

**2008**

# **GRADUATE SURVEY STUDY**

Office of  
**Institutional Effectiveness**  
March 2010



**TIDEWATER COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
From here, go anywher .

**The 2008 Graduate Survey Study may be found on the World Wide Web at  
<http://www.tcc.edu/welcome/collegeadmin/OIE/reports/index.htm>**

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## **2008 GRADUATE SURVEY STUDY**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In the fall of 2008, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness surveyed 2,385 Tidewater Community College (TCC) graduates from the class of 2008. Every two years the survey is conducted to assist in program assessment and to acquire knowledge of demographic, enrollment, attendance, employment, educational, and attitudinal data about TCC graduates. Shown below are highlights of the study.

- TCC continues to enroll increasingly younger, traditional students focused primarily on transferring to four-year colleges and universities and earning baccalaureate degrees.
- Enrollment trends indicate marginal changes in the percentages of female and African American graduates. Female graduates declined from 65% in 2006 to 64% in 2008, while the proportion of African-American graduates decreased from 26% in 2006 to 23% in 2008.
- According to student course work analysis, the percentage of graduates enrolled in at least one developmental English course decreased from 43% in 2006 to 25% in 2008, while the percentage that took at least one developmental math course increased from 38% to 51%.
- Sixty-eight percent (68%) of graduates were enrolled in an SDV course during their first year of studies at TCC, which is substantially greater than the overall college average (48%).
- Consistent with previous graduate survey reports, an overwhelming majority (93%) of responding graduates noted that their TCC experience contributed to their goal attainment.
- Nearly all respondents (99%) would recommend TCC to others wishing to continue their education, while 95% indicated they would recommend their curriculum to others wishing to enter the same field.
- Nine of ten elements of instruction were perceived by at least 70% of respondents as either good or superior, and five items were perceived as good or superior by at least 90%. Students were most satisfied with average class size (95%), the overall quality of instruction (93%), the quality of instruction in major curriculum (93%), grading and testing (93%), and content of courses in the major curriculum (90%). Somewhat less satisfaction was cited for instructor availability (89%), course availability/scheduling (85%), online instruction (82%), and faculty advising (72%).
- Graduates expressed high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of instruction except the cost of books and supplies. The percentage of graduates rating the cost of books and supplies as good or superior decreased substantially from 41% in 2006 to 31% in 2008.
- Respondents were overwhelmingly positive about the adequacy of the knowledge and skills acquired at TCC. All ten items were rated by at least 90% of respondents as either adequate or more than adequate: understanding written information (98%), thinking critically (97%), defining problems (97%), solving problems (97%), speaking skills (96%), decision-making skills (96%), technical job knowledge (96%), mathematical skills (95%), technical job skills (95%), and writing skills (94%).
- As expected, nearly all respondents used registration and admissions/records services. The majority of graduates utilized academic counseling, library/learning resources, online

services, and laboratory facilities. However, usage rates declined by more than 5% for several services including career counseling (-7%), student activities (-7%), veterans' affairs (-8%), laboratory facilities (-9%), and the TCC Information Center (-10%).

- Similar to their perceptions of instruction, survey respondents were very satisfied with most student service areas. Seven student services were rated by at least 80% as superior or good: registration (92%), library/learning resources (91%), online services (89%), laboratory facilities (86%), veterans' affairs (86%), the TCC Information Center (83%), and the Co-Op program (80%). Three services were rated as good or superior by fewer than 70% of the respondents: Barnes & Noble Bookstore (68%), career counseling (64%), and academic counseling (63%). Although not statistically significant, satisfaction rates declined from 2006 levels in three areas: academic counseling (-3%), career counseling (-2%), and student activities (-1%).
- The majority of employed graduates continued to be employed on a full-time basis at the time of the survey; however, the rate decreased slightly from 54% in 2006 to 50% in 2008. The percent of employed respondents that cited employment on a part-time basis increased from 20% in 2006 to 25% in 2008.
- Twenty-nine percent (29%) of graduates employed by the same company during and after attending TCC received promotions or pay increases upon graduation. This represented an 8% increase from 2006.
- Forty-six percent (46%) of respondents indicated that their curriculum helped, at least to some extent, with obtaining their current employment. Sixty-five percent (65%) of graduates felt that their curriculum helped to develop new job skills.
- Sixty-one percent (61%) of graduates found that their curriculum assisted them in upgrading job performance and expertise. The percentages for full- and part-time respondents increased +2% and +7%, respectively, when compared to 2006.
- Despite the nation's economic crisis, salaries of graduates employed full-time were slightly greater than those of previous graduates. Fifty-one percent (51%) of full-time employed respondents earned at least \$30,000. The percentage of full-time employed graduates that earned between \$40,000 and \$50,000 increased 2% from 12% in 2006 to 14% in 2008. Similarly, for those that earned \$50,000 or more, the percentage increased from 13% to 15% during the same two-year period. In 2008, 49% of part-time employed graduates earned at least \$11,000. This represented a substantial increase (+7%) from 2006.
- Post-graduate activities reveal that an increasing number of traditional students attend TCC in order to complete the first two years of baccalaureate study. Half of the responding graduates indicated they were currently enrolled at an institution of higher education. Eighty percent (80%) of these graduates attended a four-year college or university, a 10% increase from 2006. The majority (71%) of graduates attending a four-year institution were enrolled full-time, a much higher proportion than in 2006 and 2004 (65% and 58%, respectively).
- Eighty-three percent (83%) of respondents rated their course work at TCC as excellent or satisfactory in terms of preparation for studies continued at other institutions. Eighty-eight percent (88%) considered the quality of instruction provided by TCC to be the same or better than that provided by their current educational institution. The percentage of respondents that believed the quality of instruction at TCC was superior increased from 14% in 2006 to 17% in 2008.

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## **2008 GRADUATE SURVEY STUDY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The 2008 Graduate Survey Study is a critical component of the college's commitment to accountability, achievement, and quality assurance. In November 2008, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness conducted the biennial TCC Graduate Survey. This study examines graduates' self-reported information and perceptions on enrollment, instruction, student services, employment, and continuing education. Areas of strength and those needing improvement are identified in the study and incorporated into the college's student outcomes assessment process.

### **SURVEY METHODOLOGY**

#### **Population**

The graduate survey population included students who successfully completed the requirements for and received an award in one or more of the approved college transfer or career/technical programs during the time period of July 1, 2007, to June 30, 2008. A total of 2,385 students met these requirements. Demographic descriptions of the population are provided in the Graduate Profile section of the report.

#### **Data Collection Process**

The survey instrument was available on the web in an easy-to-use format for completion of all questions, and graduates were encouraged to complete the survey online. Additionally, a cover letter, survey, and postage-paid, pre-addressed envelope were mailed via United States Postal Service to each of the 2,385 graduates during fall 2008. The cover letter provided instructions for graduates to complete the survey either online or in hardcopy. However, unlike previous years, no reminder postcards or follow-up surveys were mailed to non-respondents (1,689).

#### **Survey Instrument**

The 34-item survey was designed to investigate a variety of aspects of the graduates' experience while attending and after graduating from TCC (see Appendix A). Divided into five sections, the survey focused on the graduates' enrollment at TCC (10 items), perceptions of instruction and student services (7 items), post-graduate employment (9 items), continuing college or university education (8 items), and general comments (one item). A table summarizing college five-year data are provided in Appendix B, and selected open-ended comments are provided in Appendix C.

#### **Respondent Profile**

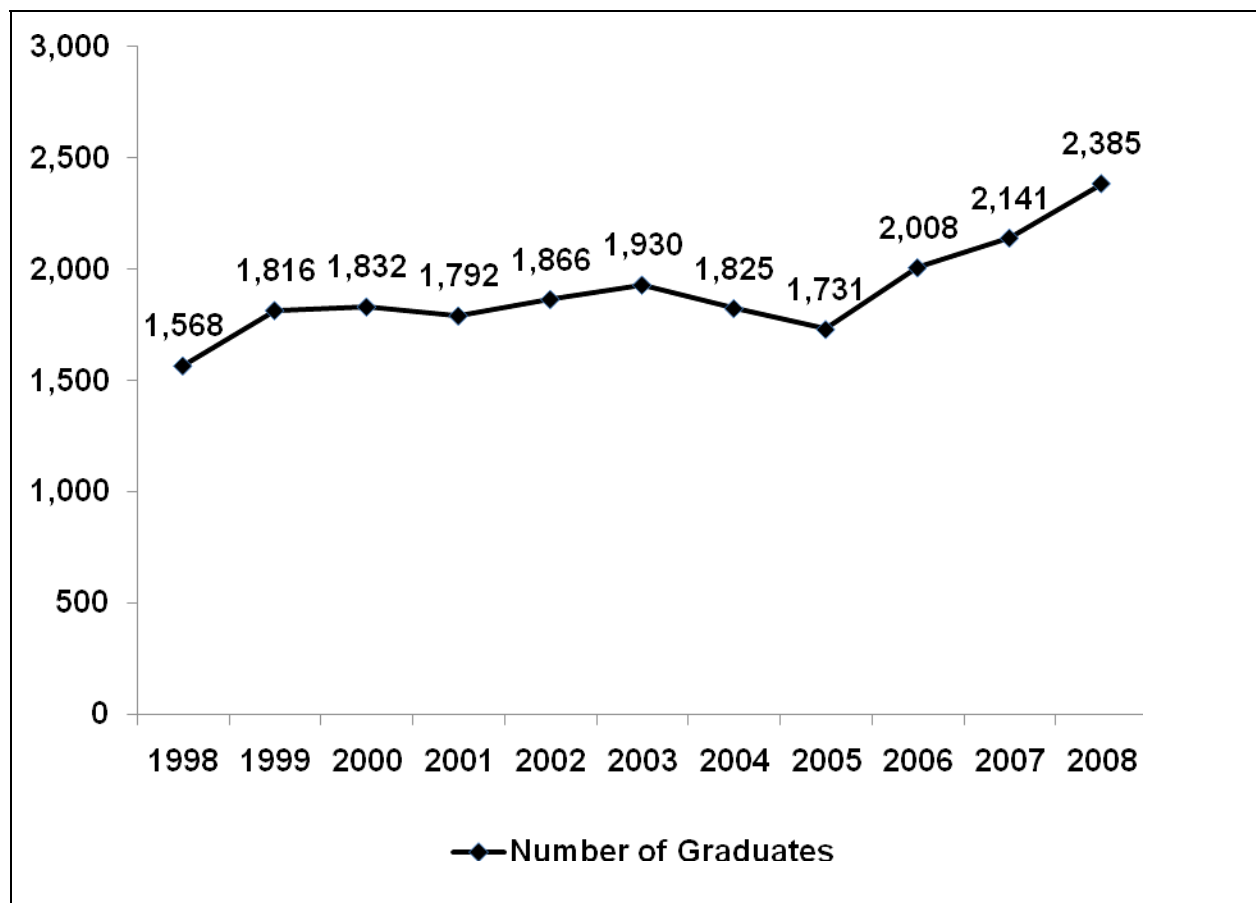
The survey results were based on 696 responses, representing a 29.2% return rate. This was the lowest response rate in over 12 years. A probable reason for the low response rates in 2006 and 2008 could be the change in methodology mentioned in the Data Collection Process section of this report. Mailing one or more follow-up surveys to non-respondents might well have resulted in an increase in the response rate, making the 2006 and 2008

surveys comparable to previous ones. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness will continue to evaluate the methodology in subsequent surveys.

Despite the low response rate, the respondent profile closely mirrored that of the 2008 graduate population. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of respondents received a college transfer degree, nearly the same percentage as all TCC graduates. Twenty-five percent (25%) of respondents were African-American, which mirrored closely the proportion of all graduates (23%). To a slightly lesser degree, the gender and age distribution matched the 2008 graduate profile. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of respondents were female compared to 64% of all graduates. While 38% of all respondents were 22 to 29 years of age, this age group represented 45% of the graduating class of 2008. These minimal differences do not negatively impact the ability to generalize survey findings to the population as a whole.

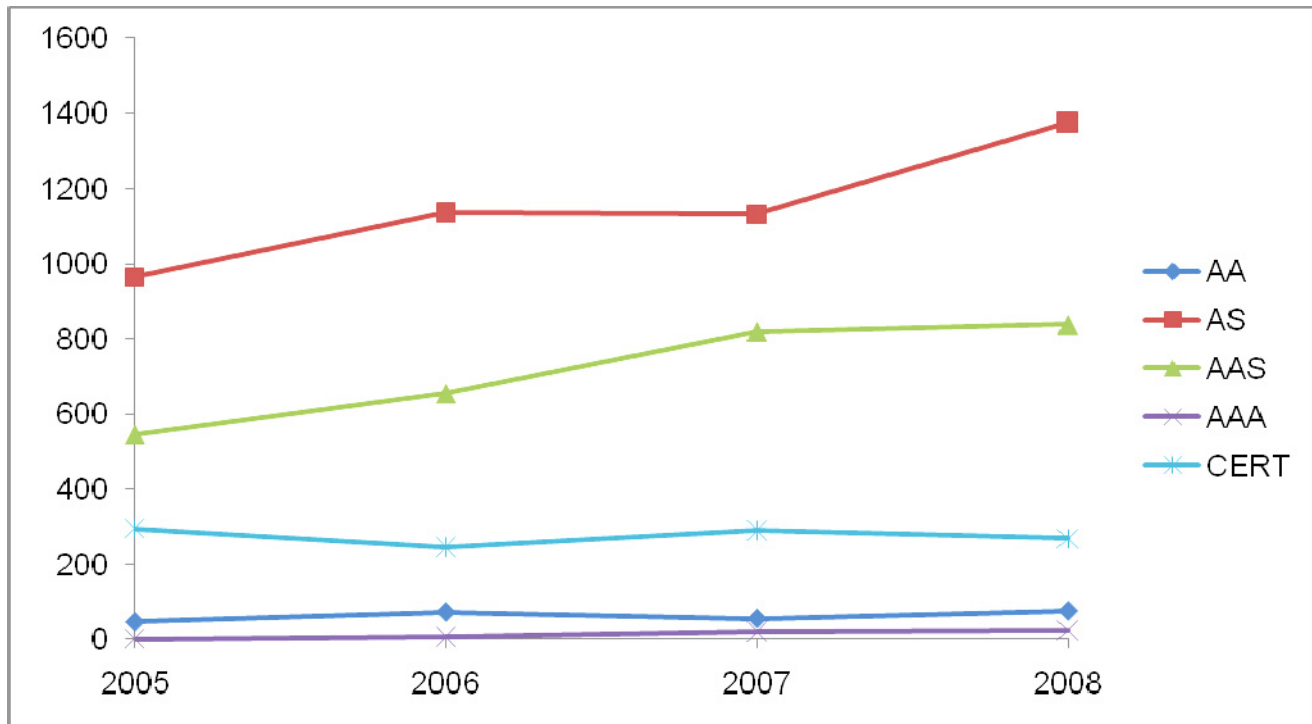
## GRADUATE PROFILE

Figure 1 depicts the number of graduates between 1998 and 2008. The graduating class of 2008 was the largest in the college's history, representing an 11% increase over the number of graduates in 2007 and a 19% increase over 2006.



**Figure 1.** Number of Graduates (1998 to 2008)

In addition to certificate/diploma awards, Figure 2 illustrates the growth patterns for the Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), Associate of Applied Science (AAS), and Associate in Applied Arts (AAA) degrees. The number of degrees awarded in college transfer curricula continued to rise substantially between 2006 and 2008. The number of AA degrees rose by 4%, while the number of AS degrees rose by 21%. The AAA is a relatively new degree and increased 229% during the reporting period. The number of AAS degrees increased 29% from 2006 to 2008, and the number of certificates increased 9%. As in previous years, the majority (62%) of graduates completed their requirements in five years or less. Seventeen percent (17%) of all certificate/diploma graduates completed their program in two years or less, a 2% increase from 2006.



**Figure 2.** Number of Degrees and Certificates by Award Type (2005 to 2008)

Demographically, TCC graduates were likely to be female, Caucasian and under 30 years of age. Sixty-four percent (64%) of the 2008 graduates were female, as compared to 61% of the fall 2007 student body. Twenty-three percent (23%) of the graduates were African-American and 14% other minority. In contrast, 31% of the student body was African-American and 13% other minority. Fourteen percent (14%) of the graduates were traditional aged college students (18-21) while 59% were under 30 years of age. Eleven percent (11%) were 45 years of age or older. Thirty-eight percent (38%) of fall 2007 students were traditional aged, and 69% were under 30.

Analysis of student course work indicates that 55% of graduates enrolled in at least one developmental course. The percentage of graduates that enrolled in at least one developmental English course decreased from 43% in 2006 to 25% in 2008, while the percentage that took at least one developmental math course increased from 38% to 51%. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of graduates were enrolled in an SDV course during their first year of studies at TCC. This is substantially greater than the overall college average of 48%, which

indicates that the completion of SDV early in a student's program of study may have a positive impact on graduation rates.

## **SURVEY RESULTS**

### **Enrollment Information**

The first section of the survey instrument contained ten items that address a variety of enrollment issues. Increasingly, the typical TCC graduate reflects enrollment trends indicative of traditional college students. The majority (58%) of the respondents studied full-time at TCC. This proportion of full-time students represented a 3% increase from 2006, a 5% increase from 2004, and an 8% increase from 2002. The percentage of the students that took classes during the day increased from 51% in 2006 to 55% in 2008, while the percentage that took their classes online increased at a slower rate from 10% to 11%. Of those students taking their classes primarily during the day, the percentage of full-time students increased from 75% to 80%. The percentage of those that completed the majority of their courses online shifted from a fairly even distribution in 2006 (48% full-time, 52% part-time) toward a part-time student majority (60%).

The percentage of respondents who attended another college or university prior to enrolling at TCC was equal to that in 2006 (10%). Mirroring previous surveys, the majority of respondents described themselves during their time at TCC as either employed (38%), a recent high school graduate (28%), or a homemaker (14%). While nearly every category showed little change over the years, the largest difference between 2006 and 2008 was the percentage of recent high school graduates, which increased from 22% to 28%.

When asked about their status while attending TCC, the majority of respondents indicated they were employed full-time (49%), nearly the same figure as in 2004 and 2006. Thirty-two percent (32%) of respondents were working part-time, a 4% increase from 2006. Almost half of the graduates indicated that their employment was directly or somewhat related to their college curriculum (45%). Eight percent (8%) of respondents were homemakers, 7% were unemployed students, and 3% of graduates indicated full-time military status. With the severe economic difficulties experienced locally and across the nation during this reporting period, one might have expected a substantial increase in the percentage of unemployed students, but the percentage of unemployed remained exactly the same as in both 2004 and 2006.

Financial aid is a critical aspect in student enrollment as evidenced by the steady increases in those reporting financial aid awards between 1994 (34%) and 2006 (50%). TCC continues to have the largest number of students receiving financial aid when compared to all other colleges in the VCCS.

Similar to previous surveys, about two-thirds (66%) of the respondents enrolled at TCC with the primary goal of transferring to a four-year college or university. Career and technical training was cited as a primary goal by 26% of the respondents. Regardless of their purpose for attending TCC, the vast majority of respondents (93%) perceived their TCC experience as contributing to the fulfillment of their goals.

As in previous graduate surveys, the most frequently cited reasons for choosing TCC continued to be low tuition (79%) and close proximity to home (76%). Other reasons included

courses/curricula of interest (59%), availability of evening classes (42%), TCC's strong academic reputation (38%), small classes and individual attention (36%), opportunity for personal improvement (33%), open admissions (32%), availability of financial aid (24%), obtaining better pay or a promotion (24%), and obtaining a job (19%). An increase in the percentage of respondents choosing TCC because of low tuition and the prospect of obtaining a job might be attributed to the economic downturn experienced by the region and nation. A new item, availability of online courses, was selected by 14% of respondents and will be tracked in future surveys.

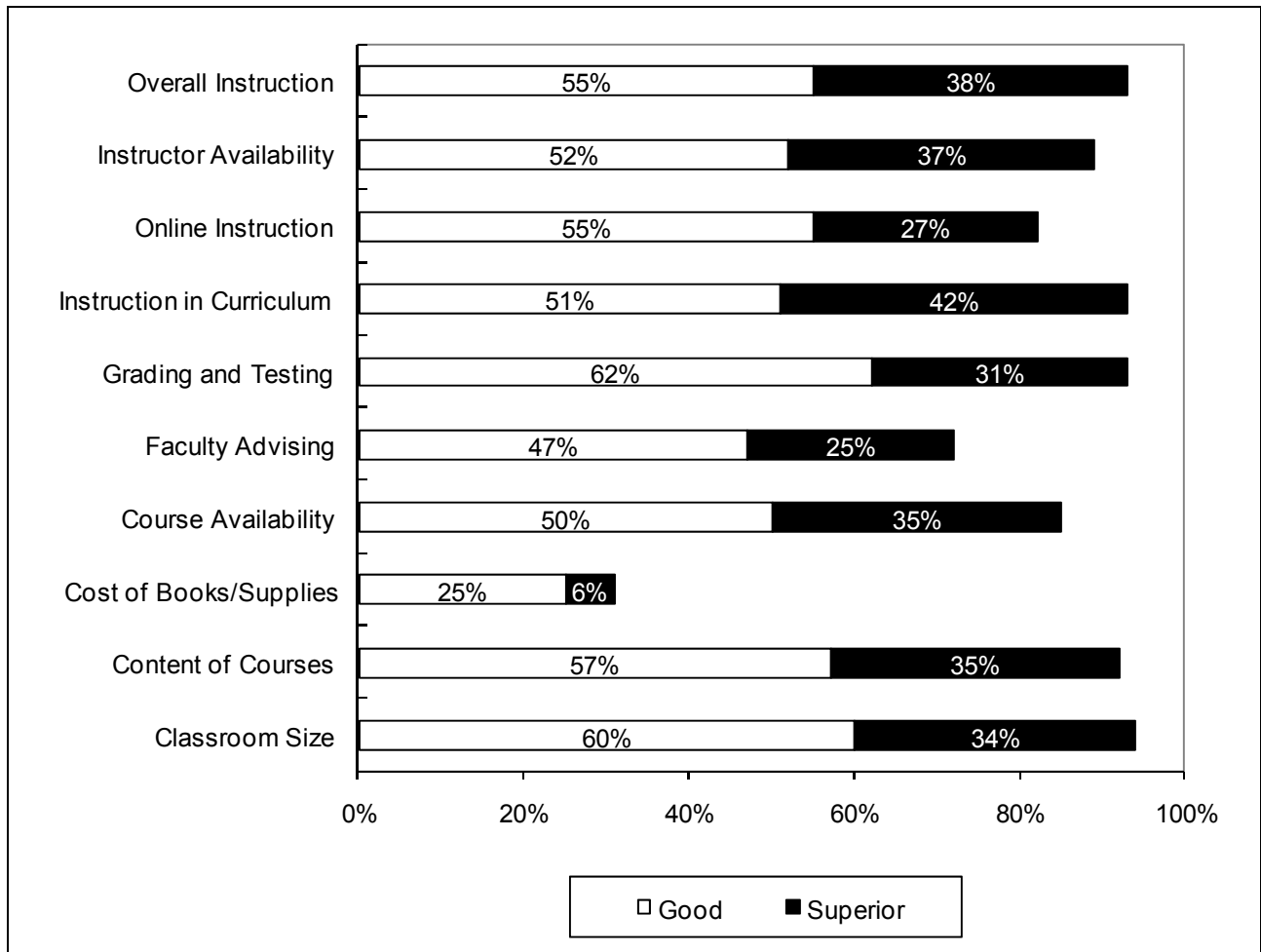
## **Evaluation of Instruction and Student Services**

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

### **Instruction**

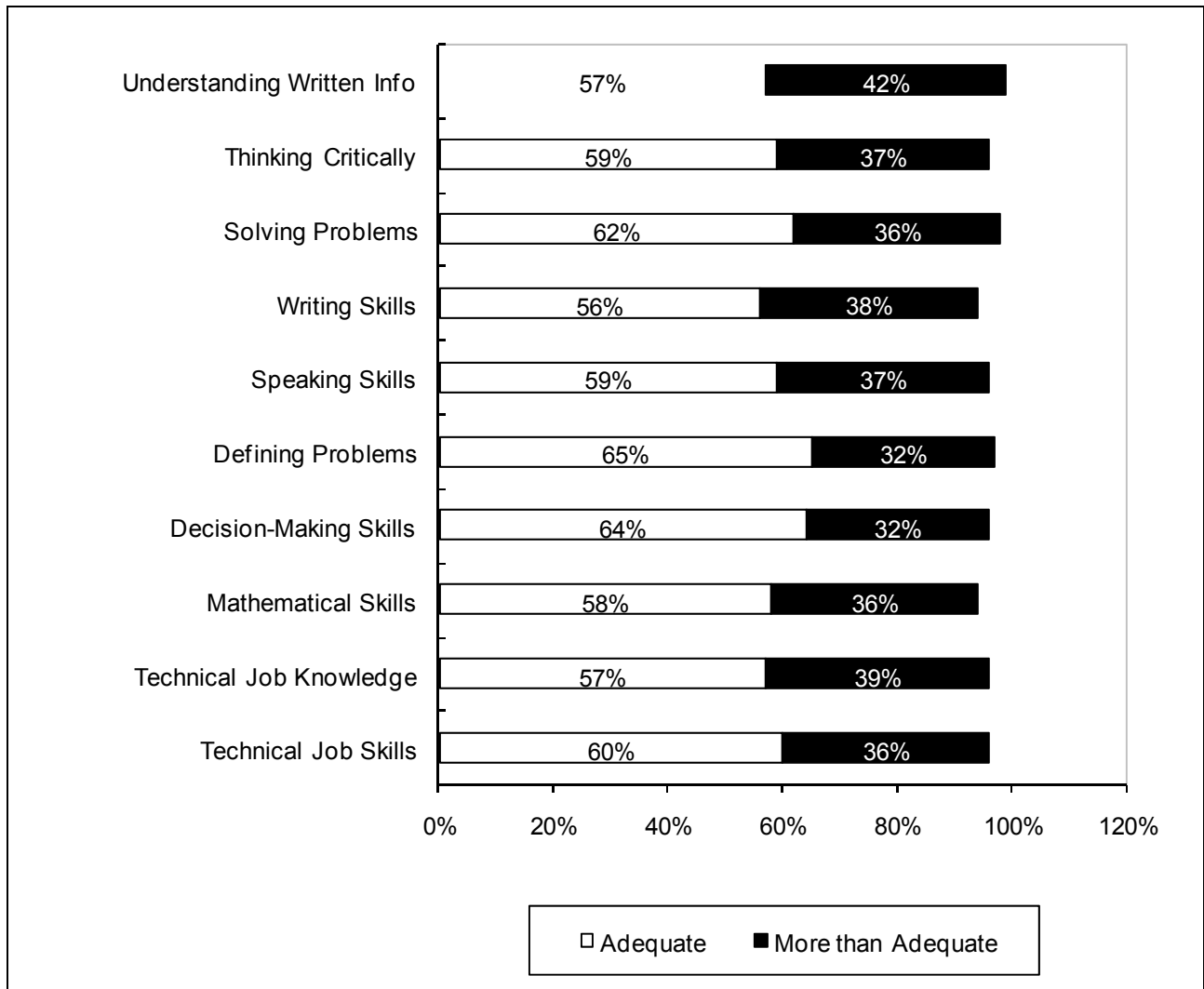
The first item asked respondents to rate ten aspects of instruction. As seen in Figure 3, nine of the ten items were rated by at least 70% of respondents as either good or superior, and five were perceived as good or superior by at least 90%. The nine items in order of satisfaction were average class size (95%), overall quality of instruction (93%), quality of instruction in major curriculum (93%), grading and testing (93%), content of courses in major curriculum (90%), instructor availability (89%), course availability/scheduling (85%), online instruction (82%), faculty advising (72%), and cost of books and supplies (31%).

Consistently over the last twelve years, graduates have expressed high levels of satisfaction with all instructional items except for the cost of books and supplies. In fact, the level of satisfaction with the cost of books and supplies decreased substantially from 41% in 2006 to 31% in 2008. A reversal of this trend should be observed in future reports as the college continues to take steps to address the cost of textbooks and supplies. For instance, during the early part of 2007, the Barnes & Noble Tidewater Community College Bookstore opened and began serving TCC students and faculty. In 2009, the college centralized auxiliary services, including the bookstore, and hired its first Director of Auxiliary Services. Concurrently, the college's Faculty Senate formed an ad hoc Textbook Steering Committee which recommended a comprehensive set of policies and procedures guiding textbook selection, use, and cost containment. These recommendations were approved by the Faculty Senate and subsequently served as the basis for a college-wide comprehensive review of the textbook selection process that insured appropriate academic quality, sensitivity to cost, and other matters as identified by the Senate. A college-wide steering committee on textbook selection was formed with broad representation from constituent groups within the college. TCC executive leadership is currently refining the work and working toward a final college-wide report with recommendations.



**Figure 3.** Satisfaction Rates for Various Aspects of Instruction (2008)

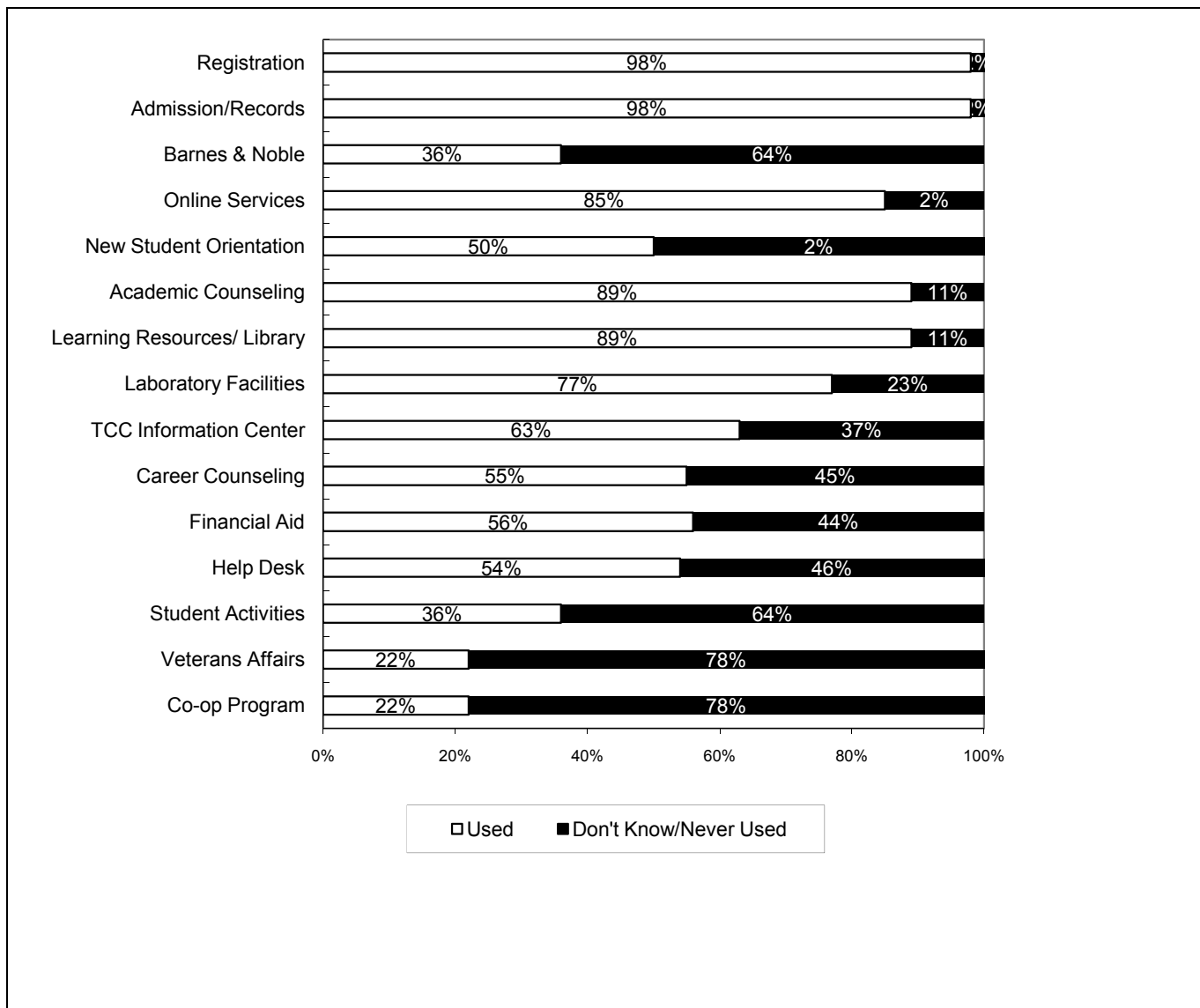
Graduates were also asked to rate the adequacy of preparation received at TCC across ten critical areas of knowledge and skills. All results are provided graphically in Figure 4. Respondents were overwhelmingly positive about the various categories of knowledge and skills acquired at TCC. All ten items were rated by at least 90% of respondents as either adequate or more than adequate. Graduates continued to express high levels of satisfaction with their preparation in: understanding written information (98%), thinking critically (97%), defining problems (97%), solving problems (97%), speaking skills (96%), decision-making skills (96%), technical job knowledge (96%), mathematical skills (95%), technical job skills (95%), and writing skills (94%).



**Figure 4.** Satisfaction Rates for Preparation of Various Skill Areas (2008)

## Student Services

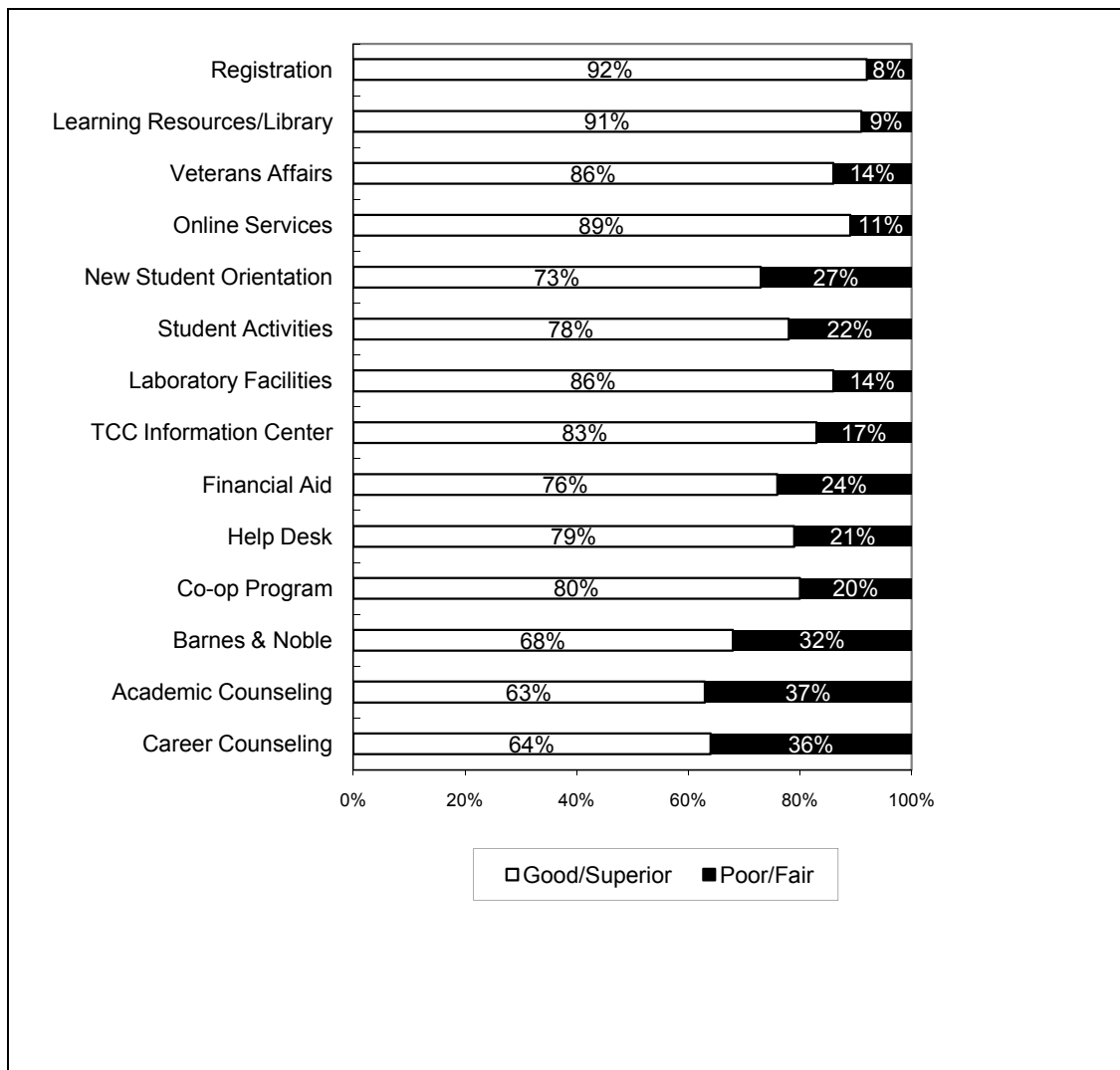
Graduates estimated the extent to which they used and were satisfied with fifteen different areas of student services (see Figure 5). Nearly all respondents used registration and admissions/records services, and at least 80% of respondents utilized academic counseling, library/learning resources, and online services. To a slightly lesser degree, respondents used laboratory facilities (77%). Usage rates declined by more than 5% for several services: career counseling (-7%), student activities (-7%), veterans' affairs (-8%), laboratory facilities (-9%), and the TCC Information Center (-10%). Some of these declines could be attributed to the increased availability of online services.



**Figure 5. Usage Rates for Various Student Services (2008)**

The majority of survey respondents were very satisfied with most service areas. At least 90% of the graduates rated registration (92%) and library/learning resources (91%) as either good or superior. Five services were rated as good or superior by over 80% of the respondents: online services (89%), laboratory facilities (86%), veterans affairs (86%), the TCC Information Center (83%), and the Co-Op program (80%). Another four services were favorably perceived by over 70%: Help Desk (79%), student activities (78%), financial aid (76%), and the new student orientation system (73%). Three services were rated as good or superior by fewer than 70% of the respondents: Barnes & Noble Bookstore (68%), career counseling (64%), and academic counseling (63%). Although graduate survey respondents continued to be increasingly satisfied with student services, three student service areas showed declines in satisfaction ratings when compared to rates from 2006: academic counseling (-3%), career counseling (-2%), and student activities (-1%).

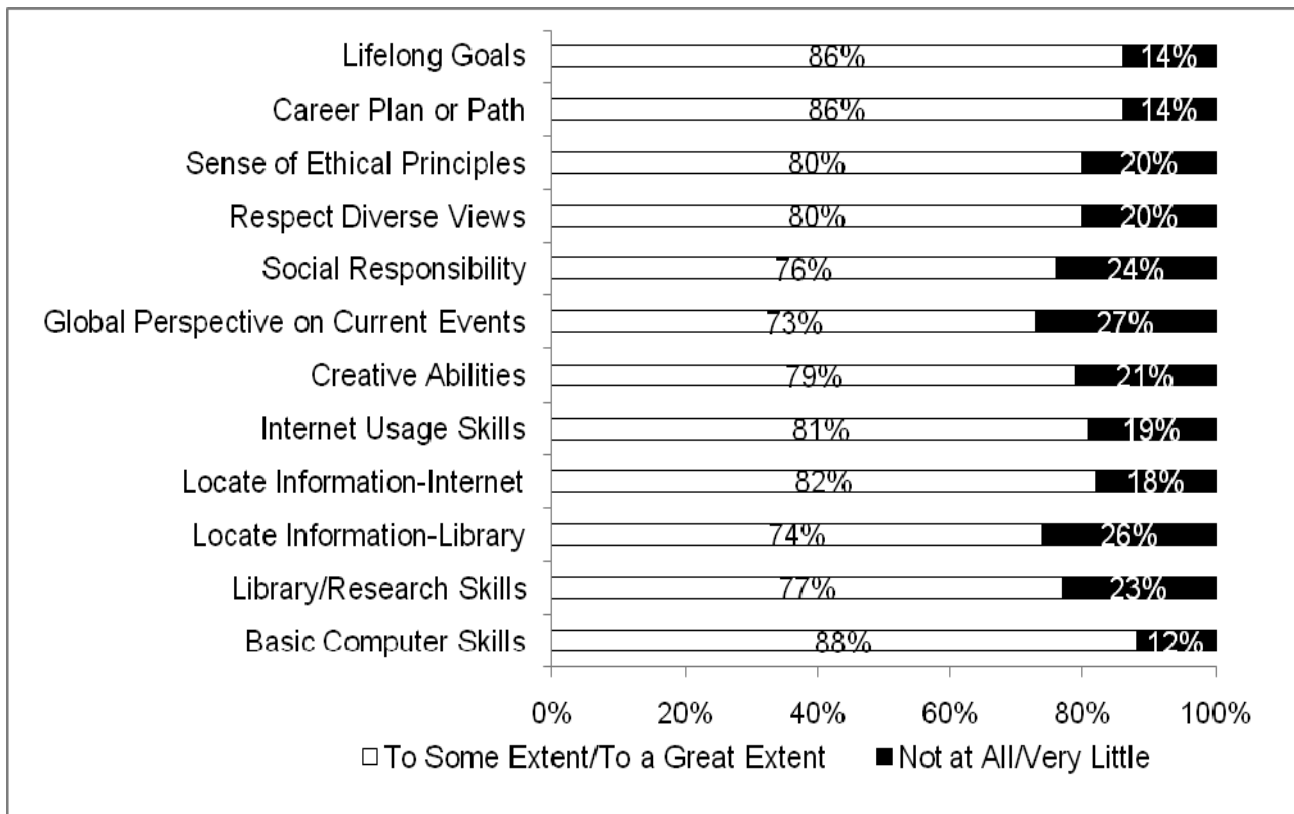




**Figure 6.** Satisfaction Rates for Various Student Services (2008)

## Personal Achievement

Survey respondents reported improvement in ten areas of personal development and general attitudes as a result of their experiences at TCC. Results for these personal development and attitudinal areas are provided in Figure 7. At least 80% of respondents believed they improved in seven of the areas: basic computer skills (88%); developing a career plan or path (86%); developing lifelong goals (86%); locating, evaluating and using information on the Internet (82%); respecting diverse viewpoints (80%); creative abilities (80%); and developing a sense of ethical principles (80%). To a lesser extent, improvement rates were also cited in the following: social responsibility (76%); locating, evaluating and using information in the library (74%); and global perspective on current events (73%).



**Figure 7.** Improvement Rates for Various Areas of Personal Development and General Attitudes (2008)

### Overall Satisfaction

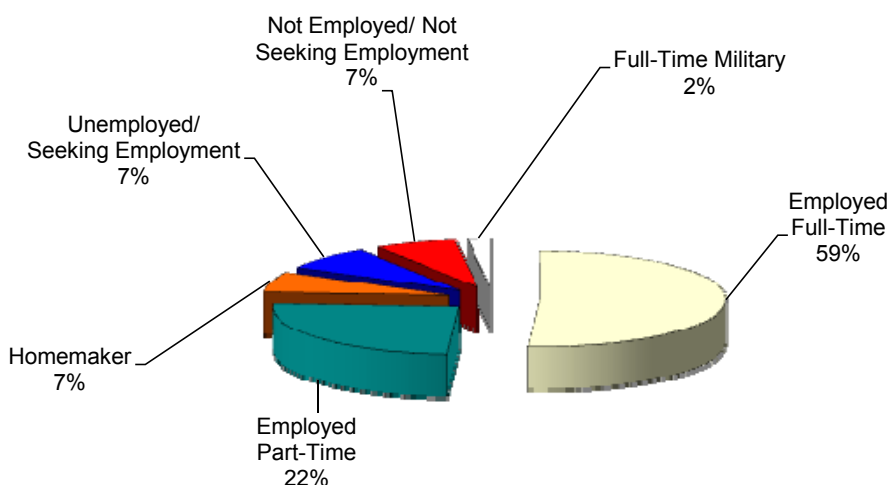
The evaluation of instruction and student services concluded with two items on recommending TCC to others. Mirroring previous survey data, graduates responded positively to their overall experience at TCC. Ninety-nine percent (99%) of respondents would recommend TCC to others wishing to continue their education, and 95% would recommend their program to others wishing to enter the same fields. Selected comments from survey respondents are provided in Appendix C.

### Employment Information

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

### Current Employment Status

Figure 8 provides a breakdown of survey respondents' employment status. The majority of graduates (50%) continued to be employed full-time at the time of the survey, a slight decrease from 2006. Conversely, the percent of respondents employed part-time increased from 20% to 25%. As in previous years, far fewer respondents cited one of the other five employment conditions: unemployed but seeking employment (8%), not employed and not seeking employment (7%), homemaker (7%), and full-time military (2%). Less than 1% was employed in an apprenticeship program.



**Figure 8.** Employment Status after TCC Graduation (2008)

## Gross Annual Income

Respondents were asked to report their current gross annual income by selecting one of seven pay bands. Despite the nation's economic crisis, salaries of TCC graduates employed full-time were slightly higher than those cited in previous years. Approximately 51% of full-time employed respondents earned between \$20,000 and \$39,999. The percentage of respondents employed full-time that reported earning between \$40,000 and \$50,000 increased from 12% in 2006 to 14% in 2008. Similarly, for those that earned \$50,000 or more, the percentage increased from 13% to 15%.

For the past ten years, \$26,000 represented the minimum salary to benchmark success for full-time employed graduates. In keeping pace with inflation and cost of living increases, this minimum standard was revised upward to \$30,000 for the 2008 survey. Fifty-one percent (51%) of full-time employed respondents earned at least \$30,000. The response rate for this new minimum standard will be tracked in future reports to determine the degree to which TCC graduate salaries keep pace with inflation. The minimum standard denoting success for part-time employed graduates remained unchanged at \$11,000. In 2008, 49% of part-time employed graduates earned at least \$11,000. This represented a substantial increase (+7%) from 2006.

Similar to the 2006 survey data, 61% of respondents were employed in a field that was at least somewhat related to their curriculum at TCC. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of graduates employed full-time reported they were employed in a related field, a 2% decrease from 2006. As in 2006, 44% of graduates employed on a part-time basis reported being employed in a field that was at least somewhat related to their curriculum.

Of those graduates currently in positions unrelated to their TCC curriculum, 44% were already working with their employer before completing the TCC program. Consistent with previous survey data, other commonly cited reasons for not being employed in a related field included not being sufficiently qualified for jobs in their fields of study (19%) and having changed career goals or preferences (18%).

The percentage of respondents employed in fields related to their curricula who were satisfied with their job preparation increased from 78% in 2006 to 80% in 2008. Another 17% of respondents perceived their preparation as “good in some areas.” When disaggregated by employment status, 81% of full-time employed respondents were satisfied with their preparation. This represented a 2% increase from 2006 and a 3% increase from 2004. Part-time employed respondents had a lower level of satisfaction (78%); however, this was a 6% increase from 2006 and an 11% increase from 2004.

### **TCC Curriculum Impact on Current Position**

Sixty percent (60%) of the responding graduates were employed by the same company that employed them while attending TCC. Of these respondents, 29% received promotions or pay increases upon graduation, an 8% increase from 2006.

Employed respondents were asked to determine the extent to which their curriculum helped them across four areas related to their employment. Table 1 provides percentages of graduates who perceived the TCC curriculum as helping, at least to some extent, these four aspects of employment. Overall, 46% of respondents indicated that their curriculum helped them obtain their current employment. Forty-nine percent (49%) of full-time employed respondents indicated their TCC curriculum helped them obtain employment, a 6% increase from 2006. Forty percent (40%) of respondents employed part-time indicated that their TCC curriculum helped them obtain their jobs, a 2% increase from the 2006 respondents.

<b>Aspects of Employment Impacted Positively by Curriculum</b>	<b>Employment Status</b>											
	<b>Full-Time</b>				<b>Part-Time</b>				<b>Total</b>			
	<b>2008</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2002</b>
Obtain Present Job	49%	43%	47%	48%	40%	38%	34%	44%	46%	41%	42%	44%
Develop New Skills	70%	66%	68%	60%	52%	47%	39%	44%	65%	61%	60%	55%
Upgrade Performance and Expertise	67%	65%	62%	58%	49%	42%	35%	46%	61%	59%	55%	55%
Qualifying for Promotions or Pay Increases	47%	47%	46%	44%	29%	21%	20%	22%	42%	41%	39%	38%

**Table 1.** Percentage of Graduates Perceiving TCC Curriculum Impacting Various Aspects of Employment (2008, 2006, 2004, 2002)

When asked the extent to which their curriculum helped to develop new job skills, 65% reported that the curriculum helped at least to some extent. Seventy percent (70%) of those employed full-time, and just over one-half (52%) of those employed part-time, believed the curriculum helped them develop new job skills.

Graduates were then asked the extent to which the curriculum assisted them in upgrading job performance and expertise. Sixty-one percent (61%) indicated help to some extent. The percentages for full- and part-time respondents increased by 2% and 7%, respectively, when compared to 2006.

The last of this series of four items asked for the degree to which the curriculum aided graduates in qualifying for promotions or pay increases. Consistent with previous survey results, 42% of all respondents indicated that to some extent, their curriculum helped them to obtain either promotions or salary increases. Forty-seven percent (47%) of full-time employed graduates noted this level of assistance. Twenty-nine percent of part-time employed graduates acknowledged that their curriculum helped them to qualify for promotion or a pay raise, an 8% increase from 2006.

### **Educational Information**

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

#### **Current Enrollment Status**

Half of responding graduates reported being currently enrolled at an institution of higher education. Eighty percent (80%) of these graduates attended a four-year college or university, which represented a substantial 10% increase from 2006. Fourteen percent (14%) attended a two-year college and the remaining 5% were enrolled in other types of institutions. As cited in previous surveys, a large majority of graduates (67%) who were not continuing their education in fall 2008 indicated their intention to do so within two years.

As TCC students have taken on more traditional characteristics, so too have the graduates who continue their education. The majority (71%) of those enrolled in a four-year institution were enrolled full-time, a larger proportion than reported in 2006 and 2004 (65% and 58%, respectively). As in previous years, most (65%) of the survey respondents currently attending two-year institutions were enrolled part-time. Seventy percent (70%) of respondents attending four-year colleges or universities reported being classified as juniors (third-year), with another 22% receiving advanced placement as seniors (fourth-year).

#### **Continuing Education**

Of those continuing their education, 73% were enrolled in majors related to their programs of study at TCC. When asked to rate their performance at their current institution of higher education, 90% cited that their performance was better or about the same as expected. Thirteen percent (13%) of these respondents felt their performance was much higher than expected, 30% felt it was higher than expected, and 47% felt it was about what they expected. Ten percent (10%) of the respondents felt their performance was lower than expected.

Similar to the 2006 survey findings, 83% of respondents rated their course work at TCC as excellent or satisfactory in preparing them to continue their education. Eleven percent (11%) believed their course work was good “in some areas.” Only 6% felt their course work was fair or inadequate.

Consistent with findings in 2006, 88% of responding graduates considered the quality of instruction provided by TCC to be the same or better than that provided by their current educational institution. The percentage of respondents that believed the quality of instruction at TCC was superior increased from 14% in 2006 to 17% in 2008. Twenty-one percent (21%) believed it to be slightly better, 51% believed it to be the same, 11% believed it to be slightly worse, and 1% believed it to be significantly worse. These results were very similar to those reported in previous graduate surveys.

## **GRADUATE COMMENT INFORMATION**

The open-ended comments of graduate survey respondents constituted the fifth and final section of the survey. These comments are included in this report as Appendix C.

## **CONCLUSION**

TCC continues to enroll younger, more traditional students who are focused primarily on transferring to four-year colleges and universities and earning baccalaureate degrees. As expected, half of all responding graduates reported being currently enrolled at an institution of higher education. Eighty percent (80%) of these graduates attended a four-year college or university, representing a 10% increase from 2006.

Aspects of TCC's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) have begun to impact graduation rates. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of graduates were enrolled in an SDV course during their first year of studies at TCC, which was substantially higher than the overall college average of 48%. One could reasonably conclude that the QEP, a comprehensive orientation system designed to improve learning for first-year students, and the completion of SDV early in a student's program of study are positively impacting graduation rates. Similarly, analysis of student course work indicates that the percentage of graduates enrolled in at least one developmental English course decreased from 43% in 2006 to 25% in 2008.

These younger and more technologically astute students appear to be relying increasingly on online student services. Analysis of usage and satisfaction rates indicates the college is well positioned to continue meeting students' needs. As would be expected, most respondents used registration and admissions/records services, academic counseling, library/learning resources services, and online services. However, usage rates declined by more than 5% for several services such as career counseling, student activities, veterans' affairs, laboratory facilities, and the TCC Information Center. One might argue that some of these declines are attributable to the increased availability of online services.

The majority of survey respondents were very satisfied with most service areas. At least 80% of the graduates rated as either superior or good the following services: registration, learning resources/library, online services, laboratory facilities, veterans affairs, the TCC Information Center, and the Co-Op program. Barnes & Noble Bookstore, career counseling, and academic counseling were rated as good or superior by fewer than 70% of the respondents. Although satisfaction levels with the cost of books and supplies decreased substantially from 41% in 2006 to 31% in 2008, the college is taking steps to address textbook selection and cost containment. Shortly after the Barnes & Noble Tidewater Community College Bookstore opened in 2007, the college centralized auxiliary services, hired its first Director of Auxiliary Services, and began a college-wide comprehensive review

of the textbook selection process that will insure appropriate academic quality and sensitivity to cost.

Graduates continued to express high levels of satisfaction with their preparation in the following categories: understanding written information, thinking critically, defining problems, solving problems, speaking skills, decision-making skills, technical job knowledge, mathematical skills, technical job skills, and writing skills. Satisfaction declined marginally across several areas including global perspective, social responsibility, sense of ethical principles, and respect for diverse views.

Surprisingly, considering the economic crisis affecting the United States, students continue to earn high salaries upon graduation from TCC. The percentage of respondents employed full-time earning between \$40,000 and \$50,000 increased from 12% in 2006 to 14% in 2008, and the percentage of those earning \$50,000 or more increased from 13% to 15%.

Graduates employed in fields related to their TCC curricula indicated satisfactory preparation for their jobs (80%), particularly part-time employed respondents whose satisfaction level increased from previous surveys. Regardless of their post-graduation status, almost all 2008 TCC graduate respondents believed that their experience at TCC contributed positively to fulfilling their goals, and almost all would gladly recommend TCC to other potential students.





**APPENDIX A**  
**2008 Graduate Survey Instrument**





## TIDEWATER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

From here, go anywhere.™

2008 Graduate Survey

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

### A. ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

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

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

	<b>Superior</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
1 Average class size	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
2 Content of courses in major academic program	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
3 Cost of books and supplies	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
4 Course advisement from faculty members	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
5 Course availability/scheduling	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
6 Grading and testing	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
7 Instructor availability	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
8 Overall quality of instruction	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
9 Quality of instruction in major academic program	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
10 Online Instruction	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### C. EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

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

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

18) Please describe your job:

1 Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

2 Name of Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

3 Employer's Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

4 Employer's City: \_\_\_\_\_

5 Employer's State and Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

1 ☐ \$10,000 and under 2 ☐ \$11,000 – \$19,999 3 ☐ \$20,000 – \$29,999 4 ☐ \$30,000 – \$39,999

5 ☐ \$40,000 – \$49,999 6 ☐ \$50,000 – \$59,999 7 ☐ \$60,000 and above

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

1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

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

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

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

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

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

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

- 25)** If your present job is **NOT** related to the academic program you completed at TCC, please indicate the **PRIMARY** reason why. (Select only **ONE** response)
- 1 ☐ Am active duty military
  - 2 ☐ Was already working with present employer before I completed the program
  - 3 ☐ Not sufficiently qualified for jobs in my field of preparation
  - 4 ☐ Changed career goal or preferred to work in another field
  - 5 ☐ Best opportunities were out of related fields
  - 6 ☐ Could not find a job in my field of preparation
  - 7 ☐ Could not find a job in my field without relocating

#### D. EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

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

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

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

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

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

2 ☐ Part-time student

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

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

- 30)** How would you rate your performance at your current college/university?
- 1 ☐ Much higher than expected
- 2 ☐ Higher than expected
- 3 ☐ About the same as expected
- 4 ☐ Lower than expected
- 5 ☐ Much lower than expected

- 31)** How well did the courses you completed at TCC prepare you for continuing your education?
- 1 ☐ My preparation was excellent
- 2 ☐ My preparation was satisfactory
- 3 ☐ Good in some areas only
- 4 ☐ Fair, but all areas could have been better
- 5 ☐ My preparation was inadequate

- 32)** How does the quality of instruction at TCC compare to that of the school in which you are currently enrolled?
- 1 ☐ Superior
- 2 ☐ Slightly better
- 3 ☐ About the same
- 4 ☐ Slightly worse
- 5 ☐ Significantly worse

Comments? \_\_\_\_\_

## E. GENERAL COMMENTS

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

## **APPENDIX B**

### **College Five-Year Summary Table**





## **College Five-Year Summary Table**

### **Data Interpretation**

The selected data in the table on the following pages indicate the five-year compiled responses to questions from the 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, and 2008 graduate questionnaires. A total of 3,842 responses were received from 9,911 graduates. The number of responses to each question may not equal the total number of survey respondents because not all respondents answered every question. The percentages are based on the number of respondents for each question, not the total number of respondents for the entire survey.

#### **NOTES:**

**1. Tidewater Community College Employed in Curriculum Related Field:**

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

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

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

**3. Tidewater Community College Preparation to Continue Education:**

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



2000-2008 GRADUATE SURVEY SUMMARY  
TOTAL COLLEGE

Total Respondents = 3842

<u>Primary Goal in Attending TCC</u>	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
On the Job Training for Degree or Job	1095	28.7%
Transfer Degree or Courses	2538	66.6%
Personal Satisfaction	116	3.0%
Employer Training Opportunities	32	0.8%
Obtain/Renew Certification	32	0.8%
<u>Current Employment Status</u>		
Full-time	2097	55.6%
Part-time	790	20.9%
Unemployed and Seeking Employment	234	6.2%
Not in Labor Force	514	13.6%
Military Service	126	3.3%
Apprenticeship	11	0.3%
<u>Employed in Curriculum-Related Field</u>		
Yes	1820	63.0%
No	1071	37.0%
<u>TCC Preparation for Employment in Field Related to Curriculum</u>		
Excellent	742	42.6%
Satisfactory	596	34.3%
Good in Some Areas Only	335	19.3%
Fair	50	2.9%
Inadequate	17	1.0%
<u>Type of Institution Currently Attending</u>		
2-Year College	323	16.0%
4-Year College/University	1575	77.9%
Other	123	6.1%
<u>Employed in Curriculum-Related Field OR Currently Attending an Educational Institution</u>		
Yes	3083	80.2%
<u>TCC Preparation for Continuing Education</u>		
Excellent	712	37.0%
Satisfactory	821	42.7%
Good in Some Areas Only	277	14.4%
Fair	79	4.1%
Inadequate	33	1.7%
<u>Would Recommend TCC to Someone in Same Curriculum</u>		
Yes	3602	94.4%
No	212	5.6%

2000-2008 GRADUATE SURVEY SUMMARY  
TOTAL COLLEGE

Total Respondents = 3842

<u>INSTRUCTIONAL EVALUTION</u>	<u>Superior</u>		<u>Good</u>		<u>Fair</u>		<u>Poor</u>		<u>Total</u>
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
Overall Quality of Instruction	1276	33%	2305	60%	218	6%	19	0%	3818
Quality of Instruction in Curriculum	1423	37%	2089	55%	265	7%	25	1%	3802
Instructor Availability	1267	33%	2095	55%	401	11%	41	1%	3804
Course Advisement from Faculty	881	24%	1798	48%	835	22%	223	6%	3737
Course Content in Major	1203	32%	2282	60%	275	7%	35	1%	3795
Average Class Size	1307	34%	2345	61%	161	4%	9	0%	3822
Grading and Testing	1010	26%	2459	65%	310	8%	33	1%	3812
Cost of Books/Supplies	304	8%	1213	32%	1680	44%	589	16%	3786
Course Availability/Scheduling	1087	29%	2094	55%	550	14%	68	2%	3799
Online Instruction	329	28%	620	52%	183	15%	58	5%	1190

<u>STUDENT SERVICES EVALUATION</u>	<u>Superior</u>		<u>Good</u>		<u>Fair</u>		<u>Poor</u>		<u>Total</u>
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
Academic Counseling	754	22%	1560	45%	802	23%	344	10%	3460
Co-op Program	193	20%	546	56%	175	18%	55	6%	969
Veterans Affairs	390	37%	499	47%	127	12%	37	4%	1053
Financial Aid	630	29%	948	44%	375	18%	183	9%	2136
Learning Resources/Library	1064	31%	1903	56%	398	12%	23	1%	3388
BN College Bookstore	43	17%	128	51%	60	24%	21	8%	252
Registration	1141	31%	2127	57%	418	11%	52	1%	3738
Student Activities	345	22%	884	56%	285	18%	66	4%	1580
Laboratory Facilities	610	20%	1777	59%	535	18%	77	3%	2999
Career Counseling	400	17%	1065	45%	643	27%	234	10%	2342
Help Desk	358	23%	853	54%	305	19%	69	4%	1585
TCC Information Center	502	24%	1148	55%	378	18%	46	2%	2074
Online Services	360	30%	694	57%	137	11%	18	1%	1209
New Student Orientation	138	18%	411	54%	157	21%	49	6%	755

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Selected Comments by 2008 Survey Respondents**



## SELECTED COMMENTS BY 2008 SURVEY RESPONDENTS

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

- My experience at TCC was great. The amount of class availability and online course availability are excellent. Keep up the good work.
- I had wonderful experiences with instructor's at TCC. They treated me fairly and gave me a sense of belonging. I was continually motivated by each instructor I chose and for that I will always be grateful.
- I am highly satisfied with the level of instruction I received while attending TCC. The faculty and staff were the best and challenged me at every turn to do my best. I am currently attending ODU and received a merit scholarship which I credit to TCC which adequately prepared me (as well as inspired me to go forward). I would highly recommend TCC to anyone seeking advanced education or training. Far too often the community colleges get a bad reputation as dumping grounds for students who cannot get into a four-year university. Ridiculous! The level and quality of instruction at TCC is on par with what I am currently experiencing in the four-year university and actually found a greater level of maturity in the community college students simply due to the fact that many of the students (and that includes recent high school graduates) are more serious about their education because most of them have a personal or financial stake in obtaining one. They work outside of school and work hard in school to get an education simply because they understand the value of education. Their level of desire is most admirable. I hope my comments were helpful and please convey my best wishes and warmest regards to President DiCroce and her dedicated staff for continued success in the operation of this fine educational institution. I am indeed a proud graduate.
- I would just like to say that I had a wonderful 2 years at TCC! Thank you for making my academic experiences enjoyable, and because of TCC I do have the ability to go anywhere!
- The Web Specialist Certification was a rewarding experience and good accomplishment but I realize that you really have a little more education behind you to make a total career switch. It is a great start to a new career and I would recommend it to others.
- I am extremely happy with the education I received at TCC. The teachers were outstanding and my experience greatly exceeded my expectations. My education at TCC prepared me for transferring to a 4-year university, especially when it comes to my writing skills. My experience and skill with college-level writing that I received at TCC greatly surpassed some other students' experiences & skills who transferred from other community colleges in other parts of Virginia. Keep up the good work at employing such great teachers and providing such great education. One suggestion is to please improve the counseling department. They were never of any help, and I am not the only student that has had this experience. Most of the time, the counselors made me feel like they didn't want to help me choose my classes or give me any advice. In addition to making me feel like a burden when I wanted their help, when I was given information, it was wrong. If I hadn't done a lot of research on my career path and if I would have listened to the advice that many of the counselors gave me, I would have not taken the correct classes that I would have been able to transfer with

and I would not have gone down the right path to reach my goals. I basically had to do all my education and career planning on my own. That is a shame considering the counselors are supposed to be there to assist us, and more importantly, that is what they are getting paid to do. Other than my experience with the counseling department though, I am extremely happy with the experiences and education that I received from TCC, and I'm very proud to be a graduate from your college.

- Just keep offering "Hands on" type of instruction. Definitely helps prepare students for the real thing.
- Standardize online courses. Too many professors use disparate techniques or don't adhere to stated rules.
- I would not have graduated if it was not for the staff at the math lab. The employees there are very special and I will never forget my experiences with them.
- Honestly the advising was very poor. I took classes that I didn't need, and didn't take some of the ones that I would need at ODU to complete my degree. The staff at TCC knew I was transferring into the college of arts at ODU yet never informed me of the foreign language requirement. I would think that because TCC handled so many transfer students the basic requirements of graduation would be known to them. In fact, because of this I will not be able to graduate from ODU before my husband's duty station switch. Besides this department my experience at TCC was a very good one, the staff was fantastic and the small class size was a real academic advantage.
- I really enjoyed attending TCC --great faculty and staff and a great low price for a wonderful education.
- The last part of the survey did not exactly apply to me because I am going to school full-time at ODU. I left my full-time job to continue my education; TCC prepared me well for my continuing education at ODU. The things I most appreciated about TCC were the very flexible scheduling and on-line classes that I took advantage of during the time that I worked full-time. Without these options, I would not have been able to attend.
- The only problem that I have with TCC is that each campus operates as its own school. Each campus uses different books and different curricula. This separation makes it VERY frustrating to take classes at different campuses, especially when the 101 class at Norfolk takes a different book than the 102 class at the VB campus (when each is a part of a whole, such as BIO 101/102).
- I was very satisfied, and I still am satisfied with the curricula offered at TCC. I decided to go back to TCC to get an Associate of Science: Business Administration degree. I plan on attending ODU to get a B.S. in Business Management.
- TCC is the best school I've been to, thank you TCC!