



2006

GRADUATE SURVEY STUDY

Office of
Institutional Effectiveness
October 2007



TIDEWATER COMMUNITY COLLEGE
From here, go anywher .

**The 2006 Graduate Survey Study may be found on the World Wide Web at
<http://www.tcc.edu/welcome/collegeadmin/OIE/reports/index.htm>**

2006 Graduate Survey Study

Office of Institutional Effectiveness
October 2007



TIDEWATER COMMUNITY COLLEGE
From here, go anywhere.™

2006 GRADUATE SURVEY STUDY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the fall of 2006, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness surveyed 2,008 Tidewater Community College (TCC) graduates from the class of 2006. Every two years the survey is conducted to assist in program assessment and to acquire knowledge of demographic, enrollment, attendance, employment, educational, and attitudinal data about TCC graduates. Highlights of the study are provided below.

- As noted in the last graduate survey report (2004), and consistent with other demographic data, TCC is increasingly enrolling a younger, traditional group of students focused primarily on transferring to four-year colleges and universities and earning baccalaureate degrees.
- Consistent with changing demographic enrollment patterns, the percentage of female graduates has increased steadily from 58% in 1996 to 65% in 2006, while the proportion of African-American graduates has increased from 17% in 1996 to 26% in 2006. The latest IPEDS data indicate that TCC is the 12th largest associate degree producer in the nation for African-American graduates.
- Regardless of their intent when they first enrolled (either an affordable start toward a baccalaureate degree or access to high-quality occupational/technical training), 93% of all responding graduates indicated that their TCC experience contributed to the fulfillment of their goals. Clearly, the overwhelming majority of graduates actualize the TCC tagline “from here, go anywhere.”
- Nearly all respondents (98%) said they would recommend TCC to others wishing to continue their education. Additionally, 95% said they would recommend their curriculum to others wishing to enter the same field.
- Eight of nine aspects of instruction were perceived by at least 70% of respondents as either good or superior, with five items being perceived as good or superior by at least 90%. The nine items rated by 2006 survey respondents, in order of satisfaction, were average class size (95%), the overall quality of instruction (94%), the quality of instruction in major curriculum (92%), content of courses in major curriculum (90%), grading and testing (90%), instructor availability (87%), course availability/scheduling (82%), faculty advising (71%), and cost of books and supplies (41%).
- Nine of the ten items related to the preparation of various knowledge and skill sets acquired at TCC were rated by at least 70% of respondents as either adequate or more than adequate, with one item being similarly perceived by at least 90%. Graduates continued to express high levels of satisfaction with their preparation in the following: understanding written information (90%), thinking critically (88%), defining problems (87%), solving problems (87%), writing skills (86%), speaking skills (86%), decision-making skills (86%), mathematical skills (84%), technical job knowledge (69%), and technical job skills (67%).
- TCC graduates are heavily dependent on student services. Nearly all respondents used registration and admissions/records services. Ninety percent (90%) took

advantage of both academic counseling and learning resources/library services, and 86% used laboratory facilities. The TCC Information Center was used by 73% of the respondents, career counseling by 62%, financial aid by 60%, and the Help Desk by 57%. Services used by less than one-half of the respondents were student activities (43%), veterans affairs (30%), and the Co-Op program (24%).

- For the most part, 2006 graduate survey respondents were very satisfied with student services. Nearly 90% of the graduates rated learning resources/library (89%) and registration (88%) as either superior or good. Four of the remaining services were rated as superior or good by over 80% of the respondents—veterans affairs (84%), laboratory facilities (83%), the TCC Information Center (82%), and the Co-Op program (80%), and another four by over 70%—admissions/records (79%), student activities (79%), the Help Desk (77%), and financial aid (73%). Only two services, academic counseling (66%) and career counseling (66%), were rated as good or superior by fewer than 70% by the respondents.
- The current employment status of graduate respondents has remained relatively stable during the past decade. While slightly fewer 2006 graduate survey respondents were employed full-time than 2004 respondents (-4%), 1% more were employed in full-time jobs than were 1996 respondents. The percentage of 2006 respondents employed part-time (20%) was only two percentage points lower than that of both 2004 and 1996 respondents.
- The majority of respondents (78%) employed in fields related to their curricula at TCC indicated that their studies satisfactorily prepared them for their jobs. Forty-one percent (41%) of employed respondents indicated that their curriculum helped, at least to some extent, with obtaining their current jobs. Sixty-one percent (61%) found that the curriculum helped to develop new job skills, and 59% indicated that it helped improve job performance and expertise.
- Nearly 40% of full-time employed respondents earned between \$26,000 and \$39,999. Twelve percent (12%) of the respondents earned between \$40,000 and \$50,000, and 13% earned \$50,000 or higher. A comparison of graduate respondent salaries with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) suggests that the salaries have kept pace with inflation during the past ten years.
- Nearly one-half (49%) of responding graduates indicated they were currently enrolled at an institution of higher education. Seventy percent (70%) of these graduates attended a four-year college or university, 18% attended a two-year college, and the remaining 12% were enrolled in other types of institutions.
- Of the students who continued their education after graduating, 81% found that the courses completed at TCC provided adequate preparation for transfer. In fact, 88% of all respondents considered the quality of the instruction provided by TCC to be at least the same or better than that provided by the institution to which they transferred.
- Overall, graduates were satisfied with their TCC experience. Graduates' comments illustrate that the college is fulfilling its two-prong mission core of college transfer education and workforce development. As one graduate reported, "The education I received at TCC has changed my life" And as another stated, "I sincerely believe that TCC was the best time and money I have spent in a very long time."

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Survey Methodology.....	1
Population	1
Data Collection Process	1
Survey Instrument	1
Respondent Profile	1
Graduate Profile	2
Survey Results	4
Enrollment Information	4
Evaluation of Instruction and Student Services	6
Instruction	6
Student Services.....	8
Personal Achievement.....	10
Overall Satisfaction	11
Employment Information.....	11
Current Employment Status.....	11
Gross Annual Income	12
TCC Curriculum and Field of Employment.....	13
TCC Curriculum Impact on Current Position.....	13
Educational Information	14
Current Enrollment Status.....	15
Continuing Education.....	15
Conclusion	16
Appendix A: 2006 Graduate Survey Instrument	17
Appendix B: College Five-Year Summary Table	23
Appendix C: Selected Comments by 2006 Survey Respondents.....	31

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

FIGURES

FIGURE 1. Number of Graduates (1996 to 2006)	2
FIGURE 2. Number of Degrees and Certificates by Award Type (1996 to 2006).....	3
FIGURE 3. Satisfaction Rates for Various Aspects of Instruction (2006)	6
FIGURE 4. Satisfaction Rates for Preparation of Various Skill Areas (2006)	7
FIGURE 5. Usage Rates for Various Student Services (2006)	8
FIGURE 6. Satisfaction Rates for Various Student Services (2006)	9
FIGURE 7. Improvement Rates for Various Areas of Personal Development and General Attitudes (2006)	10
FIGURE 8. Employment Status After TCC Graduation (2006).....	11
FIGURE 9. Earnings After TCC Graduation (2006).....	12

TABLES

TABLE 1. Percentage of Graduates Perceiving TCC Curriculum Helping Various Aspects of Employment (2006, 2004, 2002).....	14
---	----

2006 GRADUATE SURVEY STUDY

INTRODUCTION

The 2006 Graduate Survey Study is a critical component of the college's commitment to accountability, achievement, and quality assurance. In November 2006, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness conducted the biennial TCC Graduate Survey. This study examines graduates' self-reported information and perceptions on enrollment, instruction, student services, employment, and continuing education. Areas of strength and those needing improvement are identified in the study and incorporated into the college's data-driven decision making processes. In an effort to reflect on the changing student body, this study highlights some of the changing trends over the past decade.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Population

The graduate survey population included students who successfully completed the requirements for and received an award in one or more of the approved college transfer or occupational/technical programs during the time period of July 1, 2005, to June 30, 2006. A total of 2,008 students met these requirements. Demographic descriptions of the population are provided in the Graduate Profile section of the report.

Data Collection Process

The 2006 graduate survey was the first survey to take advantage of the Internet. The survey instrument was available on the web in an easy-to-use format for completion of all questions, and graduates were encouraged to complete the survey online. Additionally, a cover letter, survey, and postage-paid, pre-addressed envelope were mailed via United States Postal Service to each of the 2,008 graduates during fall 2006. The cover letter provided instructions for graduates to complete the survey either online or in hardcopy. However, unlike previous years, no reminder postcards or follow-up surveys were mailed to non-respondents (1,282).

Survey Instrument

The 34-item survey was designed to investigate a variety of aspects of the graduates' experience while attending and after graduating from TCC (see Appendix A). Divided into five sections, the survey focused on the graduates' enrollment at TCC (10 items), perceptions of instruction and student services (6 items), post-graduate employment (9 items), continuing college or university education (8 items), and general comments (one item). A table summarizing college five-year data are provided in Appendix B, and selected open-ended comments are provided in Appendix C.

Respondent Profile

The survey results were based on 726 responses, representing a 36.2% return rate. This was the lowest response rate in over 10 years. In both 2002 and 2004, the return rate was 44.2%; in 2000, it was 43.1%; in 1998, it was 46%; and in 1996, it was 43%. The probable reason for the low response rate was the change in methodology mentioned above in the section of this report titled "Data Collection Process." Mailing one or more follow-up

surveys to non-respondents might well have resulted in an increase of at least 10% in the response rate, making the 2006 survey comparable to previous ones. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness is currently evaluating this change in methodology with a view toward refining methodology in subsequent surveys.

Response rates were fairly consistent across curricula. The response rate for those graduating with AA or AS degrees was 37%; for those graduating with AAS or AAA degrees, 35%; and for those graduating with certificates or diplomas, 38%. The response rate was 100% in four curricula (Diagnostic Medical Sonography, American Sign Language, Accounting [certificate], and Diesel Industrial Machinery).

As in previous years, sampling procedures successfully yielded a respondent profile that closely mirrored that of the population (graduating class of 2006). Fifty-nine percent (59%) of respondents received a college transfer degree, the same percentage as all TCC graduates. Twenty-six percent (26%) of respondents were African-American, which mirrored exactly the proportion of all graduates. To a slightly lesser degree, the gender and age distribution mirrored the 2006 graduate profile. Sixty-six percent (66%) of respondents were female compared to 65% of all graduates. While 34% of all respondents were 22 to 29 years of age, this age group represented 42% of the graduating class of 2006. Differences are considered minimal and do not negatively impact the ability to generalize findings to the population.

GRADUATE PROFILE

Figure 1 depicts the number of graduates between 1996 and 2006. As can be seen, the graduating class of 2006 was the largest in the college's history, representing a 16% increase over the number of graduates in 2005 and a 4% increase over the previous high of 1,930 in 2003.

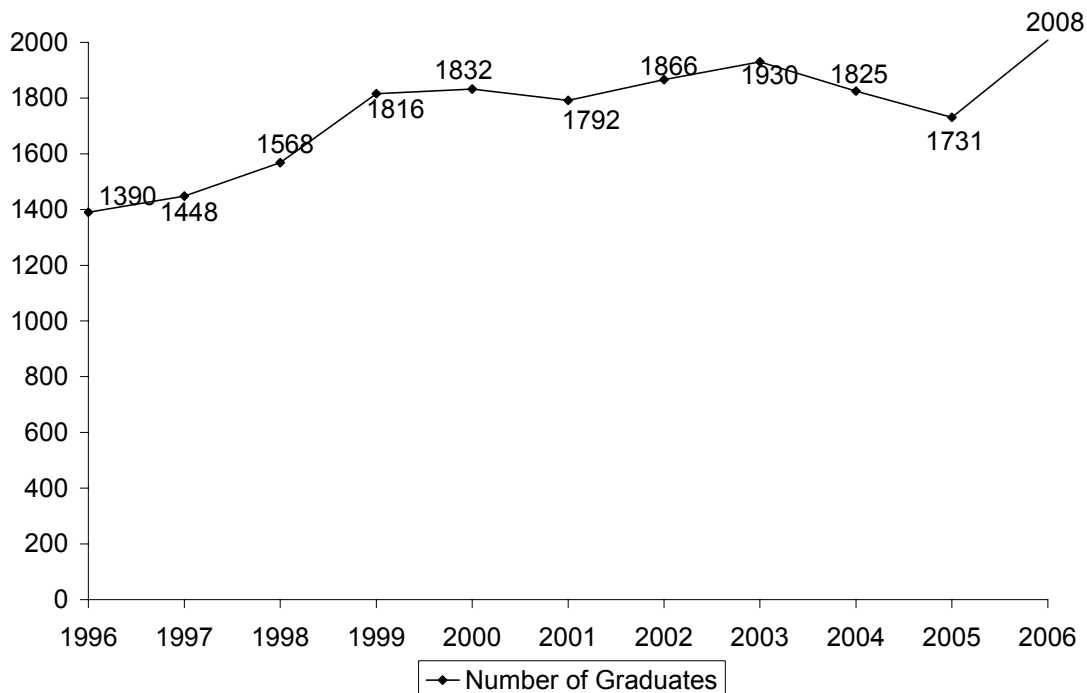


Figure 1. Number of Graduates (1996 to 2006)

Growth patterns for the AA, AS, and AAS degrees, as well as the certificate/diploma awards, are illustrated in Figure 2. The number of graduates in college transfer curricula rose substantially between 2005 and 2006, a trend noted in previous graduate survey reports. The number of students receiving the Associate of Arts (AA) degree rose by a staggering 52%, while the number of students receiving the Associate of Science (AS) degree rose by 18%. The number of students receiving an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree reached a high of 646 in 2003, but then dropped by 16% to 544 in 2004 and increased only slightly (0.6%; 547 graduates) in 2005. In 2006, however, the number of AAS graduates eclipsed the 2003 figure, rising to an all-time high of 692 (a 27% increase).¹ The number of graduates receiving certificates and diplomas was the only category in 2006 registering a decline (-14.6%). This is the result of a 25% decrease in the number of Career Studies Certificate (CSC) graduates (the number of graduates receiving other certificates actually increased by 15%).

In terms of distribution, the largest percentage of 2006 graduates received the AS degree (53%) followed by those receiving the AAS (32%). This is in contrast to the distribution 10 years ago, when 40% of all graduates received the AAS and 36% received the AS. Of the remaining 2006 graduates, 3% received the AA degree and 12% received a certificate or diploma.

Both in terms of number and percentage, TCC students graduating with certificates or diplomas was the lowest in 10 years. When this is coupled with the fact that rising numbers of students are graduating with college transfer degrees, one can only conclude that increasingly TCC is enrolling students committed to receiving degrees that in the long term will provide them with the knowledge and skills to succeed at four-year colleges and universities.

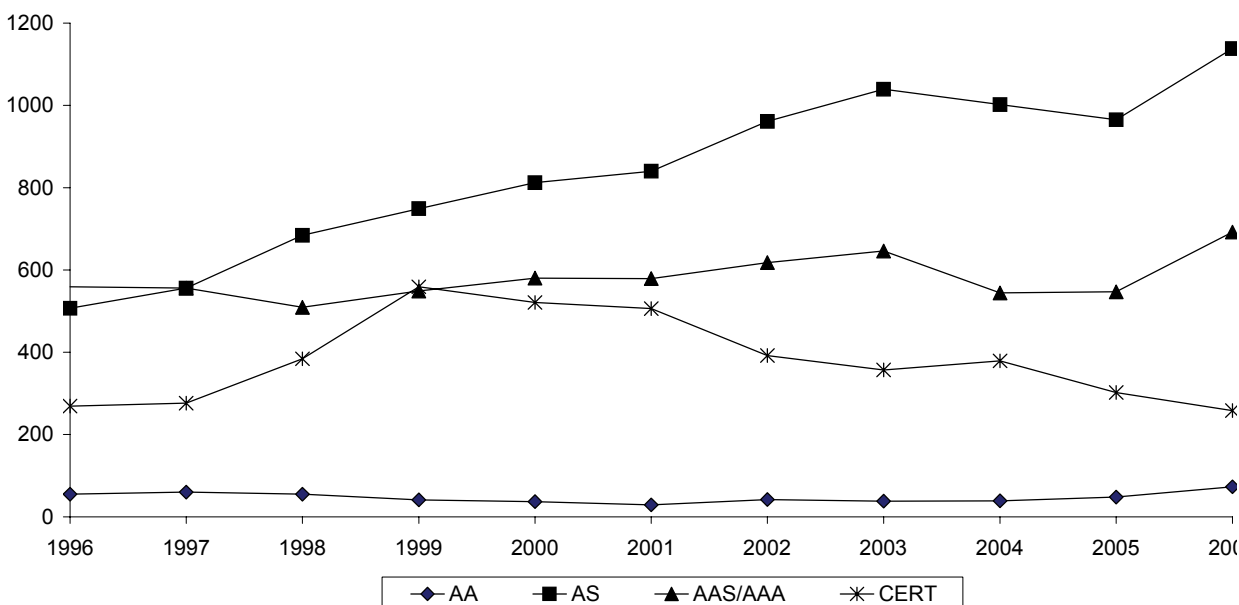


Figure 2. Number of Degrees and Certificates by Award Type (1996 to 2006)

¹ Note that for 2006, the figure includes seven graduates receiving the Associate of Applied Arts (AAA) degree in Studio Arts.

Demographically, TCC graduates were likely to be female, minority and older than the typical TCC student. Sixty-five percent of the 2006 graduates were female, as compared to only 61% of the fall 2005 student body. Twenty-six percent (26%) of the graduates were African-American and 11% other minority; in contrast, 20% of the student body was African-American and 12% other minority. Thirteen percent (13%) of the graduates were traditional aged college students (18-21) while 42% were under 30 years of age and 13% were 45 years of age or older; 33% of fall 2005 students were traditional aged, 67% were under 30, and only 9% were 45 or older.

Sixty-five percent (65%) of all graduates completed their requirements in five years or less. Students in college transfer curricula, for the most part, graduated in less time than students in occupational/technical curricula. Seventy-four percent (74%) of AA graduates and 70% of AS graduates completed all requirements in five or less years in contrast to 56% of AAS graduates and 63% of certificate/diploma graduates. Fifteen percent (15%) of all graduates finished in two years or less (16% of AA/AS graduates and 12% of AAS/certificate/diploma graduates).

Analysis of student course work indicates that 43% of the graduates had enrolled in at least one developmental English course, while 38% took at least one developmental math course, much lower percentage figures than those for 2004 survey respondents (11% lower in developmental English and 15% lower in developmental math). With respect to developmental English, nearly twice as many respondents took developmental writing (21%) as developmental reading (12%).

As noted in the 2004 graduate survey report, TCC students are graduating at younger ages than in the past. In 1996, only 6% of all graduates were traditional aged (18-21) and less than one-half (43%) were under the age of 30; in contrast, in 2006, the percentage (13%) of traditional aged graduates doubled, and over one-half (55%) were under 30. Also, as noted in the 2004 report, the percentage of female graduates has steadily increased. In 1996, 58% of all graduates were female; by 2006, the percentage had risen to 65%. In terms of ethnicity, the percentage of minority graduates has risen from 26% in 1996 to 37% in 2006. The percentage of African-American graduates rose during this period from 17% to 26%, while the percentage growth of other minority graduates was more modest, rising only 2% during the 10-year period. This evidence supports the latest IPEDS data reporting that TCC is the 12th largest associate degree producer in the nation for African-American graduates.

SURVEY RESULTS

Enrollment Information

Enrollment information comprised the first of five sections on the survey instrument and contained ten items that address a variety of issues. A majority of the respondents indicated that they studied full-time at TCC (55%), a 2% increase from 2004, and a 5% increase from 2002. The majority of the students took classes during the day (51%), while 10% took their classes online—a trend that may well grow as the college increases its distance learning offerings. Of those students taking their classes during the day, 75% were full-time, while the percentage of those taking their classes online was more evenly distributed (48% full-time, 52% part-time).

The proportion of respondents who attended another college or university prior to enrolling at TCC was slightly higher than those of previous graduating classes. While nearly one-half (49%) of the 2006 survey respondents had at some point attended another institution of higher education before enrolling at TCC, between 46% and 48% had done so over the past ten years.

Mirroring previous survey data, the majority of respondents described themselves as either employed (39%), recent high school graduates (22%), or homemakers (15%) when they enrolled at TCC. A smaller proportion of respondents transferred from other colleges (10%), served on active military duty (8%), or had recently been discharged from the military (6%). The largest change between 2004 and 2006 was the percentage of respondents who were employed, which decreased from 42% to 39%.

The majority of 2006 graduate survey respondents indicated they were employed full-time (51%) while enrolled at TCC, nearly the same figure as that of 2004 respondents. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of respondents were working part-time, a 4% decrease from 2004. The proportion of homemakers was 9%, 7% were unemployed students, and 5% of graduates indicated full-time military status. Fifty-one percent of those employed while attending TCC indicated that their employment was directly or somewhat related to their college curriculum, a much higher percentage than that of 2004 respondents (44%).

Financial aid has always been an important factor in student enrollment at TCC, and for 2006 graduates this was even truer than for previous graduating classes. Over one-half (54%) of the respondents reported receiving financial aid, compared to 48% in 2004, 49% in 2002, 44% in 1998, and 34% in 1994. This is consistent with the fact that TCC had the largest number of students receiving financial aid and total amount of aid awarded as compared to any of the other 22 VCCS colleges.

The percentage of 2006 respondents entering TCC with the primary goal of transferring to a four-year college or university (67%) was similar to that of 2004 respondents (68%). However, the percentage citing occupational/technical training as a primary goal was slightly lower (25% as compared to 28% in 2004). While few respondents enroll at TCC for the purpose of certification renewal or to take advantage of employer training opportunities, the number of 2006 survey respondents enrolling to renew their certification rose from 1% to 4%, while the number enrolling for employer training opportunities remained the same (1%). Three percent (3%) of the respondents indicated that their primary goal in attending TCC was to satisfy personal interests. Regardless of their goals in attending TCC, the vast majority of graduate respondents (93%) indicated that their TCC experience contributed to the fulfillment of their goals.

Closely mirroring previous reports, the most frequently cited reasons for choosing TCC continued to be close proximity to home (74%), low tuition (74%), and courses/curricula of interest (60%). Other reasons included availability of evening classes (45%), TCC's strong academic reputation (35%), small classes and individual attention (33%), the opportunity for personal improvement (31%), open admissions (31%), availability of financial aid (25%), obtaining better pay or a promotion (24%), and obtaining a job (16%).

Evaluation of Instruction and Student Services

Evaluation of instruction and student services was the second of five sections and contained six survey items that addressed a number of issues regarding instruction, student services, personal achievement, and overall satisfaction.

Instruction

The first item asked respondents to rate nine aspects of instruction. All results are provided graphically in Figure 3. Eight of the nine items were rated by at least 70% of respondents as either good or superior, with five items being perceived as good or superior by at least 90%. The nine items rated by 2006 survey respondents, in order of satisfaction, were average class size (95%), the overall quality of instruction (94%), the quality of instruction in major curriculum (92%), content of courses in major curriculum (90%), grading and testing (90%), instructor availability (87%), course availability/scheduling (82%), faculty advising (71%), and cost of books and supplies (41%). Consistently during the last 10 years graduates expressed high levels of satisfaction with all of these items except the cost of books and supplies.

When comparing current perceptions with survey data from 1996, levels of satisfaction remained largely consistent across most of these items. Indeed, the percentage difference was 1% or less for six of the items. Five percent more 2006 graduate survey respondents rated faculty advising as superior or good than did 1996 respondents, but 5% fewer were satisfied with grading and testing, and 4% fewer were satisfied with the cost of books and supplies.

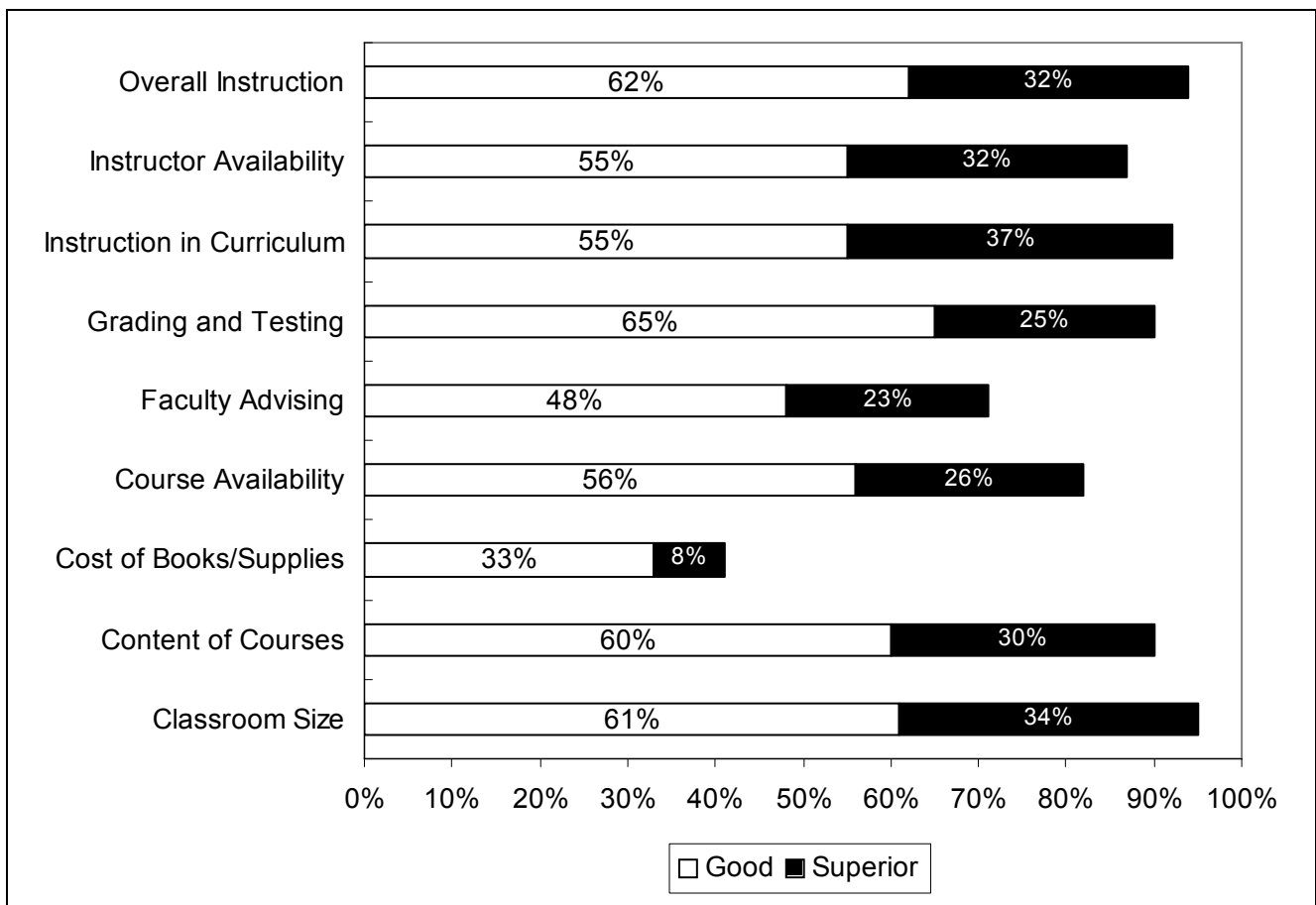


Figure 3. Satisfaction Rates for Various Aspects of Instruction (2006)

Graduates were also asked to rate the adequacy of preparation received at TCC in ten critical areas of knowledge and skills. All results are provided graphically in Figure 4. Respondents were generally positive about the adequacy of the various knowledge and skills acquired at TCC. Preparation in eight of the ten items was rated by at least 70% of respondents as either adequate or more than adequate, and one item was rated as adequate or more than adequate by 90% or more of the respondents. Graduates continued to express high levels of satisfaction with their preparation in the following: understanding written information (90%), thinking critically (88%), defining problems (87%), solving problems (87%), writing skills (86%), speaking skills (86%), decision-making skills (86%), mathematical skills (84%), technical job knowledge (69%), and technical job skills (67%). The lower satisfaction rates for the two technical-related skills may be due to a large proportion of respondents with a college transfer degree. After removing the “Not Applicable” responses, the satisfaction rates increased substantially to 94% for both items.

For the most part, 2006 graduate survey respondents were slightly less satisfied with TCC preparation than their 1996 counterparts. The same percentage of respondents in both years believed that TCC prepared them adequately or more than adequately in mathematical skills, but in all other areas, the preparation was rated lower by 2006 respondents. The largest differences in ratings over the ten years were in problem solving skills and speaking skills. Additionally, preparation in understanding written information and writing skills were cited as adequate by 4% fewer respondents in 2006.

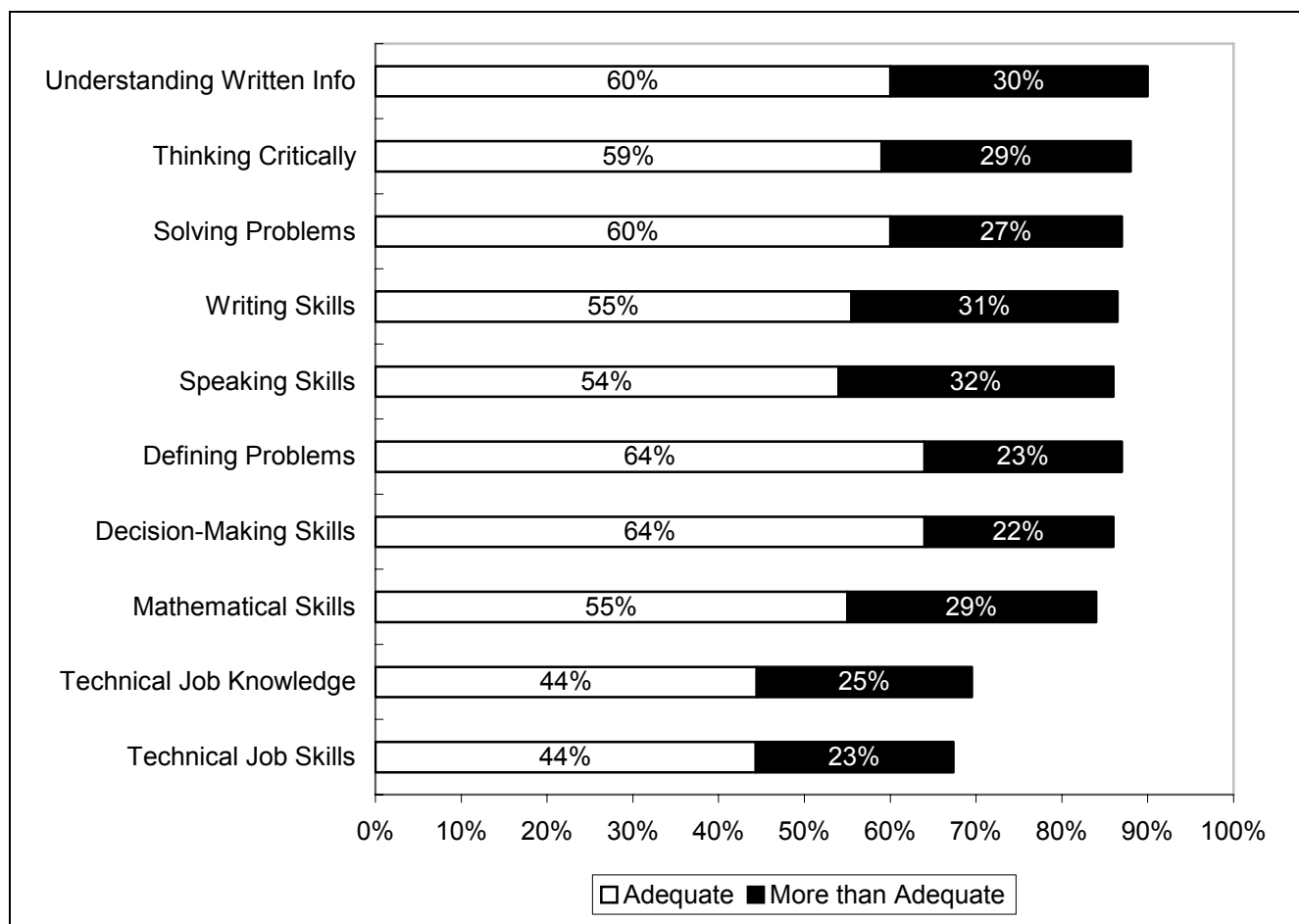


Figure 4. Satisfaction Rates for Preparation of Various Skill Areas (2006)

Student Services

Graduates were asked to estimate to what extent they used twelve different areas of student services and to express their degree of satisfaction with each of these services. Figure 5 provides a graphical representation of this service utilization. As might be expected, nearly all respondents used registration and admissions/records services. Ninety percent of the respondents took advantage of both academic counseling and library/learning resources services, and 86% used laboratory facilities. The TCC Information Center was used by 73% of the respondents, career counseling by 62%, financial aid by 60%, and the Help Desk by 57%. Services used by less than one-half of the respondents were student activities (43%), veterans affairs (30%), and the Co-Op program (24%).

A longitudinal ten-year analysis revealed usage rate differentials that ranged from -3% to +14%. Between 1996 and 2006, usage rates declined for only two student service areas: veterans affairs (-3%) and learning resources/library services (-2%), and increased for all others. The largest increases were in financial aid (14%) and laboratory facilities (10%). Similarly, usage rates increased substantially for the two items added to the 2002 survey: Help Desk (+12%) and TCC Information Center (+9%).

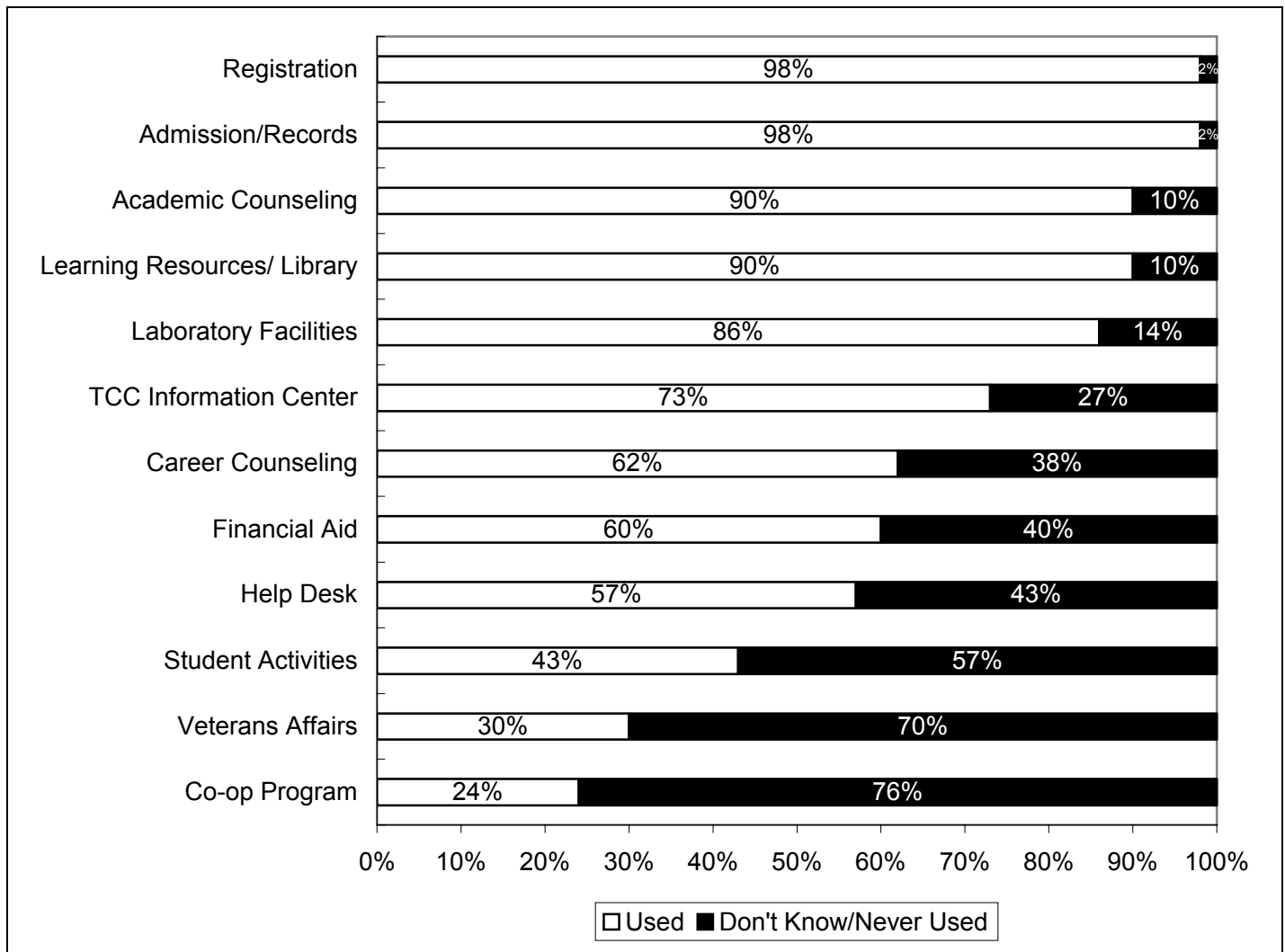


Figure 5. Usage Rates for Various Student Services (2006)

For the most part, 2006 graduate survey respondents were very satisfied with all 12 service areas. Nearly 90% of the graduates rated learning resources/library (89%) and registration (88%) as either superior or good. Four of the remaining services were rated as superior or good by over 80% or the respondents—veterans affairs (84%), laboratory facilities (83%), the TCC Information Center (82%), and the Co-Op program (80%), and another four by over 70%—admissions/records (79%), student activities (79%), the Help Desk (77%), and financial aid (73%). Only two services, academic counseling (66%) and career counseling (66%), were rated as good or superior by fewer than 70% by the respondents.

Graduate survey respondents in 2006 appeared to be more satisfied with student services than respondents were in 1996. In only two areas did fewer 2006 respondents rate services as superior or good: veterans affairs (-5%) and academic counseling (-1%). In two areas the satisfaction percentage increase was in double digits: laboratory facilities (11%) and career counseling (10%). The percentage increases in the other areas were 6% in both financial aid and learning resources/library services, 4% in student activities, 3% in both admissions/records and the Co-Op program, and 2% in registration services. Both services added to the graduate survey in 2002 saw large increases in satisfaction as well: the TCC Information Center (+6%) and the Help Desk (+2%).

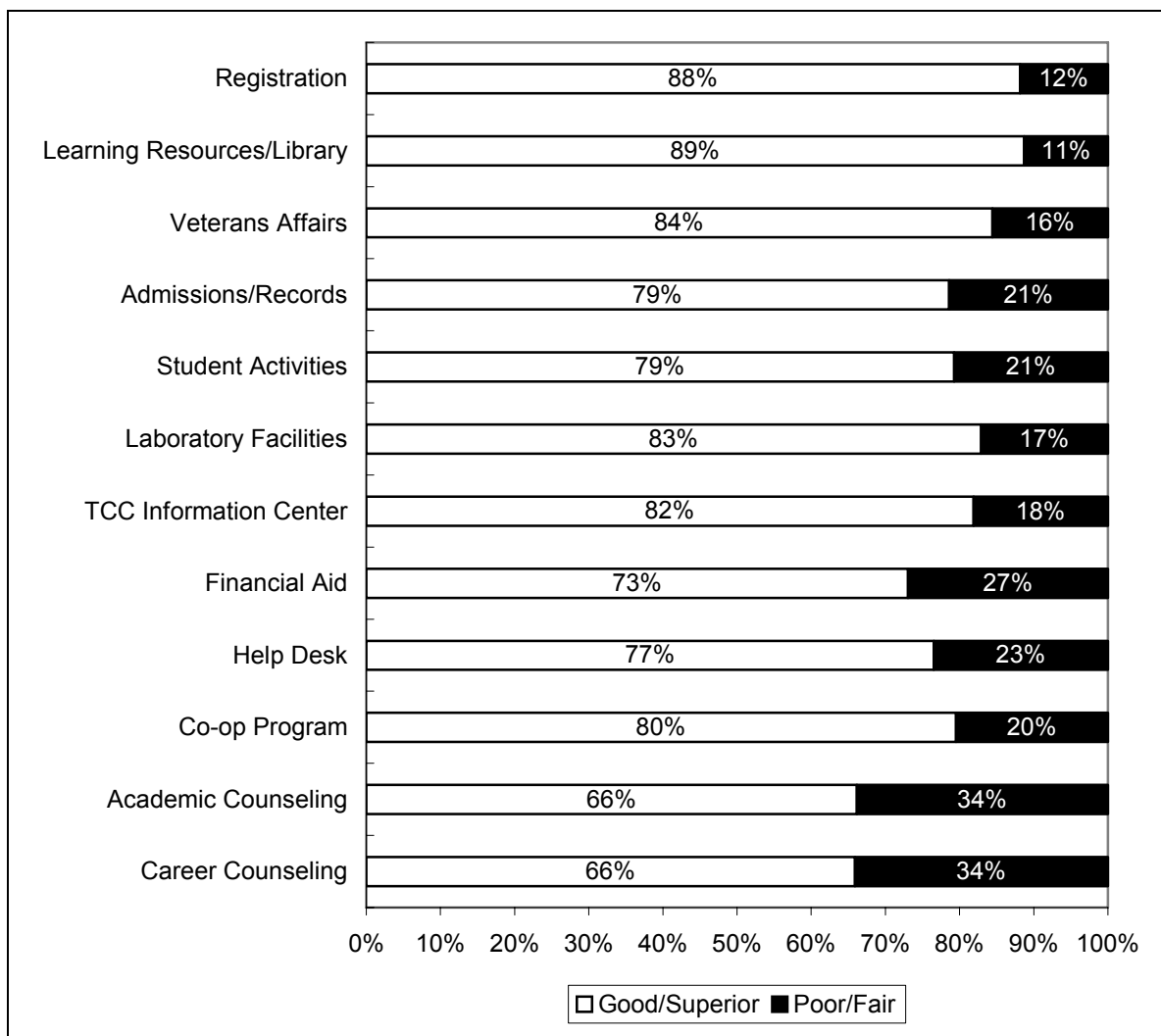


Figure 6. Satisfaction Rates for Various Student Services (2006)

Personal Achievement

Overall, respondents believed that as a result of their experiences at TCC they improved in 10 areas of personal development and general attitudes. Results for these 10 personal development and attitudinal areas are provided in Figure 7. Seventy percent or more of all respondents felt they improved in all areas, and 80% believed they improved in six of the areas—basic computer skills (88%), developing a career plan or path (86%), respecting diverse viewpoints (84%), developing lifelong goals (83%), developing a sense of ethical principles (83%), and Internet usage skills (81%). It is interesting that in this post 9-11 world acquiring a global perspective on current events was the category with the lowest improvement score (74%).

In eight of the ten categories, 2006 graduate survey respondents had higher improvement levels than 2004 respondents. Five percent more 2006 respondent believed that their sense of ethical principles was greater as a result of their TCC education than 2004 respondents; 3% more believed they had a greater respect for diverse views, had greater social responsibility, and had a better global perspective on current events; 2% more felt they had better career plans or paths; and 1% more believed their creative abilities, their Internet usage skills, and their library research skills had improved. The same percentage of 2006 respondents credited TCC with improving their basic computer skills as did 2004 respondents.

Four of the ten categories were added to the graduate survey in 2002, and in all of these, 2006 graduates believed more strongly that their experience at TCC led to improvement than did 2002 graduates. Five percent more 2006 respondent believed they had improved in “locating, evaluating, and using information on the Internet” than did 2002 respondents, 4% more felt they had improved in “locating, evaluating, and using information in the library,” as well as in developing a “career plan or path,” and 2% more felt they had improved in lifelong learning.

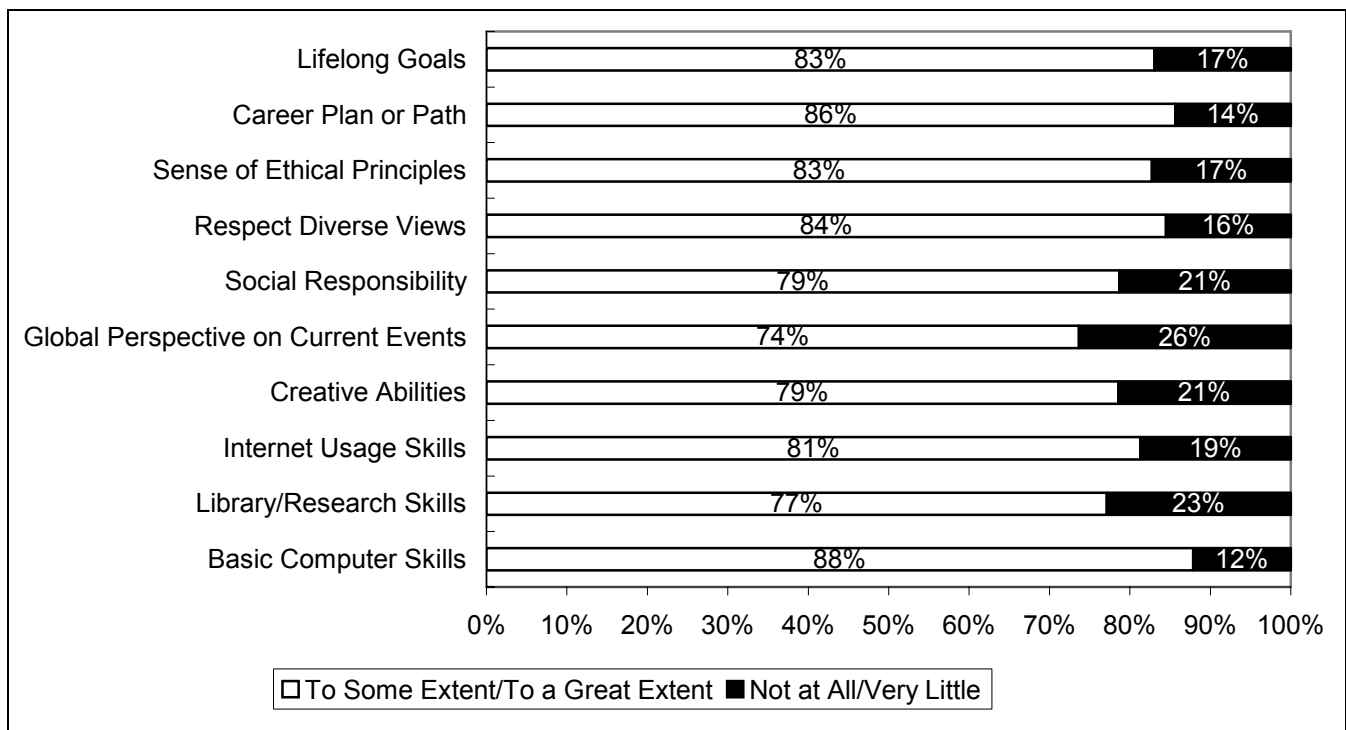


Figure 7. Improvement Rates for Various Areas of Personal Development and General Attitudes (2006)

Overall Satisfaction

The evaluation of instruction and student services section concluded with two items regarding the likelihood of recommending TCC to others. Similar to previous survey data, graduates responded positively to their overall experience at TCC. As in 1996, 2002, and 2004, nearly all respondents (98%) said they would recommend TCC to others wishing to continue their education. Additionally, 95% said they would recommend their curricula to others wishing to enter the same fields. This was the same percentage as 2004 survey respondents but 3% higher than the percentage for 1996 respondents. Selected comments from survey respondents are provided in Appendix C.

Employment Information

Employment information was the third of five sections and contained nine survey items that addressed a number of issues related to post-graduate employment such as employment status, annual income, job description, and preparation provided by TCC.

Current Employment Status

Figure 8 provides a breakdown of survey respondents' employment status based on 2006 survey data. The majority of graduates (54%) continued to be employed full-time at the time of the survey. Twenty percent (20%) of respondents were employed part-time. Far fewer respondents cited one of the other five employment conditions: not employed and not seeking employment (9%), unemployed but seeking employment (7%), homemakers (7%), and full-time military (4%). Less than 1% was employed in an apprenticeship program.

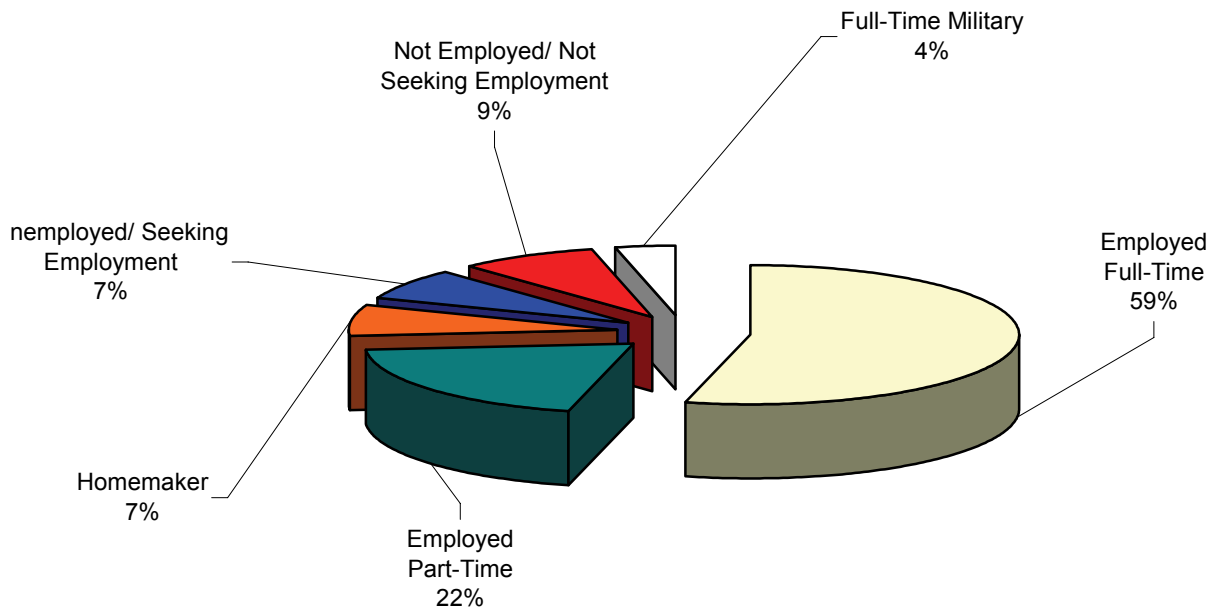


Figure 8. Employment Status after TCC Graduation (2006)

Gross Annual Income

The current employment status as self-reported by respondents has remained relatively unchanged during the past decade. While slightly fewer 2006 graduate survey respondents were employed full-time than 2004 respondents (-4%), 1% more were employed in full-time jobs than were 1996 respondents. The percentage of 2006 respondents employed part-time (20%) was only two percentage points lower than that of both 2004 and 1996 respondents.

Respondents were asked to report their current gross annual income by selecting one of seven pay bands. As might be expected due to cost-of-living increases, salaries of TCC graduates who were employed full-time were slightly greater than those of previous graduates. Approximately 39% of full-time employed respondents earned between \$26,000 and \$39,999. Twelve percent (12%) of the respondents earned between \$40,000 and \$50,000, and 13% earned \$50,000 or more.

For over ten years, \$26,000 has represented the minimum salary that was established to benchmark success for full-time employed graduates. Sixty-four percent (64%) of full-time respondents in 2006 earned at least this amount in gross annual salary. This represented a 5% increase from 2004 and a 24% increase from 1996. As seen in the figure shown below (Figure 9), the proportion has increased every year between 1996 and 2006. Similarly, \$11,000 was established as the minimum standard denoting success for part-time employed graduates. In 2006, 42% of part-time employed graduates earned at least \$11,000, which was a modest 5% increase from 1994, and a 16% increase from 1996.

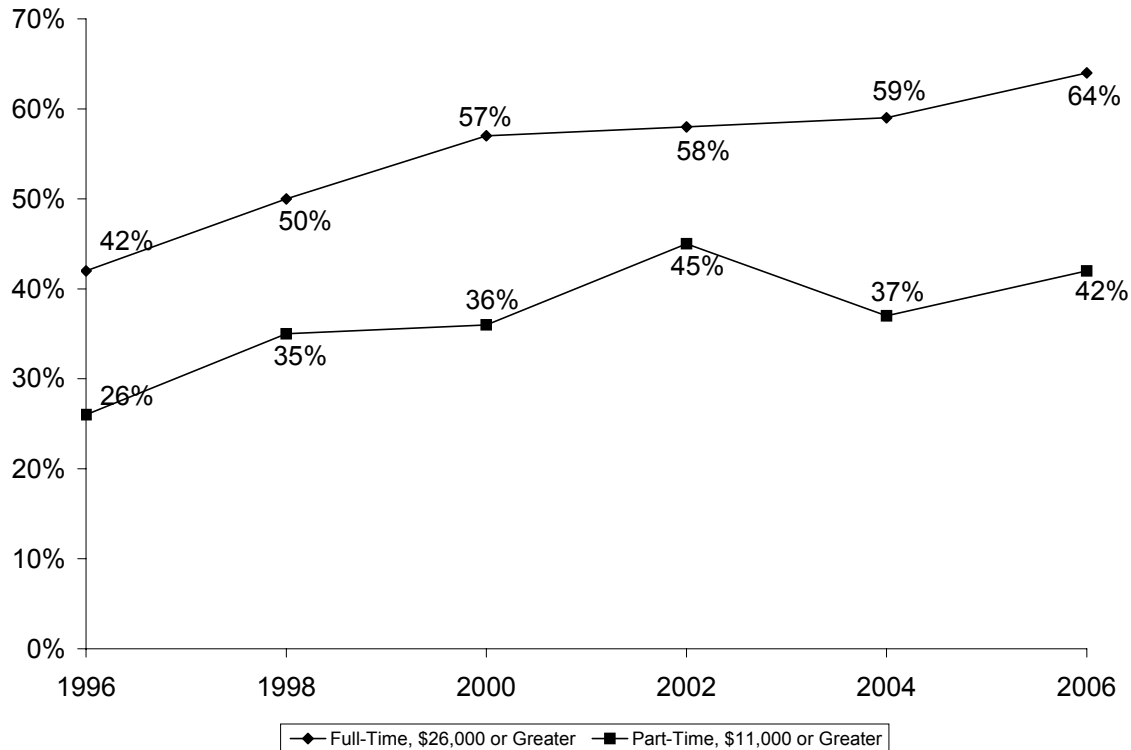


Figure 9. Earnings After TCC Graduation (1996-2006)

Interestingly, between 1996 and 2007, the consumer price index (CPI) has risen nearly 25%.² This is a slightly higher figure than that of full-time graduate survey respondents earning \$26,000 or higher (22%) and indicates that TCC graduate salaries do, indeed, keep pace with inflation.

TCC Curriculum and Field of Employment

Sixty-two percent (62%) of respondents indicated that they were presently employed in a field that was at least somewhat related to their curriculum at TCC, the same figure reported by 1996 survey respondents. A much larger percentage of graduates employed full-time (71%) reported this than did graduates employed part-time (44%).

Of those graduates currently in positions not related to their TCC curriculum, most respondents (52%) indicated that they were already working with their employer before completing the TCC program. Historically, this was the most frequently cited reason (43% in 2004 and 48% in 2002). Other commonly cited reasons included not being sufficiently qualified for jobs in their fields of study (17%) and having changed career goals or preferences (13%).

Students who cited that they were not sufficiently qualified for jobs in their fields were graduates of seven occupational/technical programs (Management, Information Systems Technology, Administration of Justice, Occupational Therapy Assistant, Industrial Technology, Administrative Support Technology, and Paralegal Studies), and one Career Studies Certificate program. Information Systems Technology and Paralegal Studies were also cited in 2004.

Consistent with previous graduate surveys, the majority (78%) of respondents employed in fields related to their curricula indicated that their studies satisfactorily prepared them for their jobs. Another 18% of respondents perceived their preparation as “good in some areas.” When disaggregating by employment status, 79% of full-time employed respondents perceived a satisfactory level of preparation, representing a 1% increase from 2004. Part-time employed respondents had a lower level of satisfaction (72%), but this was a 5% increase from 2004. No respondents engaged in military service responded to this question.

TCC Curriculum Impact on Current Position

Nearly two-thirds (63%) of the responding graduates were employed by the same company that employed them while attending TCC. This is a slightly higher percentage than that of 2004 graduates (+3%) and a much higher percentage than that of 1996 graduates (+18%). Of these respondents, 21% received promotions or pay increases upon graduation. This represented a 10% decrease both from 2004 and from 1996.

Respondents were asked to determine the extent to which their curriculum helped them across four areas related to their employment. Table 1 provides percentage rates of graduates perceiving the TCC curriculum helping, at least to some extent, these four aspects of employment. Forty-one percent (41%) of respondents indicated that their curriculum helped, at least to some extent, with obtaining their current employment. Forty-three percent (43%) of full-time employed respondents indicated their curriculum at TCC helped them obtain employment, a 4% decrease from the figure for 2004 respondents. Thirty-eight percent

² Consumer Price Index, 1913- (). Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis web site. Retrieved May 16, 2007, from <http://www.minneapolisfed.org/research/data/us/calc/hist1913.cfm>

(38%) of respondents employed part-time indicated that the TCC curriculum helped them obtain their jobs, a 4% increase from the figure for 2004 respondents.

Aspects of Employment Impacted Positively by Curriculum	Employment Status								
	Full-Time			Part-Time			Total		
	2006	2004	2002	2006	2004	2002	2006	2004	2002
Obtain Present Job	43%	47%	48%	38%	34%	44%	41%	42%	44%
Develop New Skills	66%	68%	60%	47%	39%	44%	61%	60%	55%
Upgrade Performance and Expertise	65%	62%	58%	42%	35%	46%	59%	55%	55%
Qualifying for Promotions or Pay Increases	47%	46%	44%	21%	20%	22%	41%	39%	38%

Table 1. Percentage of Graduates Perceiving TCC Curriculum Impacting Various Aspects of Employment (2006, 2004, 2002)

When asked the extent to which their curriculum helped to develop new job skills, 55% found that the curriculum helped at least to some extent. Nearly two-thirds (66%) of those employed full-time, and just under one-half (47%) of those employed part-time, believed the curriculum helped them develop new job skills. The percentage figure for those employed full-time was similar to that reported by 2004 survey respondents (-2%), but the figure for those employed part-time was much higher (+8%).

Graduates were then asked the extent to which the curriculum assisted them in upgrading job performance and expertise. Fifty-nine percent (59%) indicated help to some extent, which represented a slight increase from the figure for 2004 respondents (+4%).

The last of this series of four items asked for the degree to which the curriculum aided graduates in qualifying for promotions or pay increases. Consistent with previous survey results, 41% of all respondents perceived help at least to some extent in this area. Forty-seven percent (47%) of full-time employed graduates noted this level of assistance, nearly the same percentage as for 2004 respondents (+1%). Twenty-one percent (21%) of part-time employed graduates acknowledged that their curriculum helped them to qualify for promotion or a pay raise, again similar to 2004 survey findings (+1%).

Educational Information

Educational information was the fourth of five sections and contained eight items that addressed educational plans, current enrollment and performance information, and preparation received at TCC.

Current Enrollment Status

Nearly one-half (49%) of responding graduates indicated they were currently enrolled at an institution of higher education. Seventy percent (70%) of these graduates attended a four-year college or university, 18% attended a two-year college, and the remaining 12% were enrolled in other types of institutions. Twelve percent (12%) fewer 2006 survey respondents were enrolled in four-year institutions than were 2004 respondents and 7% fewer than were 1996 respondents. Perhaps this decline is indicative of both the rising costs to attend a four-year institution as well as the increasing choices in postsecondary education available today. As was the case in 2004, a large majority of graduates (75%) who were not continuing their education in fall 2006 indicated plans to continue within two years.

The majority (65%) of those enrolled in a four-year institution were enrolled full-time, a much higher figure than the 58% full-time enrollment of 2004 respondents, or the 55% full-time enrollment of 1996 respondents. As might be expected, the majority (70%) of 2006 survey respondents attending two-year institutions were enrolled part-time. The split between full-time and part-time enrollment was more even for those attending other types of institutions (45% full-time, 55% part-time). Eighty percent (80%) of 2006 survey respondents receiving college transfer degrees at TCC (AA/AS) transferred to four-year colleges and universities in contrast to only 48% who received occupational/technical degrees (AAS, AAA, certificates, diplomas).

As might be expected of students with two years of college under their belt, the majority of 2006 respondents attending four-year colleges or universities were classified as juniors (third-year). Another 26% received advanced placement as seniors (fourth-year), but 5% were classified as sophomores (second-year) and 4% as freshmen (first-year). These classifications are consistent with the findings from previous graduate surveys.

Continuing Education

Of those continuing their education, 78% were enrolled in majors related to their programs of study at TCC. This proportion has remained relatively steady during the last 10 years. Interestingly, while 80% of those enrolled in four-year colleges and universities chose similar curricula to what they studied at TCC, only 58% of those enrolled in two-year institutions did so. Perhaps this can be explained by the fact that many who transferred to two-year schools did so to study technical curricula to prepare them for new career fields.

When asked to rate their performance at their current institution of higher education, 94% cited that their performance was better or about the same as expected, a very slight increase from the 2004 survey results. Further analysis revealed that 14% felt their performance was much higher than expected, 28% felt it was higher than expected, and 52% felt it was about what they expected. Only 6% of the respondents felt their performance was lower than expected, and less than 1% felt it was much lower than expected.

Eighty-one percent (81%) of the 2006 respondent rated their course work at TCC as excellent or satisfactory in preparing them to continue their education at other institutions. Fourteen percent (14%) believed their course work was good "in some areas." Only 5% felt their course work was fair or inadequate.

Eighty-eight percent (88%) of responding graduates considered the quality of instruction provided by TCC to be the same or better than that provided by their current educational institution. In all, 14% believed the quality of instruction at TCC to be superior,

23% believed it to be slightly better, 51% believed it to be the same, 10% believed it to be slightly worse, and 2% believed it to be significantly worse. These results were similar to those reported in previous graduate surveys.

CONCLUSION

Two years ago, the 2004 graduate survey report concluded with the observation that TCC is increasingly enrolling a younger, traditional group of students focused primarily on transferring to four-year colleges and universities and earning baccalaureate degrees. The 2006 survey results do nothing to dispel this notion. The 2006 graduates were younger than their counterparts two years ago and approximately the same percentage was enrolled in college transfer programs. The 2004 survey report also indicated that graduates not only used student services more frequently than did graduates in previous years, but that they were generally more satisfied with these services. Again, 2006 survey results confirm these earlier findings. Two-thirds of all 2006 graduate survey respondents rated all 12 student service areas as either superior or good.

Regardless of their intent upon enrolling at TCC, almost all 2006 TCC graduate respondents believed that their experience at TCC contributed positively to fulfilling their goals, and almost all would gladly recommend TCC to other potential students. As one graduate reported, "The education I received at TCC has changed my life" And as another stated, "I sincerely believe that TCC was the best time and money I have spent in a very long time."

APPENDIX A

2006 Graduate Survey Instrument



TIDEWATER COMMUNITY COLLEGE
From here, go anywhere.™

2006 Graduate Survey

****Please check the appropriate answer in the boxes provided****

A. ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

- 1) Did you attend TCC primarily as a: 1 ☐ Full-time student (12+ credit hours) 2 ☐ Part-time student
- 2) Did you attend class primarily during the: 1 ☐ Day 2 ☐ Night (after 6 p.m.) 3 ☐ Online
- 3) Before you enrolled at TCC, had you ever attended another college/university? 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No
- 4) Which **ONE** of the following was true when you enrolled at TCC? (choose the one that best fits)
- 1 ☐ Enrolled directly from high school
 - 2 ☐ Enrolled while on active duty
 - 3 ☐ Enrolled upon military discharge
 - 4 ☐ Enrolled while working
 - 5 ☐ Homemaker, enrolled AFTER raising a family
 - 6 ☐ Homemaker, enrolled WHILE raising a family
 - 7 ☐ Transferred from another community college
 - 8 ☐ Transferred from a four-year school
- 5) During the time you attended TCC, were you:
- 1 ☐ Employed full-time (35 or more hours per week)
 - 2 ☐ Employed part-time (less than 35 hours per week)
 - 3 ☐ Unemployed and seeking employment
 - 4 ☐ Homemaker, not employed outside the home
 - 5 ☐ Not employed and not seeking employment
 - 6 ☐ Full-time military
 - 7 ☐ Employed in apprenticeship program
- 6) If you were employed while attending TCC, was your job related to your curriculum at the college?
- 1 ☐ Yes, directly related 2 ☐ Yes, somewhat related 3 ☐ No, not related
- 7) Did you receive financial aid while attending TCC? 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No
- 8) What was your primary goal in attending TCC? **(CHECK ONLY ONE)**
- 1 ☐ To obtain occupational/technical training that would improve present employment or future employment
 - 2 ☐ To obtain an occupational/technical degree or certificate
 - 3 ☐ To obtain an associate degree in order to transfer to a four-year college/university
 - 4 ☐ To obtain specific course credits that would transfer to a four-year college/university
 - 5 ☐ To enroll in courses that would satisfy specialized/personal interests
 - 6 ☐ To take advantage of employer training opportunities (i.e. Shipyard Apprentice Program)
 - 7 ☐ To obtain or renew a certification
- 9) To what extent do you feel your educational experience at TCC contributed to the fulfillment of your goal?
- 1 ☐ To a great extent 2 ☐ To some extent 3 ☐ Uncertain 4 ☐ Hardly at all 5 ☐ Not at all
- 10) Please indicate the most important reasons you attended TCC : **(CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY)**
- 1 ☐ Low tuition
 - 2 ☐ Open admission policy
 - 3 ☐ Close to home
 - 4 ☐ Good academic reputation
 - 5 ☐ Availability of financial aid
 - 6 ☐ Offered courses/curriculum of interest
 - 7 ☐ Employer requirement/suggestion (i.e. NNSY Apprenticeship)
 - 8 ☐ Small classes/individual attention
 - 9 ☐ Only program offered locally in my area of interest
 - 10 ☐ Availability of evening courses
 - 11 ☐ Personal improvement
 - 12 ☐ To obtain a job
 - 13 ☐ To obtain better pay/promotion
 - 14 ☐ Availability of public transportation

B. EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTION AND STUDENT SERVICES**11) INSTRUCTION:** Please rate the instruction at TCC.

	Superior	Good	Fair	Poor
1 Average class size	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
2 Content of courses in major curriculum	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
3 Cost of books and supplies	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
4 Course advisement from faculty members	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
5 Course availability/scheduling	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
6 Grading and testing	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
7 Instructor availability	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
8 Overall quality of instruction	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
9 Quality of instruction in major curriculum	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
10 Online Instruction	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>

12) STUDENT SERVICES: Please rate the services and facilities at TCC.

	Superior	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know/Never Used
1 Academic Counseling	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
2 Admissions and Records	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
3 Career Counseling	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
4 Co-op Program	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
5 Financial Aid	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
6 Help Desk (computer/technical problems)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
7 Laboratory Facilities	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
8 Learning Resources/Library Services	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
9 Registration	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
10 Student Activities (SGA, intramurals, cultural events, etc.)	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
11 TCC Information Center at 822-1122	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
12 Veterans' Affairs	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
13 New Student Orientation	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
14 Online Services	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>

13) How adequately did TCC's academic program prepare you in the following areas?

	More than Adequate	Adequate	Needs Improvement	Not Applicable
1 Decision-making skills	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
2 Defining problems	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
3 Mathematical skills	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
4 Speaking skills	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
5 Solving problems	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
6 Technical job-related knowledge	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
7 Technical job skills	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
8 Thinking critically	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
9 Understanding written information	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
10 Writing skills	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered "Needs Improvement" to any of the areas in question 13, please explain:

14) As a result of your experience at TCC, to what extent do you feel you have gained or made progress in the following areas:

	To a great extent	To some extent	Very little	Not at all
1 Basic computer functions and applications	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
2 Locating, evaluating, and using information in the library	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
3 Locating, evaluating, and using information on the Internet	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
4 Creative abilities	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
5 Global perspective on current events	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
6 Social responsibility	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
7 Respect for the diverse views and beliefs of others	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
8 Sense of ethical principles	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
9 Career plan or path	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
10 Personal lifelong goals	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>

15) Would you recommend TCC to someone wishing to continue their education? 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

16) Would you recommend TCC to someone wishing to enter the same curriculum you completed? 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

C. EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

- 17) What is your current employment status?
- 1 ☐ Employed full-time (35 or more hours per week)
 - 2 ☐ Employed part-time (less than 35 hours per week)
 - 3 ☐ Unemployed and seeking employment
 - 4 ☐ Homemaker, not employed outside the home
 - 5 ☐ Not employed and not seeking employment
 - 6 ☐ Full-time military or other service (Volunteer, Peace Corps, etc.)
 - 7 ☐ Employed in apprenticeship program

If you are employed, whether full-time or part-time, please answer Questions 18 through 25 below. If you currently hold more than one job, respond to the following items as they apply to your PRIMARY employment. If you are not now employed, skip to Section D.

18) Please describe your job:

1 Job Title: _____

2 Name of Employer: _____

3 Employer's Street Address: _____

4 Employer's City: _____

5 Employer's State and Zip Code: _____

19) 1 May we contact your employer to conduct an employer follow-up survey? 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No 2 Supervisor's Name _____

20) What is your gross annual income from this job? (Do not include supplemental income, i.e. retirement, investment income.)

1 ☐ Under \$5,000 2 ☐ 5,000 – 7,999 3 ☐ 8,000 – 10,999 4 ☐ 11,000 – 13,999

5 ☐ 14,000 – 16,999 6 ☐ 17,000 – 19,999 7 ☐ 20,000 – 22,999 8 ☐ 23,000 – 25,999

9 ☐ 26,000 – 29,999 10 ☐ 30,000 – 34,999 11 ☐ 35,000 – 39,999 12 ☐ 40,000 – 44,999

13 ☐ 45,000 – 49,999 14 ☐ Over \$50,000

21) 1 Are you currently employed by the same company that employed you during your attendance at TCC? 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No
2 → If yes, did you receive a promotion or pay raise (other than cost of living raise) after obtaining your degree?

1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

22) Are you presently employed in a field related to your curriculum at TCC?

1 ☐ Yes, directly related 2 ☐ Yes, somewhat related 3 ☐ No, not related (SKIP TO QUESTION 24)

23) If your present job is related to your curriculum at TCC, to what extent did the curriculum you completed prepare you for this job?

- 1 ☐ My preparation was excellent
- 2 ☐ My preparation was satisfactory
- 3 ☐ Good in some areas only
- 4 ☐ Fair, but all areas could have been better
- 5 ☐ My preparation was inadequate

24) For each area listed below, to what extent did your curriculum at TCC help you in your present job?

		To a great extent	To some extent	Very Little	Not at all
1	Helped to obtain present job	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Helped to develop new skills in job held while attending TCC	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Helped to upgrade performance and expertise in job held while attending TCC	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Helped in qualifying for promotions or pay increases in job held while attending TCC	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>

- 25)** If your present job is **NOT** related to the curriculum you completed at TCC, please indicate the **PRIMARY** reason why. **(Select only ONE response)**

- 1 ☐ Am active duty military
- 2 ☐ Was already working with present employer before I completed the program
- 3 ☐ Not sufficiently qualified for jobs in my field of preparation
- 4 ☐ Changed career goal or preferred to work in another field
- 5 ☐ Best opportunities were out of related fields
- 6 ☐ Could not find a job in my field of preparation
- 7 ☐ Could not find a job in my field without relocating

D. EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

- 26)** If you have not continued your education, do you plan to continue within the next two years? 1 ☐ Yes
2 ☐ No
3 ☐ Undecided

If you have CONTINUED your education since graduation from TCC, please answer Questions 27 through 32 below.

- 27)** What type of institution are you currently attending?
1 ☐ Two-year community college 2 ☐ Four-year college/university 3 ☐ Other

- 28)** Please indicate your current enrollment status and classification.

- 1 Status: 1 ☐ Full-time student (course load of 12 or more credit hours)
2 ☐ Part-time student

- 2 Classification: 1 ☐ Freshman 2 ☐ Sophomore 3 ☐ Junior 4 ☐ Senior

- 29)** Is your current major the same as or related to the curriculum you completed at TCC? 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

- 30)** How would you rate your performance at your current college/university?

- 1 ☐ Much higher than expected
- 2 ☐ Higher than expected
- 3 ☐ About the same as expected
- 4 ☐ Lower than expected
- 5 ☐ Much lower than expected

- 31)** How well did the courses you completed at TCC prepare you for continuing your education?

- 1 ☐ My preparation was excellent
- 2 ☐ My preparation was satisfactory
- 3 ☐ Good in some areas only
- 4 ☐ Fair, but all areas could have been better
- 5 ☐ My preparation was inadequate

- 32)** How does the quality of instruction at TCC compare to that of the school in which you are currently enrolled?

- 1 ☐ Superior
- 2 ☐ Slightly better
- 3 ☐ About the same
- 4 ☐ Slightly worse
- 5 ☐ Significantly worse

Comments? _____

E. GENERAL COMMENTS

The faculty and staff of TCC would appreciate any comments which you may have concerning the curricula or services offered at TCC. Please feel free to use the back of this page for this purpose. Thank you very much for participating in this survey.

APPENDIX B

College Five-Year Summary Table

College Five-Year Summary Table

Data Interpretation

The selected data in the table on the following page indicate the five-year compiled responses to questions from the 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, and 2006 graduate questionnaires. A total of 3,867 responses were received from 9,104 graduates. The percentages may not always add to 100 percent because not all respondents answered every question.

NOTES:

1. Tidewater Community College Employed in Curriculum Related Field:

The percentage column is calculated on the total number of respondents who indicated that their current employment status was full-time, part-time, or apprenticeship, and not by the total number of respondents.

2. Tidewater Community College Preparation for Employment in a Related Field:

The percentage column is calculated on the total number of respondents who were employed in a related field, and not the total number of respondents.

3. Tidewater Community College Preparation to Continue Education:

The percentage column is calculated on the total number of respondents who indicated they were currently attending another institution.

1998 - 2006 GRADUATE SURVEY SUMMARY
TOTAL COLLEGE

TOTAL RESPONDENTS = 3,867

EDUCATIONAL/EMPLOYMENT DATA

PRIMARY GOAL IN ATTENDING	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
O/T TRAINING FOR DEGREE OR JOB	1,200	31.0%
TRANSFER DEGREE OR COURSES	2,466	63.8%
PERSONAL SATISFACTION	1027	2.8%
EMPLOYER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES	30	0.8%
OBTAIN/RENEW CERTIFICATION	34	0.9%

CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS

FULL-TIME	2,137	55.3%
PART-TIME	759	19.6%
UNEMPLOYED AND SEEKING	236	6.1%
NOT IN LABOR FORCE	507	13.1%
MILITARY	150	3.9%
APPRENTICESHIP	10	0.3%

EMPLOYED IN CURRICULUM RELATED FIELD

YES	1,838	63.2%
NO	997	34.3%

TCC PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT IN RELATED FIELD

EXCELLENT	745	40.5%
SATISFACTORY	608	33.1%
GOOD IN SOME AREAS	342	18.6%
FAIR	53	2.9%
INADEQUATE	17	0.9%

TYPE INSTITUTION CURRENTLY ATTENDING

2 YEAR	347	9.0%
4 YEAR	1,554	40.2%
OTHER	124	3.2%

(A) EMPLOYED IN CURRICULUM RELATED FIELD

(B) CURRENTLY ATTENDING AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

A OR B	3,115	80.6%
--------	-------	-------

TCC PREPARATION TO CONTINUE EDUCATION

EXCELLENT	703	34.7%
SATISFACTORY	843	41.6%
GOOD IN SOME AREAS	282	13.9%
FAIR	79	3.9%
INADEQUATE	24	1.2%

RECOMMEND TCC TO SOMEONE IN SAME CURRICULUM

YES	3,630	93.9%
NO	211	5.5%

1998 - 2006 GRADUATE SURVEY SUMMARY
(Continued)

INSTRUCTIONAL EVALUATION	SUPERIOR # %	GOOD # %	FAIR # %	POOR # %	N/R* # %	TOTAL # %
OVERALL QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION	1,242 32%	2,385 62%	200 5%	15 -	25 1%	3,867 100%
QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION IN CURR	1,414 37%	2,128 55%	261 7%	25 1%	39 1%	3,867 100%
INSTRUCTOR AVAILABILITY	1,251 32%	2,133 55%	403 10%	39 1%	41 1%	3,867 100%
COURSE ADVISEMENT FROM FACULTY	872 23%	1,855 48%	842 22%	211 5%	87 2%	3,867 100%
CONTENT OF COURSES IN MAJOR	1,166 30%	2,324 60%	285 7%	34 1%	58 1%	3,867 100%
AVERAGE CLASS SIZE	1,309 34%	2,351 61%	167 4%	10 -	30 1%	3,867 100%
GRADING AND TESTING	983 25%	2,501 65%	309 8%	36 1%	38 1%	3,867 100%
COST OF BOOKS/SUPPLIES	317 8%	1,287 33%	1,672 43%	531 14%	60 2%	3,867 100%
COURSE AVAILABILITY/SCHEDULING **	1,001 26%	2,151 56%	602 16%	74 2%	39 1%	3,867 100%
ONLINE INSTRUCTION**	182 25%	324 45%	107 15%	37 5%	76 10%	726 100%

STUDENT SERVICES EVALUATION	SUPERIOR # %	GOOD # %	FAIR # %	POOR # %	N/R* # %	TOTAL # %
ACADEMIC COUNSELING	751 19%	1,615 42%	787 20%	313 8%	401 10%	3,867 100%
CO-OP PROGRAM	190 5%	536 14%	175 5%	53 1%	2,913 75%	3,867 100%
VETERANS AFFAIRS	414 11%	508 13%	129 3%	35 1%	2,781 72%	3,867 100%
FINANCIAL AID	567 15%	943 24%	383 10%	188 5%	1,786 46%	3,867 100%
LEARNING RESOURCES/LIBRARY	1,022 26%	1,910 49%	430 11%	29 1%	476 12%	3,867 100%
ADMISSIONS AND RECORDS	734 18%	2,172 56%	667 17%	154 4%	140 4%	3,867 100%
REGISTRATION **	1,096 27%	2,143 55%	452 12%	56 1%	120 3%	3,867 100%
STUDENT ACTIVITIES	330 9%	890 23%	301 8%	67 2%	2,279 59%	3,867 100%
LABORATORY FACILITIES	554 14%	1,764 46%	589 15%	88 2%	872 23%	3,867 100%
CAREER COUNSELING	387 10%	1,057 27%	663 17%	233 6%	1,527 39%	3,867 100%
HELP DESK **	265 11%	651 28%	246 10%	50 2%	1,144 49%	2,356 100%
TCC INFORMATION CENTER **	375 16%	911 39%	309 13%	40 2%	718 30%	2,356 100%
ONLINE SERVICES**	168 23%	354 49%	81 11%	11 2%	112 15%	726 100%
NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION**	78 11%	214 29%	81 11%	32 4%	321 44%	726 100%

* No response for Instructional Evaluation; No response/Don't know/Never used for Student Services

**Course Availability and Registration were not evaluated until 1996. The Help Desk and TCC Information Center were not evaluated until 2002. Online instruction, online services, and new student orientation were not evaluated until 2006

APPENDIX C

Selected Comments by 2006 Survey Respondents

SELECTED COMMENTS BY 2006 SURVEY RESPONDENTS*

- The teachers were excellent in all the years I attended. Tidewater Community College made me learn and realize the importance of education. The teachers have helped me in so many ways. I feel much more confident in the work that I do now. I love TCC!
- I loved attending TCC and recommend it to anyone in any walk of life!!!!
- The education I received at TCC has changed my life. I have the career that I have always wanted. I plan to continue my education in the future. TCC fit my life and is a wonderful institution. The tuition was affordable, financial aid was readily available, the professors were wonderful, and with so many campuses getting to class was a breeze. Thank you.
- I loved TCC! I am so glad I went there first before a four-year college. I had the best experience at TCC and the best teachers ever. Truly enjoyed going there and wish it was a four-year school to continue there.
- The education I received at TCC was excellent. Every class challenged me, I learned in every class and every instructor seemed to really care about my education. This is a bit different now that I am in a four-year university. I miss TCC! Thanks for everything.
- TCC was great for me, and I would come back, again, and again. My teachers at TCC built my self-esteem, and gave me great hope. I really love them for that. Everything that was in my major, I needed it for my former job, and my current job.
- TCC offered me the best course of action for someone who was not ready for a four year college...Thank You for all of your help.
- I absolutely LOVED TCC! Now that I'm at [current school], I miss it HORRIBLY!!! I really wish TCC were a four-year university because the staff there is unbelievable!!! Thanks a million!!
- I completely enjoyed my growth experience at TCC. The school is wonderful. There are many opportunities and choices for classes and locations including the internet. The online classes were perfect for my schedule. My professors were always ready and willing to help at any time. God Bless this institution always.
- This is my second associate's degree from TCC. I highly recommend this college to others, especially while at work. I've praised your online courses and recommended them to classmates, former classmates, and even potential students. I am approximately 9 semester hours away from my Bachelor's...thanks to you! I do regret however that I may not be taking anymore classes from TCC since I will be wrapping up my education. Who knows, maybe I'll come back and be on the other side. Thank you again!
- For the most part both the faculty and staff at TCC are very concerned for the students, the professors really care about the subjects they teach, wanting the

* Comments were edited for style, but the substance remains unchanged. Names of individuals and institutions were deleted.

students to learn and do well. And the staff is always there and available to help out in any way.

- Attending [current school], I've come to appreciate the small class sizes of TCC and the attention the professors / instructors provide. It is nice to have instructors know who you are and are involved in your development of the subject matter.
- I think that TCC is at the leading edge as far as making online classes available. They are excellent.
- My time at TCC was truly a good experience for me. I had been out of school for about six years before I decided to go back, so I had to learn to be a student all over again. The special attention I received from the instructors at TCC was essential in me wanting to further my education. I've got to admit I kind of miss it sometimes because I got used to the campus and the friends that I met while I was there. Operations at the major university move a little faster but I am adapting to my surrounding pretty well and I will be okay in the long run. TCC was indeed the perfect transition phase for me. Thank you!
- I wish TCC was a four-year school because I learned so much!
- The curriculum taught at TCC did an excellent job preparing me for future challenges.
- I thoroughly enjoyed attending school at TCC, especially my membership and involvement in Phi Theta Kappa. I encourage the administrators at TCC to strive to get students involved in clubs and/or extra curricular activities. I believe that active participation in clubs/extra curricular activities motivates students to do well in their academic classes, and teaches the importance focused social interaction and community involvement.
- TCC provided me with an excellent opportunity to succeed in my current field. The education and skills that I received while at TCC was second to none.
- I cannot tell you how valuable my time at TCC was. Thank you for everything.
- Thank you. I miss the family atmosphere of TCC. [My current school] does not have that feel.
- I had a great experience at TCC. I wish I could have stayed for my last two years. I highly recommend TCC to other looking to return to school after an extended absence from academics.
- I think that TCC is a great college, and I really think that the majority of Tidewater High School graduates should start their paths there. The teachers, overall, were awesome. The course work was challenging and fun. Schedules were very manageable, and the online classes were extremely wonderful to me. I increased my grade-point average tremendously by having all my coursework before me, and scheduling my own pace for the classes that I enrolled in WHILE raising two small children! Thank you a thousand times over!
- TCC may be a community college but isn't just one. It is as good as any university.
- I felt that TCC prepared me well for [current school]. I felt a higher sense of self esteem after completing my degree at TCC. I will always be very fond of TCC.

- I felt important at TCC. The staff understands working adults. I'm proud to say I'm a graduate of TCC.
- I had a wonderful experience while at TCC. I recommend it all the time. I am VERY APPRECIATIVE of the time and effort that the staff at the tutoring lab (Chesapeake Campus) took teaching, guiding and reinforcing the topics that I had difficulty in especially math. Without their aid, I know I wouldn't have passed some of my classes.
- I loved how organized TCC was. If I could have received a Bachelor's Degree there, I would have. I did not want to leave.
- Since attending and graduating from TCC, I have attended several universities working towards my BSN. Through this journey, I have come to realize that, despite it being a community college, TCC has offered the best services! It makes the process of going to school a lot less stressful. I really miss the easy registration process and the flexible and varied class offerings that TCC had to offer! I truly believe while attending TCC, I received a quality education at an affordable rate. Keep up the good work!
- I enjoyed my time at TCC and continue to recommend the college to other individuals who may be looking to return to school.
- I understand now that the more knowledge you obtain and the greater your determination, the greater level of success you will have in everything. To sum it up, I take my education very seriously and know that you get out as much as you put in. TCC played a big part in that paradigm.
- I sincerely believe that TCC was the best time and money I have spent in a very long time. I directly attribute my success to the skilled instructors from the math and Engineering Departments (including the math lab in the Virginia Beach Library).
- While attending a four-year university (to complete my B.S. degree), I realized my TCC experience challenged me more in the classroom than the university has. I think that says a lot for the quality of education in the math and engineering departments at TCC — Bravo!
- Many of my teachers at TCC were fantastic. I wish I could continue taking classes there, but I need to finish at my four-year university. I thoroughly enjoyed my experience at TCC. I felt that I was able to grow up, as slow as it might have been, with the support of all my professors.
- I think that TCC is a great stepping-stone to attending four-year university.
- I enjoyed my time at TCC, and actually miss it more than I expected. The faculty was overall very enthused and passionate about their work and it showed in their lectures. I would suggest anyone wishing to further their education to attend TCC.
- The online courses are much better than those offered at my current school. The professors are better prepared at TCC for online courses and are much more accessible, polite, and knowledgeable.

- My experience at TCC was great. The level of teaching and curriculum is the same as a university. I think everyone should attend TCC before transferring to a university.
- Great experience all the way around!