

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 14, 2006



Executive Summary

Background:

Forty percent (40%) of students enrolled at SVC in Fall 2005 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, student progress in reaching their educational goals, and data from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE).

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 lower 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 (83% and 74% respectively). A majority of students also report that combining classes also created value for them (68% and 60%). These percentages have not varied significantly over the past several years.

The substantial progress rate for the Fall 2003 cohort of transfer students has declined slightly from the prior year. Full-time students' substantial progress rate has remained the same at 69%, while part-time student progress has declined slightly, from 32% to 31%.

Over eleven percent (11.5%) of transfer-degree seeking students in the Fall 2002 cohort completed a degree within two years. This is down from 13.7% for the Fall 2001 cohort, but similar to the Fall 1999 and Fall 2000 cohorts, both approximately 11%. The percentage of the Fall 2002 cohort who completed within three years was 20%, which is down slightly from the previous year, but still above the Fall 1999 and 2000 cohorts.

Section I: Student Satisfaction

Student Satisfaction with Collaborative Courses

Students in collaborative courses—Learning Communities and English Links—offered on the Mount Vernon Campus, Whidbey Island Campus and through Distance Education are surveyed each quarter. Figures 1.1 and 1.2 show student responses from all collaborative courses offered at the Mount Vernon Campus Winter 2002 through Fall 2005.

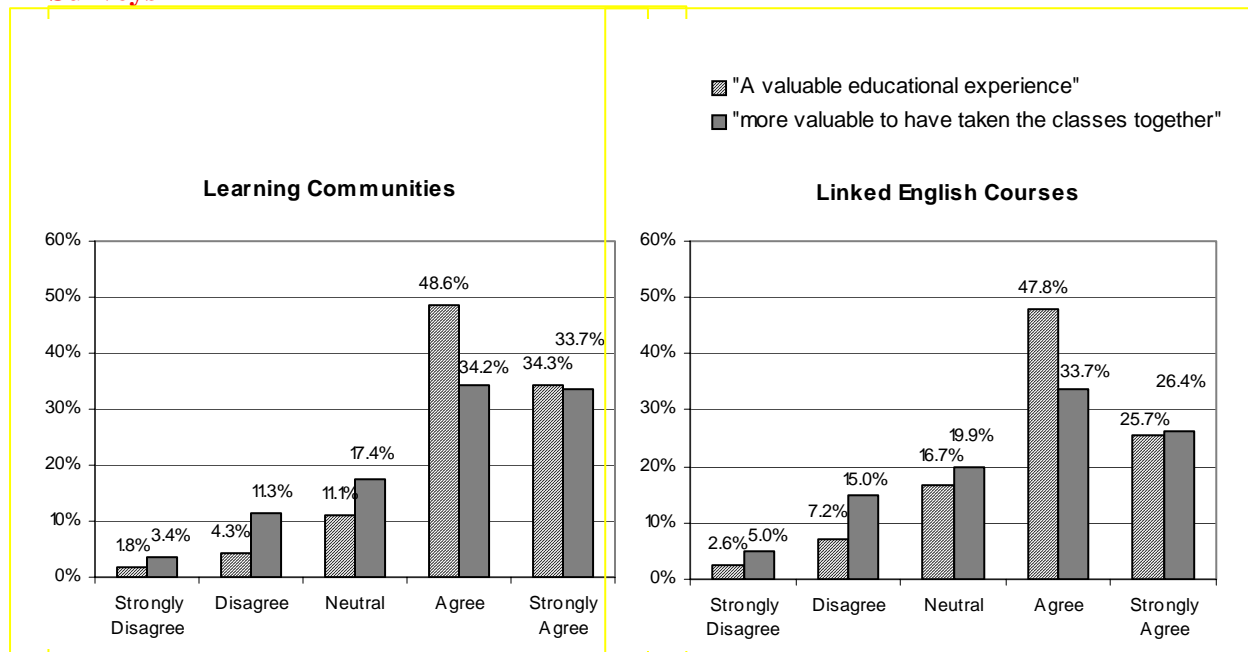
Questions for Learning Communities (N = 1672)

- *"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 for Linked English Courses (N = 2079)

- *"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

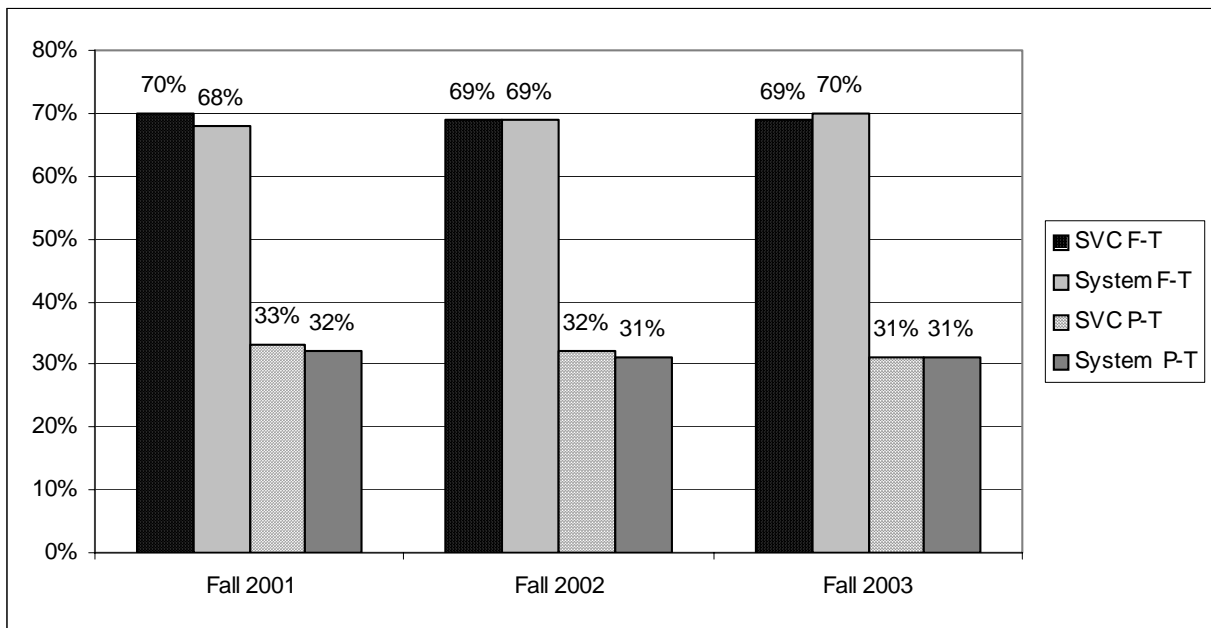


Section II: Student Progress and Time to Degree

Substantial Progress

“Substantial Progress” for degree-seeking students is defined by the State Board for Community & 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 2003. As shown in Figure 2.1, part-time students in the most recent cohort at SVC had an identical substantial progress rate as the system (31%), while the substantial progress rate of full-time SVC students is slightly lower than the system rate (69% vs. 70%).

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

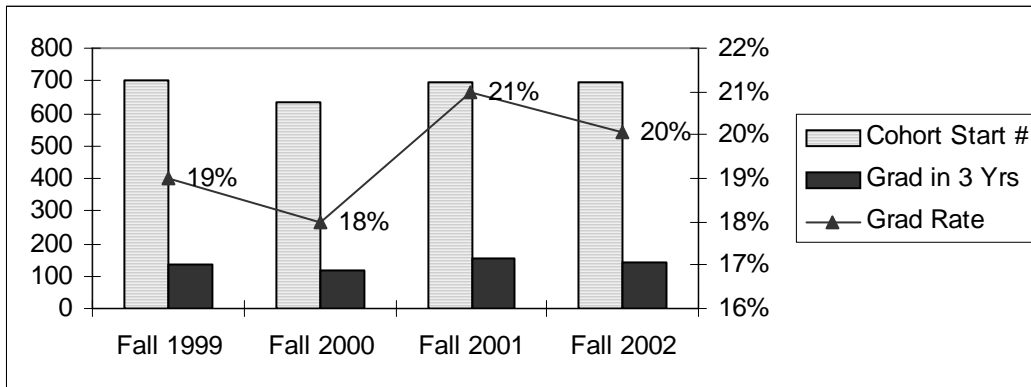


Time-to-Degree Cohort Tracking

SVC monitors the time-to-degree for students seeking transfer degrees. The cohort methodology tracks students over a three-year period. The data for the most recent four cohorts (Fall 1999 through Fall 2002) are presented in figures 2.2 – 2.6.

Of the 693 students new to the college in 2002, 359 students (52%) 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 2005, 139 of the 693 (20.1%) had graduated. Of the 139 graduates, 82 (59%) took at least one developmental education course.

Figure 2.2: 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 2002 cohort of transfer-degree-seeking students who completed at least one credit during their first quarter. The 1999, 2000, and 2001 cohort data were also presented in prior Board Monitoring Reports.

The percentage of transfer-degree seeking students who complete a degree within two years, 11.5%, is down from 13.7% for the 2001 cohort, but similar to the 1999 and 2000 cohorts. The percentage of student who complete within three years has been relatively constant--around 20%.

Figure 2.3: Time to Graduate: Graduates from the Fall 1999 Cohort (N=699)

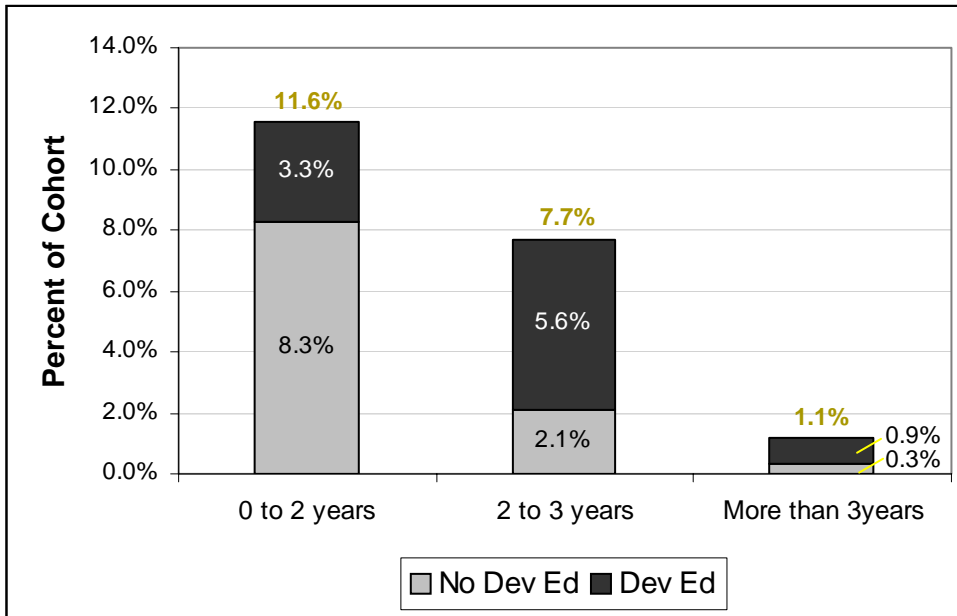


Figure 2.4: Time to Graduate: Graduates from the Fall 2000 Cohort (N=636)

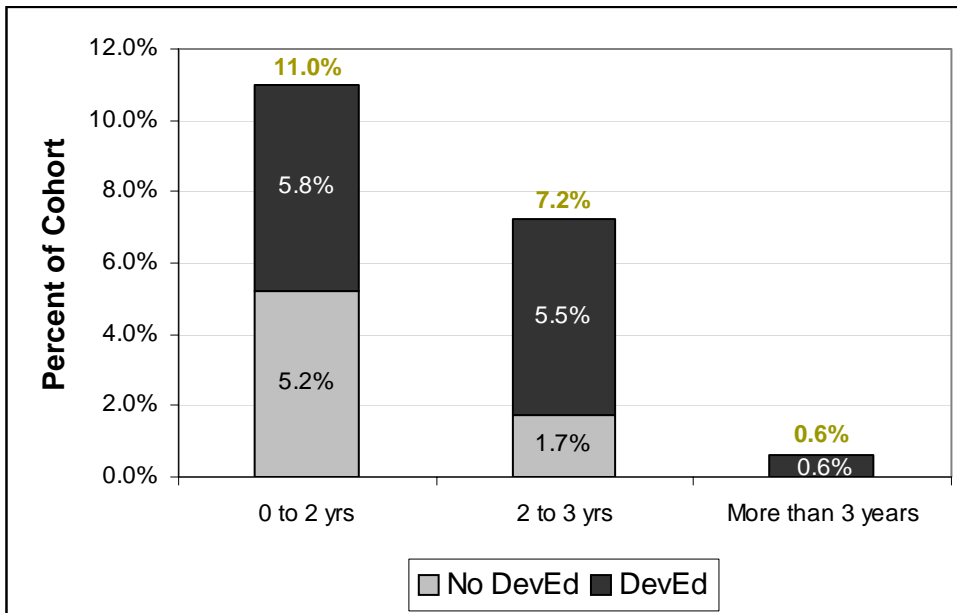


Figure 2.5: Time to Graduate: Graduates from the Fall 2001 Cohort (N=693)

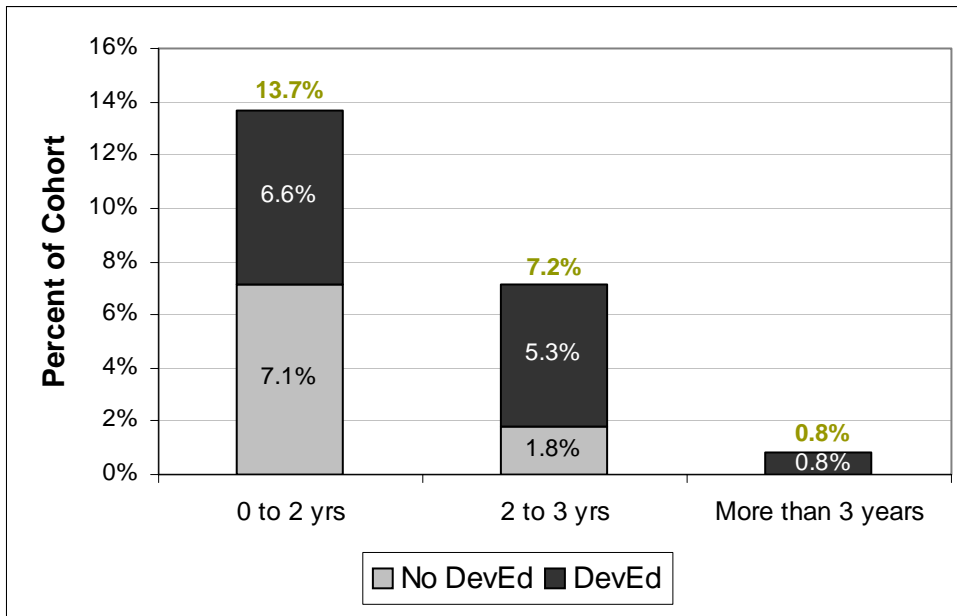
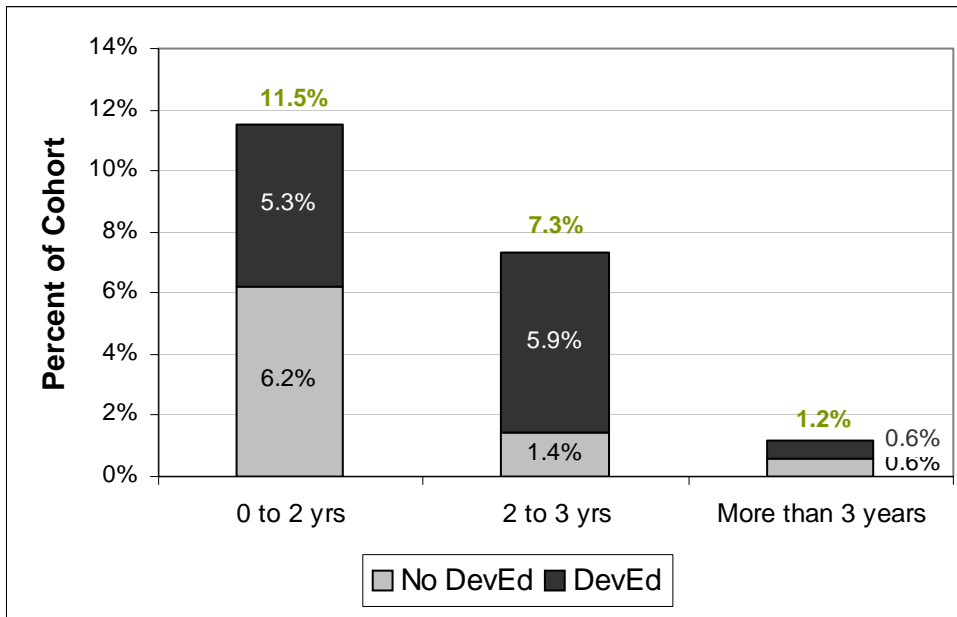


Figure 2.6: Time to Graduate: Graduates from the Fall 2002 Cohort (N=693)



Section III: Student Learning and Engagement

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.

In the spring of 2005, the College again participated in the 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. We administered the CCSSE previously in 2003 and it is 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.

The data presented in Table 3.1 on the following page are from the 2005 CCSSE for SVC and all medium colleges in the national dataset. The SVC data presented is for “academic” students, that is, those students who indicated their intent at SVC was to transfer to a four-year institution, and who had earned at least 15 credits at SVC. When compared to the national average for medium colleges, SVC transfer students report more involvement in writing papers and reports, interaction with diverse peers, use of technology, and application of concepts beyond the classroom.

As part of our analysis we also looked at differences between 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 3.1: CCSSE Responses from SVC Academic Students and All Medium Colleges

	SVC Academic Students	All Medium Colleges	Difference
<i>Papers, Reports and Presentations</i>			
Prepared two or more drafts of a paper before turning it in.	31.4%	20.2%	11.2%
Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	34.9%	21.7%	13.2%
Number of written papers or reports of any length	25.0%	9.0%	16.0%
Made a class presentation	12.6%	7.2%	5.4%
<i>Student Diversity</i>			
Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity other than your own.	28.0%	16.2%	11.8%
Had serious conversations with students who differ from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	25.5%	15.3%	10.2%
<i>Technology</i>			
Used email to communicate with an instructor	22.5%	15.4%	7.1%
Used the Internet or instant messaging to work on an assignment	41.1%	28.8%	12.3%
<i>Collaborative Learning</i>			
Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	28.0%	17.8%	10.2%
Worked with other students on a project during class	17.6%	12.9%	4.7%
Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments.	10.3%	5.5%	4.8%

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

March 14, 2006

+	Δ