Board of Trustees
Monitoring Report

Student Satisfaction & Success

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 Goal/Objective:

Increase Student Access and Success [Goal #3]

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

April 14, 2003
Executive Summary

Background:

The most important indicator of student success is the learning that takes place while the student attends SVC—both inside and outside the classroom—and the value of an SVC education is inextricably linked to our discipline-specific, general education, and interdisciplinary learning outcomes. We want students who leave SVC to be intellectually well-rounded, critical thinkers, life-long learners, excellent employees, and informed citizens. However, we know that measuring and explaining these gains from an SVC education are challenges.

This report provides the data for indicators of student success that are more measurable: student reports of their satisfaction, student progress over time in reaching their educational goals, student employment and earnings, and employer satisfaction with the SVC students they hire.

Conclusions:

The majority of transfer students are making substantial progress toward their degree and this rate is slightly higher than the system average. Less than half the students who take the ASSET placement test score into college-level Writing; only 18% are able to score into college-level Math. This lack of preparedness results in time to degree twice that for students who do not take developmental courses. However, those students who transfer tend to have a grade point average around 3.0. Transfer student 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.

Eighty percent (80%) of the students who completed a professional/technical certificate or degree program are employed nine months after leaving SVC, a rate similar to the 82% system average. The wages after college of students enrolled in professional/technical programs have remained fairly stable over the past several years, as has the post-college earnings. However, the number of students entering high wage category jobs has increased substantially over time. Employers indicate that students’ employability skills are superior or competent, and 69% indicate they would hire additional SVC students.
Change from Prior Year Monitoring:

Not Applicable

Implications/Questions:

The time-to-degree for the 0-2 and 2-3 year intervals for both the 1998 and the 1999 cohorts for all students is substantially unchanged. During the third year, the degree completion rate nearly doubles, and then increases slightly past year three. Additional research has shown that the courses most often remaining for students who did not graduate in the quarter they intended were Math and Learning into Action. The degree completion of students who have taken no developmental courses is higher for the Fall 1999 cohort than the Fall 1998 cohort, while the completion rate for students who take developmental ed courses is declining. The college recently submitted a proposal for a federal Title III grant that will focus on the under-prepared student population. One of the primary goals of this grant is to increase the success and graduation of this student population. If the college is unsuccessful in obtaining this grant, the question will be how to implement some of the activities envisioned in the grant during a period of declining budgets.

During this quarter the college will participate in a new national survey focusing on teaching, learning, and retention in community colleges, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), partially funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts and the Lumina Foundation for Education. This survey can assist us in identifying where we are and what further action may be helpful in our continuing work to support and strengthen teaching, learning and student success. Many of the questions mirror, or are very similar to the Community College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CCSEQ) administered by the college in Fall 1996 and Fall 1999, so comparison over time can be made.
The Monitoring Report on Student Success is organized into two sections. The first section includes data about Transfer student attainment and satisfaction. The second section includes attainment information for students in Professional-Technical Programs and the satisfaction of employers of those students.

**Section I: Student Satisfaction and Attainment: Transfer Degree Programs**

**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 collaborative courses offered during Winter 2002, Spring 2002, Summer 2002 and Fall 2002.

**Learning Communities (N=408)**

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

![Chart showing responses to the statement](image-url)
Figure 1.2. Responses to "I believe it was probably more valuable to have taken these classes together than it would have been to take them separately."

More Value Together

Linked English (N=459)

Figure 1.3. Responses to "This linked combination has been a valuable educational experience."

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

Student Progress and Time to Degree

“Substantial Progress,” presented in Figure 1.5, is defined by the SBCTC as the completion of four or more quarters and/or completion of a degree. As a matter of reference, the SBCTC system substantial progress rate for part-time transfer students is 30% (versus 34% for SVC) and 68% for full-time students (compared to 69% for SVC).

Figure 1.5. Substantial Progress of SVC Transfer Students by Cohort Year and Full-Time/Part-Time Status (N=3548)
Figure 1.6 below presents information provided to the Board of Trustees at their February 12, 2002 meeting about the time to graduation for the Fall 1998 cohort of transfer-degree-seeking students who completed at least one credit during that quarter. Percent of graduates is cumulative. The data in Figure 1.7 is for the Fall 1999 cohort using the same methodology. In addition to all students in each cohort, and further analysis is presented for students who took no developmental courses at SVC versus those who took at least one developmental course (not necessarily those who needed at least one developmental course.) Note also that as time goes on, the percent of graduates in the “three or more years” category will increase as students continue to meet their goals.

Figure 1.6. Time to Graduate: Fall 1998 Cohort (N=745)

![Bar chart showing time to graduate for Fall 1998 cohort.]

- 0 to 2 years: 11.5% (All Students), 6.0% (No Dev Ed), 5.5% (With Dev Ed)
- 2 to 3 years: 19.3% (All Students), 8.6% (No Dev Ed), 10.7% (With Dev Ed)
- More than 3 years: 24.0% (All Students), 10.9% (No Dev Ed), 13.2% (With Dev Ed)

- All Students
- No Dev Ed
- With Dev Ed

Figure 1.7. Time to Graduate: Fall 1999 Cohort (N=699)

![Bar chart showing time to graduate for Fall 1999 cohort.]

- 0 to 2 years: 11.6% (All Graduates), 8.3% (No Dev Ed), 3.3% (Dev Ed)
- 2 to 3 years: 19.3% (All Graduates), 10.4% (No Dev Ed), 8.9% (Dev Ed)
- More than 3 years: 20.5% (All Graduates), 10.7% (No Dev Ed), 9.7% (Dev Ed)

- All Graduates
- No Dev Ed
- Dev Ed
GPA After Transfer

Several of the four-year institutions in Washington participate in the Mutual Research Transcript Enterprise (MRTE) so that state’s colleges and universities have the ability to track their students across institutions. Unfortunately, three of the six state universities (WSU, Central Washington, and Evergreen) have chosen not to participate in this project.

**Figure 1.8. GPA of SVC Students at Transfer Institution (N =399)**

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<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>GPA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Washington U</td>
<td>3.18</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Washington</td>
<td>3.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UW, Bothell</td>
<td>2.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UW, Tacoma</td>
<td>2.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Washington U</td>
<td>2.97</td>
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Section II: Student Attainment and Employer Satisfaction: Professional-Technical Programs

**Employment and Earnings**

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges tracks the employment rate for students enrolled professional/technical programs nine months after leaving college. The employment rates for SVC students—both early leavers and completers—are shown in Figure 2.1. The SBCTC also provides colleges with a data set (Data Linking for Outcomes Assessment or DLOA) that includes wage and earning information as part of the employment outcomes for job preparation students. Students are included in the DLOA if they were awarded degrees or other completions, or have stopped taking classes for a full year. The current DLOA data set includes students who met the criteria from 1996-1997 to 2000-01, based on the last year the student attended SVC.
Figure 2.1. Employment Rates of Students in Professional-Technical Programs Nine Months after Leaving College

Figure 2.2. Average Post-College Wages* by Wage Categories, 1996-97 through 2000-01

*Adjusted annual wages
Figure 2.3. Pre- and Post-College Earnings of SVC Job Prep Students

Figure 2.4. Number of Students by Wage Categories, 1996-97 through 2000-01
Employer Satisfaction

Each year a subset of professional/technical programs, working collaboratively with Institutional Research and Career Counseling, send out surveys to the employers of recent graduates. The information provided in Figure 2.5 and 2.6 are the results of 135 returned employer surveys from 13 professional/technical programs.

Figure 2.5. Employer Satisfaction: Students’ Employability Skills

![Employability Skills Chart]

Figure 2.6. Employer Satisfaction: Would you consider (or recommend to another manager) hiring additional graduates from SVC?

![Employer Satisfaction Chart]
Board Plus/Delta
“What is good about this report?
What would you like to see changed?”

April 14, 2003

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