



Career and Technical Student Follow-up 2008-09 August 2010

Introduction

Each year, the Office of Planning and Effectiveness uses Perkins funding to complete a follow-up of Career and Technical students. The purpose of this report is to support continuous improvement efforts, and it does this by collecting student's feedback about the college and the student's program. Currently, this survey is the only instrument available to provide annual feedback for individual programs. Because program sample sizes are small, the results of this survey can only be used as indicators. At the college level, this report provides benchmarking and goal setting data.

A total of 600 students were surveyed for the 2008-09 report. These students fell into two groups. Graduates completed a transcriptable degree or certificate during the 2008-09 academic year, and leavers stopped attending classes after earning 45 or more career or technical credits in a single program. For the 2008-09 report, Planning and Effectiveness surveyed 473 graduates and 127 leavers. A total of 130 students, 115 graduates and 15 leavers, responded to the survey, for a 22% response rate (24.3% for graduates, and 11.8% for leavers).

Highlights

- 90% of students feel they accomplished their primary goal during their time at Clark College.
- 79% of students had found employment within 6 months of leaving Clark College.
- 38% of employed graduates earned more than \$18 an hour when surveyed.
- 78% of employed graduates were employed in their field of study.
- 89% of students reported that Clark College prepared them in their program of study.
- 90% of students reported feeling that Clark College prepared them in a manner consistent with current industry standards.
- 78% of graduates were satisfied or very satisfied with their current employment situation.

Methodology and Definitions

Students who had an email address on file were first contacted via email. Students who did not respond to the email were then sent a paper survey. If they did not respond to the survey, they were sent a follow-up postcard. Students who received a paper survey could either return the paper survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope, or they could complete the electronic version. Of the 600 students surveyed, 130 students responded (22%). This response rate is acceptable.

Graduates are students who earned a transcribed degree or certificate during the 2008-09 academic year. Of the 473 graduates, 115 responded (24%). Transcriptable degrees and certificates do not include short-term training program completions, or short-term program certificates.

Leavers are students who were enrolled in a career/technical program with an intent to complete a degree or certificate who earned 45 or more career/technical credits before leaving the College. Twelve (12) of those credits must have been earned in the previous two years. Of the 127 leavers, 15 responded (12%).

The term **student refers** to both graduates and leavers.

Goal Accomplishment

★ 90% of students felt they accomplished their primary goal.

One in ten respondents did not feel they accomplished their primary goal. Their responses are listed below, grouped by the primary goal they indicated.

**If NO, please explain why you do not feel you accomplished your primary goal in attending Clark College
-- grouped by primary goal**

Earn a certificate

- I did receive a certificate. But I wish they had a better directed practice and helped place students in jobs.
- Still have not found a field I can effectively work in to support myself and my family

Earn an Associate's Degree

- Because I have not finished my degree
- Because I will not get my degree until I get a job and pass 4 of the ASE tests. After the time and money and hardships I endured while attending was for nothing.
- I have not completed my AA yet
- I received my Certificate, but still have not completed my 2-yr degree
- The electronics program(s) were eliminated.

Improve or gain new skills

- My primary goal was to upgrade my accounting skills using the computer, but because of my prior education, I was put into an Office Assistant program. I did not improve my accounting skills, but did up date my office skills.

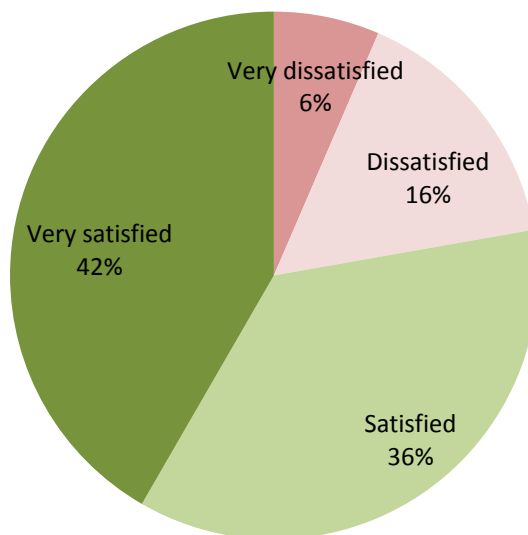
Other goals

- I did gain new skills but I still have not been able to launch my business. Some of that is related to available start up but I still feel like there are gaps. I am looking at getting involved with SCORE. The thing I can really use is the one on one.
- Petty cliquishness -- program heads and internship coordinators very cliquish about who they nurture and refer for internships and jobs.
- The teacher misled students on the way Bonneville hired.

★ 78% of all graduates were satisfied with their current employment situation.

Graduates were asked “How satisfied are you with your current employment situation? (whether employed or not?)” Unemployed graduates fell into each of the satisfaction categories. However, of the 7 graduates who were very dissatisfied, 4 were unemployed and 3 were employed part-time.

Graduates' Satisfaction with Current Employment Situation



Current Employment

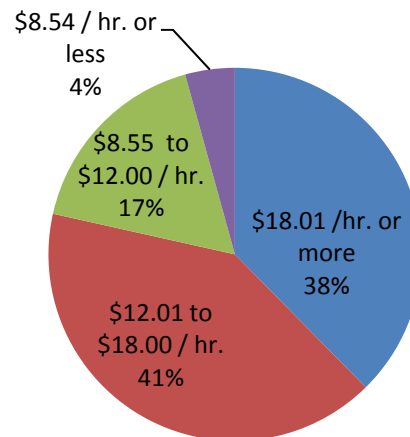
★ 78% of students were employed. Additionally 82% of graduates seeking employment were employed.

	Employment by status			
	Employed full-time	Employed part-time	Unemployed	Not employed – not looking
Graduates (n=115)	44%	37%	16%	3%
Leavers (n=15)	40%	7%	40%	13%
TOTAL (n=130)	44%	34%	18%	4%

Of employed students, 56% are working full-time and 44% are working part-time.

- ★ 79% of employed graduates earned more than \$12.00 per hour. 38% earn more than \$18.00 per hour.

Wage Category of Employed Graduates



- ★ 52% of employed students were employed in Vancouver, and an additional 19% were employed in other Washington locations. 29% were employed out of state (20% in Portland, 5% elsewhere in Oregon, and 4% in other states).
- ★ 82% of employed students were working locally (Clark, Skamania, Klickitat, Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas counties).
- ★ 78% of employed graduates were employed in their field of study.

	Employed in field of study by status	
	Yes	No
Graduates (n=94)	78%	22%
Leavers (n=7)	71%	29%

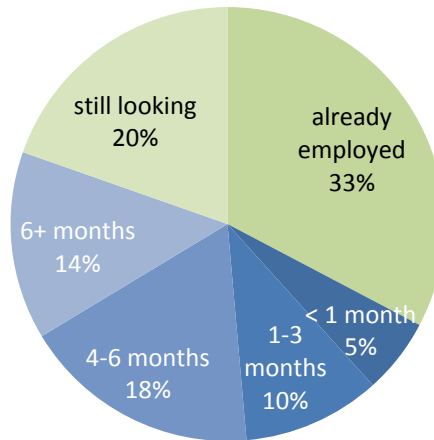
Data note: this table only includes those students who reported employment.

Students working out of their field of study were asked why. Lack of experience, lower wages in prospective field, a lack of jobs in prospective field and working towards a bachelor's degree were the primary reasons students gave for working out of their field of study.

Graduates' responses to, "If you are currently working in a job or continuing school in a field that is <u>not</u> related to your coursework at Clark College, please explain why."	
Program	Comment
Auto service and maintenance	Job Availability
Baking	I never planned to be a cashier. However, I do have years of experience. I'm waiting for an instructing position. I've been waiting for a job in the bakery.
Diesel Technology	Lack of jobs in field
Emergency Medical Technician	The classes I took at Clark did not allow me to get my certification it was an added cost and lots of testing I was not prepared for
Marketing and Sales	An intellectual challenge while pursuing Bachelor's degree in accounting
Medical BTEC	Although the reception is related to my field of study in medical office it still had office relations
Medical BTEC	Because I needed an income
Medical BTEC	Didn't get hired in the field I was studying. I am using skills I learned though.
Medical BTEC	have no experience in medical office field therefore nobody is hiring me
Microcomputer Support Specialist	I am currently working on my bachelor's degree in applied technology in order to become better qualified for a position in my field.
Microcomputer Support Specialist	No positions available at a wage greater than I am making at my current position.
Nursing	Difficulty finding RN job for new graduate with no experience in the metro area.
Pharmacy Technician	Work study is currently my only source of income
Web Design and Development	Can't find a job in my degree area.
Welding	Need more practice
Welding	No work in the metal industry at this time.

- ★ 34% of students were not able to find employment within 6 months. Another third were already employed and the other third found employment within 6 months, with most taking 4 months or more to find employment.

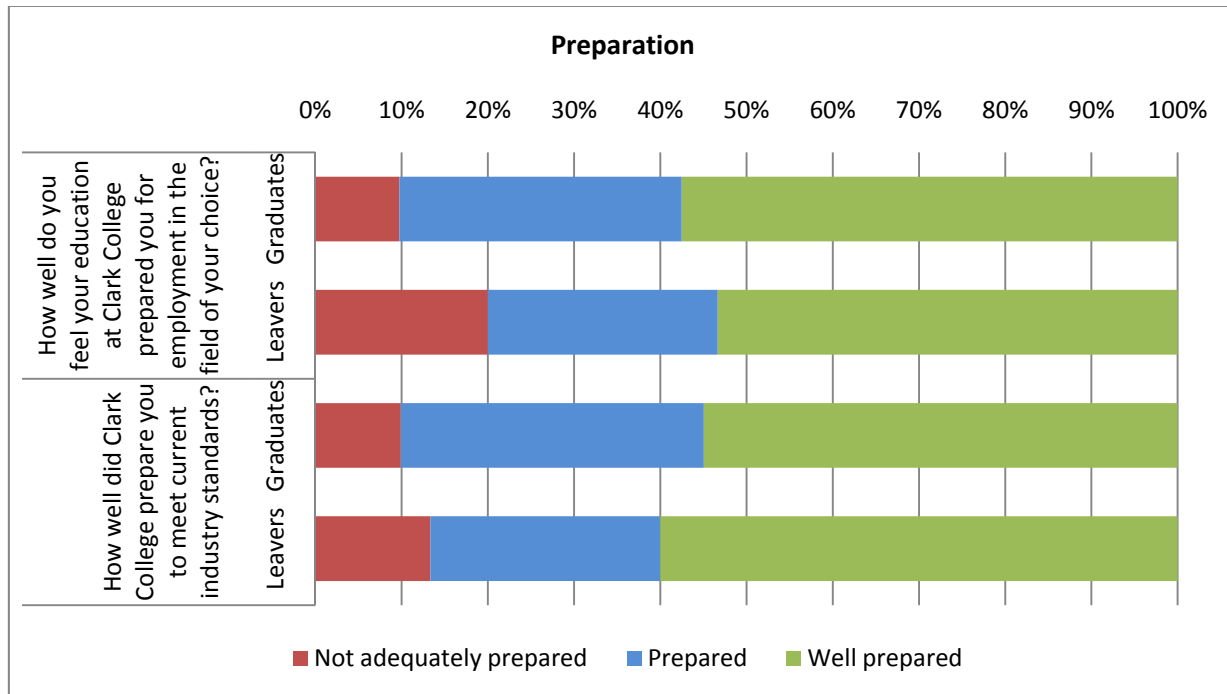
Length of Time to Employment



Students' Preparation

★ 90% of graduates indicated that Clark College prepared them for employment in their field of study.

★ 90% of graduates indicated that Clark College prepared them in a manner consistent with current industry standards.



★ 52% of students (67) indicated areas of improvement for their program of study.

Skills specific to a program will be included in the program reports. Only items with broader applicability are included in this report.

What additional skills would have been helpful for you to learn in your program?

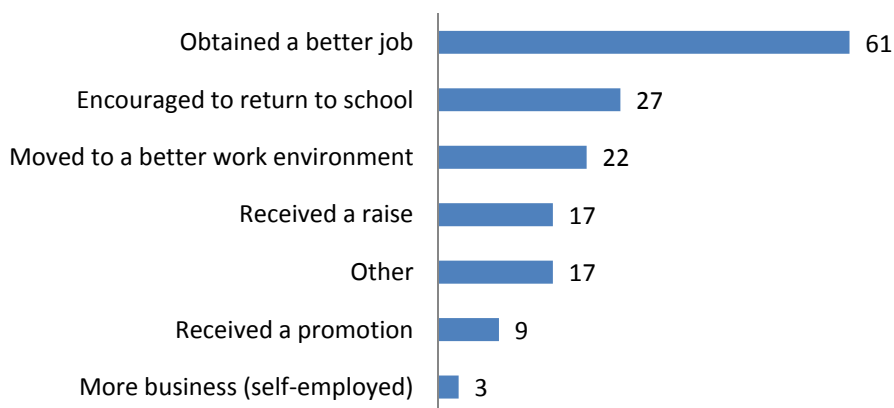
- A job placement program through Clark College would be nice.
- Better resources to find employment after graduation would have been helpful.
- Career choice options
- Computers - how to use them
- Education awareness for students suffering from mental health issues, I may be schizophrenic but I am not incapable of learning, it just takes different learning habits, which when instructors only teach and grade according to one standard it is difficult to effectively learn from them
- Evening classes or on-line classes
- Help with job search

- It would have been helpful to have the other basic courses needed for a transferable degree to Washington State University. Now I have to attend more classes and spend more money. I would have liked to have accomplished both degrees at the same time. Adviser should have helped me figure that one out since I was in that office every quarter.
- More detailed information toward specific courses for specific degrees. Less advanced courses that don't pertain to that specific degree.
- More hands on work and study
- More hours of hand on experience
- More internship hours offered
- More job location assistance
- More on how to get a job
- On hands experience or internship
- Professionalism
- Working in real world stressful situations

Employment Benefits

- ★ 107 of the 130 students (82%) reported receiving at least one benefit from their coursework at Clark College.

Number of Students Reporting Each Benefit Received



- 67% of students indicated that they have current or future educational plans.

Current or Future Educational Plans	Students	Percent
No current or future educational plans	43	33%
Transfer to a 4-year institution	38	29%
Return to Clark College for personal enrichment classes	22	17%
Return to Clark College for an Associate degree	21	16%
Return to Clark College for job-related classes	18	14%
Attend another community college	9	7%
Return to Clark College for prerequisites	8	6%

Note: Respondents can be in multiple categories

Students responding to the survey were asked if there was anything else they would like to tell us. Comments specific to a program will be included in the individual program reports. Many students took the opportunity to express thanks to the College and to specific individuals. Several other major themes emerged.

- Students are satisfied with their experiences at Clark College
- The poor economy has made it difficult to find living wage employment in their field of study.
- Students would like additional career services to help link to job opportunities, intern/externships and help applying.
- Students appreciate and need flexibility in course scheduling including use of evening, online, and hybrid classes, and classes offered through partnerships with other institutions.