

Board of Trustees Monitoring Report

Student Satisfaction & Success: Academic Program

Board Ends Policy/Strategic Plan Goal

Board Ends Policy E-4/Strategic Goal #1 – INSTRUCTION & STUDENT SUCCESS

Provide effective learning options for student success.

- 1.1 - Evaluate programs and scheduling at all SVC locations, and develop a plan to effectively and efficiently meet community/employer and student needs.
- 1.3 – Enhance articulation with K-12 and four-year colleges and universities.
- 1.4 – Support growth of interdisciplinary programs to enrich student learning.

Board Ends Policy E-8/Strategic Goal #5 – ASSESSMENT

Enhance instruction, student services, and institutional effectiveness through comprehensive assessment processes.

- 5.2 – Assess the General Education Learning Values and Learning Outcomes to ensure integration across the curriculum and improve student learning in both academic and technical programs.

March 11, 2008



Background

Forty percent (40%) of the 6820 students enrolled at SVC in fall 2007 reported that their goal was to obtain an academic transfer degree. As in the past, this Monitoring Report provides the data for targeted indicators of student success for transfer students that are measurable, including reports of student satisfaction with collaborative courses and student progress in reaching their educational goals. New with this report is the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges' Student Achievement Initiative (SAI) model for accountability. Each community college has been provided preliminary data, and selected Skagit data for transfer students are presented in Section III. Finally, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), a national survey that allows us to obtain data regarding student engagement and learning, was administered in spring 2007, and selected findings for transfer students are reported in Section IV.

Section I: Student Satisfaction

Student Satisfaction with Collaborative Courses

Learning Communities and English Links are offered on the Mount Vernon Campus, Whidbey Island Campus and through Distance Education. Learning Communities and Links are taken primarily by transfer students. Students in collaborative courses are surveyed each quarter. Figures 1.1 and 1.2 show student responses from collaborative courses offered at SVC from winter 2002 through fall 2007. The percentage of students who report that Learning Communities and English links were a valuable experience continues to be high (80% and 73% respectively). A majority of students also report that combining classes also created value for them (69% and 63%). These percentages have not varied significantly over the past several years.

It should be noted that under the new general education program, all collaborative courses are designated as Learning Communities. In the future, the data will likely be aggregated.

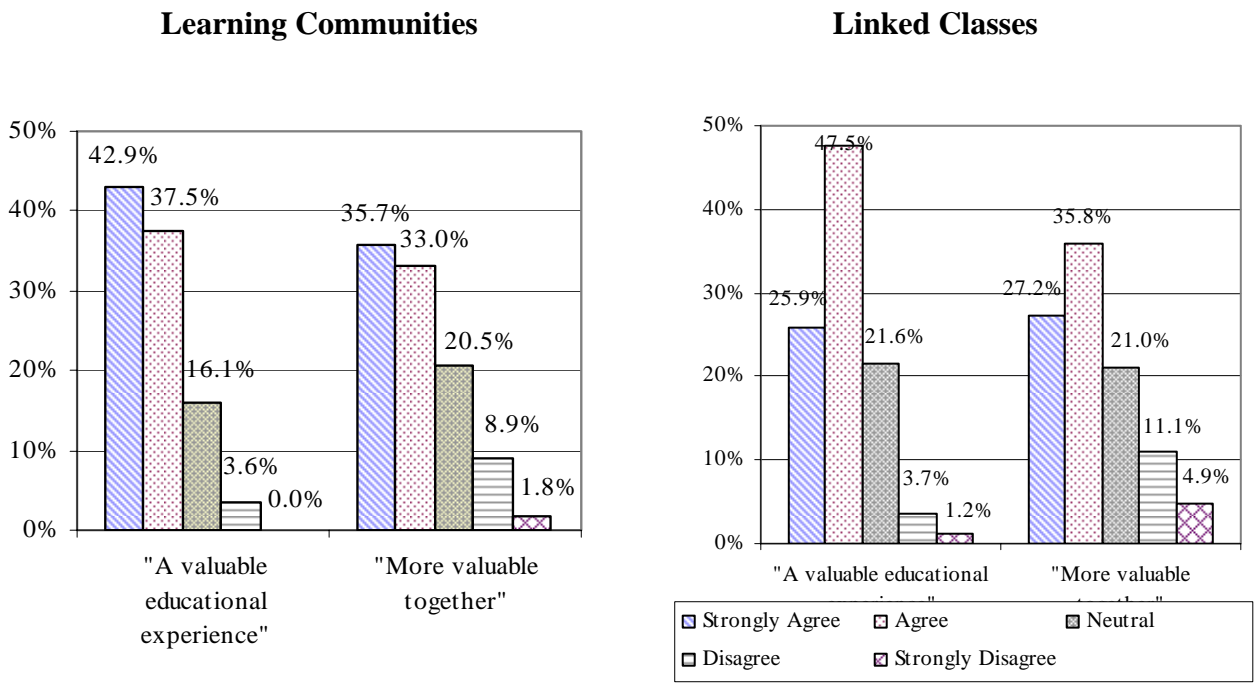
Questions on Learning Communities Survey (N = 2335)

- *"This learning community has been a valuable educational experience."*
- *"I believe it was probably more valuable to have taken these classes together than it would have been to take them separately."*

Questions on Linked English Courses Survey (N = 3097)

- *"This linked combination has been a valuable educational experience."*
- *"I believe it was probably more valuable to have taken these two classes together than it would have been to take them separately."*

Figures 1.1 and 1.2: Cumulative Data for Learning Community and English Link Surveys

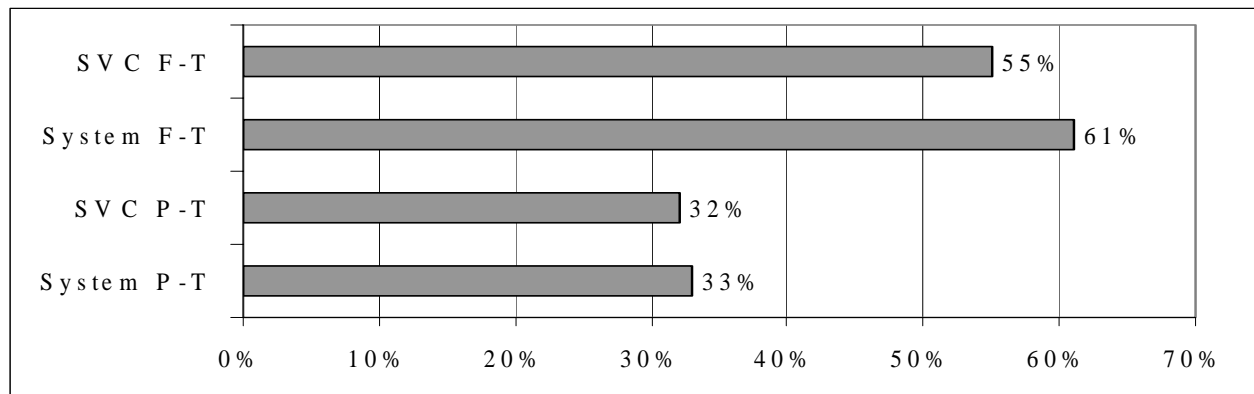


Section II: Substantial Progress

“Substantial Progress” for degree-seeking students is defined by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) as the completion of four or more quarters at the college and/or completion of a degree. This information is provided for each college and for the system annually by the SBCTC using a cohort methodology that tracks students over a two-year period. The last cohort to be tracked was students entering community colleges in fall 2005.

As shown in Figure 2.1, part-time students at SVC had a similar substantial progress rate to the system (32% versus 33%). The substantial progress rate of full-time SVC students for the fall 2005 cohort is somewhat lower than the system rate (55% vs. 61%).

Figure 2.1: Substantial Progress of SVC Degree-Seeking Students by Cohort Year and Full-Time/Part-Time Status Compared with System



Section III: Student Achievement Initiative Points

In 2006-07, a system-wide group, working with input from national experts, designed and empirically tested a dataset to measure students as they advance to certificates, degrees and apprenticeships. A Student Achievement Database has been built specifically to help colleges track their students for the incremental gains they make during the year in the following areas:

- gains made in basic skills courses,
- completing a pre-college math or English course (college ready),
- earning first 15 college level credits,
- earning 1st 30 college level credits,
- earning 1st 5 credits in college level math, and
- earning a certificate, degree or apprenticeship award.

These gains are termed “momentum points” because they add momentum to a student’s longer term success. Colleges are measured against themselves rather than comparing them with other colleges. It should be noted, however, that the momentum points gained can be impacted by total enrollments, the ratio of part-time/full-time students, and the mix of student educational goals.

As Table 3.1 indicates, based on the preliminary datasets for 2005-06 and 2006-07, the number of students identified as transfer students were similar for 2005-06 and 2006-07; however, fewer students in 2006-07 achieved momentum points. The college has initiated several pilot projects in 2007-08 to increase momentum points gained, including offering counseling-enhanced developmental learning communities and implementing a comprehensive faculty advising project.

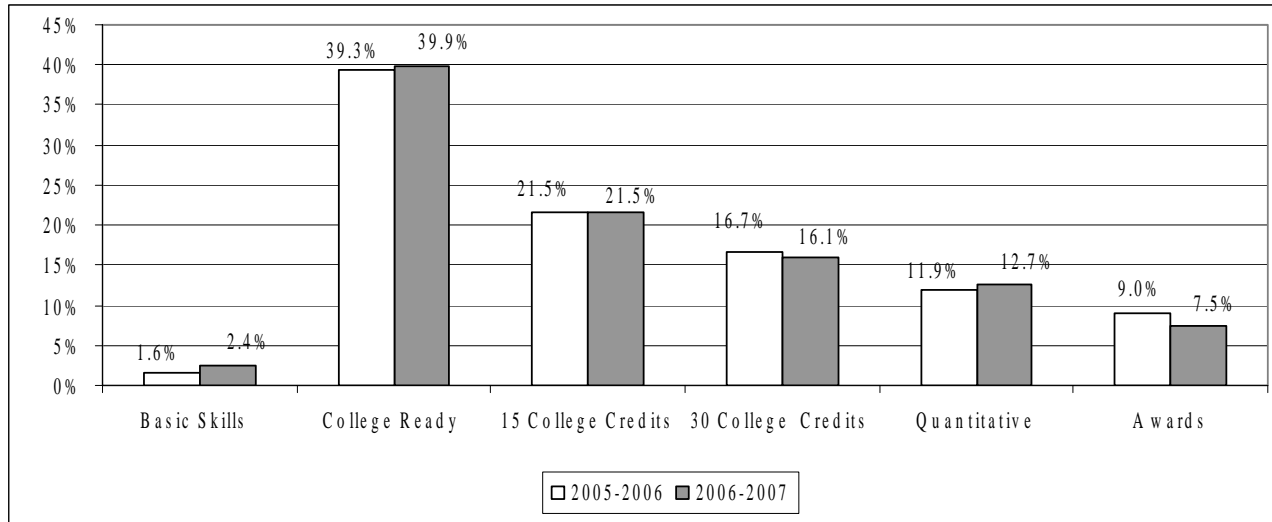
Table 3.1 Transfer Student Momentum Points: Academic Years 2005-06 and 2006-07

Increase basic skills	Become college ready	Earn 1st 15 college credits	Earn 1st 30 college credits	Earn at least 5 math credits	Complete degree or certificate	Total Points
2005-2006 (N = 3271 students, all funds)						
60 pts. (31 students)	1490 pts. (894 students)	816 pts.	634 pts.	453 pts.	341 pts.	3794 points (1974 unduplicated students)
2006-2007 (N - 3296 students, all funds)						
88 pts. (39 students)	1460 pts. (899 students)	787 pts.	588 pts.	465 pts.	274 pts.	3662 points (1883 unduplicated students)

In 2005-05, 60.3% and in 2006-07 57.1% of transfer students gathered momentum toward or reached awards during the year.

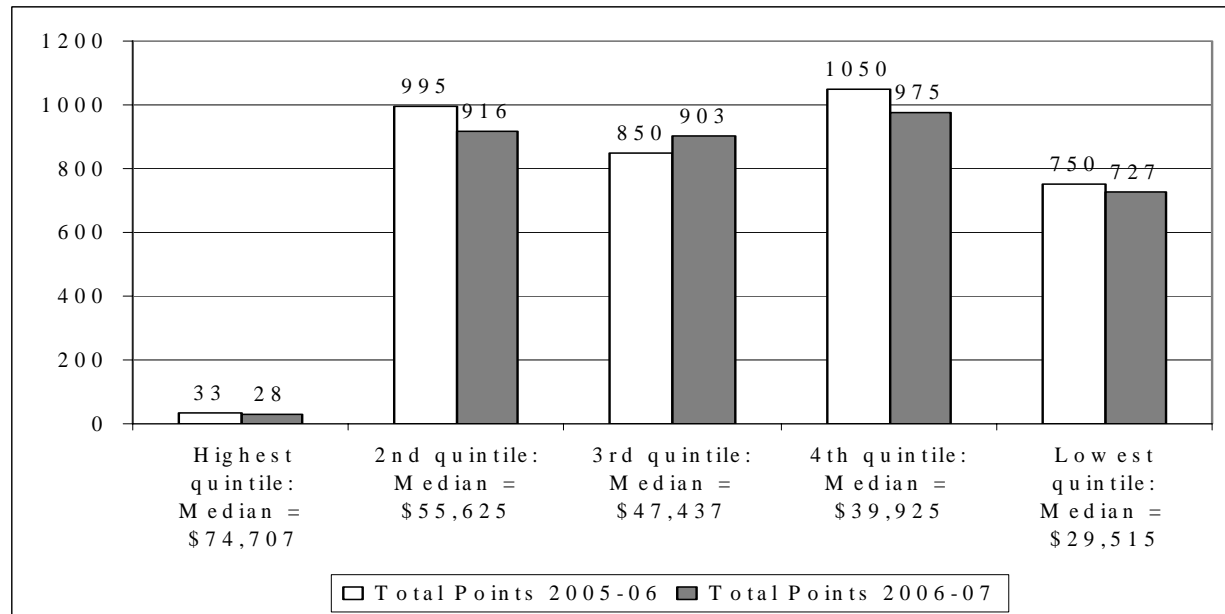
Based on the data in Table 3.1, Figure 3.1 shows the distribution in each area by percent of the points earned in both years.

Figure 3.1 Point Category Percentages of Total SVC Transfer Achievement Points: 2005-06 and 2006-07



The Student Achievement Initiative databases also include socio-economic status (SES) quintiles based on the 2000 Census block group data. Students are attributed the median household income of the block group in which they reside. Figure 3.2 shows the distribution of points for transfer students based on their SES quintile.

Figure 3.2 SVC Total Transfer Student Achievement Points by Socio-Economic Status Quintiles



Section IV: Student Learning and Engagement

The value of an SVC education is inextricably linked to our learning outcomes—discipline-specific, general education, and interdisciplinary. The research over several decades has also affirmed the contribution of students’ engagement with the institution, faculty, and other students to student retention and success. In order to examine student learning and engagement, the college has administered the nationally recognized Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) in spring of 2003, 2005 and 2007. This survey measures student perceptions of their learning and engagement as well as satisfaction with student support services.

The survey also allows the college to examine differences between SVC students based on whether or not they had taken a Learning Community at the college. It is noteworthy that students who had taken a Learning Community were significantly more likely than students who had not taken a Learning Community to engage in activities that increase their time on task (and thus their chances for meeting their educational goals) as well as to assume responsibility for their learning. In addition, students who had taken a Learning Community were more likely than students who had not to engage in activities that help them to meet specific General Education learning outcomes, particularly integration, critical thinking, cultural diversity, and communication. Table 4.1, for example, provides differences between these two groups for survey items related to active and collaborative learning.

The questions in Table 4.1 are from Section 1 of the CCSSE survey, which asked students: *“In your experiences at this college during the current school year, about how often you have done each of the following?”* Response options ranged from 1 (“Never”) to 4 (“Very Often”).

Table 4.1 Means for Students on Active and Collaborative Learning CCSSE Items Based on Learning Community Enrollment

Survey Item	Mean		Sig
	Have Taken LC	Not Taken LC	
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	3.00	3.00	n.s.
Made a class presentation	2.43	2.27	n.s.
Worked with other students on projects during class	2.88	2.69	*
Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	2.49	2.10	**
Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	1.73	1.43	**
Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course	1.61	1.43	*
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	2.87	2.69	*

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Table 4.2 on the following page compares the 2007 CCSSE for SVC transfer students (students who indicated their intent at SVC was to transfer to a four-year institution) and all medium colleges in the national dataset. When compared to the national average for medium colleges, SVC transfer students report higher levels of engagement and learning for all but one item.

Table 4.2 CCSSE Responses from SVC Academic Students and All Medium Colleges

Survey Items	Means	
	SVC Transfer Students	All Medium Colleges
<i>Academic Effort</i>		
Prepared two or more drafts of a paper before turning it in.	2.75	2.48
Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	2.97	2.70
Made a class presentation	2.36	2.02
Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations	2.65	2.52
<i>Student Diversity</i>		
Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity other than your own.	2.35	2.48
Had serious conversations with students who differ from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	2.55	2.32
<i>Collaborative Learning</i>		
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	2.69	2.55
Worked with other students on a project during class	2.70	2.45
Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments.	2.36	1.82
<i>General Education Outcomes</i>		
Acquiring a broad general education	3.09	2.93
Writing clearly and effectively	2.83	2.68
Speaking clearly and effectively	2.76	2.58
Thinking critically and analytically	3.08	2.85
Solving numerical problems	2.87	2.56
Using computing and information technology	2.66	2.68
Working effectively with others	2.93	2.87
Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	2.56	2.31
Developing a personal code of values and ethics	2.38	2.29
Contributing to the welfare of the community	2.12	1.95

Note: For all items the responses ranged from a low of 1 to a high of 4.

Board Plus/Delta

11 March 2008

**“What is good about this report?
What would you like to see changed?”**

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