

Southside Virginia Community College  
Graduate Follow-Up Update  
Class of 2007

By  
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## **METHOD**

Southside Virginia Community College has conducted one-year follow-up surveys of its graduates each year. The present report gives an update for the class of 2007. Some questions and respondents' choices of responses have been changed from previous surveys due to an assessment mandate from the State Council of Higher Education of Virginia (SCHEV). A sample of the survey forms used is given in Appendix A. Due to the small numbers involved, only summary data is presented.

For the Class of 2007, 267 responses to the Prospective Graduate Survey (Appendix A) were received from 660 surveyed graduates for the response rate of 40%. On the Graduate Follow-up Survey (Appendix A) mailed out approximately one year later, there were 270 responses from the 660 surveyed graduates, a response rate of 41%.

## **GOALS AND THEIR ACHEIVEMENT**

First, prospective graduates responded to the question, “**What was your MAIN goal in attending SVCC?**” Table 1 gives the responses to this question. Sixty percent of respondents gave one of the three career-oriented responses, and thirty-two percent had transfer to a four-year college as their main goal. Compared to the Class of 2006, there was a three percent increase in career-oriented responses and the transfer-oriented response declined by one percent.

**TABLE 1: MAIN GOAL IN ATTENDING SVCC**

| <b>GOAL</b>                               | <b>FREQUENCY</b> | <b>PERCENT</b> |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| To obtain skills to enter the job market  | 90               | 33.71          |
| To obtain skills needed to change jobs    | 51               | 19.10          |
| To improve skills for job I was doing     | 18               | 6.74           |
| To prepare for transfer to 4-year college | 83               | 32.21          |
| Personal interest or self-enrichment      | 22               | 8.24           |

When asked whether their main goal was achieved, 96.9 percent of those responding answered “yes”. This is very similar to most previous studies.

## EVALUATIONS OF SPECIFIC AREAS AND SERVICES

Prospective graduates were then asked to evaluate their experience at SVCC in a number of areas.

Table 2 depicts the proportion of those checking each choice on a four-point scale ranging from “Very Much” to “Not At All” or “Not Applicable”.

**TABLE 2: EXTENT OF SATISFACTION WITH AREAS AND SERVICES**

| <b>AREA OF SERVICE</b>                     | <b>% VERY MUCH</b> | <b>% SOMEWHAT</b> | <b>% VERY LITTLE</b> | <b>% NOT AT ALL</b> | <b>% N/A</b> |
|--|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Education                                  | 88.76              | 11.24             | 0                    | 0                   | 0            |
| Instruction in your curriculum             | 83.83              | 15.79             | .38                  | 0                   | 0            |
| Course availability                        | 66.54              | 28.20             | 4.51                 | .75                 | 0            |
| Relationship with faculty outside of class | 70.08              | 18.94             | 6.82                 | .76                 | 3.41         |
| Course content                             | 78.28              | 20.97             | .75                  | 0                   | 0            |
| Grading and testing                        | 74.16              | 25.09             | .75                  | 0                   | 0            |
| Program facilities (lab and equipment)     | 71.59              | 21.21             | 1.89                 | 1.14                | 4.17         |
| Advising                                   | 73.68              | 20.30             | 3.38                 | 2.26                | .38          |
| Computer Labs                              | 77.36              | 15.85             | 3.40                 | .38                 | 0            |
| Library Services                           | 68.42              | 24.06             | 3.38                 | .38                 | 3.76         |
| Bookstore                                  | 64.42              | 26.22             | 6.74                 | 1.50                | 1.12         |
| Registration                               | 75.09              | 21.13             | 3.40                 | .38                 | 0            |
| Financial aid                              | 67.42              | 16.85             | 5.99                 | 3.00                | 6.74         |
| Counseling                                 | 65.66              | 18.87             | 6.04                 | 2.64                | 6.42         |
| Student Activities                         | 56.02              | 24.06             | 8.25                 | 2.26                | 9.40         |
| Career Services                            | 56.23              | 24.15             | 6.04                 | 1.51                | 0            |
| Business Office/Cashier                    | 63.88              | 24.33             | 5.32                 | .38                 | 0            |
| Admissions Office/Transcripts              | 69.81              | 21.89             | 3.77                 | .38                 | 4.15         |
| Overall Satisfaction                       | 83.90              | 14.61             | 1.50                 | 0                   | 0            |

Positive ratings, with 90% or more checking either “Very Much” or “Somewhat”, are seen in eight of the nine items pertaining to instruction: Education, Instruction in Your Curriculum, Course Availability, Course Content, Grading and Testing, Program facilities, Advising, and Computer Labs.

Among various college services rated, Library Services received the highest rating at 92%. Relatively small proportions of negative ratings (“very little” and “not at all”) were received by most services rated, with

Student Activities (10.51 percent) and Financial Aid (8.99 percent) being the highest. Almost 100% (98.5%) were satisfied with their overall experience at SVCC.

### **SATISFACTION WITH BASIC SKILLS PREPARATION**

Prospective graduates were also asked to rate their satisfaction with the preparation they received at SVCC in terms of basic skills needed in everyday life: Writing clearly and effectively, Speaking clearly and effectively, and Understanding and using computers. Table 3 summarizes the proportions of responses in each category. Prospective graduates appeared to feel extremely positive about their SVCC preparation in all three areas.

**TABLE 3: SATISFACTION WITH BASIC SKILLS PREPARATION**

| <b>BASIC SKILLS</b>          | <b>% VERY MUCH</b> | <b>% SOMEWHAT</b> | <b>% VERY LITTLE</b> | <b>% NOT AT ALL</b> | <b>% N/A</b> |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Write clearly & effectively  | 64.50              | 30.53             | 3.82                 | .38                 | .76          |
| Speak clearly & effectively  | 64.89              | 29.39             | 3.82                 | .76                 | 1.15         |
| Understand and use computers | 70.11              | 22.99             | 4.60                 | 1.53                | .77          |

### **HELPFULNESS OF DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES**

Sixty-five percent of respondents indicated they had taken at least one developmental course while attending SVCC. The number of prospective graduates taking courses in the three major developmental areas were: 102 in reading, 108 in English (writing), and 144 in mathematics. Table 4 gives the proportions of response in each category.

**TABLE 4: HELPFULNESS OF DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES**

%Very Satisfied.....RATING.....%Very Dissatisfied

| <b>COURSE</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>N/A</b> |
|---------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| Reading       | 64.29    | 11.90    | 3.17     | .79      | .79      | 19.05      |
| Writing       | 65.89    | 12.40    | 3.88     | .78      | .78      | 16.28      |
| Mathematics   | 67.11    | 16.45    | 7.24     | 1.97     | 1.97     | 5.26       |

All three developmental course areas were perceived to be very helpful in preparing the respondents for credit courses.

Prospective graduates were then asked “On average, how much time did you spend working for pay during a typical week while attending SVCC?” Responses were “None” 28.46 percent, “1 to 10 hours” 7.31 percent, “11 to 20 hours” 15.00 percent and “more than 20 hours” 49.23 percent.

Prospective graduates were also asked “To what extent did your SVCC program prepare you for responsible citizenship (e.g. better informed about your community and the political process)?” A high proportion checked either “Very Much (44.87%), or “Somewhat” (42.97%). To complete the picture, 8.37% checked “Very Little” and 3.80% checked “Not At All”.

Lastly, prospective graduates were asked the question “How much money did you borrow to pay for tuition, books and other educational expenses before you graduated from SVCC?” Since SVCC’s financial aid package is loan-free, it is not surprising that 67.68% checked “None”. Another 9.89% checked borrowed “less than \$1,000”, 8.75% checked borrowed “between \$1,000 and \$3,000”, 5.32% checked borrowed “between \$3,001 and \$5,000”, and 8.37% checked borrowed “more than \$5,000”.

Except for the comments which appear in Appendix B, this was the final area included in the Prospective Graduate Questionnaire.

**FURTHER EDUCATION**

Thirty-six percent of the graduates indicated they had pursued a bachelor’s degree after graduating from SVCC, with twenty-five percent currently enrolled full-time. Table 5 summarizes the responses of this question.

**TABLE 5: PURSUING BACHELORS DEGREE**

| <b>RESPONSE</b>                        | <b>FREQUENCY</b> | <b>PERCENT</b> |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| Yes, full-time                         | 65               | 24.90          |
| Yes, part-time                         | 20               | 7.66           |
| Yes, completed a baccalaureate program | 8                | 3.07           |
| Yes, but stopped before graduation     | 1                | .38            |
| No                                     | 167              | 63.98          |

Transfer institutions receiving the greatest numbers of SVCC graduates were ODU(25), Longwood (18), and VA Tech(8). Five students indicated they returned to SVCC for further education.

A total of seventy graduates who transferred to other institutions reported their first-term-after transfer GPA. The mean for the group was 3.007 on a 4-point scale. Of those responding, 85.56 percent indicated that their current major was at least somewhat related to the curriculum they completed at SVCC, with 50 percent checking “Very Much” and 35.56 percent checking “Somewhat”. “Very Little” and “Not at All” was checked by 14.44 percent.

When asked how well SVCC prepared them academically for the bachelor’s program 91.11 percent rated their preparation positively, checking either “Very Much (43.33 percent) or “Somewhat (47.78 percent). Nine percent gave negative ratings in this area. Further analysis revealed that, of the eight respondents giving a negative response, two did not graduate from the University Parallel curriculum.

Respondents were also asked, “If you transferred to a public four-year college in Virginia, how satisfied were you with the transfer process?” Responses were “Very Much” 67.12 percent, “Somewhat” 24.66 percent, “Very Little” 1.37 percent, and “Not At All” 6.85 percent. Of the six students who responded negatively, one did not graduate from the University Parallel curriculum.

**EMPLOYMENT STATUS**

Graduates were asked to respond to the question, “Are you currently employed?” Table 6 summarizes their responses.

**TABLE 6: GRADUATES' EMPLOYMENT STATUS RESPONSES**

| <b>STATUS</b>              | <b>FREQUENCY</b> | <b>PERCENT</b> |
|----------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Yes, full-time             | 168              | 64.37          |
| Yes, part-time             | 45               | 17.24          |
| No, seeking employment     | 28               | 10.73          |
| No, not seeking employment | 20               | 7.66           |

From the table, it is seen that over 80 percent of the graduates were working either full- or part-time. The SVCC graduate unemployment rate of 10.73 percent is considerably above the 4.57 percent service area average unemployment rate and well above the 4.43 percent reported in the 2006 graduate survey. Of those twenty respondents who reported “No, not actively seeking employment”, two were not seeking employment because of illness, one had family obligations, five were pursuing additional education, nine indicated other, and three graduates did not indicate a reason.

Of those employed 69.81 percent indicated their job was “Very Much” or “Somewhat” related to the curriculum they completed at SVCC. Table 7 summarizes the responses to this question. Of those responding “Very Little” (9.91 percent) or “Not At All” (20.28 percent), 28 of 64 had been pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree since graduation. For these respondents, it would seem that the current job was likely to be part-time or temporary while working toward their degree.

**TABLE 7: TO WHAT EXTENT IS YOUR SVCC PROGRAM RELATED TO YOUR CURRENT OCCUPATION**

| <b>RATINGS</b> | <b>FREQUENCY</b> | <b>PERCENT</b> |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Very Much      | 112              | 52.83          |
| Somewhat       | 36               | 16.98          |
| Very Little    | 21               | 9.91           |
| Not At All     | 43               | 20.28          |

Graduates were also asked, “To what extent does your SVCC program help you perform in the workplace?” Table 8 presents the responses to this question.

**TABLE 8: TO WHAT EXTENT DOES YOUR SVCC PROGRAM HELP YOU PERFORM IN THE WORKPLACE?**

| <b>RATINGS</b> | <b>FREQUENCY</b> | <b>PERCENT</b> |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Very Much      | 100              | 47.62          |
| Somewhat       | 57               | 27.14          |
| Very Little    | 22               | 10.48          |
| Not At All     | 31               | 14.76          |

From the table, 74.76 percent felt their SVCC preparation helped them “Very Much” or “Somewhat” to perform in the workplace. Of those checking “Very Little” (10.48 percent) or “Not At All” (14.76 percent), 24 of 53 had been pursuing a bachelor’s degree since graduation from SVCC. Thus, it is likely the current job for those respondents was part-time or temporary while pursuing a higher degree.

Graduates were asked further to respond to the following question, “Based on your current job requirements, what areas in your SVCC program of study need improvement?” A number of graduates responded to this question. Their responses are given in Appendix B. The topics appearing most frequently among these suggestions were related to three areas: more hands on experience (8), computer/IT skills (5), and more IV experience (3). Forty-seven graduates indicated that there was no improvement needed.

## **FULL-TIME SALARIES**

One hundred and thirteen graduates who were employed full-time reported their salaries. Full-time employment was defined as 35 hours or more weekly. Table 10 below summarizes the salaries reported.

**TABLE 10: FULL-TIME SALARIES REPORTED BY GRADUATES, 2000**

| <b>ANNUAL SALARY</b> | <b>FREQUENCY</b> | <b>PERCENT</b> |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Less than \$6,000    | 2                | 1.77           |
| \$6,000-9,999        | 1                | .88            |
| \$10,000-14,999      | 4                | 3.54           |
| \$ 15,000-19,999     | 7                | 6.19           |
| \$ 20,000-24,999     | 14               | 12.39          |
| \$ 25,000-29,999     | 22               | 19.47          |
| \$ 30,000 and up     | 63               | 55.75          |

The average annual salary reported by the 113 respondents was \$32,932.80, an increase from the 2006 survey. The range was \$3,000 to \$90,000, and the median was in the \$30,000 and up category.

Any additional comments graduates made about their experience at SVCC are available upon request from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

# **APPENDIX A**

## **2007 Graduate Surveys**

## SVCC PROSPECTIVE GRADUATE QUESTIONNAIRE (2007)

**Please check appropriate boxes within each**

(1-3) (for office use)

(4-12) Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

### SECTION A – GOALS AND EVALUATIONS

1. What was your MAIN goal in attending SVCC? (Check only one, please)

- (13) 1.  To obtain skills to enter the job market  
 2.  To obtain skills needed to change jobs  
 3.  To improve skills for job I was doing  
 4.  To prepare for transfer to a 4-year college  
 5.  Personal interest or self-enrichment

2. Was your goal achieved?

- (14) 1.  Yes (if Yes, go to question 3)  
 (15) 2.  No (if No, please explain \_\_\_\_\_)

3. To what extent were you satisfied with each of these aspects of your SVCC plan?  
(Mark one response for each listed area)

|    |  | Very Much | Somewhat | Very Little | Not At All | N/A |
|----|--|-----------|----------|-------------|------------|-----|
| 16 | Education                                  |           |          |             |            |     |
| 17 | Instruction in your curriculum             |           |          |             |            |     |
| 18 | Course availability                        |           |          |             |            |     |
| 19 | Relationship with faculty outside of class |           |          |             |            |     |
| 20 | Course content                             |           |          |             |            |     |
| 21 | Grading and testing                        |           |          |             |            |     |
| 22 | Program facility (lab and equipment)       |           |          |             |            |     |
| 23 | Advising                                   |           |          |             |            |     |
| 24 | Library services                           |           |          |             |            |     |
| 25 | Bookstore                                  |           |          |             |            |     |
| 26 | Registration                               |           |          |             |            |     |
| 27 | Financial Aid                              |           |          |             |            |     |
| 28 | Counseling                                 |           |          |             |            |     |
| 29 | Student activities                         |           |          |             |            |     |
| 30 | Career services                            |           |          |             |            |     |
| 31 | Business Office/Cashier                    |           |          |             |            |     |
| 32 | Admissions Office/transcripts              |           |          |             |            |     |
| 33 | Computer Labs                              |           |          |             |            |     |
| 34 | Overall satisfaction with SVCC             |           |          |             |            |     |

4. To what extent did your SVCC education contribute to your ability to:

|    |                               | Very Much | Somewhat | Very Little | Not At All | N/A |
|----|-------------------------------|-----------|----------|-------------|------------|-----|
| 34 | Write clearly and effectively |           |          |             |            |     |
| 35 | Speak clearly and effectively |           |          |             |            |     |
| 36 | Understand and use computers  |           |          |             |            |     |

5. Did you enroll in any developmental course(s) while attending SVCC?

- (37) 1.  Yes, If yes, please rate your satisfaction with the following developmental courses in preparing you for credit courses.  
 2.  No

|    |             | (1) Very Satisfied | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) Very Dissatisfied | N/A |
|----|-------------|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----------------------|-----|
| 38 | Reading     |                    |     |     |     |                       |     |
| 39 | Writing     |                    |     |     |     |                       |     |
| 40 | Mathematics |                    |     |     |     |                       |     |

6. On average, how much time did you spend working for pay during a typical week while attending SVCC?

- (41) 1  None    2  1 to 10 hours    3  11 to 20 hours    4  more than 20 hours

7. To what extent did your SVCC program prepare you for responsible citizenship (e.g. better informed about your community and political process)?

- (42) 1  Very Much    2  Somewhat    3  Very Little    4  Not At All

8. How much did you borrow to pay for tuition, books, and other educational expenses before you graduated from SVCC?

- (43) 1  None  
 2  Less than \$1,000  
 3  \$1,001 to \$3,000  
 4  \$3,001 to \$5,000  
 5  more than \$5,000

9. Please feel free to make any additional comments about your experience at SVCC.

- (44) 1  Yes    2  No

**COMMENTS**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE

## **SVCC GRADUATE FOLLOW-UP (2007)**

Please make corrections to the information below if necessary.

**PLEASE CHECK APPROPRIATE  
BOXES WITHIN EACH  
CATEGORY BELOW**

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### **EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION**

1. Are you currently pursuing a bachelor's degree?  
1  Yes, full-time  
2  Yes, part-time  
3  Yes, completed a baccalaureate program  
4  Yes, but stopped before graduation  
5  No (skip to Employment Information below)
  
2. Name of college attended: \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. What was your first term after transfer GPA? \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. To what extent is this bachelor's degree related to your SVCC program?  
1  Very Much      2  Somewhat      3  Very little      4  Not at all
  
5. To what extent did your SVCC program prepare you academically for the bachelor's program?  
1  Very Much      2  Somewhat      3  Very little      4  Not at all
  
6. If you transferred to a public four-year college in Virginia, how satisfied were you with the transfer process?  
1  Very Much      2  Somewhat      3  Very little      4  Not at all

### **EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION**

1. Are you currently employed?  
1  Yes, full-time  
2  Yes, part-time  
3  No, actively seeking employment (skip to Question 9)  
4  No, not actively seeking employment (please indicate reason below, then skip to Question 9)  
A  Illness  
B  Military  
C  Family obligations  
D  Pursuing additional education  
E  Other \_\_\_\_\_

(OVER)

2. To what extent is your SVCC program related to your current occupation?  
 1 [ ] Very Much      2 [ ] Somewhat      3 [ ] Very little      4 [ ] Not at all
3. To what extent does your SVCC program help you perform in the workplace?  
 1 [ ] Very Much      2 [ ] Somewhat      3 [ ] Very little      4 [ ] Not at all
4. Based on your current job requirements, what areas in your SVCC program of study need improvement? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Please complete ALL the information below regarding your present employment.

\_\_\_\_\_

JOB TITLE

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF EMPLOYER

\_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS OF EMPLOYER

\_\_\_\_\_

CITY OF EMPLOYER

\_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_

STATE      ZIPCODE

6. What is your current annual gross salary before deductions? \_\_\_\_\_
7. On how many hours per week of employment is your annual gross salary based? \_\_\_\_\_
8. In order for us to assess our performance in preparing you, may we have your permission to contact your employer?

[ ] Yes      [ ] No      Your initials \_\_\_\_\_

Employer Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

9. Please feel free to make additional comments about your experience at SVCC.

**COMMENTS**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM IN THE PRE-PAID ENVELOPE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**

