

Perceptions of the Graduates

Summary Report of the Graduate
Follow-up Survey



2009 – 2013 Graduates

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Executive Summary

- The Center for Institutional Effectiveness at Bergen Community College (BCC) conducts an annual Graduate Follow-up Survey of graduates one year after they have completed their course of study. The following information relates to the students who received degrees and certificates between 2009 and 2013.
- Of the 2,279 graduates who were sent the graduate follow-up Survey, 403 graduates responded, providing a response rate of 18 percent. Over the past five administrations, the response rate has fallen somewhat; however, the distribution of a second wave of paper surveys increased the 2013 response rate.
- The majority of 2013 graduates' primary objectives were educational; 73 percent stated that they either wanted to earn a degree, to take courses for transfer, or to take courses for personal interest. Ninety-two percent of respondents affirmed that they had reached their primary objective.
- Throughout the past five administrations, the Library/LRC has remained the most highly rated service at Bergen Community College. Other highly valued services included: services for students with disabilities, tutoring services, the quality of major course instruction, and the quality of Developmental English.
- Sixty-three percent of 2013 graduates reported transferring to another institution after graduating from BCC. These graduates rated their preparedness for further education as being between "Good" and "Excellent."
- Nearly three-quarters (74 percent) of 2013 graduates indicated that they were employed either full- or part-time at the time of survey administration. Almost 60 percent of these 291 respondents stated that they were working in a directly related or somewhat related field to their field of study.
- When asked how well Bergen Community College prepared them for employment, participants typically responded that the job training they received was "Average" to "Good." Forty percent of respondents indicated that their program helped with job performance and 37 percent asserted that their program helped them to obtain a job.
- The graduates were asked to estimate how much they expected particular skills to improve and to what extent those skills actually did improve. Students' expectations were exceeded most from their initial expectations in the areas of "Tolerance and understanding of other people" and "Ability to cope with new situations."
- On average, over the past five administrations of the survey, 96 percent of graduates stated that they would recommend attending Bergen Community College to prospective students.

Introduction

The Center for Institutional Effectiveness conducts an annual survey of Bergen Community College graduates one year after they have completed their course of study. The primary objective of this survey is to assess the extent to which students feel the College's programs, facilities, and services have enabled them to achieve their personal, educational, and professional goals. The information obtained from the Graduate Follow-up Survey may be employed in the following ways:

- A. To provide information on the effectiveness of academic programs.
- B. To evaluate the quality of instruction, services, and facilities.
- C. To provide useful feedback that can foster curriculum modifications and development.
- D. To provide data to fulfill the College's accountability requirement to the Federal Government, State, County, other external agencies, and most importantly the community and students it serves.

The report that follows is a summary of results from five administrations of the Graduate Follow-up Survey, based on the responses of students who received degrees and/or certificates between the 2009 and 2013 academic years. The purpose of this report is to provide a succinct assessment of the major findings between administrations.

In order to simplify the reading of this report, the graduates will be referred to by their year of program completion: as "2009 graduates," "2013 graduates," etc.

Method

The Survey Instrument

The Graduate Follow-up Survey is divided into four sections. The questions in Section A address the graduates' initial goals for attending Bergen Community College and their assessment of the College's services and facilities. In Section B, the questions are directed at the graduates' educational status after graduating from BCC. Questions about the graduates' employment status and related career opportunities are presented in Section C. The final section, Section D, instructs the graduates to assess the effect their experiences at BCC have had on their personal and academic development. Here they are asked to determine the extent to which they had expected to improve certain skills when they started at BCC and the extent to which these skills actually improved. The graduates were also given the opportunity to comment on their experiences while at BCC and to voice their opinions on what could be done to improve the College.

Mailings

Each administration year, during the spring semester, a list of names and addresses of the graduates¹ from the previous year is compiled and used to generate the mailing labels. A postage-paid return envelope and, when necessary, a survey insert developed for specific academic programs were included in the mailing of the survey.² The first mailing of the survey was accompanied by an introductory letter from the President. The 2013 graduates received one paper survey in the mail and, if they did not return the paper survey, another subsequent mailing to increase the response rate. Similarly, one initial email was sent to both the graduates' Bergen email addresses and to their personal email addresses, if this information was available. Those who did not complete the online survey received (up to four) subsequent emails containing a link to the survey.

Analysis

Data was collected and aggregated from all mail and online responses for quantitative analysis. Analyses were separated into seven sections: Respondents, Educational Objectives, Student Services, Transfer Enrollment, Employment, Expectations for Improvement, and Overall Impressions. In some cases, this data was paired with historical responses from the previous four years to show five-year trends.

Qualitative student feedback was requested in a comments section at the end of each survey. A small, but representative sample of these comments was selected and added to each of the seven sections, named above, in order to add depth and context to the quantitative data.

¹ Only students whose mailing information was available were contacted

² The results of the program inserts were made available to the specific department and will not be included in this report

Results

Respondents

Table 1 below shows the response rate of the 2009-2013 Graduate Follow-up Surveys, derived from the total number of surveys distributed and the number of graduates who responded. Overall, the response rate has declined over the past five administrations with the exception of 2013. The 2012 response rate was lower due to the mailing of only one wave of paper surveys, as opposed to two mailings.

Table 1. Response Rate

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| # Sent | 1,536 | 1,909 | 2,022 | 2,034 | 2,279 |
| # Responded | 403 | 386 | 315 | 208 | 403 |
| Response Rate | 26% | 20% | 16% | 10% | 18% |

As shown below in Table 2, looking at the breakdown of respondents by program type, 67 percent of 2013 graduates from transfer programs responded to the survey, whereas 32 percent of 2013 graduates from career programs responded. Respondents who completed Career Programs were slightly overrepresented in this sample. When looking at the total graduate population, 78 percent of the graduates completed Transfer Programs and 22 percent graduated from Career Programs.

Table 2. Respondents by Program

| | 2009 | | 2010 | | 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | |
|-------------------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| <i>Associate of Arts (AA)</i> | 106 | 26% | 88 | 23% | 74 | 23% | 30 | 14% | 39 | 10% |
| <i>Associate of Science (AS)</i> | 151 | 37% | 184 | 48% | 160 | 51% | 107 | 51% | 231 | 57% |
| All Transfer Programs | 257 | 64% | 272 | 70% | 234 | 74% | 137 | 66% | 270 | 67% |
| <i>Associate of Applied Science (AAS)</i> | 135 | 33% | 101 | 26% | 73 | 23% | 56 | 27% | 117 | 29% |
| <i>Certificates (CERT)</i> | 10 | 2% | 9 | 2% | 8 | 3% | 9 | 4% | 9 | 2% |
| <i>Certificates of Achievement (COA)</i> | 1 | 0% | 2 | 1% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 0% |
| All Career Programs | 146 | 36% | 112 | 29% | 81 | 26% | 65 | 31% | 127 | 32% |
| Unknown | 0 | 0% | 2 | 1% | 0 | 0% | 6 | 3% | 6 | 1% |
| ALL RESPONDENTS | 403 | 100% | 386 | 100% | 315 | 100% | 208 | 100% | 403 | 100% |

Educational Objectives

According to Table 3, the percentage of respondents citing an educational reason as their primary objective for first attending BCC has remained fairly constant ($m=75\%$)³. The most frequently cited objective (by 42 percent of respondents) was “To earn a degree from BCC,” which has remained the most common primary objective throughout the past five administrations.

Table 3. Which statement best describes your PRIMARY objective for first attending BCC?

| | 2009 | | 2010 | | 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | |
|---------------------------------------|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| To improve job skills | 12 | 3% | 16 | 4% | 10 | 3% | 0 | 0% | 8 | 2% |
| To prepare for first career | 26 | 7% | 39 | 11% | 27 | 9% | 20 | 10% | 40 | 11% |
| To prepare for career change | 52 | 14% | 32 | 9% | 35 | 12% | 32 | 16% | 54 | 14% |
| To earn a degree from BCC | 160 | 44% | 155 | 43% | 126 | 43% | 81 | 42% | 159 | 42% |
| To complete courses for transfer | 112 | 31% | 116 | 32% | 91 | 31% | 57 | 29% | 107 | 28% |
| To take courses for personal interest | 2 | 1% | 3 | 1% | 1 | 0% | 5 | 3% | 12 | 3% |

According to Table 4, ninety-two percent of students stated that they had achieved their primary objective by the time they had left the college. This percentage has decreased slightly since 2011 with a 4 percent decline in primary objective attainment.

Table 4. Did you achieve your primary objective by the time you left the college?

| | 2009 | | 2010 | | 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | |
|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Yes | 356 | 96% | 333 | 94% | 282 | 96% | 178 | 92% | 352 | 92% |
| No | 15 | 4% | 21 | 6% | 11 | 4% | 15 | 8% | 31 | 8% |

Regarding their objectives, our graduates said:

“I returned to college as a midlife change of career due to the economy. I went to BCC and received an Associate Degree with Honors. I was very proud of this accomplishment, finally achieving a lifelong goal.”

“Through the nursing program, I was able to change my 2nd career as an immigrant.”

“Bergen was really great to me and set me up to go to a four year college even 7 years later. I would definitely recommend Bergen to any friend to get them started and help them transfer to a 4 year school. Bergen is a great starting off point and can help you correct the grades [if] you didn't do well in High School.”

³ In this instance, m is equal to the mean frequency or mean percentage of responses over the past five years

Student Services

Table 5 shows the composite scores of students who responded to the question of how well student services met their needs as a student. Composite scores were calculated as the average value using the scale shown, from among the respondents who indicated that they had used the service.

(Excellent = 5, Good = 4, Average = 3, Fair = 2, Poor = 1)

The most highly rated service, with a composite score of 4.31, was that of the Library/LRC. These services have continued to be the most highly rated over the past five administrations ($m=4.3$)⁴. Satisfaction with this service was followed by Services for students with disabilities ($m=4.07$), Tutoring services ($m=4.02$), Quality of major course instruction ($m=3.97$), and the Quality of developmental English ($m=3.94$).

Table 5. How well did the following services at our college meet your needs as a student?

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|-----------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Academic Advising | 3.66 | 3.69 | 3.45 | 3.57 | 3.71 |
| Admissions | 3.83 | 3.89 | 3.50 | 3.64 | 3.77 |
| Counseling | 3.59 | 3.60 | 3.54 | 3.51 | 3.61 |
| Financial Aid | 3.63 | 3.40 | 3.40 | 3.06 | 3.39 |
| Job placement assistance | 2.83 | 2.66 | 3.41 | 2.52 | 2.69 |
| Transfer advisement | 3.55 | 3.58 | 3.40 | 3.41 | 3.61 |
| Library/LRC | 4.39 | 4.38 | 4.18 | 4.25 | 4.31 |
| Registration procedures | 3.87 | 3.93 | 3.67 | 3.65 | 3.85 |
| Student Life activities | 3.78 | 3.80 | 3.68 | 3.67 | 3.73 |
| Career counseling | 3.30 | 3.27 | 3.50 | 3.06 | 3.20 |
| Tutoring services | 3.95 | 4.13 | 3.98 | 4.01 | 4.05 |
| Services for students with disabilities | 4.16 | 4.15 | 3.94 | 3.98 | 4.14 |
| Cooperative Education | 3.92 | 3.91 | 3.88 | 3.67 | 3.82 |
| Quality of world language instruction | 3.92 | 3.96 | 3.80 | 3.57 | 4.00 |
| Quality of major course instruction | 4.06 | 4.05 | 3.78 | 3.92 | 4.04 |
| Quality of developmental English | 3.98 | 4.03 | 3.75 | 3.93 | 4.03 |
| Quality of developmental math | 3.78 | 3.91 | 3.72 | 3.81 | 3.89 |

Regarding services, our graduates said:

"--- was my advisor and she was incredible. She was informative and knowledgeable. I have sent other students to see her and they couldn't thank me enough.."

"The college can be improved by helping students with more counselors available when need[ed] instead of waiting for 2 weeks for an appointment..."

⁴ In these instances, m is equal to the mean frequency or mean percentage of responses over the past five years

Transfer Enrollment

Sixty-three percent of students, as shown in Table 6, enrolled in a degree-granting institution after graduating from Bergen Community College. The rate of transfer enrollment has remained fairly consistent over the past five administrations, however, increased somewhat in 2011 and 2012.

Table 6. Have you enrolled at another college in a degree granting program since your graduation from BCC?

| | 2009 | | 2010 | | 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | |
|------------|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Yes | 250 | 62% | 245 | 64% | 215 | 69% | 144 | 69% | 253 | 63% |
| No | 152 | 38% | 136 | 36% | 97 | 31% | 64 | 31% | 149 | 37% |

Of the 253 graduates who enrolled at another college since graduating from BCC, 71 percent stated that they were enrolled full-time. The most frequently cited transfer institutions were Montclair State University (48 respondents), William Paterson University (36 respondents), Rutgers University (33 respondents), and Ramapo College of New Jersey (12 respondents). Ninety-two percent of those who enrolled are still currently enrolled in their respective institutions.

Table 7. Please indicate your current enrollment status

| | 2009 | | 2010 | | 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | |
|---------------------------|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Full-time Student | 175 | 70% | 179 | 73% | 151 | 71% | 99 | 71% | 179 | 71% |
| Part-time Student | 40 | 16% | 42 | 17% | 38 | 18% | 32 | 23% | 53 | 21% |
| No Longer Enrolled | 34 | 14% | 24 | 10% | 23 | 11% | 8 | 6% | 19 | 8% |

Table 8 shows the composite scores that indicate how well the graduates' courses prepared them for future education. Composite scores were calculated as the mean value of responses using the scale shown below:

(Excellent = 5, Good = 4, Average = 3, Fair = 2, Poor = 1)

According to transfer students' composite score ratings, responses generally reflected that students had "Average" to "Excellent" preparation for further education from Bergen Community College.

Table 8. How well did the courses you completed at BCC prepare you for further education?

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Composite Score | 4.16 | 4.15 | 3.42 | 3.99 | 4.09 |

Regarding transfer enrollment, our graduates said:

"It has been a fantastic school to start off small before transferring into a Senior College. It helped me to build up my independence, confidence, and learning skills throughout my courses. I could not stress my recommendation more to anyone especially those who just graduated from high school."

"I loved Bergen when I was there. It is a great starting off college. I did my time and transferred with my Associates degree. I did not like the placement tests that made me stay a little longer than 2 years, but it was well worth it."

"BCC should work with other colleges with transferring courses. The courses at The College of NJ did not match up with the courses that I had to take at BCC."

"The courses were well taught and challenging! I am so thankful I was able to complete my associates at BCC to transfer to Montclair. I saved so much money!"

Employment

Nearly three-quarters of 2013 graduates (74 percent) reported being employed, either full- or part-time, which is an all-time high since 2009. Eighteen percent of respondents stated that they are currently seeking employment (Table 9).

Table 9. What is your current employment status?

| | 2009 | | 2010 | | 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | |
|---------------------------------------------|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Employed full-time | 156 | 40% | 127 | 36% | 109 | 36% | 67 | 33% | 161 | 41% |
| Employed part-time | 136 | 35% | 126 | 36% | 108 | 35% | 73 | 36% | 130 | 33% |
| Not employed, but seeking employment | 68 | 17% | 56 | 16% | 53 | 17% | 39 | 19% | 70 | 18% |
| Not available for employment | 34 | 9% | 41 | 12% | 36 | 12% | 22 | 11% | 34 | 9% |

Of graduates who reported being employed either full- or part-time, the majority (56 percent) stated that they were hired after graduating in 2013 (Table 10).

Table 10. When did you get your job?

| | 2009 | | 2010 | | 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | |
|--------------------------------------------|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Before entering BCC | 91 | 32% | 67 | 27% | 47 | 22% | 31 | 23% | 57 | 21% |
| While attending BCC | 60 | 21% | 59 | 24% | 45 | 22% | 36 | 27% | 62 | 23% |
| Within 3 months after graduation | 35 | 12% | 34 | 14% | 38 | 18% | 23 | 17% | 50 | 18% |
| More than 3 months after graduation | 98 | 35% | 88 | 35% | 79 | 38% | 43 | 32% | 103 | 38% |

Shown in Table 11, nearly half of respondents (46 percent) reported annual earnings of \$30,000 or more and one-third of respondents reported earning over \$40,000 per year. This is fairly consistent with the prior year's findings (47 percent and 33 percent, respectively).

Table 11. Please indicate your approximate salary.

| | 2009 | | 2010 | | 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | |
|--------------------------|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Below \$15,000 | 83 | 31% | 75 | 32% | 72 | 36% | 34 | 26% | 73 | 28% |
| \$15,000-\$19,999 | 27 | 10% | 26 | 11% | 24 | 12% | 14 | 11% | 32 | 12% |
| \$20,000-\$29,999 | 36 | 13% | 42 | 18% | 33 | 16% | 21 | 16% | 38 | 14% |
| \$30,000-\$39,999 | 41 | 15% | 27 | 11% | 19 | 9% | 18 | 14% | 35 | 13% |
| \$40,000-\$49,999 | 31 | 12% | 19 | 8% | 14 | 7% | 14 | 11% | 33 | 12% |
| \$50,000-Up | 51 | 19% | 48 | 20% | 39 | 19% | 28 | 22% | 54 | 20% |

Employment (Continued)

Fifty-nine percent of employed respondents reported working in a position either directly or somewhat related to their program of study at Bergen Community College (Table 12).

Table 12. Is your current job related to the program of study you completed at BCC?

| | 2009 | | 2010 | | 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | |
|------------------------------|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Yes, directly related | 99 | 34% | 76 | 31% | 64 | 30% | 49 | 36% | 85 | 30% |
| Yes, somewhat related | 67 | 23% | 61 | 25% | 57 | 27% | 35 | 26% | 81 | 29% |
| No, not related | 126 | 43% | 108 | 44% | 92 | 43% | 51 | 38% | 116 | 41% |

If the employed respondents' jobs were not related to their course of study, they received a follow-up question to better understand why. Almost one-third (32 percent) of respondents cited that they were working in an unrelated field due to their transfer to a four-year college.

Table 13. If your job is not related, why not?

| | 2009 | | 2010 | | 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Transferred to a four year college | 45 | 38% | 49 | 49% | 31 | 39% | 22 | 43% | 36 | 32% |
| Found a better paying job in another field | 13 | 11% | 2 | 2% | 3 | 4% | 9 | 18% | 11 | 10% |
| Preferred to work in another field | 12 | 10% | 9 | 9% | 8 | 10% | 1 | 2% | 7 | 6% |
| Could not find a job in my field | 28 | 23% | 22 | 22% | 15 | 19% | 10 | 20% | 23 | 21% |
| Not sufficiently qualified for job in my job field | 22 | 18% | 16 | 16% | 22 | 28% | 8 | 16% | 33 | 30% |
| Worked in field, but changed jobs | 0 | 0% | 3 | 3% | 1 | 1% | 1 | 2% | 1 | 1% |

Regarding employment, our graduates said:

"BCC has been a great experience for returning students with changing careers or going back to finish an A.A.S. after many years. For me, it was a second chance."

"There should be a career, vocational training program for students with severe to mild learning disabilities that focuses on more job training and sampling rather than pure academics."

"In May 2013 I graduated from BCC with an AAS in Dental Hygiene and I love my career."

"Overall, a good experience and a good start for most students. My medical assisting program was very supportive and provides continual e-mail job opportunities for graduates. I had a part-time job for a short time and am looking for a new part-time job. I would like to further my education."

Employment (Continued)

Graduates were asked how well their studies at BCC prepared them for their current position. In Table 14, composite scores were based upon a mean of responses using the scale shown below:

(Excellent = 5, Good = 4, Average = 3, Fair = 2, Poor = 1)

Based on the composite scores for the past 5 administrations of the survey, respondents most often stated that they received an “Average” to “Good” preparation for their current job due to training from BCC.

Table 14. How well did the training you received at BCC prepare you for your current job?

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Composite Score | 3.65 | 3.67 | 3.24 | 3.36 | 3.66 |

Respondents were asked to select any and all of the following ways their program of study helped them. Forty percent of respondents reported that their program “Helped performance on the job” and 37 percent stated that their program “Helped [them] to obtain a job.”

Table 15. Did your program of study help you in any of the following ways? (Mark all that apply)

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------|------|------|------|------|
| | (% of Respondents) | | | | |
| Helped to obtain job | 34% | 39% | 34% | 36% | 37% |
| Helped performance on the job | 39% | 29% | 40% | 39% | 40% |
| Helped to get a raise or promotion | 9% | 5% | 10% | 9% | 10% |
| Other | 11% | 10% | 6% | 11% | 8% |

Expectations for Improvement

In addition to their primary objectives for attending Bergen Community College, it is believed that graduates have expectations for the improvement of academic and personal skills. In Table 16, the “Expected” column shows how much the respondents initially felt that these particular skills would improve, the “Actual” column shows how much these skills did improve, and the “% Change” column shows the difference between what respondents originally expected and to what degree they actually improved, with positive scores depicting respondents exceeding their expectations about the skill. The composite scores for expected and actual improvement of these skills were calculated using the following scale:

(Very much = 4, Somewhat = 3, Very little = 2, Not at all = 1)

The skill in which 2013 graduates most exceeded their expectations of improvement was in “Tolerance and understanding of other people in our diverse society.” Over the past 5 years, this skill has shown the greatest positive change. “Ability to cope with new situations” and “Interpersonal skills” follow in the greatest positive change from expected to actual improvement over the past 5 years.

Table 16. Please review the skills listed below and try to assess what your expectations were when you started at BCC and if you met those expectations through your experiences while attending the college.

| | 2009 | | | 2010 | | | 2011 | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|----------|----------|--------|----------|----------|--------|----------|
| | Expected | Actual | % Change | Expected | Actual | % Change | Expected | Actual | % Change |
| Communication Skills | 3.03 | 3.34 | 10% | 3.06 | 3.34 | 9% | 2.62 | 2.81 | 7% |
| Ability to apply bodies of knowledge within and across disciplines | 3.13 | 3.37 | 8% | 3.17 | 3.36 | 6% | 2.66 | 2.84 | 7% |
| Mathematical and computational ability | 2.88 | 3.12 | 8% | 2.85 | 3.05 | 7% | 2.69 | 2.83 | 5% |
| Computer fluency – retrieve, organize, and analyze information | 2.72 | 2.99 | 10% | 2.76 | 2.94 | 7% | 2.58 | 2.71 | 5% |
| Personal Responsibility – managing yourself and your commitments | 2.98 | 3.38 | 13% | 3.02 | 3.34 | 11% | 2.60 | 2.79 | 7% |
| Ability to think and express ideas creatively | 2.98 | 3.29 | 10% | 3.06 | 3.32 | 9% | 2.61 | 2.83 | 8% |
| Tolerance and understanding of other people in our diverse society | 2.87 | 3.33 | 16% | 2.89 | 3.21 | 11% | 2.61 | 2.83 | 8% |
| Ability to cope with new situations | 2.93 | 3.34 | 14% | 2.96 | 3.28 | 11% | 2.66 | 2.81 | 6% |
| Ability to think critically | 3.10 | 3.42 | 10% | 3.11 | 3.34 | 7% | 2.65 | 2.72 | 3% |
| Interpersonal skills – maintain professional relationships and engage in meaningful teamwork | 2.96 | 3.34 | 13% | 3.02 | 3.38 | 12% | 2.69 | 2.89 | 7% |

| | 2012 | | | 2013 | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|--------|----------|----------|--------|----------|
| | Expected | Actual | % Change | Expected | Actual | % Change |
| Communication Skills | 3.10 | 3.39 | 9% | 3.07 | 3.37 | 10% |
| Ability to apply bodies of knowledge within and across disciplines | 3.32 | 3.21 | -3% | 3.17 | 3.37 | 6% |
| Mathematical and computational ability | 3.12 | 3.09 | -1% | 2.85 | 3.05 | 7% |
| Computer fluency – retrieve, organize, and analyze information | 2.75 | 2.94 | 7% | 2.84 | 3.01 | 6% |
| Personal Responsibility – managing yourself and your commitments | 3.09 | 3.33 | 8% | 3.01 | 3.35 | 11% |
| Ability to think and express ideas creatively | 2.99 | 3.19 | 7% | 3.09 | 3.30 | 7% |
| Tolerance and understanding of other people in our diverse society | 2.84 | 3.28 | 15% | 2.91 | 3.37 | 16% |
| Ability to cope with new situations | 3.05 | 3.35 | 10% | 2.97 | 3.40 | 14% |
| Ability to think critically | 3.09 | 3.39 | 10% | 3.15 | 3.42 | 9% |
| Interpersonal skills – maintain professional relationships and engage in meaningful teamwork | 3.01 | 3.28 | 9% | 3.01 | 3.38 | 12% |

Overall Impressions

Participants were asked whether they would recommend Bergen Community College to prospective students. As shown in Table 17, the vast majority of students respond “yes” ($m=96\%$)⁵ with each administration of the survey.

Table 17. Would you recommend Bergen Community College to prospective students?

| | 2009 | | 2010 | | 2011 | | 2012 | | 2013 | |
|------------|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Yes | 381 | 97% | 338 | 95% | 288 | 98% | 178 | 96% | 345 | 96% |
| No | 13 | 3% | 18 | 5% | 6 | 2% | 8 | 4% | 13 | 4% |

Regarding overall impressions, our graduates said:

“I had a great experience at BCC because, as someone who did not know what she was going to do after high school, BCC was a great place for me to get my priorities in order. The professors are warm, intelligent, and are role models.”

“Maybe one day BCC should become a 4 year college institution! Thank you very much once again for guiding me and showing me that I can do it!

“I had a pretty decent experience but they could do more to prepare the students for a four year college.”

“I loved bcc so much. I miss it! It was hard but so worthwhile.”

“Overall I would attend Bergen again in a heartbeat.”

⁵ In this instance, m is equal to the mean frequency or mean percentage of responses over the past five years

Appendix I: After Graduation

According to our findings, 245 graduates transferred to a degree-granting institution. Below, Table 18 shows the institutions in which our graduates most frequently enrolled. Montclair State University is the most frequently transferred to institution (48 respondents), followed by William Paterson University (36 respondents), and Rutgers University (33 respondents).

Table 17. Top 10 Transfer Institutions

| Transfer Institutions | # |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| Montclair State University | 48 |
| William Paterson University | 36 |
| Rutgers University | 33 |
| Ramapo College of New Jersey | 12 |
| CUNY | 11 |
| Fairleigh Dickinson University | 9 |
| Thomas Edison State College | 9 |
| New Jersey Institute of Technology | 8 |
| Ramapo College | 8 |
| Felician College | 6 |
| <i>Other Institutions</i> | 65 |
| TOTAL | 245 |

Two hundred fifty-four graduates cited that they were employed either full- or part-time after graduating. The most frequently cited job titles were Registered Nurse (23 respondents), Server (10 respondents), and Medical Assistant (9 respondents).

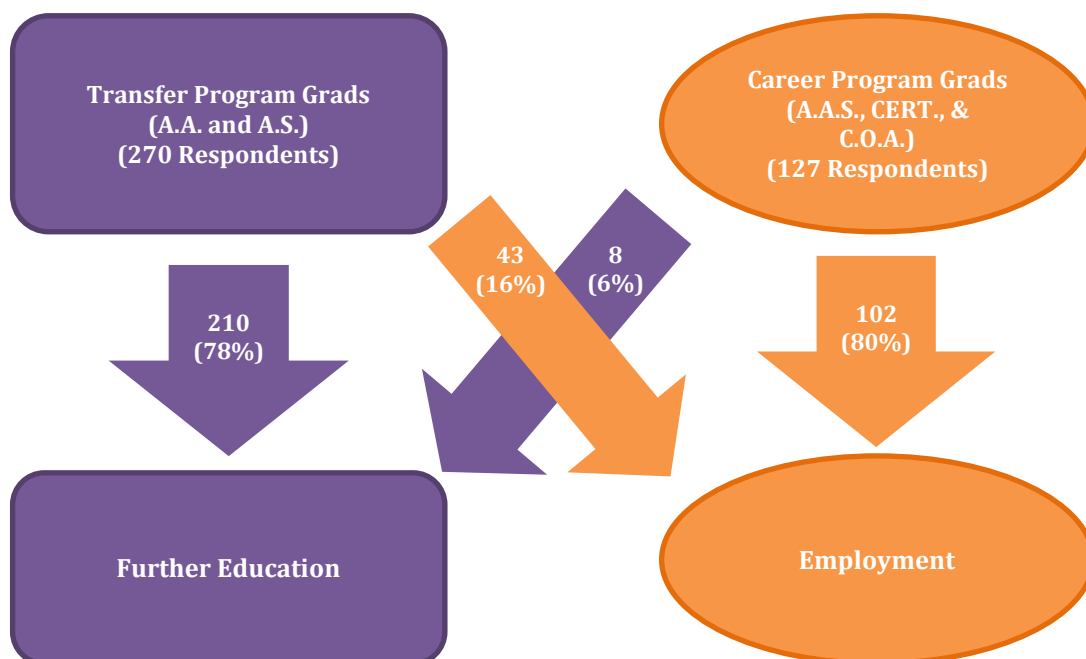
Table 19. Top 10 Occupations

| Job Titles | # |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Registered Nurse | 23 |
| Server | 10 |
| Medical Assistant | 9 |
| Dental Hygienist | 8 |
| Respiratory Therapist | 8 |
| Bank Teller | 7 |
| Cashier | 7 |
| Customer Service Representative | 7 |
| Clerk | 6 |
| Teacher's Assistant | 5 |
| <i>Other Professions</i> | 164 |
| TOTAL | 254 |

Appendix II: Respondents by Transfer and Career Programs

Two hundred seventy of the responding graduates in 2013 graduated from a Transfer Program (Associate in Arts or Associate in Science) while 127 of the responding graduates graduated from a career program (Associate in Applied Science, Certificate, or Certificate of Achievement). In order to determine how these programs prepare graduates for further education or employment opportunities, we separated the Transfer Program graduates from the Career Program graduates and assessed how many of them reached the primary goal of their program of study (i.e. transfer graduates who transferred and career graduates who entered the workforce), and how many continued in the opposite path (i.e. those from transfer programs who entered the workforce, and those from career programs who enrolled at a four-year institution).

Shown in the chart below, of the 270 respondents who were enrolled in a Transfer Program at Bergen Community College, 210 (78 percent) enrolled at a four-year institution and 43 respondents (16 percent) entered the workforce. Out of the 127 graduates who were enrolled in a Career Program at BCC, 102 (80 percent) continued into the workforce, and 8 respondents (6 percent) transferred to a four-year institution.



Appendix III: The Graduate Follow-up Survey

Attached is the current (post-2007) version of the survey form. The survey form has been edited for space; items have been moved and resized to fit the current page format.

BERGEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE **Graduate Follow-up Questionnaire**

SECTION A

1. Which statement best describes your PRIMARY objective for first attending BCC?

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> To improve job skills | <input type="radio"/> To earn a degree from BCC |
| <input type="radio"/> To prepare for first career | <input type="radio"/> To complete courses for transfer |
| <input type="radio"/> To prepare for career change | <input type="radio"/> To take courses for personal interest |

2. Did you achieve your primary objective by the time you left the college?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. How well did the following services at our college meet your needs as a student?

| | EXCELLENT | GOOD | AVERAGE | FAIR | POOR | DIDN'T KNOW EXISTED | KNEW ABOUT BUT DIDN'T USE |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Academic advisement | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Admissions | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Counseling | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Financial Aid | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Job Placement Assistance | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Transfer Advisement | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Library/Learning Resource Center | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Registration Procedures | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Student Life Activities | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Career Counseling | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Tutoring Services | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Services for Students with Disabilities | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Cooperative Education | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Quality of World Language Instruction | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Quality of Major Course Instruction | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Quality of Developmental English | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Quality of Developmental Math | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other (specify)_____ | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

SECTION B

1. Have you enrolled at another college in a degree granting program since your graduation from BCC?
☐ Yes
☐ No (skip to section C)

2. Please indicate your current status.
☐ Full-time student
☐ Part-time student
☐ No longer enrolled

3. What is the name of your current (most recently attended) college?
Name: _____ State: ____ Major: ____

4. How many credits earned at BCC were accepted at the college you indicated?
☐ Less than 32 credits ☐ Between 33 and 63 credits ☐ 64 credits or more

5. How did the courses you completed at BCC prepare you for further education?

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Excellent | Good | Average | Fair | Poor |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

6. Did you have any of the following problems while transferring to the college that you indicated? (Mark all that apply)

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Transferring credits from BCC | <input type="radio"/> Receiving transcript at other college |
| <input type="radio"/> Receiving transfer credits earned at BCC | <input type="radio"/> Problems being admitted for transfer |
| <input type="radio"/> Sending transcript from BCC | <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ |

SECTION C

1. What is your current employment status?
☐ Employed full-time
☐ Employed part-time
☐ Not employed, but seeking employment
☐ Not available for employment
2. Is your current job related to the program of study you completed at BCC?
☐ Yes, directly related
☐ Yes, somewhat related
☐ No, not related
3. If your job is **not** related, why not?
☐ Transferred to a four year college
☐ Found a better paying job in another field
☐ Preferred to work in another field
☐ Could not find a job in my field
☐ Not sufficiently qualified for job in my field
☐ Worked in field, but changed jobs
4. Please provide the following information.

Job Title: _____
Employer: _____ State: _____ County: _____
5. In an effort to evaluate Career Programs, may we contact your Supervisor?
☐ Yes
☐ No
If Yes, who is your Supervisor? Name: _____
6. When did you get your job?
☐ Before entering BCC
☐ While attending BCC
☐ Within 3 months after graduation
☐ More than 3 months after graduation
- 1.7. Did your program of study at BCC help you in any of the following ways? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)

☐ Helped to obtain job
☐ Helped to get a raise or promotion
☐ Helped performance on the job
☐ Other: _____
- 2.8. How well did the training you received at BCC prepare you for your current job?

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Excellent | Good | Average | Fair | Poor |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
- 3.9. Please indicate your approximate annual salary.

| | | |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Below \$15,000 | <input type="radio"/> \$20,000 – \$29,999 | <input type="radio"/> \$40,000 – \$49,999 |
| <input type="radio"/> \$15,000 – \$19,999 | <input type="radio"/> \$30,000 – \$39,999 | <input type="radio"/> \$50,000 – Up |
- 4.10. Through what source did you first hear about your current position?

| | | |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> College Placement Office | <input type="radio"/> Newspaper/Internet classified ad | <input type="radio"/> Friend or relative |
| <input type="radio"/> Employment agency/headhunter | <input type="radio"/> Co-op/Internship Program | <input type="radio"/> BCC faculty or staff member |

SECTION D

1. Please review the skills listed below and try to assess what your expectations were when you started at BCC and if you met those expectations through your experiences while attending the college. (For example: How much did you **expect to improve** your communication skills in college **and** how much did you **actually improve** those skills?)

| Expected to Improve | | | | | Actually Improved | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Very much | Somewhat | Very Little | Not at All | | Very much | Somewhat | Very Little | Not at All |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 1. Communication Skills | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 2. Ability to apply bodies of knowledge within and across disciplines | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 3. Mathematical and Computational Ability | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 4. Computer Fluency-retrieve, organize and analyze information | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 5. Personal Responsibility-manage yourself and your commitments | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 6. Ability to think and express ideas creatively | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 7. Tolerance and understanding of other people in our diverse society | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 8. Ability to cope with new situations | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 9. Ability to think critically | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | 10. Interpersonal Skills-maintain professional relationships and engage in meaningful team work | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

2. Would you recommend Bergen Community College to prospective students?
☐ Yes ☐ No

COMMENTS

We would appreciate any comments regarding your experiences while at BCC and how you feel we can improve the programs, courses, and services available to BCC students. Please make your comments in this space provided or use an additional sheet if necessary.