

Southside Virginia Community College  
Graduate Follow-Up Update  
Class of 2008

By  
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## **METHOD**

Southside Virginia Community College conducts one-year follow-up surveys of its graduates each year. This report presents the results for the graduating class of 2008. 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 2008, 238 responses to the Prospective Graduate Survey (Appendix A) were received from 717 surveyed graduates for the response rate of 33%. On the Graduate Follow-up Survey (Appendix A) mailed out approximately one year later, there were 236 responses from the 717 surveyed graduates, a response rate of 33%.

## **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. Forty-six percent of respondents gave one of the three career-oriented responses, and forty-six percent had transfer to a four-year college as their main goal. Compared to the Class of 2007, there was a fourteen percent decrease in career-oriented responses and the transfer-oriented response increased by fourteen 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	64	26.9
To obtain skills needed to change jobs	28	11.8
To improve skills for job I was doing	18	7.6
To prepare for transfer to 4-year college	110	46.2
Personal interest or self-enrichment	18	7.6

When asked whether their main goal was achieved, 96.2 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	82.4	17.6	0	0	0
Instruction in your curriculum	77.7	22.3	.4	0	0
Course availability	58.7	35.3	5.1	.9	0
Relationship with faculty outside of class	60.9	28.6	7.1	.8	2.9
Course content	72.7	26.5	.8	0	0
Grading and testing	71.5	27.2	1.3	0	0
Program facilities (lab and equipment)	72.6	23.6	1.7	1.3	.8
Advising	67.6	23.1	5.5	1.3	2.5
Computer Labs	74.7	17.3	4.6	.4	3.4
Library Services	62.6	25.2	5.5	.4	6.3
Bookstore	57.0	28.7	7.2	3.4	3.8
Registration	73.8	22.4	1.3	.8	1.7
Financial aid	67.9	16.9	2.5	1.7	11.4
Counseling	61.4	22	6.8	1.3	8.5
Student Activities	44.5	34	9.7	.8	11.3
Career Services	44.3	32.3	7.2	2.1	14
Business Office/Cashier	52.1	30.9	5.1	1.3	10.6
Admissions Office/Transcripts	67.9	25.3	3.4	1.7	2.1
Building and Grounds	74.7	20.3	.8	1.3	3.0
Campus Security	72.8	22.1	1.7	.9	2.6
Overall Satisfaction	80.3	18.5	.4	.8	0

Positive ratings, with 90% or more checking either “Very Much” or “Somewhat”, are seen in all 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, Registration received the highest rating at 96%. Relatively small proportions of negative ratings (“very little” and “not at all”) were received by most services rated, with Bookstore and Student Activities (11 percent) and Career Services (9.3 percent) being the highest. Almost 100% (98.8%) 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	65.1	26.5	5.9	1.3	1.7
Speak clearly & effectively	60.1	29.4	6.7	2.5	1.3
Understand and use computers	63.4	30.7	3.8	1.3	1.3

**HELPFULNESS OF DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES**

Fifty-seven 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 was: 126 in reading, 129 in English (writing), and 150 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	38.1	27.8	3.2	0	0	31.0
Writing	38	31	2.3	0	0	28.7
Mathematics	48	30	10	1.3	0	10.7

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

For the first time, prospective graduates were asked questions about online courses they had enrolled in while attending SVCC. The first question was: “Please indicate the number of online courses you have taken at SVCC.” Ten percent indicated they did not take any online courses. Fifty-five percent indicated they took 1-5 online courses. Twenty-three percent took 6-10 online courses, seven percent took 11-15 online courses and six percent took 16 or more online courses.

The prospective graduates were then asked about the level of satisfaction with their online courses. Seventy-six percent were either very satisfied or satisfied with their online courses. Fifteen percent were somewhat satisfied. Five percent were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their online courses and four percent indicated N/A.

The final item concerning online courses was: “Please select the statement which best describes the workload of online courses to seated courses at SVCC.” The outcome can be seen in the Table 5 below.

**TABLE 5: WORKLOAD OF ONLINE COURSES TO SEATED COURSES**

<b>GOAL</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
Online courses require much more work than seated courses	29	13.2
Online courses require more work than seated courses	77	35.0
Online courses require about the same amount of work as seated courses	99	45.0
Online courses require less work than seated courses	14	6.4
Online courses require much less work than seated courses	1	.5

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” 21.4 percent, “1 to 10 hours” 11.3 percent, “11 to 20 hours” 16.4 percent and “more than 20 hours” 50.8 percent.

Lastly, prospective graduates were 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 (37.8%), or “Somewhat” (47.5%). To complete the picture, 11.8% checked “Very Little” and 2.9% checked “Not At All”.

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

## FURTHER EDUCATION

Thirty-five percent of the graduates indicated they had pursued a bachelor's degree after graduating from SVCC, with twenty-eight percent currently enrolled full-time. Table 6 summarizes the responses of this question.

**TABLE 6: PURSUING BACHELORS DEGREE**

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
Yes, full-time	63	27.51
Yes, part-time	13	5.68
Yes, completed a baccalaureate program	4	1.75
Yes, but stopped before graduation	7	3.06
No	142	62.01

Transfer institutions receiving the greatest numbers of SVCC graduates were ODU(20), Longwood (12), UVA (7) and St. Paul's College (6). Five students indicated they returned to SVCC for further education.

A total of sixty-five graduates who transferred to other institutions reported their first-term-after transfer GPA. The mean for the group was 3.114 on a 4-point scale. Of those responding, 84.71 percent indicated that their current major was at least somewhat related to the curriculum they completed at SVCC. "Very Little" and "Not at All" was checked by 15.29 percent.

When asked how well SVCC prepared them academically for the bachelor's program 91.67 percent rated their preparation positively, checking either "Very Much (50 percent) or "Somewhat (41.67 percent). Eight percent gave negative ratings in this area. Further analysis revealed that, of the seven respondents giving a negative response, four 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" 58.33 percent, "Somewhat" 30 percent, "Very Little" 10 percent, and "Not At All" 1.67 percent. Of the seven students who responded negatively, four did not graduate from the University Parallel curriculum.

## EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Graduates were asked to respond to the question, “Are you currently employed?” Table 7 summarizes their responses.

**TABLE 7: GRADUATES’ EMPLOYMENT STATUS RESPONSES**

STATUS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Yes, full-time	132	58.41
Yes, part-time	35	15.49
No, seeking employment	32	14.16
No, not seeking employment	27	11.95

From the table, it is seen that over 74 percent of the graduates were working either full- or part-time. The SVCC graduate unemployment rate of 14.16 percent is considerably above the 5.98 percent service area average unemployment rate and above the 10.73 percent reported in the 2007 graduate survey. Of those twenty-seven respondents who reported “No, not actively seeking employment”, five were not seeking employment because of illness, four had family obligations, eleven were pursuing additional education, five indicated other, and two graduates did not indicate a reason.

Of those employed 74.7 percent indicated their job was “Very Much” or “Somewhat” related to the curriculum they completed at SVCC. Table 8 summarizes the responses to this question.

**TABLE 8: TO WHAT EXTENT IS YOUR SVCC PROGRAM RELATED TO YOUR CURRENT OCCUPATION**

RATINGS	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Very Much	89	53.61
Somewhat	35	21.08
Very Little	11	6.63
Not At All	31	18.67

Graduates were also asked, “To what extent does your SVCC program help you perform in the workplace?” Table 9 presents the responses to this question.

**TABLE 9: TO WHAT EXTENT DOES YOUR SVCC PROGRAM HELP YOU PERFORM IN THE WORKPLACE?**

<b>RATINGS</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
Very Much	90	54.22
Somewhat	45	27.11
Very Little	15	9.04
Not At All	16	9.64

From the table, 81.33 percent felt their SVCC preparation helped them “Very Much” or “Somewhat” to perform in the workplace.

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?” Seventy-one graduates responded to this question. Their responses are given in Table 10. The topics appearing most frequently among these suggestions were related to three areas: “More Hands-on” (6), “More Clinicals” (4) and “Need More Foreign Languages” (2) and “Need Early Childhood Pgm”. Twenty-five graduates indicated that there was no improvement needed.

**Table 10: BASED ON YOUR CURRENT JOB REQUIREMENTS WHAT AREAS IN YOUR SVCC PROGRAM NEED IMPROVEMENT?**

<b>AREA</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
ACCOUNTING	1	1.41
ADD MGT/SUPERVISION COURSE	1	1.41
ANATOMY SHOULD BE REQUIRED	1	1.41
AUTO COMPUTER DIAGNOSTICS	1	1.41
CDL LICENSE	1	1.41
COVER HAZMAT A LITTLE MORE	1	1.41
DIESEL TECH	1	1.41
DRAWING BLOOD	1	1.41
DRIVING LAWS IN VIRGINIA	1	1.41
ELECTRIC/HYBRID VEHICLES	1	1.41
ELECTRICAL DESIGN/COMMERC AC	1	1.41
FOREIGN LANGUAGE	2	2.82
HAVE ALL RN PGM IN SOUTH BOSTON	1	1.41
INSTRUCTORS HAVE NO PATIENCE	1	1.41
INTERVIEWING SKILLS	1	1.41
IV INSERTS	1	1.41
MATH	1	1.41
MEDICAL CODING	1	1.41
MORE CLINICALS	4	5.63
MORE COMPUTER TRAINING	1	1.41
MORE HANDS ON	6	8.45
MORE HMS CLASSES	1	1.41
MORE HUMAN RESOURCE CLASSES	1	1.41
MORE INTERNSHIPS	1	1.41
NEED AAS DEGREE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD	2	2.82
NEED FIELD TRIPS	1	1.41
NEED MORE HVAC CLASSES	1	1.41
NEED MORE TRAINING IN MED OFFICE	1	1.41
NEED QUICKBOOKS	1	1.41
NIGHT DRIVING EXPERIENCE	1	1.41
NONE	25	35.21
PHLEBOTOMY NEEDS MED TERMINOLOGY	1	1.41
PLAN READING	1	1.41
PSYCHOLOGY	1	1.41
SEE COMMENTS	2	2.82
SHOULD HAVE BEEN IN A DIFFERENT PGM	1	1.41

## FULL-TIME SALARIES

Eighty-seven graduates who were employed full-time reported their salaries. Full-time employment was defined as 35 hours or more weekly. Table 11 below summarizes the salaries reported.

**TABLE 11: FULL-TIME SALARIES REPORTED BY 2008 GRADUATES**

<b>ANNUAL SALARY</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
Less than \$6,000	0	0
\$6,000-9,999	2	2.3
\$10,000-14,999	7	8.05
\$ 15,000-19,999	9	10.34
\$ 20,000-24,999	19	21.84
\$ 25,000-29,999	15	17.24
\$ 30,000 and up	35	40.23

The average annual salary reported by the 87 respondents was \$27,751.62, a decrease from the 2007 survey. The range was \$8,000 to \$72,000, and the median was in the \$25,000-29,999 category.

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

# **APPENDIX A**

## **2008 Graduate Surveys**

**The 2008 Prospective Graduate Follow-up Survey was administered on-line through Survey Monkey. For a copy of the survey, please contact the Office of Institutional Research at 434/736-2077 or 434/949-1045**

**or e-mail**

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**SVCC GRADUATE FOLLOW-UP  
(2008)**

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**