
South Puget Sound Community College

2012 Graduate Survey Report

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Executive Summary

The 2012 graduate survey was administered winter term of 2013 to students who graduated in the 2011-12 academic year with an academic degree or workforce degree and/or certificate. The response rate of 883 administered surveys was 28.7%. A greater number of academic awards were earned by the respondents (56%) than workforce awards (38%), the remaining awards include high school completion or short certificate along with an earned academic or workforce award.

50.2% of respondents indicated they were continuing their education while 28.1% are working full-time. The percentage of graduates who are unemployed but seeking employment is higher than last year at 12.6%. Employed graduates' annual income had the most frequent response in the \$20,001 - \$30,000 category which is the same category as the previous year. Employment as it relates to their SPSCC experience for those responding has made a positive gain in several areas when compared to last year. More than 75% said their pay was "better than expected" or "about as expected" as a result of their SPSCC program. 65% are working in a field either directly or indirectly related to their program of study. 69% of respondents indicated "better than expected" or "about as expected" when asked to compare their current job to what their expectation was as a result of completing their SPSCC program. An area in which there was a decline was that more respondents felt they were not as well prepared for work responsibilities as in previous surveys with 15.6% reporting they were "not well prepared" compared with 9.8% last year.

Half of the respondents indicated they were a continuing student. Of those students, 90% indicated a transfer institution. The top transfer institution was University of Washington followed by The Evergreen State College, and St. Martin's University. The average self-reported GPA at the transfer institution among survey respondents is 3.42. 82% of respondents indicated 61 or more transfer credits were accepted at the receiving institution with more than 90% of respondents indicating more than half of their credits transferred. Helpfulness regarding the academic transfer process declined slightly (-1.8%) from last year, with fewer students choosing "helpful" and more students were selecting "not helpful" regarding the transfer process. Preparation for upper division course work declined from the previous year slightly (-1.6%) with 71% selecting "very well prepared" or "generally well prepared".

49% of respondents would not change anything about their education. Students selected "somewhat agree" as the most frequent response that their courses provided the skills necessary for success in the workforce or at their transfer institution. Satisfaction of quality of instruction within the respondents field of study increased slightly (0.02) from last year with a mean score of 3.96. Alternately, satisfaction of quality of instruction outside the respondents' field of study decreased slightly (-0.04) from the previous year with a mean score of 3.98. The slight decline in College wide abilities in four out of five areas ranging in an annual change from last year of -0.01 to -0.17 was not significant from the previous year.

The services section was redesigned this year to include frequency and importance of service along with the familiar satisfaction category. Advising was branched into new student advising and current student advising. The categories of counseling and participation in student activities were also added. Online registration was indicated as the most frequently used service, the most important service, and has the greatest satisfaction among respondents. Online registration is followed by the library as the most frequently used service, the most important and the greatest satisfaction.

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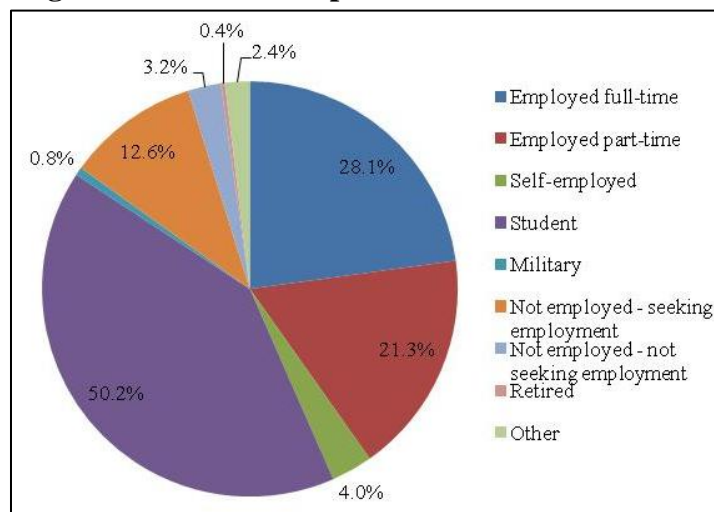
Degree and Current Status

The 2011-2012 graduate survey was sent to 883 students who earned an award during the 2011-2012 year and were not subsequently enrolled the following fall 2012.

Of the eight hundred and eighty three surveys administered, two hundred and fifty three students responded resulting in a 28.7% response rate. Of the two hundred and fifty three responding graduates, three hundred and nine academic awards were granted with forty-two students receiving more than one award during the 2011-2012 year. Generally, these multiple awards were a combination of a workforce certificate and subsequent Associate Degree within the program.

Of those respondents who returned the survey (Figure 1), the status of student was indicated with the most frequency (50.2%), with the next most frequent status as full-time employed (28.1%). In 2011, respondents indicated student status was 43.8% and full-time employed status was 30.5%.

Figure 1: Status of Respondents



Of graduates who responded, a greater number received an academic award (56.0%) compared to those respondents who received a workforce award (37.9%). The most frequent award granted was an Associate in Arts – DTA (46.0%). This upward trend follows the previous two surveys with the Associate in Arts granted to 42.2% of respondents in 2011 and 32.5% of respondents in 2010. The Associate in Arts degree is followed by Associate Degree Nursing – DTA and Associate in Business DTA/MRP (Table 1).

Table 1: Degrees Awarded to Respondents in 2011-2012

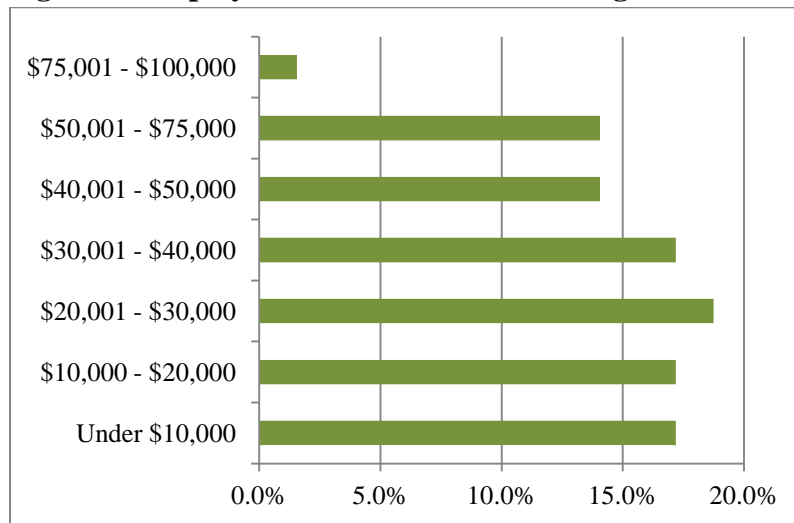
Degree Program	Frequency	Percent
ASSOCIATE IN ARTS - DTA	142	46.0%
ASSOCIATE DEGREE NURSING - ADN	22	7.1%
ASSOCIATE IN BUSINESS DTA/MRP	15	4.9%
HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA	8	2.6%
EXIT CODE 9	6	1.9%

AAS - AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY	6	1.9%
AAS - OFF ADM-ADMIN ASSISTANT	6	1.9%
ASSOC IN SCIENCE AS-T TRACK 2	6	1.9%
AAS - MEDICAL ADMIN ASSISTANT	5	1.6%
AAS - WELDING	5	1.6%
OFFICE ASSISTANT-CERTIFICATE	5	1.6%
AAS - COMPUTER NETWORK ADMIN	4	1.3%
AAS - DENTAL ASSISTANT	4	1.3%
AAS - PARALEGAL	4	1.3%
ASSOC IN SCIENCE AS-T TRACK 1	4	1.3%
CERT OF PROFICIENCY WELDING	4	1.3%
SUSTAIN PLANT PRODUCTION-CERT	4	1.3%
AAS - ACCOUNTING	3	1.0%
AAS - BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	3	1.0%
AAS - COMPUTER PROGRAMMING	3	1.0%
AAS - CULINARY ARTS	3	1.0%
AAS - HORTICULTURE TECHNOLOGY	3	1.0%
AAS-EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION	3	1.0%
ASSOC IN ELEMENTARY ED-DTA/MRP	3	1.0%
MECHANICAL DRAFTING-CERT	3	1.0%
PRACTICAL NURSING-CERTIFICATE	3	1.0%
WEB DESIGN-CERTIFICATE	3	1.0%
AAS-COMPUTER AIDED DRAFT (CAD)	2	0.6%
AAS-INFO TECH DESKTOP SUPPORT	2	0.6%
ACCOUNTING CLERK CERTIFICATE	2	0.6%
ARCHITECTURAL DRAFTING-CERT	2	0.6%
ASSOCIATE IN BIOLOGY DTA/MRP	2	0.6%
BUSINESS OPERATIONS - CERT	2	0.6%
CIVIL DRAFTING-CERTIFICATE	2	0.6%
CLERK/RECEPTIONIST-CERTIFICATE	2	0.6%
DENTAL ASSISTANT-CERTIFICATE	2	0.6%
LANDSCAPE HORTICULTURE-CERT	2	0.6%
AAS-LAND SURVEY/GEOMATICS TECH	1	0.3%
AAS-T - EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUC	1	0.3%
ASSOCIATE IN GENERAL STUDIES	1	0.3%
ASSOCIATE PRE-NURSING DTA/MRP	1	0.3%
BAKING & PASTRY ARTS - CERT	1	0.3%
BUILDING INFO MODELING CERT	1	0.3%
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUC-AAS-T	1	0.3%
FIRE OFFICER DEGREE-AAS-T	1	0.3%
HUMAN RESOURCE ASSISTANT-CERT	1	0.3%
TOTAL AWARDS	309	100%

Employment

Sixty-four graduates reported an annual income and are employed full-time or part-time and not continuing as a student. Appendix A lists employers and job titles of these respondents. 18.8% reported an annual income between \$20,001 and \$30,000 (Figure 2) which was also the highest frequency category in 2011. The \$20,000-\$30,000 category is followed by the same frequency among the \$30,001-\$40,000, \$10,001-\$20,000, and under \$10,000.

Figure 2: Employed Graduates Income Categories



Respondents exclusively employed full time or part time and not continuing their education responded more favorably to their employment expectations as a result of completing their program than in 2011 (Table 2). When comparing actual pay to the pay expectation, 14.5% of 2012 respondents indicated their pay was “better than expected” which is higher than in the previous two surveys. Pay expectation “was met” and expected pay was “below expectation” also returned a more favorable response than the 2011 survey.

64.5% of graduates are applying their degree to their current employment position, exceeding the previous two year survey responses (Table 3). Alternatively, those who are employed in jobs unrelated to their academic work at SPSCC declined by more than 5%.

When graduates were asked how their current job compares to the type of job expected, respondents had a decline in the “better than expectation” category but an overall an increase from the previous year that the job as a result of completing their SPSCC program met their expectation (Table 4).

When asked how well SPSCC prepared the graduate for work responsibilities 56.3% indicated weaknesses, deficiencies, or not at all prepared (Table 5). Those respondents indicating “well prepared” increased 6% from 2011, while somewhat prepared fluctuated between the two “generally” and “moderately” prepared categories. Those who responded “not well prepared” continued to increase from the previous two surveys. Respondent remarks included deficiencies and/or weaknesses in a need for longer clinical days, disease identification, fluid and electrolytes, and IV starts are a few of the medical related comments. Several graduates commented on time management skill weaknesses and real world experience to complement their program.

Table 2: Pay Comparison as a Result of SPSCC Program




How does this pay compare to what you expected as a result of completing your SPSCC program?				
	2010	2011	2012	Status
Better than expected	12.7%	11.8%	14.5%	
About as expected	66.7%	44.7%	61.3%	
Below expectation	20.6%	43.4%	24.2%	

Table 3: Job Relative to Degree




Is your current job related to the program in which you received your degree?				
	2010	2011	2012	Status
Yes, directly related	36.9%	38.2%	40.3%	
Yes, indirectly related	20.0%	21.1%	24.2%	
No, not related	43.1%	40.8%	35.5%	

Table 4: Job Comparison as a Result of SPSCC Program












How does your current job compare to the type of job you expected to have as a result of completing your SPSCC program?				
	2010	2011	2012	Status
Better than expectation	19.0%	17.1%	15.6%	
About as expected	52.4%	43.4%	53.1%	
Below expectation	28.6%	39.5%	31.3%	

Table 5: Preparation for Work Responsibilities

How well did SPSCC prepare you for your work responsibilities?				
	2010	2011	2012	Status
I was very well prepared	54.7%	37.8%	43.8%	
I was generally well prepared with some weaknesses	20.3%	39.0%	21.9%	
I was moderately well prepared with some clear deficiencies	20.3%	13.4%	18.8%	
I was not well prepared	4.7%	9.8%	15.6%	

 Increase from last year-positive
  Increase from last year-negative
 Decrease from last year-positive
  Decrease from last year-negative

Education

89.8% of those who identified themselves as students also identified a transfer institution (Table 6). 2012 graduates transferred to the University of Washington, The Evergreen State College, St. Martin's University, and Western Washington University. This composition replicates the frequency of transfer institutions in the 2011 survey. Students were asked to self identify their current GPA. Of students who identified a transfer institution, excluding The Evergreen State College, the average self-reported GPA among respondents was 3.42.

Table 6: Transfer Institutions

Institution	Frequency	Percent
Bellevue College-Radiologic Sciences BS Degree	1	0.9%
Brandman University	1	0.9%
Brigham Young University	2	1.8%
Central Washington University	4	3.5%
Concordia university	1	0.9%
Eastern Washington University	1	0.9%
Georgia State University	1	0.9%
Lake Washington Technical College	1	0.9%
Lane Community College, Eugene, OR	1	0.9%
Northern Arizona University	1	0.9%
Northwest University	1	0.9%
Ohio State university	1	0.9%
Pacific Lutheran University	3	2.6%
Polytechnic Institute of New York University	1	0.9%
Saint Martin's University	15	13.2%
San Joaquin Community College	1	0.9%
Santa Fe University of Art and Design	1	0.9%
Seattle Pacific University	1	0.9%
Seattle University	2	1.8%
TCC	1	0.9%
The Evergreen State College	16	14.0%
University of Hawaii at Manoa	1	0.9%
University of Oregon	1	0.9%
University of Puget Sound	1	0.9%
University of Washington	20	17.5%
University of Washington Bothell	1	0.9%
University of Washington Seattle	2	1.8%
University of Washington Tacoma	8	7.0%
Washington State University	9	7.9%
Western Governors University	2	1.8%
Western Washington University	12	10.5%
Total	114	100.0%

Thirty-six students provided comments regarding courses that would have made the transfer experience easier. Some course(s) noted by students are not offered at SPSCC (Biopsychology, 4-year college prep seminar, junior level statistics), while others indicated courses/programs offered and the respondent did not enroll in the course(s).

The acceptance of transfer credits continues to rise from previous surveys, with 81.7% reporting 61 or more credits transferring (Table 7). This is reflected in the responses describing the transfer of credit with more than 90% of 2012 respondents reporting more than half of SPSCC credits transferred (Table 8).

Table 7: Credits Received for SPSCC Coursework











How many transfer credits did you receive for your SPSCC coursework?				
	2010	2011	2012	Status
More than 90 credits	28.9%	33.3%	29.8%	
61-90	39.7%	44.2%	51.9%	
46-60	12.4%	7.5%	8.7%	
31-45	4.1%	6.7%	4.8%	
16-30	4.1%	3.3%	3.8%	
0-15	10.7%	5.0%	1.0%	

Table 8: Category of Transfer Credit Acceptance

Please select the option that best describes your transfer of credits. My transfer institution accepted...				
	2010	2011	2012	Status
All of my credits	68.5%	61.6%	62.3%	
More than half of my credits	25.2%	26.8%	30.2%	
Less than half of my credits	3.6%	11.6%	5.7%	
Did not accept any of my credits	2.7%	0%	1.9%	

SPSCC helpfulness concerning information about the transfer process is lower than previous surveys (Table 9). Although “somewhat helpful” increased from previous years, it is not enough to compensate for the lower rating in the “helpful” category. 70.8% of graduates felt “generally” or “well” prepared for upper division coursework, down slightly from 2011 (72.4%). Respondents remarked deficiencies and/or weaknesses in essay writing, APA formatting, upper division writing and reading expectations. Math and critical thinking skills were also noted as weaknesses.

Table 9: Helpfulness Regarding the Transfer Process












How helpful was SPSCC in informing you about your transfer credit and the transfer process?				
	2010	2011	2012	Status
Helpful	37.5%	30.6%	23.1%	
Somewhat helpful	38.3%	39.7%	45.4%	
Not helpful	24.2%	29.8%	31.5%	

Table 10: SPSCC Preparation for Upper division Coursework






How well did your coursework at SPSCC prepare you for your upper division coursework? I was...				
	2010	2011	2012	Status
Very well prepared	44.2%	35.3%	32.1%	
Generally well prepared	42.5%	37.1%	38.7%	
Moderately well prepared	10.6%	20.7%	23.6%	
Not well prepared	2.7%	6.9%	5.7%	

 Increase from last year-positive
  Increase from last year-negative
 Decrease from last year-positive
  Decrease from last year-negative

SPSCC Effectiveness

48.7% of respondents would not change anything about their education which is an increase from the 2011 survey (Table 11). More than three-quarters of respondents would select SPSCC again regardless of curriculum choice. Students who would attend a different college or not go to college at all declined from 2011.

Table 11: Evaluating Institution and Program Choice

If you were starting your education all over again, which would you do?				
	2010	2011	2012	Status
Attend SPSCC and enroll in the same curriculum	52.3%	37.1%	48.7%	
Attend SPSCC but enroll in a different curriculum	27.9%	34.9%	27.5%	
Attend a different two-year college	5.8%	8.6%	7.4%	
Go directly to a four-year college/university	14.0%	18.9%	15.9%	
Not go to college at all	0%	.6%	.5%	

Graduates' applicability and satisfaction with coursework increased from the prior year survey for both graduates who are working and transfer graduates (Table 12). In 2011, the mean applicability and satisfaction with coursework for working graduates was 3.78 and 3.95 for transfer graduates. The satisfaction with the quality of instruction within the field of study is slightly higher than 2011. The 2011 satisfaction within the field of instruction was 3.94. Instruction outside of the field of study is down slightly from 2011, with the 2011 mean score of 4.02.

Table 12: Applicability and Satisfaction with Coursework

<i>Applicability and Satisfaction with Coursework at SPSCC</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
Courses provided me with the skills to apply in my chosen field*	59	1	5	3.92	1.193
Courses provided me with the skills to be successful at my transfer institution**	105	1	5	4.03	.914
Satisfaction with quality of instruction within my field	189	1	5	3.96	1.150
Satisfaction with quality of instruction outside my field	178	1	5	3.98	1.008

*Data analyzed for employed and not students. **Data analyzed for students only

College Wide Abilities

The college wide abilities categories have a slight decline in all categories except multicultural awareness which has a slight increase from last year. The most frequent response among the first three abilities (Table 13) is “Somewhat Agree”. Multicultural awareness and understanding ethical responsibilities had “Strongly Agree” as the most frequent response. The difference in fluctuation among the abilities is slight and does not reflect a significant difference between 2011 and 2012.

Table 13: College Wide Ability Evaluation

<i>College Wide Abilities</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
Communicate Effectively	194	1	6	4.91	1.157
Think logically and critically	193	1	6	5.03	1.101
Evaluate and process symbolic and quantitative data	193	1	6	4.75	1.196
Understand myself in relation to others in a multicultural world	193	1	6	4.91	1.178
Understand ethical responsibilities and consequences	191	1	6	4.91	1.221

Campus Services

Several changes to the 2012 survey Campus Services section were made to accommodate more data elements. Included are the traditional satisfaction of service but also the frequency and importance of those services has been added. Academic advising in previous years has been a singular category. The 2012 survey introduces new student advising and current student advising as separate categories. Also introduced are the categories of counseling and participation in student activities/events.

Frequency of service is a three point scale with one indicated as “rarely/never” and three indicated as “often”. Online registration, followed by the library and bookstore are the most frequently used campus services.

Importance of service is a three point scale with one indicated as “not at all” [important] and three indicated as “very” [important]. Online registration followed by the library and enrollment services is the most important services to survey respondents.

Figure 3: Frequency of Service Use

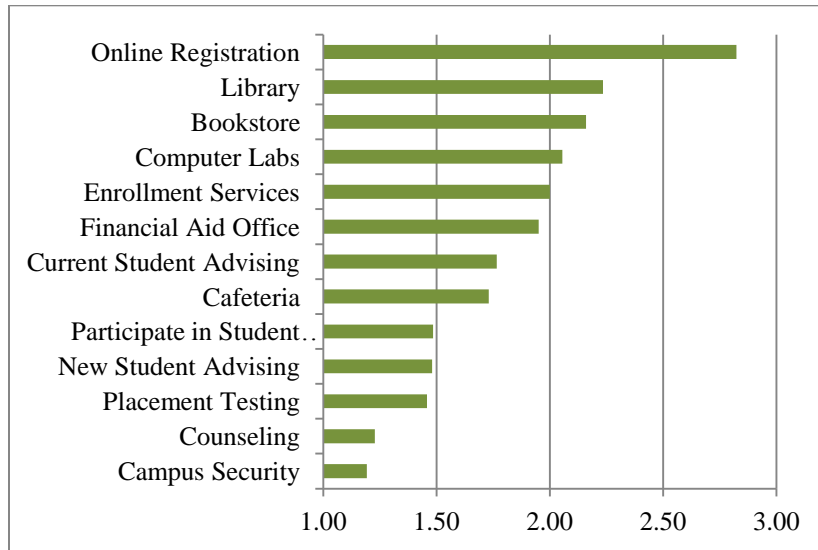
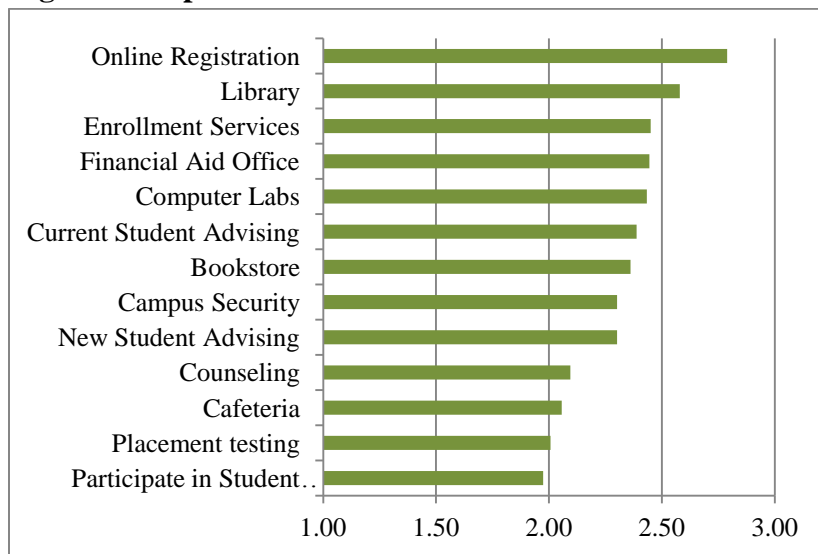


Figure 4: Importance of Service

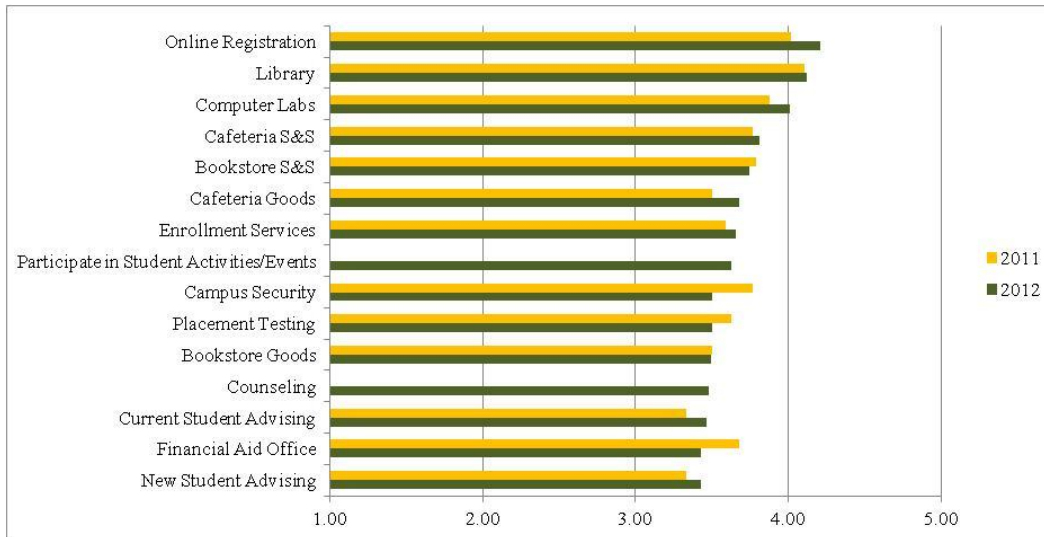


Responding graduates were most satisfied with online registration which had a significantly higher satisfaction mean than the 2011 survey. Online registration satisfaction was followed by the library, computer labs, and cafeteria services/staff. Seven categories exceeded the mean from last year, with the greatest positive difference in online registration, cafeteria goods, advising, and computer lab. Six out of the top eight most frequently used services for 2012 (online registration, library, computer labs, enrollment services, current student advising, cafeteria) also showed a greater satisfaction in those same areas from the 2011 survey. A significant decline in satisfaction occurred with security services when compared with last year. Other service areas that declined in satisfaction are financial aid, placement testing, and bookstore goods and services.

Table 14: Satisfaction of Services

<i>Campus Service</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Deviation</i>
Online Registration	183	1	5	4.21	.751
Library	167	1	5	4.12	.884
Computer Labs	158	1	5	4.01	.822
Cafeteria S&S	146	1	5	3.82	.894
Bookstore S&S	181	1	5	3.75	1.076
Cafeteria Goods	145	1	5	3.68	.977
Enrollment Services	182	1	5	3.66	.972
Participate in Student Activities/Events	127	1	5	3.63	.933
Placement Testing	150	1	5	3.50	.954
Campus Security	126	1	5	3.50	1.056
Bookstore Goods	181	1	5	3.49	1.138
Counseling	102	1	5	3.48	1.031
Current Student Advising	173	1	5	3.46	1.092
Financial Aid Office	137	1	5	3.43	1.217
New Student Advising	162	1	5	3.43	.989

Figure 5: Satisfaction Comparison 2011 and 2012



Highlights and Trends

There were many areas of positive improvement from the 2011 graduate survey. Pay comparison compared to the expectation of the completed program was up +16.6% from the prior year for “about as expected” and down -19.2% from the prior year for “below expectation”. The type of job expected as a result of the completed program was up +9.7% from the prior year for “about as expected”. Credits for transfer in the 61 and above category were up 4.2% from the prior year. 48.7% of respondents said they would attend SPSCC and enroll in the same curriculum, an increase of 11.6% from the prior year.

When reviewing the surveys for 2010, 2011, and 2012 several trends are emerging:

Positive three year upward trend

- Current Job is directly or indirectly related to the degree earned at SPSCC
- 61-90 transfer credits accepted at transfer institution
- More than half of my credits transferred
- Somewhat helpful regarding the transfer process
- Understanding myself in relation to others in a multicultural world

Positive three year downward trend

- Job not related to the degree received
- 0-15 transfer credits accepted at transfer institution

Negative three year upward trend

- Not well prepared for work responsibilities
- Not helpful regarding the academic transfer process
- Moderately well prepared for upper division coursework

Negative three year downward trend

- Better than expected job as a result of SPSCC program

Appendix A: List of Employers and Job Titles

Employers	
Apple Physical Therapy	Nyrstar Clarksville Inc.
Aramark Dining Services	Olympic Dental and Denture Center
Army	Proliance Surgeons
Asano Corporation	Providence Medical Center
Basilico	Providence St. Peter Hospital
Capital Medical Center	Revolution Snow & Skate
Cardinal CG	Skipworth's LLC
Catholic Community Services	SPSCC
Child care action council	St. Clare hospital
Child, Youth and School Services	St. Joseph Medical Center
City of Chehalis	Staples
Community Resources	Starbucks
Crista Shores	State of Washington
David's Bridal	Texas Hold Urgent Care
EduKids	The Valley Athletic Club
Emeritus Senior Living @ Harbour Pointe Shores	Thurston EDC
Employment Security Dept.	Top Dog Day Care
Ferrellgas	Tradesmen International
Fir Lane	WA State Auditor's Office
Genie Industries	Washington Department of Licensing
Gymboree Play and Music	Washington State Department of Health
HCR Manor Care	Washington Department of Transportations
Holm Law	WCLA Insurance Agency
Josephine Cowden	Women's and Family Health Specialists
Lacey Animal Clinic	WWU Parking Office
Mason General Hospital	Yelm Community Schools
Military Sales & Service	Yelm Glass
NBC Universal	Yumi Shade

Job Titles	
Agency Accountant	Merchandiser
Budget Analyst	Nanny
Bulk Delivery Driver	OB Nurse
Caregiver	Office Assistant 1
Child and Youth Program Assistant	Online Manager
Contract Analyst III	Operations Analyst
Customer Service Specialist II	Oyster Farmer
Dental Assistant	Parking Attendant
Dining Services Director	Patient Account Clerk
District Computer Technician	Patient Service Coordinator Assistant
Emergency Room/Critical Care RN	Personal Care Provider
Excise Tax Examiner	Preschool Teacher
Exec. Asst./Marketing & Events Specialist	Program Assistant
Firefighter	Program Manager
Forms and Records Analyst	Radiology Technologist
Glazier	Receptionist
Hotel Help	Registered Nurse
ITS4 Deployment Specialist	Smelter
Legal Assistant	Stockroom Attendant 1
Licensed Practical Nurse	Surgical Technologist
Lifeguard	Teacher
Load End Lead	Waitress
Maintenance Tech	Wedding Consultant
Mechanic	Welder
Medical Support Assistant	Welding Specialist