



# 2004 ACT Student Opinion Survey

OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS  
NOVEMBER 2004



TIDEWATER COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
From here, go anywhere.™

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# **2004 ACT Student Opinion Survey**

**Office of Institutional Effectiveness**  
November 2004



**TIDEWATER COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
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# **TIDEWATER COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACT STUDENT OPINION SURVEY - SPRING 2004**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In April 2004, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness conducted the fifth administration of the ACT Student Opinion Survey over the course of ten years. As part of its on-going effort to measure student satisfaction with instructional programs, student services, and other aspects of the college experience, and in an effort to inform the ten-year SACS self-study process, this study highlights some of the changing trends over the past ten years. As in previous years, a stratified random sample of students was surveyed from each campus, from various disciplines, and with varying attendance patterns. The survey was administered to 467 students (61%) out of a sample size of 766 students.

Respondents mirrored the college's student demographic profile, which included diverse backgrounds and a wide range of ages. Reflective of the college's changing demographics, the percentage of Caucasian respondents has decreased by 17% in the past ten years, while African-American respondents increased 13% in the same time period. Additionally, the increasing enrollment of "traditional students" is evidenced by several demographic factors that increased by more than 10% over the past ten years: respondents with the primary purpose of transferring to a four-year institution (25% increase); enrolled full time (21% increase); unmarried (17% increase); attended classes primarily during the day (21% increase); and entered directly from high school (13% increase).

Most respondents cited low cost (69%), convenient location (61%), the availability of desired courses (57%), and the ability to work while attending (53%) as the primary reasons for enrolling at TCC. In the last ten years, the low cost and convenient location have become increasingly important to students (13% and 9% increase, respectively). At the same time, the percentage of respondents receiving some form of financial aid has increased from 34% in 1994 to 43% in 2004. Students also cited potential for success (33%) and availability of scholarships and financial aid (28%) as important reasons for enrolling. Very few respondents reported that high school counselors or parents/relatives had any influence on their decision to attend TCC.

TCC was the college of first choice for approximately 70% of the respondents and most held positive impressions of their classroom experience: students were satisfied with class size (83%), testing and grading (82%), and attitude of teaching staff toward students (78%). Over 70% of the respondents also cited satisfaction with course content in major, quality of instruction, variety of courses offered, flexibility to design program of study, and challenge in program of study. Ninety-five percent of the students had access to a computer outside of the college for academic work, an increase of 41% over ten years, and 93% indicated access to the internet. Of those who enrolled in a distance learning course, 82% perceived the course as at least or more academically rigorous as traditionally delivered courses.

After several years of increasing satisfaction ratings with admissions and registration procedures, the 2004 survey indicated a leveling off in terms of satisfaction. This could be a result of the college's conversion to an online registration system and the inherent glitches that accompany any transformation of business practices and procedures that involve technology and innovation. Overall, 70% of the respondents were satisfied with general admissions/entry procedures. Additionally, high ratings were given to college catalog/admissions publications (79%) and the accuracy of information received before enrolling (70%). When asked to identify which college publications were used most frequently, the top three sources were website information (41%), printed catalog (32%), and printed schedule book (20%). An area that has shown marked improvement since 1994 is the availability of financial aid information prior to enrolling (51% satisfied in 1994 compared to 61% satisfied in 2004).

In an effort to gain baseline data for student satisfaction and usage of the new student information system, several questions were included to determine student perceptions. While the vast majority of respondents (over 88%) had used the web for registration and related activities, 35% had not used it for payment of tuition. Over 70% of the students indicated satisfaction with checking real-time course status (70%), enrolling in a class (78%), paying tuition with credit card (70%), printing class schedule (80%), and obtaining grades (75%). Reviewing the academic advisement plan and checking financial aid awards received 62% and 60% satisfaction ratings, respectively.

The survey examined frequency of use and level of satisfaction with a number of co-curricular services and facilities. Several areas that have experienced a large increase in usage over the past ten years include advising, financial aid, library/LRC, tutoring, and computer services. Approximately one-third (34%) of the spring 2004 students indicated they had taken advantage of learning assistance provided outside of the classroom (i.e. tutoring, Math lab, Writing Center, Supplemental Instruction). With enhanced demand for these services, satisfaction levels have increased or remained about the same.

#### **Usage and Satisfaction with Select Co-Curricular Services**

<b>Co-Curricular Services</b>	<b>Usage</b>		<b>Satisfaction Rating</b>	
	<b>1994</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>2004</b>
Academic Advising	59%	73%	62%	66%
Computer Services	34%	68%	86%	86%
Financial Aid	32%	49%	67%	66%
Library/LRC	68%	80%	85%	89%
Orientation	29%	32%	68%	72%
Tutoring	11%	23%	77%	73%

The college has made a concerted effort over the past ten years to provide a higher level of student involvement in college governance and student activities. The impact of this effort is evident in the increase over the ten-year period in respondents' satisfaction with student voice in college policies (11% increase), rules governing student conduct (8% increase), purposes for use of student fees (15% increase), personal involvement in college activities (12% increase), and student government (11% increase).

Finally, when comparing TCC respondent data with the nationally normed data for similar colleges, TCC had scores above the national average with regard to library/LRC services, academic variety and program of study, testing and grading, most registration and admissions services (including publications), rules and regulations governing students (conduct, academic policies, use of student activity fees), and lab facilities (including computer labs). Areas where the college scored below the national average included services typically found in student centers (day care, health services, student employment services), advising (availability of counselors, academic course planning, and career advisement), and some facilities areas (industrial arts shop facilities, student center, athletic facilities).

Overall, students are satisfied with their TCC experience. Students are showing overwhelming approval of the college's investments over the last ten years in terms of infrastructure, facilities, technology, business practices and policies. It is evident that the college's investments have been aimed at enhancing the first two years of the baccalaureate experience and developing the workforce opportunities in the community it serves. However, in times of limited resources and growing demand for educational services, the survey data alludes to the need for student centers, improved facilities for the industrial technologies, and enhanced advising services on the campuses.

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# **TIDEWATER COMMUNITY COLLEGE ACT STUDENT OPINION SURVEY - SPRING 2004**

## **INTRODUCTION**

In an attempt to measure student satisfaction with instruction and services at Tidewater Community College (TCC), the ACT Student Opinion Survey was administered during the 2004 Spring Semester. This report provides a descriptive summary of the survey results. The survey instrument asks questions concerning the following areas: college impressions, college services, and college environment (see Appendix A). The same survey instrument was used in 1994, 1996, 1999, and 2002; thus, where appropriate, longitudinal analyses are included. To provide a national comparison, Appendices B and C contain satisfaction score averages from the 2004 survey along with national normative data.

## **SURVEY DESIGN**

### **Methodology**

As in previous years, a stratified random sample of students was surveyed from each campus, from various disciplines, and with varying attendance patterns. Instructors received information about the survey effort along with the survey materials and were asked to administer the survey to their students in the classroom.

The selected class sample consisted of 42 classes with a combined enrollment of 766 students. Fifty percent (50%) of selected classes were taught at the Virginia Beach Campus, 18% were taught at both the Portsmouth and Norfolk campuses, and 14% were taught at the Chesapeake Campus. Fifty-four percent (54%) of the classes met in the morning or afternoon, 42% were evening classes, and 4% were Saturday classes.

Responses were received from 467 students in 34 of the 42 selected classes. Of those 34 classes, 18 (53%) were taught at Virginia Beach, 6 (18%) were taught at each Portsmouth and Norfolk, and 4 (12%) were taught at Chesapeake. Twenty-one of the classes (62%) met in the morning or afternoon, 12 (35%) in the evening, and one (3%) on Saturday.

### **Respondent Profile**

- A total of 467 students responded to the survey, resulting in a 61% response rate.
- Over one-half of respondents (55%) indicated that they enrolled in most of their courses at the Virginia Beach Campus. Another 17% enrolled in most of their courses at the Portsmouth Campus, followed by the Norfolk and Chesapeake campuses with 14% each.
- The percentage of students that take courses at more than one campus increased from 24% in 2002 to 33% in 2004. The majority of students (74%) that enrolled at multiple campuses found consistency in services across campuses, a 20% increase from 2002.
- Although the majority of respondents were either Caucasian or African-American (53% and 27%, respectively), the percentage of Caucasian respondents has decreased by 17% since 1994 while African-American respondents increased 13% over the same ten-year period.
- Sixty-three percent (63%) of respondents were female.
- The majority of students (70%) were unmarried (single, divorced, or widowed), which represents a 17% increase from 1994.

- Most students (70%) did not have any dependent children. However, 24% had one or two children, and 6% had three or more children.
- Sixty-three percent (63%) of students reported being employed over twenty hours per week. The percentage that work over forty hours per week decreased to a ten-year low, 14%.
- Even with the majority of students being employed over twenty hours per week, 65% indicated that they were full-time students (a 22% increase from 1994).
- Seventy-one percent (71%) of students attended morning or afternoon classes, a 21% increase from 1994.
- Almost half of the students (44%) had attended TCC for one year at the time of the survey, and 33% had attended TCC for two years.
- Forty-three percent (43%) of students received financial aid, representing a 9% gain from 1994.
- The largest percentage of students entered TCC directly from high school (37%), while 28% entered after working for a period of time. The percentage of students entering from high school has increased 13% from 1994.
- The largest percentage of students (47%) was 20-29 years of age. An additional 24% was in the 19 or under age group, an 11% increase since 1994.
- For 58% of the respondents, the purpose of attending TCC was to prepare to transfer to a four-year institution. This represents a 25% increase from 1994. Twenty-four percent (24%) enrolled to obtain an Associate degree, a 9% decrease compared to 1994. The percentage of students who have access to a computer outside of the college for their academic work has increased steadily over a ten-year period. An overwhelming majority (95%) of respondents have access to a computer outside of the college, compared to 54% in 1994. Additionally, 93% of students reported having access to the Internet outside of the college for their academic work, compared to 79% of students in 1999.
- Thirty percent (30%) of respondents indicated that they volunteer in their community.

## **SURVEY RESULTS**

### **College Impressions**

The College Impressions section of the survey sought students' overall impressions of the college and motivating reasons for their enrollment at TCC. Table 1 summarizes various reasons for selecting TCC and the percentage of students who indicated each was a reason for attending. Over a ten-year period, respondents have been consistent in their reasons for attending as evidenced by the high percentage that chose the following: low cost of attending, offered the courses I wanted, convenient location, and could work while attending. Although less than half of the respondents felt that advice of parents or relatives, the size of the college, or availability of scholarship/financial aid were reasons for selecting TCC, these were the only items to increase at least 10% over a ten-year period, indicating increasing importance to students.

Reasons	1994	1996	1999	2002	2004	Change 02 to 04	Change 94 to 04
Low cost of attending	81.23%	90.88%	86.89%	87.55%	87.27%	-0.28%	6.04%
Offered the courses I wanted	90.24%	85.34%	82.31%	83.96%	86.01%	2.05%	-4.23%
Convenient location	80.35%	83.48%	80.74%	84.02%	85.10%	1.08%	4.75%
Could work while attending	79.22%	77.51%	78.84%	83.93%	77.18%	-6.75%	-2.04%
Good chance of personal success	62.31%	67.06%	64.29%	67.33%	70.14%	2.81%	7.83%
Good vocational or academic reputation	57.49%	55.65%	48.62%	61.40%	56.62%	-4.78%	-0.87%
Liked the size of the college	37.76%	46.02%	44.64%	44.87%	48.50%	3.63%	10.74%
Availability of scholarship or financial aid	34.05%	39.05%	45.82%	45.58%	46.29%	0.71%	12.24%
Liked the social atmosphere	27.96%	30.03%	29.18%	35.43%	35.96%	0.53%	8.00%
Advice of parents or relatives	24.46%	28.83%	34.85%	35.21%	33.95%	-1.26%	9.49%
Advice of high school counselor, teacher	14.37%	14.76%	16.76%	15.90%	17.17%	1.27%	2.80%
Wanted to be with friends	6.02%	7.65%	8.31%	13.35%	12.44%	-0.91%	6.42%

**Table 1: Reasons for Selecting TCC – 1994 to 2004**

Overall, students' impressions of TCC continued to be positive. Eighty-six percent (86%) of students indicated that TCC was their first or second choice, which is slightly lower than the 91% who indicated so on the 2002 survey. Moreover, sixty-five percent (65%) of students reported that they would definitely or probably choose TCC again. A substantial majority of respondents (78%) felt that the quality of education provided by TCC was excellent or good, representing the same level of quality as perceived in the 1994 survey.

## College Services

A large part of the survey focuses on college services. Students were asked to report their use of various services at the college and to indicate their level of satisfaction with these services. Table 2 shows the percentage of respondents that indicated they used particular services, while Table 3 provides information concerning satisfaction rates of students who actually used the college services.

College Services or Programs	1994	1996	1999	2002	2004	Change 02 to 04	Change 94 to 04
Parking facilities and services	90.12%	92.05%	89.12%	89.02%	87.84%	-1.18%	-2.28%
Library/learning resources center facilities and services	68.20%	80.98%	79.20%	79.84%	79.85%	0.01%	11.65%
Academic advising/course planning services	58.90%	70.99%	72.28%	73.58%	73.09%	-0.49%	14.19%
Computer services	33.93%	52.76%	63.71%	68.69%	67.57%	-1.12%	33.64%
Financial aid services	31.82%	39.47%	46.07%	48.54%	48.54%	0.00%	16.72%
Cafeteria/food services	44.68%	51.96%	39.51%	43.31%	39.24%	-4.07%	-5.44%
College orientation program	29.05%	35.24%	31.62%	39.09%	31.68%	-7.41%	2.63%
Vocational guidance/career planning services	20.36%	26.57%	28.22%	32.39%	26.19%	-6.20%	5.83%
College-sponsored tutorial services	10.82%	19.76%	15.49%	15.40%	23.11%	7.71%	12.29%
Personal counseling services (for personal concerns and problems)	17.07%	25.67%	20.72%	22.97%	19.48%	-3.49%	2.41%
Veterans services	13.61%	15.54%	11.85%	14.90%	15.26%	0.36%	1.65%
College-sponsored social activities	14.46%	15.27%	16.60%	13.21%	14.75%	1.54%	0.29%
Student employment services	5.69%	8.16%	9.24%	8.16%	11.32%	3.16%	5.63%
Cultural programs and activities	9.61%	12.72%	7.54%	6.68%	10.30%	3.62%	0.69%
Credit by examination (CLEP, etc.)	7.01%	5.62%	6.36%	5.88%	9.32%	3.44%	2.31%
Job placement services	6.93%	10.47%	8.43%	7.84%	7.18%	-0.66%	0.25%
Recreational and intramural programs and services	8.18%	7.08%	8.33%	8.45%	6.56%	-1.89%	-1.62%

**Table 2: Use of College Services – 1994 to 2004**

- Four of the 17 listed services were used by at least 50% of respondents: parking facilities and services (88%), library/learning resources center facilities and services (80%), academic advising/course planning services (73%), and computer services (68%).
- Five of the services listed showed an increase in usage over the past ten years of 10% or more: computer services (34% growth), financial aid services (17% growth), academic advising/course planning services (14% growth), college-sponsored tutorial services (12% growth), and library/learning resources center facilities and services (12% growth).
- The largest increase in usage between 1994 and 2004 was for computer services (34% growth), while college-sponsored tutorial services experienced the largest increase from 2002 to 2004 (8% growth).
- When asked which of the College's publications is used most frequently, 41% responded web-based information, followed by 32% that chose the print version of the college catalog.
- A supplemental question that was added specifically for TCC asked whether or not the student received some type of learning assistance that was available outside of the classroom. Thirty-four percent (34%) responded affirmatively.

Students who indicated that they used a college service were also asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the service. Table 3 presents the percentage of students who indicated that they were very satisfied or satisfied with a given college service. Percentages are based on the total number of students who used the service and responded to the question.

<b>College Services or Programs</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Change 02 to 04</b>	<b>Change 94 to 04</b>
Library/learning resources center facilities and services	84.72%	87.45%	85.36%	87.21%	88.96%	1.75%	4.24%
College-sponsored social activities	56.82%	83.72%	80.79%	79.66%	86.54%	6.88%	29.72%
Computer services	85.98%	87.50%	84.71%	90.27%	85.99%	-4.28%	0.01%
Cultural programs and activities	75.00%	83.78%	77.05%	88.89%	84.38%	-4.51%	9.38%
Veterans services	80.00%	91.11%	83.65%	92.54%	79.63%	-12.91%	-0.37%
Recreational and intramural programs and services	59.09%	60.00%	83.10%	76.32%	73.69%	-2.63%	14.60%
College-sponsored tutorial services	77.42%	76.67%	67.88%	75.68%	73.25%	-2.43%	-4.17%
College orientation program	68.13%	65.14%	64.38%	65.41%	72.13%	6.72%	4.00%
Financial aid services	67.33%	66.67%	67.98%	82.10%	66.32%	-15.78%	-1.01%
Personal counseling services (for personal concerns and problems)	62.26%	66.23%	68.42%	71.82%	65.79%	-6.03%	3.53%
Academic advising/course planning services	62.23%	69.91%	67.20%	70.87%	65.64%	-5.23%	3.41%
Vocational guidance/career planning services	62.50%	72.84%	69.77%	72.37%	64.07%	-8.30%	1.57%
Student employment services	68.75%	73.68%	70.13%	66.67%	57.57%	-9.10%	-11.18%
Credit by examination (CLEP, etc.)	70.59%	63.64%	65.38%	82.61%	55.56%	-27.05%	-15.03%
Cafeteria/food services	53.28%	60.12%	55.31%	54.63%	55.34%	0.71%	2.06%
Parking facilities and services	59.36%	60.54%	59.02%	59.53%	55.23%	-4.30%	-4.13%
Job placement services	31.58%	54.17%	63.38%	63.64%	23.81%	-39.83%	-7.77%
<b>(Internet-based services Supplemental Questions)*</b>							
Review and print a class schedule	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	79.95%	N/A	N/A
Enroll in a class	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	77.87%	N/A	N/A
Obtain final grades	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	74.54%	N/A	N/A
Pay tuition using a VISA or MasterCard	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	70.29%	N/A	N/A
Check the real-time course status and availability information	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	70.03%	N/A	N/A
Review academic advisement plan	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	61.90%	N/A	N/A
Check financial aid award	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	60.31%	N/A	N/A

\* Seven new survey items were added in 2004 to the Supplemental Question Sheet.

**Table 3: Satisfaction with Services for Students who Used Service – 1994 to 2004**

- The satisfaction score averages for two survey items were statistically significantly different from national normative data when measured against community colleges of similar size (see Appendix B). Satisfaction with library/learning resources center facilities and services was significantly greater when compared to nationally normed data, while academic advising/course planning services was significantly lower than the national average at the .05 level.
- Nearly every score average was above 3.0 on a scale of 1 to 5, which indicates some degree of satisfaction with all services provided by TCC. In fact, five services had average scores greater than 4.0. These services included: library/learning resources (4.29), computer services (4.27), veterans services (4.17), college-sponsored social activities (4.12), and cultural programs and activities (4.03).
- Seventy percent or more of the respondents perceived the following eight services as satisfactory: library/learning resources center (89%), college-sponsored social activities (87%), computer services (86%), cultural programs and activities (84%), veterans' services (80%), recreational and intramural programs and services (74%), college-sponsored tutorial services (73%), and college orientation program (72%).
- Ten services met or improved upon 1994 satisfaction rates, with 2 of these services increasing by at least 15%. The satisfaction rate for college-sponsored social activities increased by 30%, while recreational and intramural programs and services increased by 15% from 1994 satisfaction levels.
- Cafeteria/food services received one of the lowest satisfaction rates; however, the 2004 rate (55%) represents an improvement over rates from both 1994 and 2002.
- Student satisfaction with Internet-based services ranged from 60% (check financial aid award) to 80% (review and print a class schedule). Five of the seven web-based services received satisfaction rates of at least 70%.

## College Environment

The largest segment of the ACT Student Opinion Survey asked students about their level of satisfaction with the college environment and covered perceptions on issues pertaining to academics, admissions, rules and policies, facilities, registration, and general concerns. The data for each of these areas are presented in Tables 4 through 9. Percentages represent those who responded "very satisfied" and "satisfied," and are based only on the number of students who responded to the question.

<b>Academics</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Change 02 to 04</b>	<b>Change 94 to 04</b>
Quality of instruction in your major area of study	86.88%	91.45%	87.05%	91.28%	83.11%	-8.17%	-3.77%
Attitude of the teaching staff toward students	82.56%	85.14%	81.76%	86.58%	82.27%	-4.31%	-0.29%
Flexibility to design your own program of study	82.51%	87.54%	82.63%	84.56%	78.25%	-6.31%	-4.26%
Class size relative to the type of course	72.56%	76.01%	77.95%	81.98%	77.70%	-4.28%	5.14%
Preparation you are receiving for your chosen occupation	83.38%	79.94%	75.13%	78.32%	76.40%	-1.92%	-6.98%
Challenge offered by your program of study	77.41%	79.76%	76.88%	75.91%	74.82%	-1.09%	-2.59%
Value of the information provided by your advisor	84.41%	85.20%	78.81%	79.79%	74.77%	-5.02%	-9.64%
Testing/grading system	72.10%	74.15%	74.60%	74.59%	73.93%	-0.66%	1.83%
Variety of courses offered at this 2-year college	70.59%	69.47%	67.44%	70.95%	69.25%	-1.70%	-1.34%
Availability of your advisor	75.40%	74.55%	70.19%	70.79%	65.56%	-5.23%	-9.84%
Course content in your major area of study	66.19%	64.86%	64.88%	66.74%	63.86%	-2.88%	-2.33%
Out-of-class availability of your instructors	69.18%	65.92%	64.91%	67.71%	59.70%	-8.01%	-9.48%

**Table 4: Satisfaction with College Environment – Academics – 1994 to 2004**

- Eight items were perceived as satisfactory by at least 70% of respondents: quality of instruction (83%), attitude of the teaching staff (82%), flexibility to design their own program of study (78%), class size (78%), preparation for chosen occupation (76%), challenge offered by the program of study (75%), value of the information provided by the advisor (75%), and testing/grading system (74%).
- Since 1996, students have given the highest satisfaction ratings to three aspects of the college environment: quality of instruction in their major area of study, attitude of the teaching staff, and flexibility to design their own program of study.
- Relative to other academic issues, students were least satisfied with the course content in their major area of study and the out-of-class availability of their instructors. Although the satisfaction score averages for these two items were below national averages, they were not statistically significant (see Appendix C). The only item with a statistically significant lower score average when compared to nationally normed data was availability of the advisor.
- A supplemental survey item asked for the degree to which distance learning courses were as academically difficult as traditionally delivered courses. Of the 131 respondents that self-reported enrollment in a distance learning course, 82% found the online format as or more difficult than traditional courses. In fact, 44% considered online courses to be more difficult.

<b>Admissions</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Change 02 to 04</b>	<b>Change 94 to 04</b>
College catalog/admissions publications	72.54%	77.03%	77.46%	83.33%	79.37%	-3.96%	6.83%
General admissions/entry procedures	72.22%	75.36%	78.15%	78.10%	71.36%	-6.74%	-0.86%
Accuracy of college information you received before enrolling	66.47%	71.09%	73.81%	74.37%	69.61%	-4.76%	3.14%
Availability of financial aid information prior to enrolling	51.17%	55.68%	61.59%	68.15%	60.70%	-7.45%	9.53%
Assistance provided by the college staff when you entered this college	60.88%	64.05%	65.23%	69.18%	60.70%	-8.48%	-0.18%

**Table 5: Satisfaction with College Environment – Admissions – 1994 to 2004**

- None of the satisfaction score averages for admissions-related items indicated a statistical significant difference from national normative data (see Appendix C). However, all items listed in Table 5 had scores above the national average with the exception of the last item, assistance provided by college staff upon entering the college.
- All aspects of the admissions process were rated positively (see Table 5). Three of the five items were perceived as satisfactory by at least 70% of respondents: college catalog/admissions publications (79%), general admissions/entry procedures (71%), and accuracy of college information received before enrolling (70%).
- Three items improved upon 1994 satisfaction rates. The satisfaction rate for availability of financial aid information increased 10% from 1994 satisfaction levels, while college catalog information increased 7%, and accuracy of college information increased 3%.

<b>Rules and Policies</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Change 02 to 04</b>	<b>Change 94 to 04</b>
Rules governing student conduct at this college	67.29%	72.42%	73.13%	80.36%	75.71%	-4.65%	8.42%
Personal security/safety at this college	66.47%	70.18%	70.43%	70.10%	67.12%	-2.98%	0.65%
Academic probation and suspension policies	48.52%	46.82%	54.13%	61.59%	53.89%	-7.70%	5.37%
Purposes for which student activity fees are used	34.28%	41.61%	45.86%	50.33%	49.60%	-0.73%	15.32%
Student voice in college policies	36.26%	40.93%	46.35%	50.82%	46.67%	-4.15%	10.41%

**Table 6: Satisfaction with College Environment – Rules and Policies – 1994 to 2004**

- Three of the satisfaction score averages for policy-related items were statistically significantly greater than national normative data (see Appendix C). Rules governing student conduct, academic probation and suspension policies, and purposes for which student activity fees are used had significantly higher satisfaction scores than national averages.
- Some items were rated more positively than others (see Table 6). Only rules governing student conduct was perceived as satisfactory by at least 70% of respondents. The lowest level of perceived satisfaction was student voice in college policies (47%).
- Every item related to rules and policies improved upon 1994 satisfaction rates, ranging from a 1% increase (personal security/safety) to a 15% increase (purposes for which student activity fees are used).

<b>Facilities</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Change 02 to 04</b>	<b>Change 94 to 04</b>
Study areas	64.87%	71.72%	72.61%	75.75%	75.49%	-0.26%	10.62%
Classroom facilities	72.43%	83.43%	78.74%	81.00%	75.46%	-5.54%	3.03%
General condition and appearance of the buildings and grounds	73.82%	82.80%	82.45%	81.21%	74.21%	-7.00%	0.39%
Business-training facilities/equipment (computers, typewriters, etc.)	63.91%	73.77%	73.53%	77.26%	73.05%	-4.21%	9.14%
Laboratory facilities	57.34%	71.30%	68.89%	74.49%	72.12%	-2.37%	14.78%
College bookstore	69.30%	71.88%	74.15%	67.64%	65.45%	-2.19%	-3.85%
Student community center/student union	38.66%	46.60%	46.47%	52.52%	50.38%	-2.14%	11.72%
Industrial arts/shop facilities (woodworking, mechanical, etc.)	38.56%	45.11%	40.61%	48.66%	38.38%	-10.28%	-0.18%
Athletic facilities	30.22%	26.45%	35.43%	41.85%	34.63%	-7.22%	4.41%

**Table 7: Satisfaction with College Environment – Facilities – 1994 to 2004**

- None of the satisfaction score averages for facilities-related items were statistically significantly different from national normative data (see Appendix C). Four of the nine items, however, showed satisfaction levels at or above national averages: business training facilities/equipment, laboratory facilities, college bookstore, and study areas.
- Five of the nine items were perceived as satisfactory by at least 70% of respondents (see Table 7): study areas (76%), classroom facilities (76%), general condition and appearance of the buildings and grounds (74%), business training facilities and equipment (73%), and laboratory facilities (72%).
- With the exception of industrial arts/shop facilities and college bookstore, all items increased in satisfaction ratings since 1994.

<b>Registration</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Change 02 to 04</b>	<b>Change 94 to 04</b>
Academic calendar for this college (e.g., semester or quarter system)	76.90%	81.23%	77.51%	76.97%	78.03%	1.06%	1.13%
General registration procedures	77.01%	83.33%	79.88%	82.56%	72.69%	-9.87%	-4.32%
Billing and fee payment procedures	72.11%	77.26%	75.99%	75.96%	68.36%	-7.60%	-3.75%
Availability of the courses you want at times you can take them	62.14%	62.22%	61.73%	65.25%	61.17%	-4.08%	-0.97%

**Table 8: Satisfaction with College Environment – Registration – 1994 to 2004**

- The satisfaction score average for the academic calendar was statistically significantly greater than the national norm (see Appendix C). Three of the four items indicated satisfaction levels at or above national averages including: academic calendar, general registration procedures, and availability of the courses students want at times they can take them.
- As in previous years, students were most satisfied with the academic calendar (78%) and general registration procedures (73%).
- The academic calendar was the only survey item that improved upon its 1994 satisfaction rate. Registration satisfaction rates have remained fairly stable over time, experiencing only marginal increases and decreases.

<b>General</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>Change 02 to 04</b>	<b>Change 94 to 04</b>
This college in general	80.29%	85.43%	82.05%	84.66%	78.23%	-6.43%	-2.06%
Racial harmony at this college	70.06%	71.60%	73.48%	76.69%	68.72%	-7.97%	-1.34%
Attitude of the college non-teaching staff toward students	56.33%	59.70%	59.52%	61.95%	56.73%	-5.22%	0.40%
Opportunities for personal involvement in college activities	41.56%	52.36%	55.95%	58.20%	53.31%	-4.89%	11.75%
Concern for you as an individual	54.08%	55.95%	52.71%	62.87%	50.58%	-12.29%	-3.50%
College media (college newspapers, campus radio, etc.)	40.55%	47.44%	42.38%	44.01%	48.25%	4.24%	7.70%
Opportunities for student employment	40.10%	40.29%	50.73%	50.16%	47.71%	-2.45%	7.61%
Student government	32.18%	36.10%	39.76%	42.86%	42.91%	0.05%	10.73%

**Table 9: Satisfaction with College Environment – General – 1994 to 2004**

- None of the satisfaction score averages for the general environment were statistically significantly different from national normative data (see Appendix C). However, two items had satisfaction scores above national averages: student government and opportunities for personal involvement in college activities.
- Consistent with findings from previous surveys, the college in general and racial harmony received the highest satisfaction ratings (see Table 9). In fact, these were the only items to receive ratings between 69% and 85% over a ten-year period.
- College media and student government were the only items to increase satisfaction rates from 2002 levels.
- Four survey items experienced healthy gains in satisfaction between 1994 and 2004: opportunities for personal involvement in college activities (12% increase), student government (11% increase), college media (8% increase), and opportunities for student employment (8% increase).
- A supplemental question asked students to indicate the extent to which TCC prepared them for the world of work or to continue their education. Seventy-four percent (74%) responded that this was achieved to at least some extent, representing an increase of 10% from 2002.

- In response to another supplemental question, 61% of students were satisfied with their sense of belonging at TCC. This represents an increase of 14% as compared to the 2002 survey results.

## CONCLUSION

Tidewater Community College has long embraced data-driven decision making through its continuous and systematic evaluation process. The ACT Student Opinion Survey has been used as a quality assurance indicator to determine students' satisfaction with various and assorted services including academic issues, admission procedures, rules and policies, facilities, registration procedures, and other general concerns. Ten years of survey data has evidenced improvements in all facets of the TCC student experience.

By benchmarking data against other colleges nationally, TCC is better able to position itself as a national model of a comprehensive community college for the 21st Century. TCC received significantly higher satisfaction ratings on five items when compared to national averages. These distinguished areas include: library/learning resources center facilities and services, rules governing student conduct, academic probation and suspension policies, purposes for which student activity fees are used, and academic calendar. Over the past ten years, the college has made a concerted effort to provide a higher level of student involvement in college governance and student activities; the comparison with national scores in these areas indicates positive results from these efforts.

Although the majority of students were satisfied with many aspects of TCC, two items received significantly lower satisfaction score averages when compared to national data. Therefore, the college should consider facilitating discussion and identification of causal factors for the following survey items: academic advising/course planning services and availability of academic advisors.

Data analysis from a longitudinal perspective revealed nine areas with double-digit increases in satisfaction ratings. The following survey items evidenced substantial increases in satisfaction levels over a ten-year period, ranging from 10 to 30 percent: college-sponsored social activities (30%), purposes for which student activity fees are used (15%), laboratory fees (15%), recreational and intramural programs and services (15%), student community center/student union (12%), opportunities for personal involvement in college activities (12%), study areas (11%), student government (11%), and student voice in college policies (10%). Most of these items are reflective of the college's proactive investment over the past ten years in student engagement activities such as a college-wide student newspaper, enhanced college-wide and campus student activities, and a renewed student government association.

Three areas experienced double-digit declines in satisfaction over the same ten-year period. Satisfaction rates dropped 10% for out-of-class availability of instructors, quality of instruction in major area of study, and availability of advisors. Although a substantial percentage of students indicated satisfaction with the quality of instruction (75%), far fewer were satisfied with the out-of-class availability of their instructors (66%) and availability of their advisors (60%). Most likely, this trend is a reflection of the college's struggle to balance an enrollment increase of 42% over the last ten years with dwindling resources. In 1993-94, the instructional load was handled by a faculty consisting of 55% full-time compared to 41% full-time ten years later.

The 2004 ACT Student Opinion Survey Report provides data and findings worthy of further examination to identify causal factors, with particular attention to student advising during and after the in-take process. National studies have shown that proper advisement at the welcome and entry point will aid in retention efforts and provide the foundation for a successful college experience.



## APPENDIX A: Listing of Survey Items by Section and Year

Survey Items by Section	Year Asked				
	2004	2002	1999	1996	1994
<b>Section I - Background Information</b>					
A. Social Security Number	X	X	X	X	X
B. Age	X	X	X	X	X
C. Racial/Ethnic Group	X	X	X	X	X
D. For What Purpose Did You Enter This 2-Year College	X	X	X	X	X
E. Indicate Your Overall College Grade Average	X	X	X	X	X
F. Sex	X	X	X	X	X
G. Marital Status	X	X	X	X	X
H. Number Of Dependent Children	X	X	X	X	X
I. Indicate The Number Of Hours Per Week You Are Currently Employed	X	X	X	X	X
J. What Is Your Current Enrollment Status At This 2-Year College	X	X	X	X	X
K. Indicate The Number Of Years You Have Attended This College	X	X	X	X	X
L. Which Type Of Classes Do You Most Frequently Attend	X	X	X	X	X
M. Which Of The Following Was True For You At The Time You First Entered This 2-Year College	X	X	X	X	X
N. How Far From This 2-Year College Do You Currently Live	X	X	X	X	X
O. Do You Receive Any Type Of Federal, State, Or College-Sponsored Student Financial Aid	X	X	X	X	X
P. Indicate Your Current Area Of Study	X	X	X	X	X
Q. Indicate Your Occupational Choice	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Section II - College Impressions</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1994</b>
A. Indicate Whether Each Of The Following Was A Major Reason, A Minor Reason, Or Not A Reason, That You Selected This Particular 2-Year College	X	X	X	X	X
Convenient Location	X	X	X	X	X
Offered the Courses I Wanted	X	X	X	X	X
Low Cost of Attending	X	X	X	X	X
Could Work While Attending	X	X	X	X	X
Good Vocational or Academic Reputation	X	X	X	X	X
Liked the Social Atmosphere	X	X	X	X	X
Liked the Size of the College	X	X	X	X	X
Good Chance of Personal Success	X	X	X	X	X
Availability of Scholarship or Financial Aid	X	X	X	X	X
Advice of Parents or Relatives	X	X	X	X	X
Advice of High School Counselor, Teacher, Principal, etc.	X	X	X	X	X
Wanted to Be with Friends	X	X	X	X	X
B. Indicate Your Rating Of This 2-Year College At The Time You Applied For Admission	X	X	X	X	X
C. If You Could Start College Over, Would You Choose To Attend This College	X	X	X	X	X
D. What Is Your Overall Impression Of The Quality Of Education At This 2-Year College	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Section III - College Services</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1994</b>
For Each Service (Or Program) Listed Below, Indicate Whether Or Not You Have Used The Service And, If You Have Used The Service, Your Level Of Satisfaction With It	X	X	X	X	X
1. Academic advising/course planning services	X	X	X	X	X
2. Personal counseling services (for personal concerns and problems)	X	X	X	X	X
3. Vocational guidance/career planning services	X	X	X	X	X

4. Job placement services	X	X	X	X	X
5. Financial aid services	X	X	X	X	X
6. Recreational and intramural programs and services	X	X	X	X	X
7. Library/learning resources center facilities and services	X	X	X	X	X
8. Residential hall programs and services	X	X	X	X	X
9. Student health services	X	X	X	X	X
10. College-sponsored tutorial services	X	X	X	X	X
11. Student employment services	X	X	X	X	X
12. Cafeteria/food services	X	X	X	X	X
13. College-sponsored social activities	X	X	X	X	X
14. Cultural programs and activities	X	X	X	X	X
15. College orientation program	X	X	X	X	X
16. Credit by examination (CLEP, etc.)	X	X	X	X	X
17. Computer services	X	X	X	X	X
18. Parking facilities and services	X	X	X	X	X
19. Veterans services	X	X	X	X	X
20. Day care services	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Section IV - College Environment</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1994</b>
<b>Academic</b>					
1. Testing/grading system	X	X	X	X	X
2. Course content in your major area of study	X	X	X	X	X
3. Quality of instruction in your major area of study	X	X	X	X	X
4. Out-of-class availability of your instructors	X	X	X	X	X
5. Attitude of the teaching staff toward students	X	X	X	X	X
6. Variety of courses offered at this 2-year college	X	X	X	X	X
7. Class size relative to the type of course	X	X	X	X	X
8. Flexibility to design your own program of study	X	X	X	X	X
9. Availability of your advisor	X	X	X	X	X
10. Value of the information provided by your advisor	X	X	X	X	X
11. Challenge offered by your program of study	X	X	X	X	X
12. Preparation you are receiving for your chosen occupation	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Admissions</b>					
13. General admissions/entry procedures	X	X	X	X	X
14. Accuracy of college information you received before enrolling	X	X	X	X	X
15. Availability of financial aid information prior to enrolling	X	X	X	X	X
16. Assistance provided by the college staff when you entered this college	X	X	X	X	X
17. College catalog/admissions publications	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Rules &amp; Policies</b>					
18. Rules governing student conduct at this college	X	X	X	X	X
19. Student voice in college policies	X	X	X	X	X
20. Academic probation and suspension policies	X	X	X	X	X
21. Purposes for which student activity fees are used	X	X	X	X	X
22. Personal security/safety at this college	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Facilities</b>					
23. Classroom facilities	X	X	X	X	X
24. Industrial arts/shop facilities (woodworking, mechanical, etc.)	X	X	X	X	X
25. Business-training facilities/equipment (computers, typewriters, etc.)	X	X	X	X	X
26. Laboratory facilities	X	X	X	X	X
27. Athletic facilities	X	X	X	X	X
28. Study areas	X	X	X	X	X
29. Student community center/student union	X	X	X	X	X

30. College bookstore	X	X	X	X	X
31. Availability of adequate housing for students	X	X	X	X	X
32. General condition and appearance of the buildings and grounds	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Registration</b>					
33. General registration procedures	X	X	X	X	X
34. Availability of the courses you want at times you can take them	X	X	X	X	X
35. Academic calendar for this college (e.g., semester or quarter system)	X	X	X	X	X
36. Billing and fee payment procedures	X	X	X	X	X
<b>General</b>					
37. Concern for you as an individual	X	X	X	X	X
38. Attitude of the college nonteaching staff toward students	X	X	X	X	X
39. Racial harmony at this college	X	X	X	X	X
40. Opportunities for student employment	X	X	X	X	X
41. Opportunities for personal involvement in college activities	X	X	X	X	X
42. Student government	X	X	X	X	X
43. College media (college newspapers, campus radio, etc.)	X	X	X	X	X
44. This college in general	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Section V - Additional Questions</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1994</b>
1. Campus at which you take most of your classes	X	X			
2. Do you usually take classes at more than one campus	X	X			
3. If yes, did you find consistency in services across campuses	X	X			
4. Which of the College's publications do you use most frequently	X				
5. I plan to transfer to another four-year college or university	X				
6. I currently volunteer in my community	X	X			
7. I have access to a computer outside of the college for my academic work	X	X	X		
8. I have access to the internet outside of the college for my academic work	X	X	X		
9. I received some type of learning assistance that is available to me outside of the classroom to help me in my coursework (e.g., tutoring, Math Lab, Writing Center, Supplemental Instruction)	X				
10. I am aware that Service Learning is available at TCC	X	X			
11. If you have enrolled in a distance learning course at TCC (e.g., online/internet, compressed video, telecourse), to what degree do you find distance learning courses as academically difficult as traditionally delivered courses (e.g., classroom)	X				
12. Check the real-time course status and availability information (satisfaction with internet use)	X				
13. Enroll in a class (satisfaction with internet use)	X				
14. Pay tuition using a VISA or MasterCard (satisfaction with internet use)	X				
15. Review and print a class schedule (satisfaction with internet use)	X				
16. Obtain final grades (satisfaction with internet use)	X				
17. Check financial aid award (satisfaction with internet use)	X				
18. Review academic advisement plan (satisfaction with internet use)	X				
19. Access to computers on campus (level of satisfaction)	X	X	X		
20. Sense of belonging (level of satisfaction)	X	X	X		
21. Convenience of registering for classes (level of satisfaction)	X	X	X		
22. Ability to get needed information in this campus (level of satisfaction)	X	X	X		
23. Information received from College Information Center (level of satisfaction)	X	X	X		
24. Assistance received to help decide which field of study to	X	X	X		

pursue (level of satisfaction)				
25. Computer assistance received from the Help Desk (level of satisfaction)	X			
26. Availability of diverse student activities at the campus/college (level of satisfaction)	X			
27. TCC adequately prepared me for the world of work or to continue my education	X	X		
28. TCC helped me gain a better understanding of the basic political, economic, and religious values of American culture	X	X		
29. TCC increased my knowledge and understanding of diverse cultural groups	X	X		
30. TCC increased my awareness of the impact of cultural values on determining gender roles	X	X		

## APPENDIX B: Comparison of Satisfaction Score Averages for College Services

College Services or Programs	Satisfaction Score Averages*		
	TCC Spring 2004	National Norm** 2001-03	Difference
Parking facilities and services	3.44	3.22	0.22
College-sponsored social activities	4.12	4.00	0.12
Veterans services	4.17	4.08	0.09
Library/learning resources center facilities and services	4.29	4.21	0.08***
Computer services	4.27	4.19	0.08
College orientation program	3.85	3.85	0.00
Cultural programs and activities	4.03	4.08	-0.05
Recreational and intramural programs and services	3.95	4.03	-0.08
Financial aid services	3.80	3.90	-0.10
College-sponsored tutorial services	3.97	4.10	-0.13
Academic advising/course planning services	3.66	3.79	-0.13***
Cafeteria/food services	3.47	3.60	-0.13
Personal counseling services (for personal concerns and problems)	3.72	3.89	-0.17
Vocational guidance/career planning services	3.67	3.87	-0.20
Credit by examination (CLEP, etc.)	3.63	3.87	-0.24
Student employment services	3.39	3.86	-0.47
Job placement services	2.71	3.59	-0.88

\* Satisfaction averages are computed using the following response codings: 5=Very Satisfied, 4=Satisfied, 3=Neutral, 2=Dissatisfied, 1=Very Dissatisfied. "Does Not Apply" and blank responses are omitted.

\*\* National normative data from community colleges with headcounts greater than 5,000 that administered the survey between January 1, 2001 and December 31, 2003.

\*\*\* Statistically significant difference at the .05 level using two-tailed t-tests.



## APPENDIX C: Comparison of Satisfaction Score Averages for College Environment

College Environment	Satisfaction Score Averages*		
	TCC Spring 2004	National Norm** 2001-03	Difference
<b>Academics</b>			
Testing/grading system	4.03	3.93	0.10
Flexibility to design your own program of study	3.95	3.91	0.04
Variety of courses offered at this 2-year college	4.00	3.97	0.03
Class size relative to the type of course	4.17	4.17	0.00
Attitude of the teaching staff toward students	4.07	4.11	-0.04
Quality of instruction in your major area of study	3.97	4.02	-0.05
Out-of-class availability of your instructors	3.80	3.85	-0.05
Course content in your major area of study	3.91	3.97	-0.06
Challenge offered by your program of study	3.92	3.98	-0.06
Value of the information provided by your advisor	3.71	3.78	-0.07
Preparation you are receiving for your chosen occupation	3.81	3.88	-0.07
Availability of your advisor	3.64	3.75	-0.11***
<b>Admissions</b>			
College catalog/admissions publications	4.04	3.98	0.06
Accuracy of college information you received before enrolling	3.84	3.80	0.04
Availability of financial aid information prior to enrolling	3.68	3.65	0.03
General admissions/entry procedures	3.84	3.81	0.03
Assistance provided by college staff when you entered this college	3.65	3.72	-0.07
<b>Rules and Policies</b>			
Rules governing student conduct at this college	3.96	3.87	0.09***
Academic probation and suspension policies	3.67	3.58	0.09***
Purposes for which student activity fees are used	3.51	3.43	0.08***
Student voice in college policies	3.49	3.51	-0.02
Personal security/safety at this college	3.80	3.85	-0.05
<b>Facilities</b>			
Business-training facilities/equipment (computers, typewriters, etc.)	3.98	3.90	0.08
Laboratory facilities	3.87	3.85	0.02
College bookstore	3.66	3.65	0.01
Study areas	3.93	3.93	0.00
Classroom facilities	3.90	3.91	-0.01
General condition and appearance of the buildings and grounds	3.91	3.96	-0.05
Availability of adequate housing for students	3.22	3.28	-0.06
Industrial art/shop facilities (woodworking, mechanical, etc.)	3.44	3.59	-0.15
Student community center/student union	3.58	3.76	-0.18
Athletic facilities	3.27	3.61	-0.34
<b>Registration</b>			
Availability of the courses you want at times you can take them	3.61	3.53	0.08
General registration procedures	3.85	3.78	0.07

	Satisfaction Score Averages*		
	TCC Spring 2004	National Norm** 2001-03	Difference
<b>College Environment</b>			
Academic calendar for this college (e.g., semester or quarter system)	3.97	3.90	0.07***
Billing and fee payment procedures	3.78	3.79	-0.01
<b>General</b>			
Opportunities for personal involvement in college activities	3.62	3.60	0.02
Student government	3.45	3.44	0.01
Racial harmony at this college	3.87	3.88	-0.01
Campus media (college newspapers, campus radio, etc.)	3.50	3.51	-0.01
This college in general	4.02	4.03	-0.01
Attitude of college nonteaching staff toward students	3.62	3.64	-0.02
Opportunities for student employment	3.46	3.51	-0.05
Concern for you as an individual	3.49	3.60	-0.11

\* Satisfaction averages are computed using the following response codings: 5=Very Satisfied, 4=Satisfied, 3=Neutral, 2=Dissatisfied, 1=Very Dissatisfied. "Does Not Apply" and blank responses are omitted.

\*\* National normative data from community colleges with headcounts greater than 5,000 that administered the survey between January 1, 2001 and December 31, 2003.

\*\*\* Statistically significant difference at the .05 level using two-tailed t-tests.