

Board of Trustees Monitoring Report

Student Satisfaction & Success: Academic Program

Board Ends Policy:

Skagit Valley College exists to provide the college district community with the skills and knowledge sufficient for enrichment, successful employment and/or educational achievement [E-3].

Skagit Valley College shall embrace an open door policy and shall provide students and the community with user-friendly and efficient access to a learning-centered education [E-4]

Strategic Plan Goals/Objectives:

Increase Student Access and Success [Goal #3]; Ensure that college-ready students are able to receive a two-year degree in two years [Objective #1]; Develop and evaluate the success of strategies designed to increase student retention [Objective #3]

Cultivate an environment that encourages diversity and supports learning for all members of the college community [Goal #1]

March 8, 2005



Executive Summary

Background:

Forty-four percent (44%) of students enrolled at SVC in Fall 2004 reported that their goal was to obtain a transfer or general studies degree. This report provides the data for targeted indicators of student success that are measurable: reports of student satisfaction with collaborative courses, and student progress in reaching their educational goals.

Conclusions:

Transfer students enrolled in collaborative courses—Learning Communities and English links—report that the collaborative courses are a valuable educational experience and this collaborative approach is better than taking the courses alone.

Despite a continued low rate of preparedness, in English and Math particularly, the majority of degree-seeking students are making substantial progress toward their degree and this rate for SVC is equal to or slightly higher than the system average.

Change from Prior Year Monitoring:

The percentage of students who report that Learning Communities and English links were a valuable experience continues to be high (74%-84%). A majority of students also report that combining classes also created value for them (61%-71%). These percentages have not varied significantly over the past several years.

The substantial progress rate for the Fall 2002 cohort of transfer students has declined from the prior year, but is similar to the Fall 2000 cohort. This pattern is also true for full-time students, while part-time student progress has declined from prior years (39.7% to 36.7%).

The percentage of transfer-degree seeking students who complete a degree within two years (~11%) has not substantially changed over the past four years. However, the percentage of student who complete within three years has increased to 21%.

Implications/Questions:

The percentage of students making substantial progress continues to be relatively consistent (within a few percentage points); however, the rate of part-time students in the most recent cohort declined. On a positive note, the three-year graduation rate has shown an increase. This may be the result of a number of retention strategies developed in Student Services and in Instruction to increase persistence and graduation rates; however, we have no verifiable evidence of such a cause-effect relationship.

Section I: Student Satisfaction

Student Satisfaction with Collaborative Courses

Students in all collaborative courses—Learning Communities and English Links—offered on the Mount Vernon Campus, Whidbey Island Campus and through Distance Education are surveyed each quarter. The following charts are student responses from all collaborative courses offered at the Mount Vernon Campus Winter 2002 through Fall 2004.

Learning Communities (N=1222)

Figure 1.1: *"This learning community has been a valuable educational experience."*

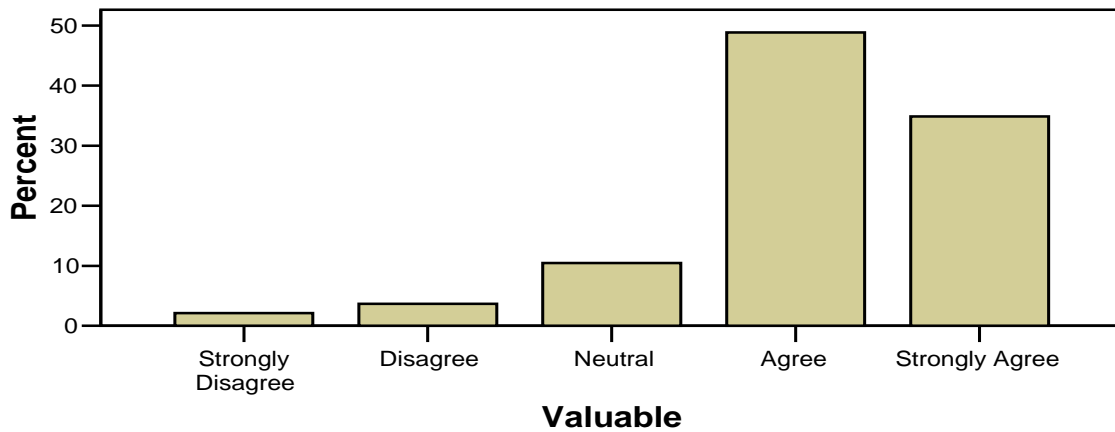
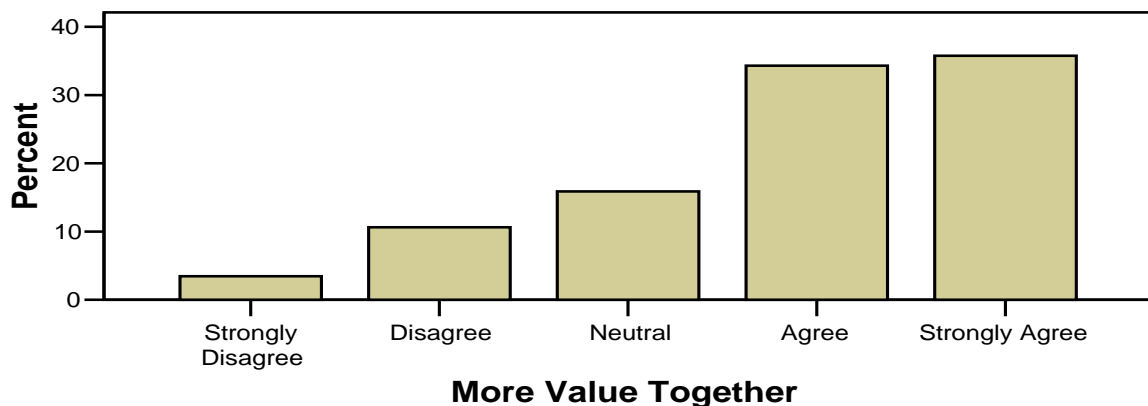


Figure 1.2: *"I believe it was probably more valuable to have taken these classes together than it would have been to take them separately."*



Linked English (N=1507)

Figure 1.3: *"This linked combination has been a valuable educational experience."*

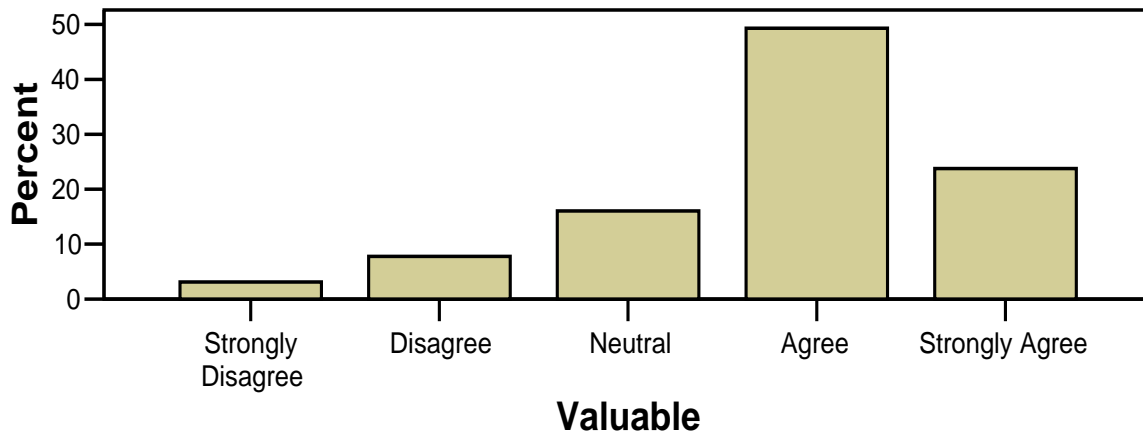
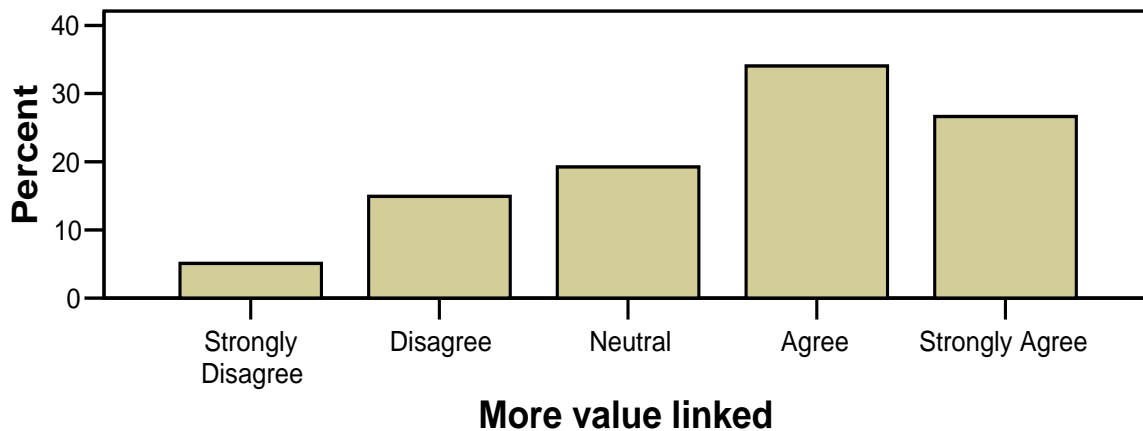


Figure 1.4: *"I believe it was probably more valuable to have taken these two classes together than it would have been to take them separately."*



Section II: Student Progress and Time to Degree

Substantial Progress (System Data)

“Substantial Progress” for degree-seeking students is defined by the SBCTC as the completion of four or more quarters at the college and/or completion of a degree. This information is provided by college and for the system each year by the SBCTC using a cohort methodology that tracks students for two years. The last cohort to be tracked was the students entering in Fall 2002. As shown in Figure 2.1, part-time students in the most recent cohort at SVC had a slightly higher substantial progress rate than their counterparts in the system (32% versus 31%), while the substantial progress of full-time students is equivalent to the system (69%).

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

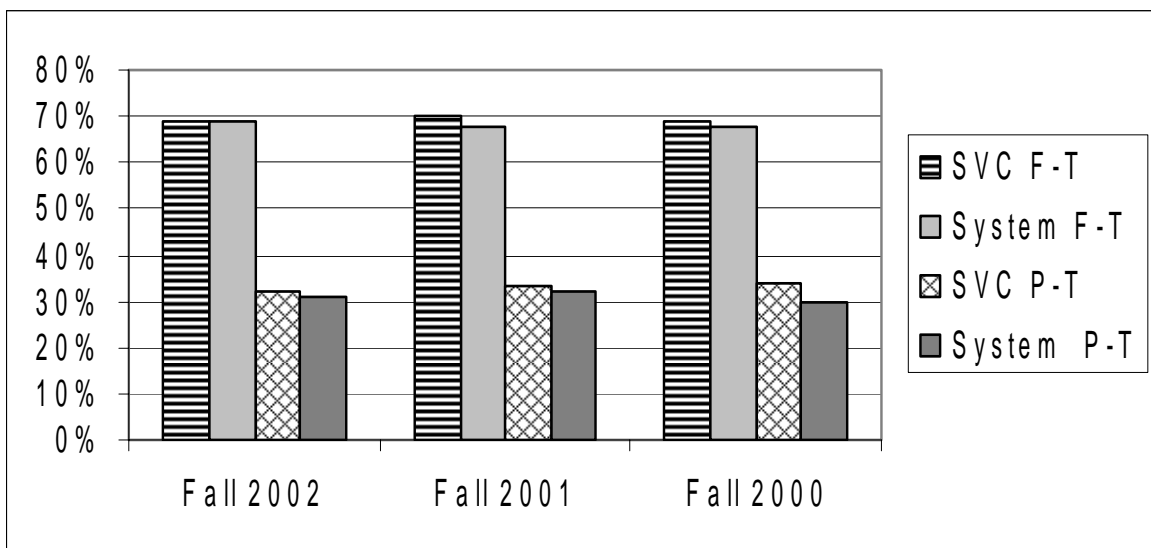


Figure 2.2 (on the following page) shows the substantial progress of transfer degree-seeking students by cohort year and enrollment status. The substantial progress rate for the Fall 2002 cohort of transfer students declined when compared to the Fall 2001 cohort, but is similar to the Fall 2000 cohort (64.7% versus 64.5%). This pattern is also true for full-time students--both the 2000 and 2002 rates were approximately 71%. The substantial progress of part-time students has declined slightly from prior years (39.7% in both 2000 and 2001 to 36.7% in 2002).

Figure 2.2: Substantial Progress of SVC Transfer Degree-Seeking Students by Cohort Year

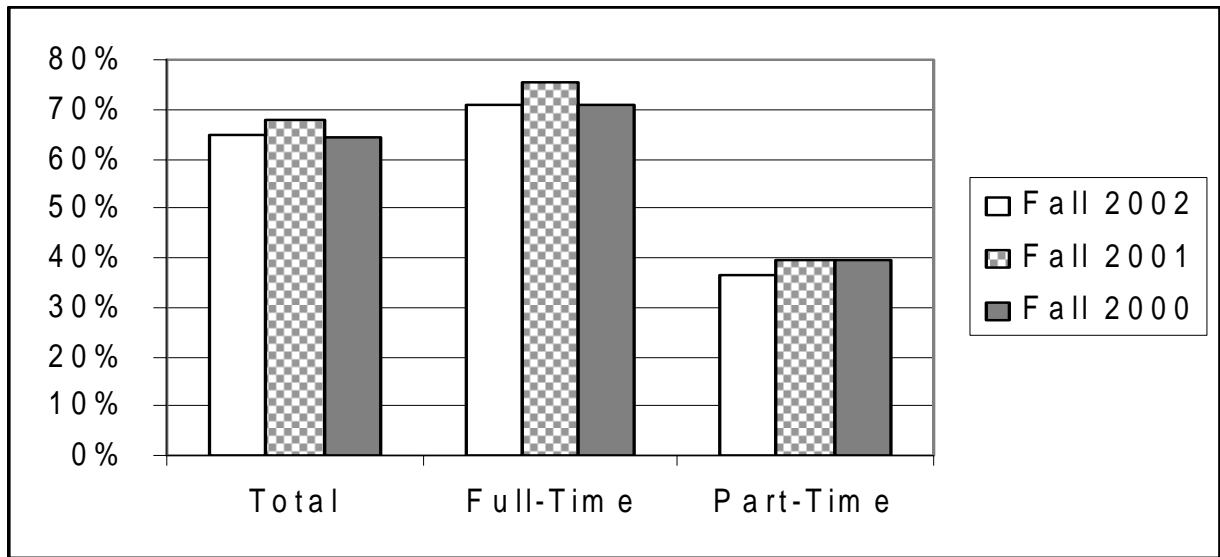
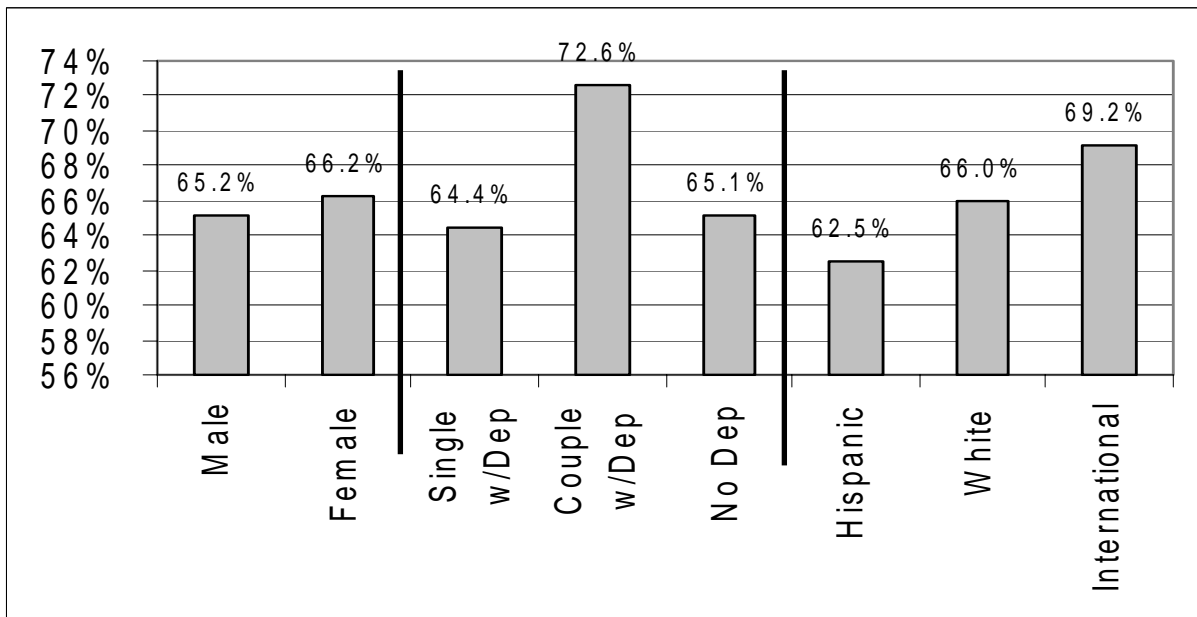


Table 2.3 shows the substantial progress of students based on targeted characteristics such as gender, family status, and ethnic backgrounds. All three cohorts (Fall 2000, 2001, and 2002) are included in this analysis. The data indicates that females have a slightly higher substantial progress rate as do students who are part of a couple with children or other dependents. Hispanic students have a lower rate than white students.

Figure 2.3: Substantial Progress of SVC Degree-Seeking Students by Selected Characteristics for the 2000, 2001 & 202 cohorts

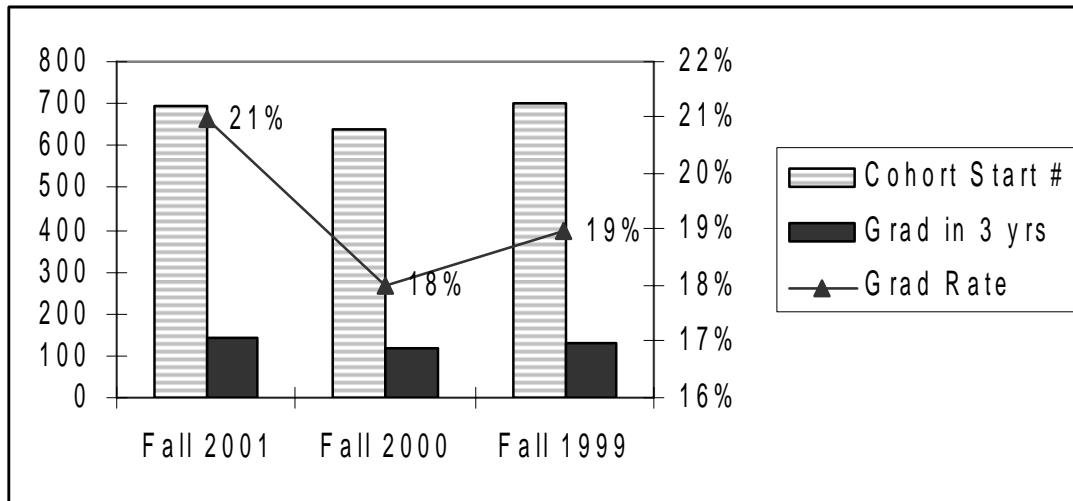


Time-to-Degree Cohort Tracking

SVC monitors the time-to-degree for students seeking transfer degrees. The cohort methodology tracks students over three years. The data for the most recent three cohorts (Fall 1999, Fall 2000, and Fall 2001) are presented in Tables 2.4 – 2.7.

Of the 693 students new to the college in 2001, 384 students (77%) took at least one developmental education course (an English, Math, or Reading course below the 100-level). The average number of developmental education courses taken by those 384 students was 2.8—approximately three classes per student. By the end of Spring quarter 2004, 151 of the 693 (21.2%) had graduated. Fifty-eight percent of those 151 who graduated took at least one developmental education course.

Table 2.4: Three-Year Graduation Rates for Transfer Degree Seeking Students by Cohort Year



The following table updates information on the **time to graduation** to include the Fall 2001 cohort of transfer-degree-seeking students who completed at least one credit during their first quarter. The 1999 and 2000 cohort data were presented in prior Monitoring Reports.

The percentage of transfer-degree seeking students who complete a degree within two years (~11%) has not substantially changed over the past four years. The percentage of student who complete within three years has increased to 21%.

Figure 2.5: Time to Graduate: Graduates from the Fall 1999 Cohort (N=699)

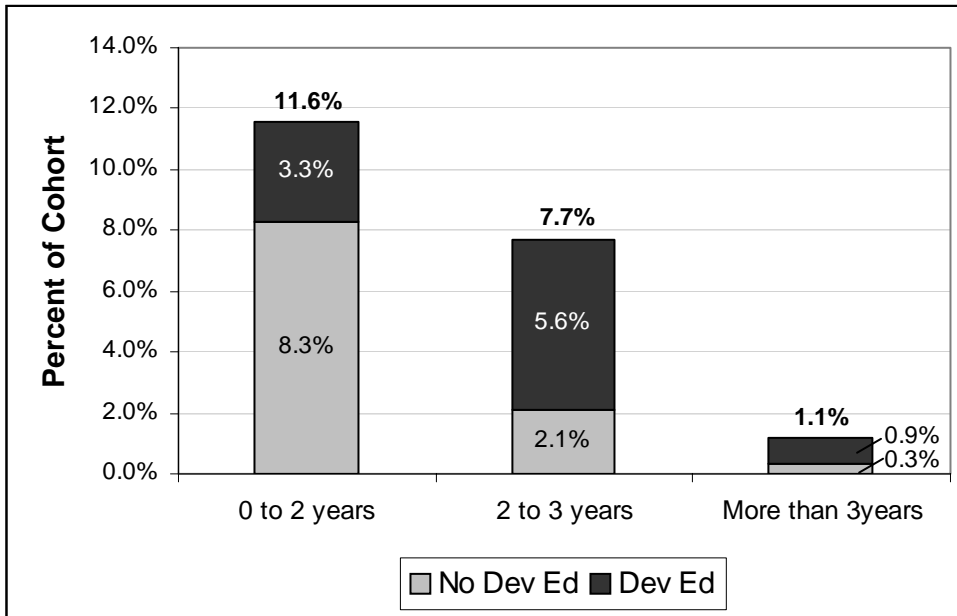


Figure 2.6: Time to Graduate: Graduates from the Fall 2000 Cohort (N=636)

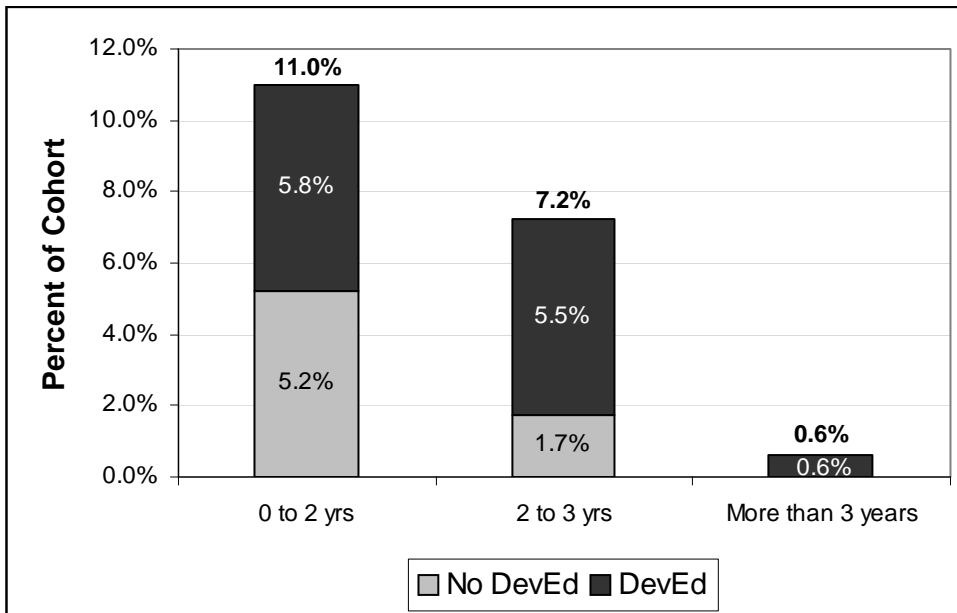
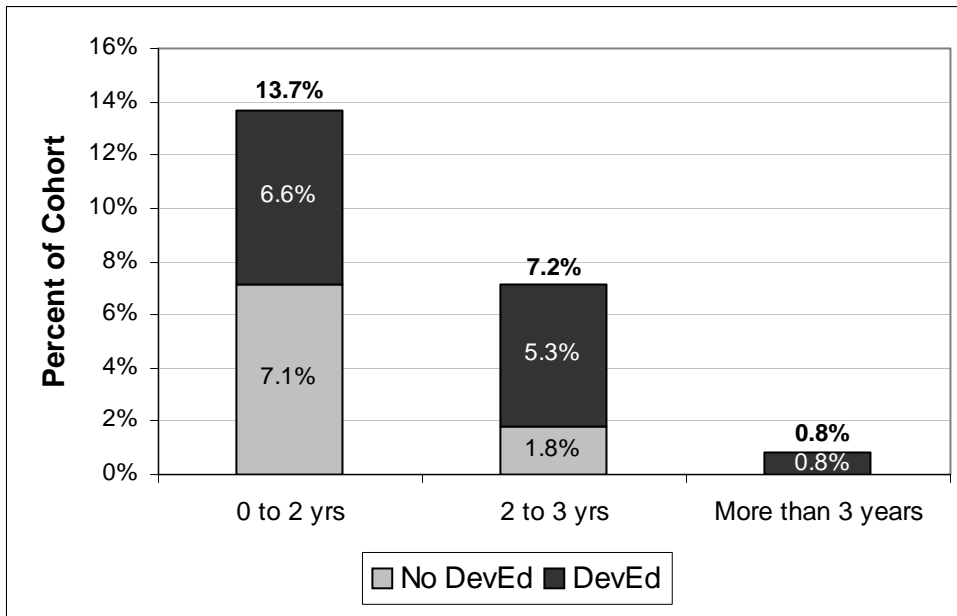


Figure 2.7: Time to Graduate: Graduates from the Fall 2001 Cohort (N=693)



Section III: Student Learning and Engagement

This report provides the data for indicators of student success that are measurable: reports of student satisfaction with collaborative courses and student progress in reaching their educational goals. However, the most important indicator of student success is the learning that takes place while the student attends SVC both inside and outside the classroom. The value of an SVC education is inextricably linked to our learning outcomes: discipline-specific, general education, and interdisciplinary. We want students who leave SVC to be intellectually well-rounded, critical thinkers, life-long learners, excellent employees, and informed citizens.

Last year's report included the results from the Spring 2003 administration of the nationally recognized Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). This survey measures student perceptions of their learning and engagement as well as satisfaction with student support services. Given the cost of the survey administration, the college is unable to conduct the survey on an annual basis. However, we will again be administering the survey in Spring 2005. This will give us the opportunity to examine not only the "snapshot" of current students, but also to assess strengths and challenges over time. This data will be available in Fall 2005.

It is also our intent to administer the survey again in Spring 2007 so that we have a longitudinal comparison of student learning and engagement in preparation for writing our ten-year accreditation self-study.

Board Plus/Delta
“What is good about this report?
What would you like to see changed?”

March 8, 2005

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