

RESEARCH

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BRIEF

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SPC's Three Year Graduate Follow-Up Results

The purpose of the brief is to provide information about the previous year's graduates that can be used by program directors for program review and to counsel students to help them make successful education and career choices.

The Office of Institutional Research collects the information about SPC graduates one year after program completion to determine their educational and employment status. SPC uses a unique system of surveying all its graduates and making telephone calls as necessary in order to make available the most comprehensive data possible about the activities of its graduates. In the Fall of each year, a survey is sent to all students who graduated from St. Petersburg College in the late summer, December, or the spring during the previous academic year. The initial mailing is followed with a second mailing several weeks later to those who did not respond. The survey asks respondents about their current educational and employment status, and focuses on a number of detailed questions with regard to job relatedness to their studies and job titles.

The information discussed reflects only data collected from the Recent Alumni Survey; it provides three years of data and enables program directors to compare year-to-year performance of SPC graduates. Data includes the companies where the students are working, the Florida colleges and universities where graduates are continuing their education, and the earnings of those employed.

A.A. Degree Graduates

Table 1 shows the number of SPC degree graduates for three years. The number of students graduating from SPC's A.A. degree program was over 1,700 per year for each of the three years. Each year, there were slightly more graduates receiving the A.A. degree from a 1.3% to 3.3% in 2003-04. While the number of students found in previous years have remained over 50.0%, the number found in 2003-04 decreased significantly by 11.0%.

Table 1. Three-Year Comparison of Associate in Arts Graduates Found

	2001-02	%	2002-03	%	2003-04	%
GRADUATES	1,717		1,737		1,795	
# FOUND	890	51.8	956	55.0	694	38.7

The purpose of the A.A. degree is to prepare students for transfer to a college or university. Table 2 shows the activities of the A.A. degree graduates found one year after graduation. The data shows that over three-quarters of respondents earning this degree have met this goal (79.3% in 2001-02; 79.3% in 2002-03; 81.8% in 2003-04) and did enroll in an educational institution of some type. Interestingly, the percent of graduates re-enrolling at SPC doubled from 9.6% (2001-02) to 20.9% (2003-04).

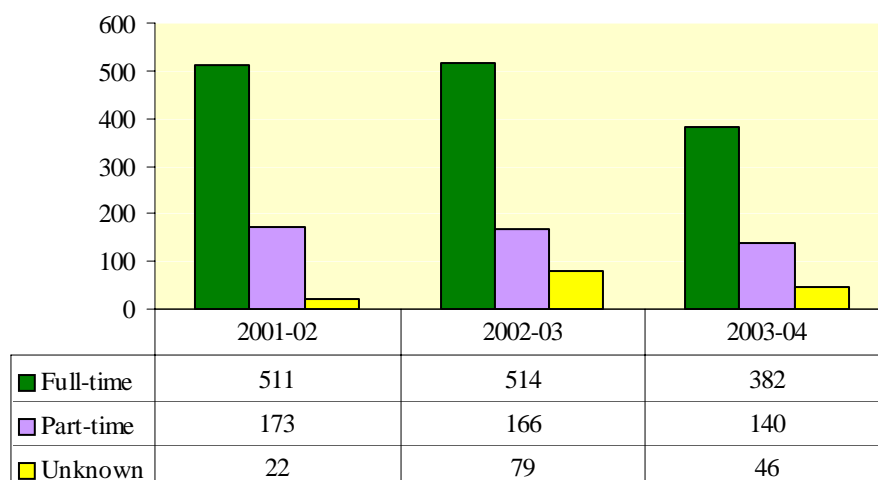
The majority of students (96.0%) who continued their education remain in Florida. For all three graduating classes, the top eight institutions chosen by graduates continuing their education one year after graduation includes: University of South Florida (1,089 – 53.1%); St. Petersburg College (387 – 18.9%); University of Florida (118 – 5.8%); University of Central Florida (85 – 4.1%); Florida State University (79 – 3.9%); Eckerd College (42 – 2.0%); St. Leo University (14 – 0.7%); and University of North Florida (12 – 0.6%)

Table 2. Activities of A.A. Graduates

	2001-02	%	2002-03	%	2003-04	%
# FOUND	890		956		694	
CONTINUING EDUCATION						
In-state University	563	63.3	509	53.2	369	53.2
SPC	85	9.6	157	16.4	145	20.9
In-state Private	26	2.9	52	5.4	26	3.7
In-state Community College/ Technical	3	0.3	13	1.4	5	0.7
Other	27	3.0	26	2.7	19	2.7
Unknown	2	0.2	2	0.2	4	0.6
Total Education	706	79.3	759	79.4	568	81.8
MILITARY	6	0.7	8	0.8	3	0.4
TOTAL PLACED	712	80.0	767	80.2	571	82.3
EMPLOYED ONLY	155	17.4	155	16.2	105	15.1
UNKNOWN	23	2.6	34	3.6	18	2.6

For the three-year period, overall enrollment status for 2,033 graduates, 1,407 (69.2%) were enrolled full-time, 479 (13.6%) were enrolled part-time and 147 (7.2%) didn't indicate their enrollment status. (See Figure 1 below)

Figure 1. Enrollment Status of A.A. Graduates



Examples of areas of study included Business Management, Psychology, Health Services Administration, Interdisciplinary Social Sciences, Mechanical Engineering, B.S. in Nursing, Journalism, Marketing, International Affairs, Human Resources Management, Mass Communications, Recreation and Leisure Services, Anthropology, Secondary Social Science Education, Social Science, International Business, Humanities, Education, Fire Arts, Real Estate, Doctor of Pharmacy, Chemical Engineering, Natural Resource Management, Public Leadership, and Environmental Science.

A.S. & A.A.S. Degree/PSVC/ATC/ATD Certificate Graduates

Table 3 shows a comparison of the number of SPC vocational degree and certificate graduates and compares it to the number found. The number of students graduating from SPC vocational programs fluctuates from a high of 1,300 to 1,400. An average of 52.2% of the vocational students are found each year.

Table 3. Three-Year Comparison of A.S./A.A.S. Degree/PSVC/ATC/ATD Certificate Graduates Found

	2001-02	%	2002-03	%	2003-04	%
GRADUATES	1,379		1,499		1,373	
# FOUND	800	58.0	733	48.9	686	50.0

For students enrolled in A. S. degree or PSVC/ATD/ATC certificate programs the primary purpose of college education is to obtain a job or to upgrade job skills. Since the Associate and Certificate programs are designed to prepare students for employment after graduation, it would be expected that the employed in field response would be strongly weighted toward job specific programs rather than the A.A. program. Students are considered “placed” if they are (1) working in a job related to the SPC program completed, (2) continuing their education, or (3) in the military.

The comparison table below shows that the number of students employed remained over 80.0% each year. An employment rate of sixty percent or more (63.0% for 2001-02; 64.3% for 2002-03; and 64.0% for 2003-04) indicates that SPC students are being employed in positions related to their studies. However, it should be noted that some graduates who are employed in related fields are also continuing their education. Also, the number of students continuing their education rose in the same time period from 12.1% to 16.8%. Consequently, the results indicate that, for every year over three-quarter percent of students are considered placed (See Table 4 below).

Furthermore, graduates were asked if their current position was related to their academic studies, for further information (See Employers Survey for Working Graduates at [http://www.spcollege.edu/central/ir/ResearchBriefs/.](http://www.spcollege.edu/central/ir/ResearchBriefs/))

Table 4. Activities of A.S./A.A.S. Degree/PSVC/ATC/ATD Certificate Graduates

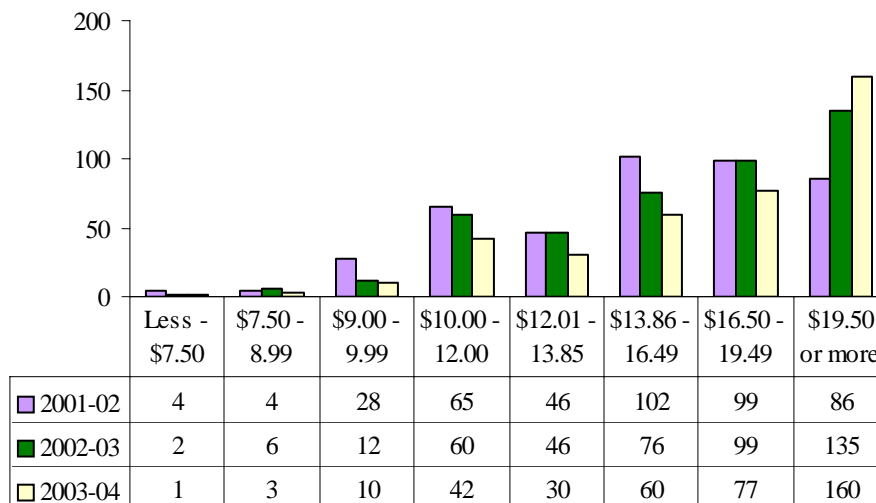
	2001-02	%	2002-03	%	2003-04	%
# FOUND	800		733		686	
EMPLOYED	705	88.1	628	85.7	601	87.6
Employed Related	504	63.0	472	64.3	440	64.1
Employed Continuing Ed	60	7.5	46	6.3	69	10.1
Continuing Education	37	4.6	40	5.5	46	6.7
Military	4	0.5	6	.8	3	0.4
PLACED	605	75.6	564	77.0	558	81.3
Employed Not Related	141	17.6	110	15.0	92	13.4
Unknown	54	6.8	59	8.0	36	5.2

Employed graduates were asked to identify their employer and to provide their job title. For several years the trend has been that the same employers hired SPC graduates. Table 5 lists the top 10 companies who employ five or more vocational graduates each year. (See Appendix B Employers By Programs http://www.spjc.edu/central/ir/Web_Factbook_05-06.pdf)

Table 5. Top 7 Employers of A.S./A.A.S. Degree/PSVC/ATC/ATD Certificate Graduates

All Children's Hospital
 Bayfront Medical Center
 Largo Medical Center
 Morton Plant Mease Hospital
 Pinellas County Sheriff's Office
 St. Anthony's Hospital
 Tampa General Hospital

Hourly wages are based upon those graduates who reported their wages and are employed in positions related to their studies. One thousand two hundred fifty-three (1,253) employed graduates who reported their hourly wages reported earning from \$6.15 to \$19.50 per hour with an overall average hourly wage of \$15.16. The amounts earned varied from year to year with the most frequently reported wage per hour ranging from \$19.50 or more, summarized in Figure 2. Table 6 shows that over the three-year period since 2001, there have been considerable increases in the average hourly earnings among graduates employed in positions related to their field of study.

Figure 2. Breakdown of Hourly Wage by Year for A.S./A.A.S. Degree/PSVC/ATC/ATD Certificate Graduates**Table 6. Average Hourly Wage**

	2001-02	%	2002-03	%	2003-04	%
# Employed in Field	504		472		440	
# Reported Wage	434	86.1	436	92.4	383	87.0
Average Hourly Wage	\$14.36		\$15.22		\$16.00	

Bachelor of Science and Bachelors of Applied Science Graduates

In Fall 2002, SPC began offering baccalaureate degrees (Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Bachelor of Applied Science). These programs will focus on preparing students to enhance their skills and knowledge, to reach higher levels of income, and to increase personal/professional growth.

Data was collected on 81 (65.3%) of the 124 students who received bachelor's degrees in areas of Education, Nursing and Technology. (See Figure 3 below) Of the 81 who responded to the questions regarding employment, 74 (91.4%) were employed; 54 (66.7%) stated that their current job was related to their SPC major and of these 27.8% (15) both work and continue their education. In addition, 14 indicated that they were continuing their education at institutions such as: University of South Florida (6), St. Leo University (2), St. Petersburg College (2), Troy State, Florida Institute of Technology, University of Tampa, and the University of Phoenix.

Figure 3. Percentage Breakdown by Program Area for B.S./B.A.S. Graduates

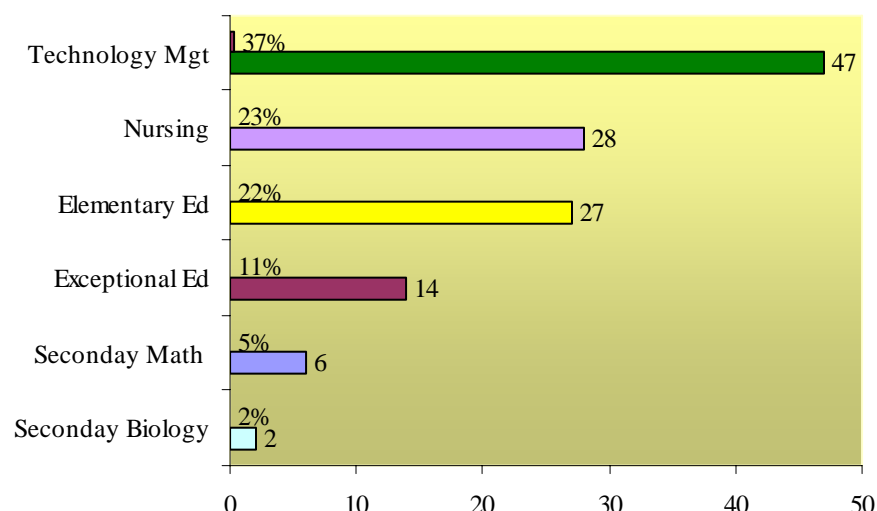
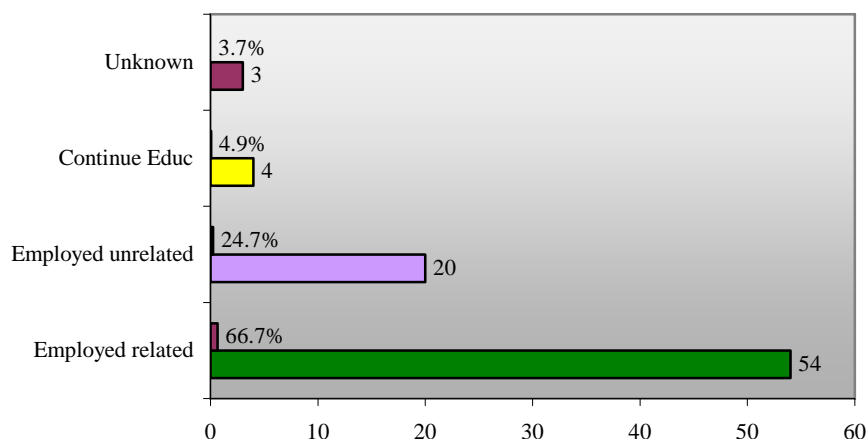


Figure 4. Activity of B.S./B.A.S. Graduates



As expected the Bachelor graduates employed in field related to their studies were higher than the A.S. graduates. The average hourly wage for 37 B.S. graduates who disclosed their wage was \$17.40.

SUMMARY

It should be noted here that for all students, 2003-04 was the first year the survey gathered information on the program regarding the graduates satisfaction with their studies in preparing them for their chosen career; the majority (937 or 64.1%) indicated that their studies prepared them for work/school after SPC. Additionally, 87.3% (1,276) stated that they would recommend SPC to others.

Students who come to SPC seeking knowledge to continue their education at a higher institute of learning, to gain employment, or to improve job skills are successful in fulfilling their goals. Also, the responses confirmed that SPC academic programs are achieving their intended objectives of preparing students to gain employment and/or continuing their education.

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