

STCC Graduating Student Survey Results: 2013

Each year, our Institutional Research office sends out surveys to students who graduated approximately 12-18 months previously. This survey is completed to meet the requirements of our Perkins Grant with the timing dictated by the conditions of the grant.

In order to gain an immediate sense of graduates' education and employment plans as well as to obtain student feedback on the efficacy of the STCC education, we piloted a new survey of graduating students in May 2013 as they picked up their caps and gowns for the graduation ceremony. All survey questions can be found in Appendix I. (Please note that not all totals equal 100% due to rounding.)

Survey Respondents and Response Rate: 351 graduating students took survey

Of the 578 students at cap and gown pick-up, 351 participated in this survey for a 61% response rate. Of these respondents, 306 reported that they would be receiving an associate degree, 43 reported receiving a certificate, and 2 did not respond to the question. There were 1092 total graduates for FY2013.

Graduates were asked how long it took them to complete their credential and from which program they were receiving it. The list of programs represented by credential type can be found in Appendix II of this report.

Time to Completion	Associates		Certificates	
	N	%	N	%
Less than 1 year	1	0%	15	35%
1 year to less than 2 years	28	9%	20	47%
2 years to less than 3 years	146	48%	4	9%
3 years to less than 4 years	79	26%	4	9%
4 years to less than 5 years	20	7%	0	0%
5 years to less than 6 years	12	4%	0	0%
6 or more years	18	6%	0	0%
Total	304	100%	43	100%

Employment Plans: 74% of new graduates are currently employed

Graduates were asked about their current employment status which includes military service. If graduates responded that they were either continuing employment or beginning new employment, they were asked about the relationship of their work to their STCC education as well as whether their work is full- or part-time. Of graduates responding to this question, about 74% report being employed. Please note that many graduates are pursuing further education either instead of or in addition to employment.



Work Status	Associates	Certificates
Employed: Continuing Current Job	37%	24%
Employed: Beginning New Job	36%	48%
Employed: Military Service	1%	0%
Not Employed: Seeking Employment	17%	21%
Not in Workforce	8%	7%

Graduates who reported being employed were asked about their full-time versus part-time status with more than 75% responding that they will have full-time employment.

Work Hours	Associates	Certificates
Full Time Work	77%	83%
Part Time Work	23%	17%

Graduates were also asked whether their employment was related to the academic work they completed at STCC. More than 70% of associate degree graduates said their employment was somewhat or directly related to their academic work, with 90% of certificate graduates reporting this.

Work Relation	Associates	Certificates
Work Directly Related to STCC Education	54%	67%
Work Somewhat Related to STCC Education	19%	23%
Not Related	28%	10%

Continuing Education Plans: 68% of new graduates expect to continue their education

Graduates were asked about whether they will be continuing their education within the next year and whether they will do so in a full- or part-time capacity. About 68% of graduates receiving associates degrees plan on continuing their education within the year, with most aiming for a 4-year college or university. About 61% of certificate graduates plan to continue their education with the majority returning to STCC.



Education Status	Associates	Certificates
A new program at STCC	11%	30%
Another 2-year college	8%	13%
A 4-year college/university	49%	18%
No additional education beginning this year	32%	40%

Of those students pursuing additional education, more associate degree graduates plan on pursuing full-time education (62%) than their certificate counterparts (54%).

Hours	Associates	Certificates
Full Time Schooling	62%	54%
Part Time Schooling	38%	46%

Perceived Educational Preparation: 96% of graduating students feel that STCC prepared them for employment and/or continuing education

We asked graduates several questions about their educational experience at STCC including their overall preparedness, how their education at STCC had improved their academic and personal skills, and the barriers and supports they experienced in their efforts to complete their credentials.

In response to a question about how well their STCC education had prepared them for employment or further education, only 12 students reported being either somewhat or very unprepared. More than 60% of both certificate and associate degree recipients said they were very well prepared.

Educational Preparation	Associates	Certificates
Very well prepared	68%	62%
Somewhat prepared	28%	36%
Somewhat unprepared	3%	0%
Very unprepared	1%	2%

To learn more specifically about the preparation of the graduates, we provided a list of educational and personal skills and asked students to rate how much their STCC experience had improved these abilities. Mean improvement responses were somewhat lower for certificate than associate degree holders as might be expected given their shorter time at STCC to complete the credential. All mean scores were between 3 (some

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improvement) and 4 (a lot of improvement). Graduates reported the largest gains in their abilities to think critically, to research a problem and assess information related to it, to contribute to group discussions and work, and to get along with many different kinds of people.

Associate Degree Recipients:

Rate how your experience at STCC improved your ability to:	No Improvement	A little	Some	A lot	Tremendous	Mean
write clearly	13%	11%	24%	38%	14%	3.30
speak clearly	16%	10%	29%	32%	13%	3.15
persuade others of your view	11%	10%	31%	32%	15%	3.30
examine assumptions	7%	7%	31%	39%	16%	3.50
think critically	2%	6%	21%	44%	27%	3.89
reason logically	2%	9%	27%	42%	19%	3.66
make and justify decisions	3%	7%	30%	41%	19%	3.66
use math to address day-to-day issues or problems	9%	15%	27%	31%	17%	3.31
research a problem and assess information to address it	3%	7%	28%	39%	23%	3.73
use computers and common software, mobile devices or internet or cloud-based applications	7%	10%	25%	33%	25%	3.60
contribute to group discussions and work	2%	11%	31%	34%	22%	3.62
consider a subject from multiple points of view	1%	11%	28%	41%	19%	3.64
get along with many different kinds of people	5%	9%	22%	37%	27%	3.71
participate in community actions or events	12%	13%	27%	32%	16%	3.27
better serve my community or society in general	9%	13%	27%	31%	20%	3.40



Certificate Recipients:

Rate how your experience at STCC improved your ability to:	No Improvement	A little	Some	A lot	Tremendous	Mean
write clearly	21%	12%	14%	44%	9%	3.09
speak clearly	19%	9%	21%	37%	14%	3.19
persuade others of your view	14%	7%	23%	42%	14%	3.35
examine assumptions	10%	10%	24%	43%	14%	3.43
think critically	7%	10%	14%	52%	17%	3.62
reason logically	7%	14%	10%	57%	12%	3.52
make and justify decisions	7%	12%	14%	52%	14%	3.55
use math to address day-to-day issues or problems	20%	17%	17%	32%	15%	3.05
research a problem and assess information to address it	10%	17%	19%	33%	21%	3.40
use computers and common software, mobile devices or internet or cloud-based applications	12%	10%	22%	29%	27%	3.49
contribute to group discussions and work	5%	14%	12%	50%	19%	3.64
consider a subject from multiple points of view	7%	14%	19%	40%	19%	3.50
get along with many different kinds of people	5%	10%	17%	34%	34%	3.83
participate in community actions or events	12%	17%	15%	34%	22%	3.37
better serve my community or society in general	12%	12%	19%	36%	21%	3.43

Perceived Educational Barriers: Finances, family responsibilities, academic interruption, and low expectations are most frequent barriers

We also asked graduates about the barriers they faced as they worked to obtain their credential. For associate degree recipients, more than 40% of students experienced either minor or major barriers to their education due to: financial difficulties, job demands, family responsibilities, not having been in school for a long time, not being academically prepared when they started, and being unclear about their career goals. For certificate recipients, fewer students reported barriers overall. More than 30% of certificate recipients

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experienced either minor or major educational barriers due to: financial difficulties, family responsibilities, not being academically prepared when they started, job demands, not having been in school for a long time, and having expectations about them being too low.

Associate Degree Recipients:

Which barriers did you have to overcome to complete your STCC education?	Not a barrier	Minor barrier	Major barrier	Mean
I was not academically prepared when I started	55%	34%	10%	1.55
I had not been in school for a long time	53%	27%	20%	1.67
English is not my first language	84%	9%	7%	1.23
My academic goals were unclear	61%	32%	7%	1.46
My career goals were unclear	56%	36%	8%	1.53
Expectations of me were too low	74%	21%	5%	1.30
It took me a while to find the program I wanted to complete	60%	29%	11%	1.51
After selecting my program, I had trouble finding the best path for completing it	68%	24%	8%	1.40
It was difficult to get into the classes I needed	75%	20%	5%	1.30
Not enough access to professional advisors	73%	19%	8%	1.34
Not enough access to faculty advisors	71%	21%	8%	1.38
Not enough access to tutors or other academic support	78%	18%	5%	1.27
Financial difficulties	41%	36%	23%	1.81
Job demands	45%	38%	17%	1.71
Housing issues	71%	21%	8%	1.37
Family responsibilities	46%	30%	24%	1.79
Personal and/or health challenges	62%	24%	14%	1.52



Certificate Recipients:

Which barriers did you have to overcome to complete your STCC education?	Not a barrier	Minor barrier	Major barrier	Mean
I was not academically prepared when I started	63%	25%	13%	1.50
I had not been in school for a long time	68%	18%	15%	1.48
English is not my first language	73%	12%	15%	1.41
My academic goals were unclear	73%	22%	5%	1.32
My career goals were unclear	76%	20%	5%	1.29
Expectations of me were too low	68%	20%	12%	1.44
It took me a while to find the program I wanted to complete	76%	20%	5%	1.29
After selecting my program, I had trouble finding the best path for completing it	80%	20%	0%	1.20
It was difficult to get into the classes I needed	95%	5%	0%	1.05
Not enough access to professional advisors	83%	15%	2%	1.20
Not enough access to faculty advisors	88%	12%	0%	1.12
Not enough access to tutors or other academic support	85%	15%	0%	1.15
Financial difficulties	51%	32%	17%	1.66
Job demands	66%	24%	10%	1.44
Housing issues	76%	20%	5%	1.29
Family responsibilities	59%	17%	24%	1.66
Personal and/or health challenges	78%	17%	5%	1.27

Perceived Educational Supports: Family, faculty, and classroom activities pave the way for success

Finally, we asked students about the factors that helped them succeed in completing their credentials. For students receiving their associate degree, more than 80% cited the following factors as being a part of their completion success: homework and projects, in-classroom experience and activities, faculty and/or instructors, family support or encouragement, and being a role model for others. For graduates receiving a certificate, more than 90% cited the following completion success factors: in-classroom experience and activities, faculty and/or instructors, classmate support or encouragement, family support or encouragement, and being a role model for others.

Associate Degree Recipients:

What factors helped you succeed in completing your STCC education?	Not a factor	Minor factor	Major factor	Mean
Faculty and/or instructors	7%	29%	64%	2.57
Professional advisors	28%	34%	38%	2.10
Faculty advisors	24%	38%	37%	2.13
College staff (not faculty or advisors)	27%	39%	33%	2.06
In-class experience and activities	6%	29%	65%	2.59
Homework and projects	6%	41%	53%	2.46
Internship, clinical placements, or other career/program-related experience	43%	19%	38%	1.95
Classmate support or encouragement	17%	31%	52%	2.35
Family support or encouragement	11%	21%	69%	2.58
Being a role model for others	12%	28%	60%	2.48
Other	69%	4%	27%	1.58

Certificate Recipients:

What factors helped you succeed in completing your STCC education?	Not a factor	Minor factor	Major factor	Mean
Faculty and/or instructors	3%	25%	73%	2.70
Professional advisors	15%	30%	55%	2.40
Faculty advisors	10%	33%	58%	2.48
College staff (not faculty or advisors)	23%	28%	50%	2.28
In-class experience and activities	0%	28%	73%	2.73
Homework and projects	8%	28%	64%	2.56
Internship, clinical placements, or other career/program-related experience	28%	23%	50%	2.23
Classmate support or encouragement	5%	30%	65%	2.60
Family support or encouragement	8%	20%	73%	2.65
Being a role model for others	8%	25%	68%	2.60
Other	53%	24%	24%	1.71



Appendix I: Graduate Survey

Congratulations on your degree! We want to learn more from you to improve the college, programs, and courses so that even more students can be successful at STCC. Thank you in advance for sharing your thoughts and experiences!! As you graduate, you become a STCC alumni member. We hope you will become an active STCC alumni member and continue to provide feedback and guidance to the college. Happy graduation, Class of 2013!

Q1 What degree(s) are you receiving?

- Associate Degree
- Certificate

Q2 Which program(s) did you complete?

Q3 About how long did it take you to finish this degree or certificate?

- Less than 1 year
- 1 year to less than 2 years
- 2 years to less than 3 years
- 3 years to less than 4 years
- 4 years to less than 5 years
- 5 years to less than 6 years
- 6 or more years



Q4 Rate how your experience at STCC improved your ability to:

	No improvement (1)	A little improvement (2)	Some improvement (3)	A lot of improvement (4)	Tremendous Improvement (5)
write clearly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
speak clearly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
persuade others of your view	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
examine assumptions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
think critically	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
reason logically	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
make and justify decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
use math to address day-to-day issues or problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
research a problem and assess information to address it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
use computers and common software, mobile devices or internet or cloud-based applications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
contribute to group discussions and work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
consider a subject from multiple points of view	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
get along with many different kinds of people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
participate in community actions or events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
better serve my community or society in general	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q5 Continuing Education: What additional education will you begin (within the year) after receiving your degree or certificate from STCC?

- A new program at STCC
- Another 2-year college
- A 4-year college/university
- No additional education beginning this year

If students answered that they would be continuing their education, they were also asked Q6.

Q6 Will you be attending college full or part time?

- Full Time
- Part Time

Q7 Employment Activity: What employment activity will you engage in after receiving your degree or certificate from STCC?

- Continue in my current job
- Begin a new job
- Military Service
- Not currently employed but seeking employment
- Not seeking employment

If students answered that they would be employed, they were also asked Q8 and Q9.

Q8 Will you be working full or part time?

- Full Time
- Part Time

Q9 Is the job related to the STCC degree/certificate you completed?

- Yes, it is directly related.
- It is somewhat related.
- No, it is not related.



Q10 As a result of your education at STCC, how prepared do you feel to pursue your post-graduation education and/or employment plans?

- Very well prepared
- Somewhat prepared
- Somewhat unprepared
- Very unprepared



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Q11 Which barriers did you have to overcome to complete your STCC education? Please indicate if each was: Not a barrier, Minor barrier, or Major barrier.

	Not a barrier (1)	Minor barrier (2)	Major barrier (3)
I was not academically prepared when I started	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had not been in school for a long time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
English is not my first language	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My academic goals were unclear	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My career goals were unclear	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Expectations of me were too low	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It took me a while to find the program I wanted to complete	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
After selecting my program, I had trouble finding the best path for completing it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It was difficult to get into the classes I needed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not enough access to professional advisors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not enough access to faculty advisors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not enough access to tutors or other academic support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial difficulties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Job demands	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Housing issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Family responsibilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal and/or health challenges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please describe)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



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Q12 What factors helped you succeed in completing your STCC education? Please indicate if each was: Not a factor, Minor factor, or Major factor.

	Not a success factor (1)	Minor success factor (2)	Major success factor (3)
Faculty and/or instructors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional advisors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faculty advisors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
College staff (not faculty or advisors)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In-class experience and activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Homework and projects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Internship, clinical placements, or other career/program-related experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Classmate support or encouragement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Family support or encouragement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being a role model for others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please describe)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q13 As new alumni of Springfield Technical Community College, please update your contact information:

First Name

Last Name

personal (non-STCC) email address

phone



Appendix II: Graduate Respondents by Credential and Program

No. Associates by Program	
LTGS	61
LECJ	20
NURS	16
LTTR	13
MCBS	11
CITS	10
TPRD	9
CSET	8
ACCT	7
DHYG	7
ENGY	7
MECH	7
BTCM	6
BUSN	6
MANG	6
PTAS	6
DMIR	5
AUTM	4
CIVL	4
ENGR	4
RSPC	4
SURG	4
EDEL	3
CART	3
CHLD	3
ELEC	3
FIRE	3
MAST	3
HTHC	3
ARCH	2
BIOT	2
CLLS	2
DMIS	2
ESET	2

No. Associates by Program	
ESTR	2
EXEC	2
LEOT	2
MLTD	2
MRKT	2
OCCP	2
ARCH	1
CHEM	1
EDEL	1
INHM	1
PROG	1
WEBP	1
WEPB	1
NYNX	1
TCOM	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>277</i>



No. Certificates by Program	
COSM	6
ENGY	5
MEDA	4
CNCO	3
AUTO	2
CSET	2
INHM	2
LECJ	2
DAST	2
ARCH	1
CLLS	1
DPHO	1
FIRE	1
MEDC	1
MOUS	1
CLER	1
<i>Total</i>	35

