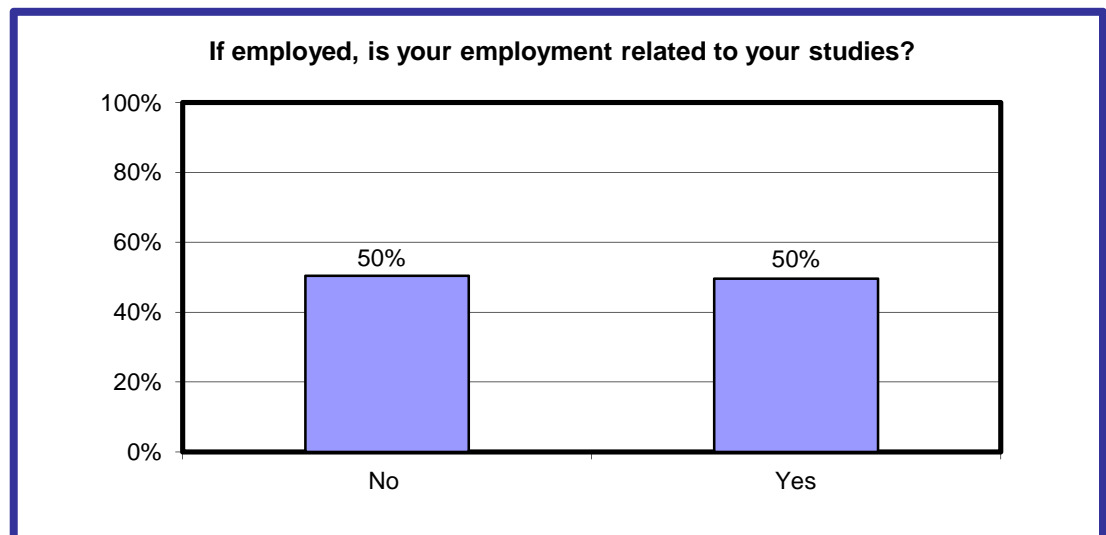


Figure 9: Employment Related Studies



Continuing Education

Two-thirds (66.1%) of respondents indicated that they planned to continue their education.

Table 10
Continuing Education

Do you plan to attend another college?		
	N	%
Not Continuing	624	33.9%
Continuing Education	1219	66.1%

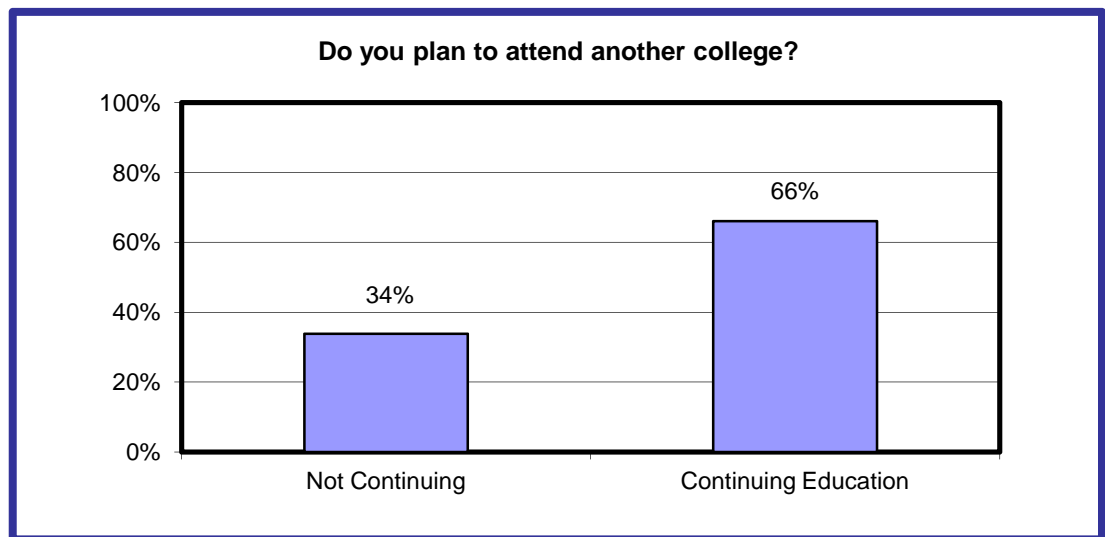


Figure 10: *Continuing Education*



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 (28.3%). The next highest institution selected was the SPC Baccalaureate Program with over ten percent (10.6%) 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	518	28.3%
SPC Baccalaureate Program	194	10.6%
Other	153	8.4%
University of Florida	71	3.9%
Private university or college in Florida	61	3.3%
University of Central Florida	50	2.7%
Public University or college outside of Florida	47	2.6%
SPC University Partnership	46	2.5%
Florida State University	44	2.4%
Florida public university or college not listed	30	1.6%
Private university or college outside of Florida	28	1.5%
Other Community College	6	0.3%



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 4.3 rating on a 5-point scale.

The next eight 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” (3.8).

Overall, students gave all areas of preparedness ratings above 3.7 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	4.25	0.88
Ethical Understanding and Behavior	4.21	0.86
Humanities	4.15	0.89
Composition/Writing	4.13	0.87
Social and Behavioral Sciences	4.13	0.87
Communications/Speech	4.12	0.89
Courses in a Four-Year Program	4.11	0.92
Reading	4.07	0.88
Natural Sciences	4.04	0.91
Computer Competency	3.98	0.94
Mathematics	3.96	0.95
Employment After SPC	3.76	1.13

Note: Data are displayed using two decimal places due to the proximity of the values.



Table 13 compares student ratings from the current year's survey (2011/12) with the previous year's survey (2010/11). All twelve areas showed decreases from the previous year.

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:	2010/11	2011/12	
	Mean	Mean	Difference
Courses in Your Major Area	4.32	4.25	-0.07
Ethical Understanding and Behavior	4.26	4.21	-0.05
Humanities	4.21	4.15	-0.06
Composition/Writing	4.18	4.13	-0.05
Social and Behavioral Sciences	4.16	4.13	-0.03
Communications/Speech	4.17	4.12	-0.05
Courses in a Four-Year Program	4.19	4.11	-0.08
Reading	4.09	4.07	-0.02
Natural Sciences	4.09	4.04	-0.05
Computer Competency	4.03	3.98	-0.05
Mathematics	4.00	3.96	-0.04
Employment After SPC	3.91	3.76	-0.15

Note: Data are displayed using two decimal places due to the proximity of the values.



Assistance Utilization

When asked the question “Did you receive any assistance to help you attend SPC from any of these programs?” About two percent (1.8%) received assistance from “Vocational Rehab”, two percent (1.5%) received assistance from “Wages”, two percent (1.5%) received assistance from “English as a Second Language”, and one percent (1.1%) received assistance from “Workforce Investment Act.” A total of five percent (5.9%) of responding graduates received support from these programs during the 2011/12 academic year.

Table 14
Assistance Utilization

While at SPC did you receive assistance from any of the following governmental programs?		
	N	%
Vocational Rehab	34	1.8%
Wages	28	1.5%
English as a Second Language	27	1.5%
Title 1 Workforce Investment Act	21	1.1%

SPC Recommendation

Ninety-eight percent of respondents (98.0%) 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	%
Yes	1815	98.0%
No	38	2.1%



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 (56.9%) 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 (34.9%) of the students, and “Selecting a Major” (28.8%).

The two factors that students selected as having the least impact on their success were “Tutoring: Reading” (1.8%), and “Tutoring: Writing” (4.7%).

Table 16
Student Success

Which of the following impacted your success as a student? (Select all that apply)*	N	%
Career Goal	1059	56.9%
Job While in College	650	34.9%
Selecting a Major	537	28.8%
Career Guidance	337	18.1%
Job After Graduation	316	17.0%
Tutoring: Math	314	16.9%
Help with Study Skills	283	15.2%
Help with Oral Communication skills	179	9.6%
Help with Computer Skills	161	8.6%
Internship	154	8.3%
Help with Test Anxiety	143	7.7%
Tutoring: Writing	87	4.7%
Tutoring: Reading	34	1.8%

*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 was “Job responsibilities/schedule”, which was selected by twenty-four percent of the students (24.1%). This was followed by “Family responsibilities including childcare”, selected by about twenty-three percent (22.7%) of the students.

It should be noted that the majority of students (1277) 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	141	24.1%
Family responsibilities including childcare	133	22.7%
Finances	111	19.0%
Health or personal problems	92	15.7%
Availability of courses	80	13.7%
Not eligible for financial aid	18	3.1%
Availability of SPC services	6	1.0%
Transportation	4	0.7%



Educational Outcomes

The Educational Outcomes Questionnaire was administered as part of the Graduating Student Survey in 2011-12. This year one-thousand eight hundred and sixty-two 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 2011-12 Entering Student Survey and the 2011-12 Graduating Student Survey were significant. Of the eleven categories, ten of the mean scores were significantly different at an alpha of .05. Moreover, nine 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 2011-12. The highest mean increase in this area was “Word Processing” (+0.5).

Table 18
Computer and Technology Competency

Computer and Technology Competency	2011/12		
	Entering Mean	Graduating Mean	Mean Difference
Please rate your competency in the following skill areas (5-point scale).			
Word Processing	3.86	4.37*	+0.51
Internet	4.34	4.63*	+0.29
E-mail	4.48	4.70*	+0.22

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

Note: Data are displayed using two decimal places due to the proximity of the values.



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 2011-12. The highest mean increase in the area of Civic Activities was “Vote in an Election” (+0.4).

Table 19
Informed and Responsible Citizens

Civic Activities In what activities do you currently participate? (5-point scale).	2011/12		
	Entering Mean	Graduating Mean	Mean Difference
Vote in an election	3.08	3.46*	+0.38
Volunteer in community service activities	2.84	3.05*	+0.21
Participating in campaigns or forums	1.81	1.94*	+0.13

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

Note: Data are displayed using two decimal places due to the proximity of the values.



Humanities Activities

In the area of Humanities Activities, students were asked in which activities they participated. One skill area displayed a mean increase from the Entering Student Survey to the Graduating Student Survey in 2011-12. Specifically, "Visiting an Art Museum" had the only mean increase (+0.3) of the three activities.

Table 20
Humanities Activities

Humanities Activities In which of the following activities do you participate? (5-point scale).	2011/12		
	Entering Mean	Graduating Mean	Mean Difference
Visiting an art museum	2.50	2.79*	+0.29
Attend a concert, dance performance or live drama	3.02	2.95*	-0.07
Creating a painting, sculpture or other work of visual art	2.34	2.31	-0.03

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

Note: Data are displayed using two decimal places due to the proximity of the values.



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 2011-12. The highest mean increase in the area of Lifelong Learning was “Enrolling in College or Personal Enrichment Classes (+0.4).

Table 21
Lifelong Learning

Lifelong Learning Which of the following life-long learning activities will you participate in following graduation? (5-point scale).	2011/12		
	Entering Mean	Graduating Mean	Mean Difference
Enrolling in college or personal enrichment classes	3.35	3.74*	+0.39
Participate in continuing education	3.70	3.93*	+0.23

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

Note: Data are displayed using two decimal places due to the proximity of the values.



Table 22 displays the five education outcomes areas with the largest mean increases between the 2011-12 Entering Student Survey and the 2011-12 Graduating Student Survey. The greatest individual improvement was in the category “Word Processing” where graduating students scored a 0.5 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).	2011/12		
	Entering Mean	Graduating Mean	Difference
Word Processing	3.86	4.37*	+0.51
Attend college or personal enrichment classes	3.35	3.74*	+0.39
Vote in an election	3.08	3.46*	+0.38
Internet	4.34	4.63*	+0.29
Visiting an art museum	2.50	2.79*	+0.29

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

Note: Data are displayed using two decimal places due to the proximity of the values.

Nine of the eleven areas resulted in a statistically significant increase in mean scores between the 2011-12 Entering Student and Graduating Student Surveys.



Table 23 displays the six education outcomes areas with mean decreases and the smallest mean increases between the 2011-12 Entering Student and Graduating Student Surveys. The two categories with mean decreases were “Attend a concert, dance performance or live drama” and “Creating a painting, sculpture, or other work of visual art,” where graduating students scores decreased over the entering students.

Table 23
Education Outcomes with Smallest Improvement

Please rate your competency in the following skill areas (5-point scale).	2011/12		
	Entering Mean	Graduating Mean	Difference
Attend a concert, dance performance, or live drama	3.02	2.95*	-0.07
Creating a painting, sculpture, or other work of visual art	2.34	2.31	-0.03
Participating in campaigns or forums	1.81	1.94*	+0.13
Volunteer in community service activities	2.84	3.05*	+0.21
Email	4.48	4.70*	+0.22
Participate in continuing education	3.70	3.93*	+0.23

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

Note: Data are displayed using two decimal places due to the proximity of the values.



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 "Composition/Writing." Nine areas scored a four or greater on the 5-point rating scale. Students believe they were less well prepared for "Employment after SPC" (3.8). Nevertheless, students gave all areas of preparedness ratings above 3.7 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-three percent of students were fully satisfied with the educational goals they achieved while at the College and twenty-six percent were somewhat satisfied.

Over half of the students (56.9%) 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 (34.9%) of the students, and "Selecting a Major" (28.8%).

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 2011-12 Entering Student Survey and the 2011-12 Graduating Student Survey were significant. Of the eleven categories, ten of the mean scores were significantly different at an alpha of 0.05. Of the eleven defined groupings, nine of them showed improvements between the 2011-12 Entering Student and Graduating Student Surveys.



Contact Information

Please address any questions or comments regarding this evaluation to:

James Thomas Coraggio, Ph.D.
AVP, Institutional Effectiveness, Research, and Grants
St. Petersburg College, P.O. Box 13489, St. Petersburg, FL 33733
(727) 341-3084
coraggio.jesse@spcollege.edu



Appendix: Graduating Student Survey



Graduating Student Survey 2011-12

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.

Select:

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

Select:

3. Would you recommend SPC to others?

Select:

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

Select:

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

Select:



6. Do you plan to enter the military?

Select:

7. What is your employment status?

Select:

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

Select:

9. Which award are you applying for?

Select:

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

Select:

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

Select:

13. College Preparation

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

Reading

Select:

14. Composition/Writing

Select:

15. Communication/Speech

Select:

16. Computer Competency

Select:

17. Ethical Understanding and Behavior

Select:

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

Select:

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

Select:

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



Select:

21. Mathematics

Select:

22. Courses in your major area

Select:

23. Courses in a four-year program

Select:

24. Employment after SPC

Select:

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.)

Select:

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

Select:

27. Acquiring information/conducting research through the Internet

Select:

28. Civic Activities

How often do you participate in the following activities?
Vote in an election

Select:



29. Volunteer in community service activities

Select:

30. Participate in campaigns or forums

Select:

31. Humanities Activities

How often do you participate in the following activities?
Attend a concert, dance performance, or live drama

Select:

32. Visit an art museum

Select:

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

Select:

34. Life-long Learning

How often do you participate in the following activities?
Participate in continuing education

Select:

35. Attend college or personal enrichment classes

Select:

*Student ID#:

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



Data and information contained herein cannot be used without the express written authorization of the St. Petersburg College. All inquiries about the use of this information should be directed to the Executive Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness at St. Petersburg College.

© Copyright St. Petersburg College, February 2013. All rights reserved.