



State of Minnesota
Office of Higher Education
Student Experience Survey
Initial Report

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2014





TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction
3. Survey Methodology
4. Overview and Profile of Respondents
5. Data Analysis
 - A. Marketing & Recruitment Practices
 - B. Student Financial Support
 - C. Academic Experience
 - D. Post Institution Experience
6. Key Findings
7. Recommendations
 - A. Next steps

Appendices

- A. Additional Tables
- B. Communication and Outreach Materials
- C. Survey Questions and Matrix



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Minnesota Office of Higher Education (OHE) partnered with Public Consulting Group (PCG) to conduct the 2013 statewide Student Experience Survey for current and former students of two-year colleges in the private non-profit and private for-profit sectors across the state.¹ The goal of the analysis is to provide OHE with an independent snapshot of the perceptions of students in two-year programs about their educational experience and to determine if students perceive that the institutions they attended were worth the expense, met the quality expected and provided access to the appropriate supports necessary to achieve their educational goals. The analysis focuses on four main categories: Marketing & Recruitment Practices, Student Financial Support, Academic Experience, and Post-Institution Experience.

For the most precise results, a representative random sample would be selected. But since OHE and PCG were dependent on voluntary institutional participation and roster lists, an email survey was chosen as a beginning step. This methodology does provide some general perceptions since the 10% response rate is fairly good for this type of survey.

The original survey design was meant to include the experience of students in all sectors, public and private, to provide an overall picture of the student experience. PCG and OHE conducted extensive outreach to targeted institutions to ensure the survey design best met their needs. In the end, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) decided not to participate. Therefore, this survey only includes voluntary participation of private non-profit and private for-profit sectors across the state, but not the public MnSCU institutions.

PCG and OHE thank the for-profit and non-profit administrators who elected to participate in the survey and took time to distribute the survey to their students. We would also like to thank the students who responded; their willingness to thoughtfully respond to the survey is appreciated.

By analyzing student's perceptions of their experience, OHE can better support institutional policies and practices that may enhance satisfaction levels across all its institutions. This report should be considered the first in a series of student experience surveys. Additional surveys will be more inclusive of all institutions to offer a more complete picture of the student experience. The ability to draw a representative sample would also be extremely useful.

¹ **Private nonprofit institutions** are institutions owned and operated by nonprofit organizations whose net earnings do not benefit any shareholder or individual. These institutions are eligible for tax-deductible contributions in accordance with the Internal Revenue code (26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(3)). **For-profit institutions** are institutions that are privately owned or owned by a publicly traded company and whose net earnings can benefit a shareholder or individual.

METHODOLOGY

The project team worked in collaboration with OHE and key stakeholders from institutions statewide to design a web-based survey to collect data related to students' perception of their school experience. The survey was open for a five week period from September 9 to October 11, 2013.

The survey sample included students of non-profit and for-profit institutions offering 2-year and certificate granting programs within the following criteria: currently enrolled, graduated, and no longer enrolled for all students that were enrolled at any point in time between December 1, 2011 and December 31, 2012. The invitation to participate in the survey was sent to all institutions in the state offering 2-year and certificate granting programs with a count of students greater than 50 within the sample criteria. Institutions then emailed the survey invitation to eligible students.

The student experience survey had an overall response rate of 8.5% for for-profit institutions and 12.2% for non-profit institutions. Response rates were calculated based on each participating institution's count of invitations sent out. Response rates were highly dependent on institution's participation in the survey implementation process, including the frequency of reminders sent during the duration of the survey and the reliability of the student email addresses available to the institution.

All responses were collected anonymously. In an effort to increase response rates, an optional question for respondents to enter themselves in a drawing to win one of two free Apple iPads was included. The two winning respondents were randomly selected.

KEY FINDINGS

Students from both institution types reported an overall positive satisfaction level with their institutions. Most survey respondents believed their institution was worth the cost of attendance and reported that they would choose their institution again. However, there were some notable variations of the reported experience between those attending for-profit and non-profit institutions. Non-profits respondents, in general, had a slightly more positive perception of their experience than those from for-profit institutions.

Key findings related to student's perception of their experience at their institution are highlighted below.

Overview and Profile of Respondents

- Respondents from non-profit institutions are more likely to have prior postsecondary experience than those in for-profit institutions, with most having more than two years of prior higher education experience.
- Most respondents pursuing an associate degree or certificate program in both for-profit and non-profit institutions were working full-time before enrolling in their institution, though the proportions are higher for for-profit institutions. The majority of all respondents noted they enrolled in their school to begin a career.
- On average, non-profit survey respondents are younger (45% are under the age of 24). A third of all for-profit respondents were over the age of 35.
- For-profit respondents are much more likely to be female (73%). Non-profit respondents mirror the state and national average of 57%.

Marketing and Recruitment Practices

- Respondents from both for-profit and non-profit institutions indicated that most often they first heard about the institution through the same medium; either an internet search, a TV/radio/internet commercial, or a friend/relative. Students from non-profit institutions most frequently cited the internet as their first introduction to the institution (41%), whereas those from for-profits had more diversity in their response.
- Top reasons for selecting institution are the same for both institution types:
 - Class schedule
 - Financial aid offered
 - Reputation of program/school

Student Financial Support

- Students from for-profit institutions reported receiving financial aid less frequently than those from non-profit institutions (74.2% and 83.4% respectively). While student loans are the top source of financial aid for respondents attending both types of institutions, loans were more frequent for respondents attending for-profits. Student attending non-profits are more than twice as likely to have received a scholarship.
- Almost all respondents completed a FAFSA, and roughly one third of all respondents noted receiving help from their school to do so. For those respondents that indicated that they received help completing the FAFSA, more for-profit respondents indicated receiving student loans while more non-profit respondents who received help with their application received scholarships.

- Most survey respondents report not receiving any financial counseling services from their institution. Those who did were most likely to receive support in figuring out how to pay for school. For-profit respondents more frequently reported receiving help to get a loan, whereas non-profit respondents more frequently reported receiving help to find scholarships or grants. Less than 10% of all respondents participated in any type of financial literacy program.
- 60.9% of respondents attending for-profit institutions received information about expected hourly or annual earnings from their institutions. Of the respondents attending for-profit institutions who received this information, less than half currently have earnings that meet their expectations (43.8%). While fewer respondents from non-profits reported receiving information from their institution about potential earnings (46.0%), those that did were slightly more likely to have earnings that meet their expectations (47.4%).

Academic Experience

- Respondents reported an overall positive perception of the quality of their academic experience. Students responded the least favorably to academic advising and the quality of these interactions. Those from non-profit institutions perceived the quality of their experience slightly more favorably than those from for profits.
- Almost all students reported receiving some form of academic support from their institution. The most cited types of academic support from all respondents are selecting classes to fit my major and help transferring credits into this school.
- Given the national data on remediation, reported completion of remedial courses among survey respondents was low. Most respondents were not required to complete remedial courses. Of the small number who did take remedial courses, most reported having taken two or more courses.
- The top two reasons that respondents cited for leaving the institution are the same for for-profit and non-profit institution respondents: Family Circumstance and Cost.
- Roughly half of all survey respondents took advantage of career services. There appears to be a weak relationship between respondents who end up working in their field of study due to taking advantage of this institutional support.

Post Institution Experience

- More non-profit graduates reported working in their field of study than those from for-profits. Non-profit graduates also more frequently cited using the skills they learned in their program of study at work.

- Fewer survey respondents who have graduated or completed their programs felt the program was worth the cost than those who are currently enrolled. Graduates who are working in their field of study are more likely to agree that their program was worth the cost.
- For both institution types, as the amount of time attending the institution increases, the percentage of respondents who indicated that they would choose the institution again decreases.
- Respondents from non-profit institutions were more satisfied with their educational experience and were more likely to re-enroll than those from for-profit institutions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on PCG's analysis of the survey data. These recommendations focus on identifying areas for further study or action that will best support a positive postsecondary experience for Minnesota's students. They specifically focus on the practices and policies of private for-profit and non-profit institutions that offer two-year degrees or less, and in particular those that offer associates degrees and certificate programs. Recommendations emphasize actions that should be taken by OHE, but many will require the support or participations of the state's institutions of higher education.

- **Replicate survey for public institutions.** The lack of data related to the experience of students in public institutions presented significant limitations in the writing of this report. Students who attend public schools represent roughly half of all students who receive associates degrees in the state, yet this report is missing the perspective of this sizeable group. Given this exclusion, it is challenging to make system-wide policy recommendations. PCG recommends this survey be replicated for students who attend public institutions to better understand their perceived experience and to allow for a more global view of the Minnesota postsecondary landscape. Given the organizational structure of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, it may make the most sense to have the initial survey led by their internal research offices. For future surveys, PCG recommends that all institution types participate and do so using the same survey design.
- **More financial literacy/counseling needed.** School cost was frequently cited as a reason for leaving the school. Yet, most students did not participate in financial counseling services. More outreach should be done to provide access to quality financial counseling

services and to encourage students to use these services. Services should assist students to better understand the full cost of the school and provide them with the necessary tools needed to plan for their education. There is also the need for much more emphasis on Financial Literacy courses for students.

- While most students complete the FAFSA, only about a third received help from their school to complete this application. Given the research that demonstrates the connection between assistance with FAFSA completion on both college persistence and access, OHE should support institutions to develop programs that would ensure more students receive this help. This counseling could be leveraged as an opportunity to provide additional financial guidance as well.
- However, it is equally critical that students are not being encouraged to take out loans that are inappropriate or unnecessary. The data suggests that students at for-profit institutions who received help on their FAFSA are also very likely to receive student loans. More examination of this relationship is warranted. PCG recommends further analysis of extant data provided by the institutions, as student self-reported data may present an inaccurate picture.
- **Use of institutional career services weak.** Respondents reported attending school to pursue a career. Yet, there appears to be a weak relationship between participation in career services programs and job placement. Equally, only half of all students chose to participate in these services. More support should be provided across both institution types for preparing and placing students into jobs related to their field of study. There is the need for further research to see how career services could better support students. For example, PCG did not look at the types of career services support (i.e. career fairs, mock interviews) and the relationship of those activities on student's employment status.
- **More information needed on quality of academic advising.** Respondents reported an overall positive perception of the quality of their academic experience. Students responded the least favorably to academic advising and the quality of these interactions. Given the importance of this role, PCG recommends further discovery by OHE related to the qualifications of academic advisors, their frequency of interaction with students and the typical composition of those interactions.

- **Strengthen institutional supports.** Respondents who participated in either academic or financial supports provided by the institution were more likely to say they would attend the school again and were more likely to be working in their field of study after graduation. It may be that participation in these types of activities helps to deepen a relationship with the school beyond that of just taking courses. Research shows that students who attend two year school (either for-profit or non-profit) often mirror the behavior of students at “commuter schools,” where students are less likely to engage with their school beyond their classes. PCG recommends examination on how to use and expand these types of institutional support offerings to further strengthen student satisfaction.
- **Examine salary expectations.** A high percentage of students at for-profit institutions indicated that their school provided them with the salary they may expect to earn after graduation, yet most graduates did not have earnings that met those communicated expectations. This discrepancy in the data is an area that warrants further examination by OHE. While it may be the case of unrealistic or inflated expectations on the part of students, OHE should rule out any deceptive practices on the part of some institutions.
- **Investigate degree completion times trends.** The longer a student has attended an institution, the greater the dissatisfaction a student has with the school. This trend may be due to students who are taking longer than anticipated to complete their course of study. PCG recommends comparing anticipated to actual length of degree completion data to confirm this hypothesis and to determine if this discrepancy is more prevalent in some schools than others. When looking at these data, OHE may also want to compare published degree completion times to what students understand those completion times to be.
- **Engage in further data collection.** Survey data can only go so far in understanding the full picture of a student’s experience with their institution. PCG recommends further data collection activities be completed by OHE to supplement this report. Specifically, PCG recommends OHE convenes focus groups of both current and recently graduated students’ experience to dig deeper into institution recruitment, financial and post-graduation support practices that were touched on in this report. Institution site visits would also provide a more robust understanding of institution practices and the student experience.

- **Institute annual survey.** PCG recommends Minnesota OHE repeats a student experience survey on an annual basis to allow for more comparative data and the analysis of trends over time. If this survey is repeated, PCG recommends OHE identifies mechanisms to increase the number of participating for-profit and private non-profit institutions so that all schools are represented. PCG also encourages OHE to work directly with participating institutions to develop a centralized system to collect student contact information that would better allow for a random sample of the survey population.

2. INTRODUCTION

The Minnesota Office of Higher Education (OHE) contracted with Public Consulting Group (PCG) to conduct the 2013 statewide Student Experience Survey for current and former students of two-year colleges in the private non-profit and private for-profit sectors across the state.² The original intent of the survey was to survey students at public institutions as well. PCG and OHE worked to develop a survey instrument that all institution types were comfortable with; however, the network of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) ultimately decided not to participate. The goal of the analysis is to provide OHE with a more comprehensive picture of the perceptions of students in two-year programs about their educational experience at postsecondary institutions across the state and to determine if students perceive that the institutions they attended provided access to the appropriate supports necessary to achieve their educational goals. The analysis will focus on four main categories: Marketing & Recruitment Practices, Student Financial Support, Academic Experience, and Post-Institution Experience.

Background

Career and private for-profit and non-profit postsecondary institutions provide educational opportunities to a growing number of students in the United States. Today's knowledge-based economy places an increased importance on higher education and these institutions provide access for a more diverse set of students to pursue their professional ambitions.

For-profit institutions are among the fastest growing postsecondary institutions in the nation. This sector of higher education has come under growing scrutiny by the US government and accreditation agencies since they earn most of their revenue through taxpayer-funded student financial aid.³

National Landscape

Nationally, 38.7% of working-age adults (25-64 years old) hold a two or four-year college degree. In Minnesota, the percentage is higher, with 46.6% of the state's 2.9 million working-age

² **Private non-profit institutions** are institutions owned and operated by non-profit organizations whose net earnings do not benefit any shareholder or individual. These institutions are eligible for tax-deductible contributions in accordance with the Internal Revenue code (26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(3)). **For-profit institutions** are institutions that are privately owned or owned by a publicly traded company and whose net earnings can benefit a shareholder or individual.

³ Center for Analysis of Postsecondary Education and Employment. (October 2103). *For-Profit Colleges: Growth, Outcomes, Regulation*. <http://capseecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2013/10/CAPSEE-GrowthOutcomeReg-FINAL.pdf>.

adults holding a two or four-year college degree.⁴ Minnesota's attainment rate is increasing slowly, up from 45.8% in 2010.⁵

Degree Granting Trends

The number of certificates granted by U.S. postsecondary institutions has increased by 64% in the last decade, from 572,000 in 2000-01 to 936,000 in 2009-10, surpassing the number of associate's degrees granted in 2009-10 (850,000). Nationally, the majority of certificates are granted in vocational fields as they are intended to prepare students for jobs that require sub-baccalaureate education.⁶ In 2010, Minnesota granted 15,938 certificates and diplomas.⁷

The number of associate's degrees granted by U.S. postsecondary institutions increased by 30% from 1997 to 2007, from 571,000 to 745,000. Though the growth rate for associate's degrees is smaller than that of certificates, the number of associate's degrees granted nationally is projected to grow 30% by 2020, a faster projected growth rate than that of bachelor's degrees.⁸ In 2010, Minnesota granted 18,468 associate's degrees.⁹

Student Experience

Student satisfaction with the college experience is a key factor in persistence, as students who are satisfied with their experiences on campus tend to persist to graduation.¹⁰ In a national study conducted in 2012, higher education consulting firm Noel-Levitz found that career and private institutions were tied with four-year public institutions for having the lowest overall rates of satisfaction (54%), behind four-year private institutions and community colleges. Only 54% of

⁴ 2011 U.S. Census

⁵ Lumina Foundation for Education, Inc. (June 2013). *A Stronger Nation Through Higher Education*. http://www.luminafoundation.org/stronger_nation/report/#minnesota.

⁶ US Department of Education. (January 2013). *Characteristics of Certificate Completers With Their Time to Certificate and Labor Market Outcomes*. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2013/2013157.pdf>.

⁷ Minnesota Office of Higher Education. *Degrees Awarded in Minnesota: Degrees and other awards conferred by Minnesota's postsecondary institutions*. <https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=433>.

⁸ US Department of Education. (March 2012). *Characteristics of Associate's Degree Attainers and Time to Associate's Degree*. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012271.pdf>.

⁹ Minnesota Office of Higher Education. *Degrees Awarded in Minnesota: Degrees and other awards conferred by Minnesota's postsecondary institutions*. <https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=433>.

¹⁰ Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J., Buckley, J. A., Bridges, B. K., & Hayek, J. C. (2006). *What matters to student success: A review of the literature*. Bloomington, IN: National Postsecondary Education Cooperative.

career institution students reported that they would re-enroll in their institution, the lowest percentage across the four institution types.¹¹

By analyzing student's perceptions of their experience, OHE can better understand the student experience and support policies that may enhance satisfaction levels across all its institutions.

¹¹ Noel-Levitz. (2012). *The 2012 National Student Satisfaction and Priorities Report – Executive Summary*.
http://www.noellevitz.com/documents/shared/Papers_and_Research/2012/2012_Student_Satisfaction_Report.pdf.

3. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The project team worked in collaboration with OHE and key stakeholders from institutions statewide to design a web-based survey to collect data related to students' perception of this school experience. The survey was offered to participating institutions in a paper pencil format upon request; no paper pencil surveys were requested by respondents or institutions. The survey was open for a five week period from September 9 to October 11, 2013. OHE and PCG worked with institutions to collect student contact information and conduct outreach. The project team created a Minnesota Student Experience Survey email (mnsurvey@pcgus.com) to streamline all communication regarding the survey implementation, response rate updates, and questions. Please see **Appendix B.** for survey communications and outreach materials.

Sample

The survey sample included students from non-profit, for-profit, and public institutions offering 2-year and certificate granting programs that were enrolled within the timeframe between December 1, 2011 and December 31, 2012. OHE estimated the universe of all possible students to be approximately 113,000 students from 124 institutions. Upon evaluation of the sample universe, OHE made the decision to survey only students from institutions with greater than 50 students within the timeframe. OHE provided PCG contact information for all institutions in the sample. In total, 48 for-profit and non-profit institutions were invited to participate, as well as the institutions with eligible students in the network of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU). PCG reached out to each institution and invited them to include their students in the survey and to provide feedback on the survey design and implementation process. A standard invitation to participate in the survey was sent to all institutions in the state offering 2-year and certificate granting programs and participating institutions then emailed the survey invitation to eligible students.

Although the intent of the survey was to collect responses from all certificate and 2-year degree granting institutions in the state, participation was not mandatory. MnSCU public institutions, where over half of all students attend, chose not to participate in the survey. The final participating institutions included twenty for-profit institutions and ten non-profit institutions. Table 3.1 below provides a list of institutions from which respondents answered the survey.

Table 3.1 Participating Institutions

For-profit	Non-profit
Academy College	American Indian OIC
Aveda Institute	Crown College
Center Point Massage and Shiatsu Therapy Care	Dunwoody College
DeVry University	Northwestern Health Science University
Duluth Business University	Oak Hills Christian College
Empire Beauty School	St. Catherine University
Everest Institute	St. Mary's University of MN
Globe University	Summit Academy OIC
Herzing University	University of Northwestern St. Paul
ITT-Tech	White Earth Tribal and Community College
McNally Smith College of Music	
Minneapolis Business College	
Minneapolis Media Institute	
National American University	
Nova Academy of Cosmetology	
Park Avenue School of Cosmetology	
PCI Academy	
Rasmussen College	
Regency Beauty Institute	
Travel Academy	

Institutions with less than ten responses were deemed too small to serve as a representation of the institution and were removed from the sample. Final responses included in this analysis include fourteen for-profit institutions and eight non-profit institutions.

The student experience survey had an overall response rate of 8.5% for for-profit institutions and 12.2% for non-profit institutions. Response rates were calculated based on each participating institution's count of invitations sent out. Please note that response rates were highly dependent on institution's participation in the survey implementation process, including the frequency of reminders sent during the duration of the survey and the reliability of the student email addresses available to the institution. The following table below provides a breakdown of response rates by institution type. **Appendix A.** provides a full breakdown of response rate by institution.

Table 3.2 Response Rates, All Respondents

School Type	Number of Respondents	Number of Invites Sent Out	Response Rate	Margin of Error
For-profit	1,319	15,550	8.5%	±2.58%
Non-profit	934	7,684	12.2%	±3.01%

Please note that the total completed surveys received was 2,253 however, all survey questions were optional allowing respondents the ability to stop the survey at any time. 189 respondents or 8.4% of respondents submitted partially completed surveys. To incorporate all responses submitted, this report's analysis of survey findings are completed using the count of responses for the particular question or questions in the analysis and not the total responses. All findings in the Data Analysis section include total (n) count of respondents for the survey question analyzed.

To reach a representative sample of students, the project team worked closely with OHE and institutions to monitor the response rates of each school type and each student type and target institutions and student populations. To reduce survey response bias, outreach to students was conducted through email and delivered by institution. Based on OHE's data on registered for-profit two year and certificate granting institutions, the majority of for-profit institutions in the state are centrally located in the metropolitan Minneapolis-St. Paul urban area which for the purposes of this survey includes 11 counties (Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Goodhue, Hennepin, Isanti, McLeod, Ramsey, Rice, Scott, Sherburne, Stearns, Washington, Wright). The majority (81%) of institutions with respondents to the survey were included in the metropolitan area suggesting that the survey sample of respondents is geographically representative of the for-profit institutions in the state.

All responses were collected anonymously and survey language ensured students that their responses were not individually identified. In an effort to increase response rates, an optional question for respondents to enter themselves in a drawing to win one of two free Apple iPads was included. The two winning respondents were randomly selected.

Survey Questions

In an effort to encourage the completion of all questions on the survey, the survey was designed to take no more than 15 minutes to complete. Questions specifically focused on student experience to capture respondent's perceptions of marketing and recruitment practices, financial support, academic experience, and post-institution experience. For questions requiring students to rank or rate the answer choices, the project team used a four point Likert-scale/a "forced choice" method approach. The project team employed this method to "force" respondents to take a stand on the topic questioned. Survey questions were tailored to respondents based on their enrollment status and filtered by currently enrolled, graduated, and no longer enrolled. A number of questions allowed respondents to specify if a multiple choice or drop down answer list did not include their desired response. An open ended question for respondents was also included to allow students to provide general feedback on their student experience. For a full list of survey questions and the associated questions for each enrollment status please see **Appendix C**.

Stakeholder Input

To gather input from institutions on the survey methodology, the project team worked closely with Minnesota institutions from the for-profit, non-profit and public sectors. The project team and OHE held the stakeholder meetings described below to support survey implementation. Please note that although the public institutions ultimately did not participate in the student experience survey, the project team engaged public institution representatives throughout each phase of the survey implementation process. Please see **Appendix A** for a full list of higher education institutions invited to participate in the student experience survey. This list was provided to PCG by MN OHE.

- Initial survey stakeholder meeting: In the first phase of the development (April 2013) of the survey methodology, PCG and OHE held a kick-off meeting with representatives from for-profit, non-profit and public higher education institutions. In this initial survey stakeholder kick-off meeting, PCG and OHE discussed the intent of the survey, and the proposed survey methodology including survey population, outreach method, timeline and survey questions and format. The stakeholder group came to the conclusion that a September survey implementation timeline would be most appropriate to receive the highest possible response rate. Institution representatives also provided valuable feedback on the questions to be included in the survey.

- **Survey implementation webinars:** Prior to the implementation of the survey, the project team and OHE conducted two webinars (August 19 and August 27) and invited all for-profit, non-profit, and public higher education institutions included in the survey to participate, 21 institutions attended one of two webinars. The webinars provided institutions background information on the intent of the survey, the project goals and timeline, survey questions, and the timeline for institutions to send the survey to students from their institution. The project team allowed institutions to ask questions and provide oral and written feedback on the survey methodology and survey questions. The project team took into account a number of institution representative's survey edits and suggestions for new questions.
- **On-going communications:** Throughout the five week survey implementation period, the project team sent weekly communications to institution representatives to encourage participation and provide feedback on each institution's response rates.

Survey Limitations

As stated above the margin of error for both the non-profit and for-profit responses are below 3% indicating that the possibility of sampling error is low; the survey results are a strong representation of the survey population and that findings are not due to chance. Although the margin of error is strong, the margin of error does not account for other potential sources of error including response bias and exclusion of people who could not be reached. The survey design attempted to increase response rates by channeling all survey invitations through institution and institution emails, respondents are more likely to complete a survey if they feel some sort of affiliation with the survey administrator.

Although the invitation methodology was a benefit it also created potential for survey response bias. Respondents to surveys are typically those that have a strong positive or negative affiliation with the administrator or the survey topic, the survey results have the potential of having strong representation from either or both ends of the spectrum. An example of this response bias can also be seen in the Student Experience Survey through the strong response rates from attend sectarian institutions (39% of non-profit respondents were from Oak Hills Christian College or Crown College). Many respondents who attend these institutions noted a spiritual or religious reason that led them to the school. Given this disposition, these students might perceive their postsecondary experience differently than the typical student who would attend this institution type.



In addition, inadvertent response bias may be present in the survey through the number of students that could not be reached due to old or faulty contact information (email addresses). This is especially true in the population of students that are no longer enrolled in the institution. Institutions were asked to send invitations to the most updated student email on file, in many cases this may be one that students who are no longer enroll no longer check.

The lack of participation from the public institutions in the network of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities also presents a limitation to the study as the survey results only serve as the first step in Office of Higher Education's study to understand student experiences across the state in two-year and certificate program institutions.

4. OVERVIEW AND PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

The Student Experience Survey collected information from survey respondents about their enrollment including the type of program respondents are or were enrolled in, the length of time enrolled, status prior to enrollment, enrollment status, employment status, decision to choose the institution and demographics. To gather a better understanding of the survey sample population respondent self-reported enrollment data was analyzed against Minnesota statewide statistics as well against the national landscape when appropriate. The following questions from the survey are included in the overview and profile of respondents section.

Respondent Enrollment

A total of 2,253 individuals responded to the Student Experience Survey for an overall survey response rate of 10.3%. Respondents came from 30 different institutions. While all regions of the state were represented, the vast majority of respondents came from the greater Minneapolis-St. Paul area (based on institution location and respondent location tracked by the web-based tool).

PCG divided responses by institution type for the purposes of this analysis. 1,318 respondents (8.5%) identified themselves with a for-profit institution and 993 respondents (12.2%) identified themselves as from a non-profit institution.¹²

Of those students who attend a non-profit institution, 39% attend sectarian institutions (Oak Hills Christian College or Crown College). Many respondents who attend these institutions noted a spiritual or religious reason that led them to the school. Given this disposition, these students might perceive their postsecondary experience differently than the typical student who would attend this institution type.

Half of all for-profit respondents are either enrolled in or completed an associate degree, and just over a third are either pursuing or had recently completed a certificate program. The program breakdown for students in non-profit institutions are somewhat more evenly distributed with roughly 40% enrolled in or completed either an associate degree or certificate program.

¹² OHE provided institution classification type.

Table 4.1. Respondent Program Breakdown, All Respondents

Program	For-profit	Non-profit
A few courses	0.8%	1.1%
Associate	50.5%	37.5%
Certificate	34.1%	42.8%
Other	14.6%	18.6%

For-profit N=1,318; Non-profit N=933

Very few respondents indicated they are only taking a few courses. It is assumed that students who are only attending for a few courses would have less affinity towards the school and would therefore be less likely to participate in a survey of this nature.

366 survey respondents identified as “Other” and are pursuing a variety of different degrees, the majority of which are bachelor’s (63.9%), masters (10.9%), or doctorate (10.4%) degrees. Examples of such degrees that respondents most often reported pursuing include “Doctor of Chiropractic,” “Masters of Oriental Medicine,” and “Ministry Bachelor of Science.” Unless otherwise specified, these students are included our analysis.

- *Length of Attendance*

Table 4.2. Respondent Length of Attendance, by Enrollment Status

Institution Type	For-profit				Non-profit				Total
	Less than 6 months	6 months- 1 year	1-2 years	More than 2 years	Less than 6 months	6 months- 1 year	1-2 years	More than 2 years	
Length of time enrolled									
Enrolled Full Time	215	148	135	119	236	69	191	142	1255
Enrolled Part Time	67	63	93	120	49	23	43	27	485
Graduated/ Completed	42	26	132	108	7	26	33	56	430
No longer enrolled	12	14	14	9	7	9	7	6	78
Total	336	251	374	356	299	127	274	231	2248

Almost half of all survey respondents indicated that they are enrolled full-time. Of these respondents, 617 are from for-profit institutions and 638 are from non-profit institutions. The largest concentration of respondents from both institution types who are currently enrolled full-time have been at the school for less than 6 months. Nearly a quarter of respondents indicated that they are enrolled part-time and 430 indicated that they have either graduated or completed their program of study. Most respondents who indicated graduating or completing their program

are from for-profit institutions (308 versus 122). Only 78 respondents total indicated they are no longer enrolled. Of those students, there is an even distribution of their length of attendance at the institution.

Table 4.3. Respondent Length of Attendance, Associate Degree and Certificate Respondents

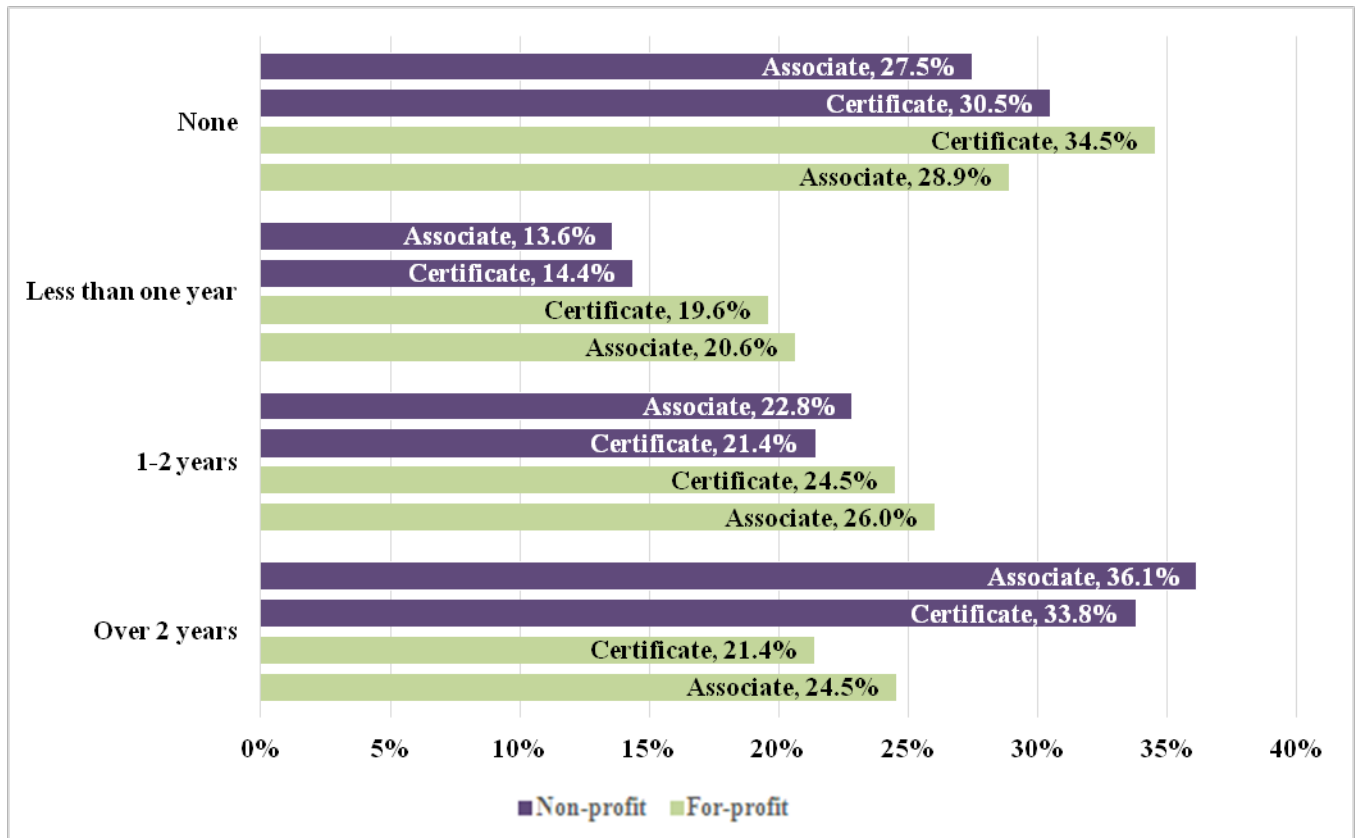
Institution Type		For-profit				Non-profit				Total
		Less than 6 months	6 months-1 year	1-2 years	More than 2 years	Less than 6 months	6 months-1 year	1-2 years	More than 2 years	
Length of time enrolled										
Enrolled Full-Time	Associate	90	88	78	32	83	24	85	28	508
	Certificate	101	51	35	28	101	32	69	74	491
Enrolled Part-Time	Associate	33	40	58	81	34	10	33	14	303
	Certificate	30	19	25	18	10	-	-	-	123
Graduated/Completed	Associate	-	-	79	58	-	-	21	-	169
	Certificate	42	21	50	20	-	26	11	39	214
No Longer Enrolled	Associate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34
	Certificate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20
Total		303	232	334	245	239	107	229	173	

All counts below 10 are not shown in this table; however, total counts are inclusive of all respondents. See Appendix A. for full response counts.

Similar to the above chart, most respondents who are pursuing either an associate degree or certificate program are full-time students. Substantially more respondents reported being enrolled in an associate degree program part-time than a certificate program part-time. Graduated/completed respondents are concentrated among those who attended for-profits institutions. Of the 384 graduated/completed respondents, 275 are from for-profit institutions and 108 are from non-profits. Only 54 of these students reported being no longer enrolled.

- *Prior Years of Higher Education*

Figure 4.1. Prior Years of Higher Education, Associate Degree & Certificate Respondents



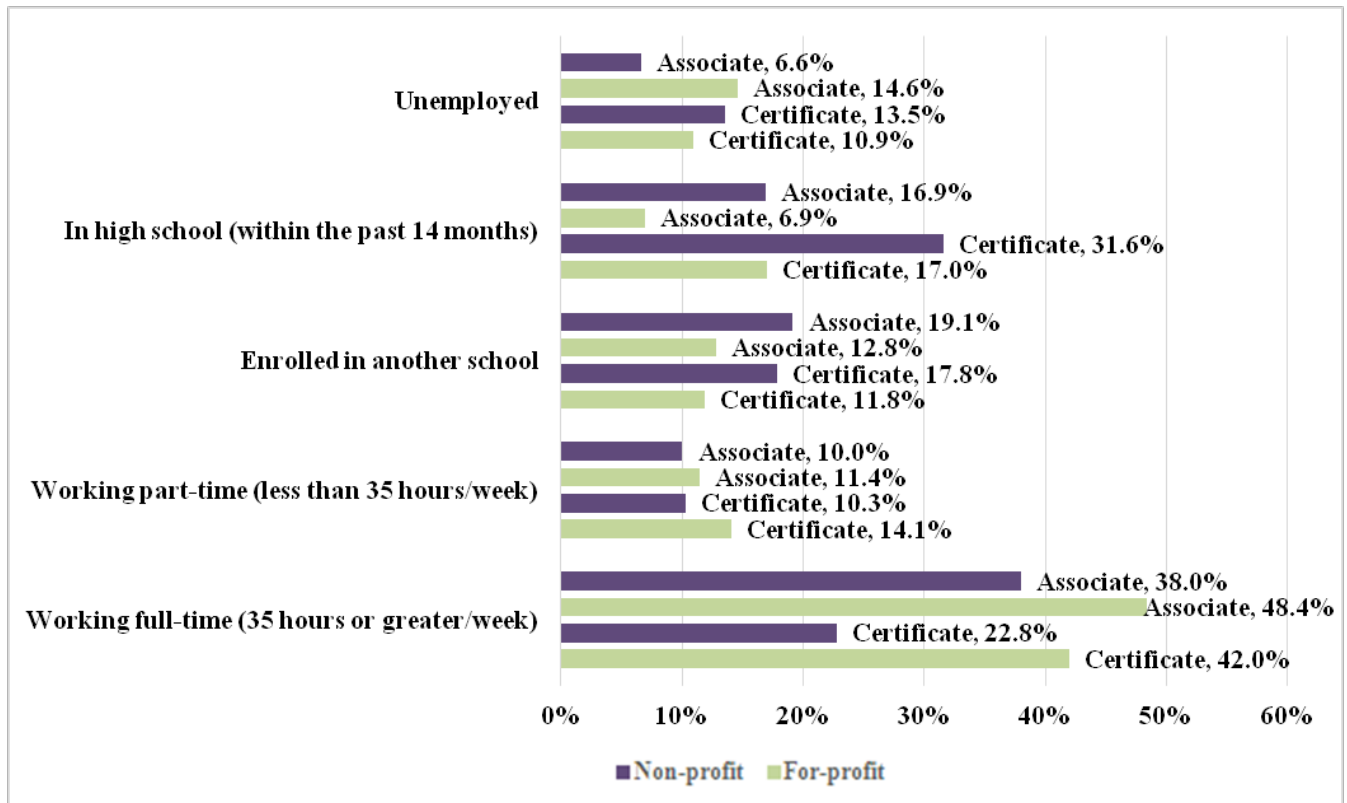
For-profit Associate N=665; Non-profit Associate N=346

For-profit Certificate N=449; Non-profit Certificate N=397

The median length of prior years of higher education for for-profit associate and certificate respondents is less than one year, however, for non-profit associate and certificate is 1-2 years. Respondents from non-profit institutions tend to have more than 2 years of prior experience in comparison to for-profit respondents.

- *Status Prior to Enrollment*

Figure 4.2. Status before Attending Institution, Associate Degree & Certificate Respondents



For-profit Associate N=665; Non-profit Associate N=350

For-profit Certificate N=448; Non-profit Certificate N=399

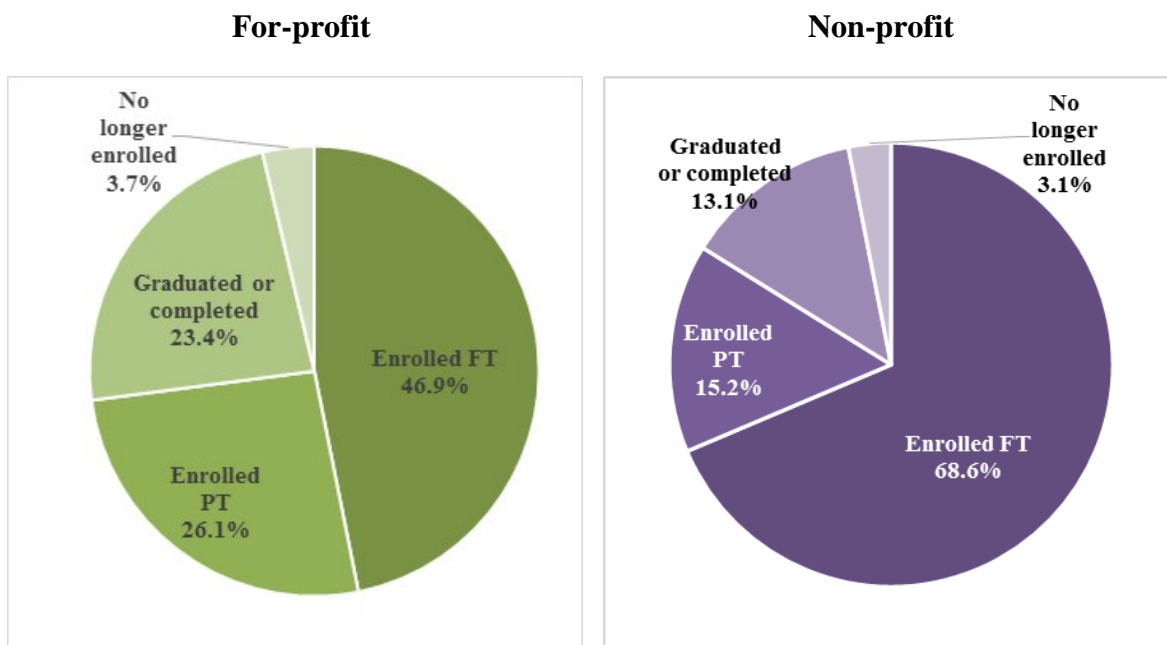
Note: Activities with a rate of less than 10% were omitted. Those activities include: Retired (For-profit Associate – 0.6%, For-Profit Certificate – 0.4%; Non-profit Associate – 0.6%, Non-profit Certificate – 0.8%), In the Military (For-profit Associate – 2.9%, For-Profit Certificate – 1.1%; Non-profit Associate – 5.7%, Non-profit Certificate – 1.5%), and Other (For-profit Associate – 2.4%, For-Profit Certificate – 2.7%; Non-profit Associate – 3.1%, Non-profit Certificate – 1.8%).

Most respondents pursuing an associate degree or certificate program in both for-profit and non-profit institutions were working full-time before enrolling in their institution, though the proportions are higher for for-profit institutions. 31.6% of non-profit respondents pursuing certificates were in high school, compared to 17.0% of for-profit respondents pursuing certificates and 16.9% of non-profit respondents pursuing associate degrees. 19.1% of non-profit

respondents pursuing associate degrees and 17.8% of non-profit respondents pursuing certificates were enrolled in another school prior to attending the institutions.

- *Current Enrollment Status*

Figure 4.3. Current Enrollment Status, All Respondents



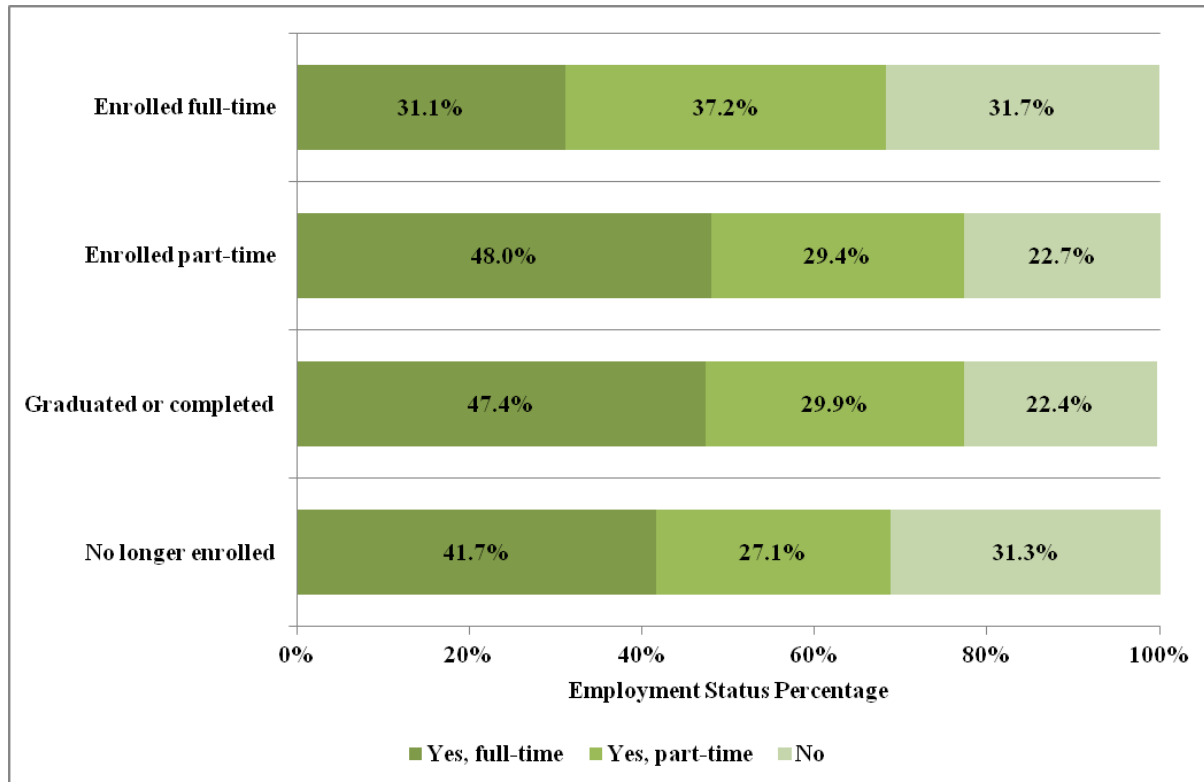
For-profit N=1,319; Non-profit N=934

Students that are enrolled full-time were the largest concentration of all respondents. This mirrors state distributions where more students across all Minnesota public institutions are enrolled full-time (60%) than part-time (40%).

For-profit graduates more frequently participated in the survey than those from non-profits. 23.4% of for-profit respondents are either graduated or completed student, compared to only 13.1% of those in non-profits. Only a small number of no longer enrolled students responded to the survey.

Current Employment Status

Figure 4.4. Current Work Status, For-profit Respondents

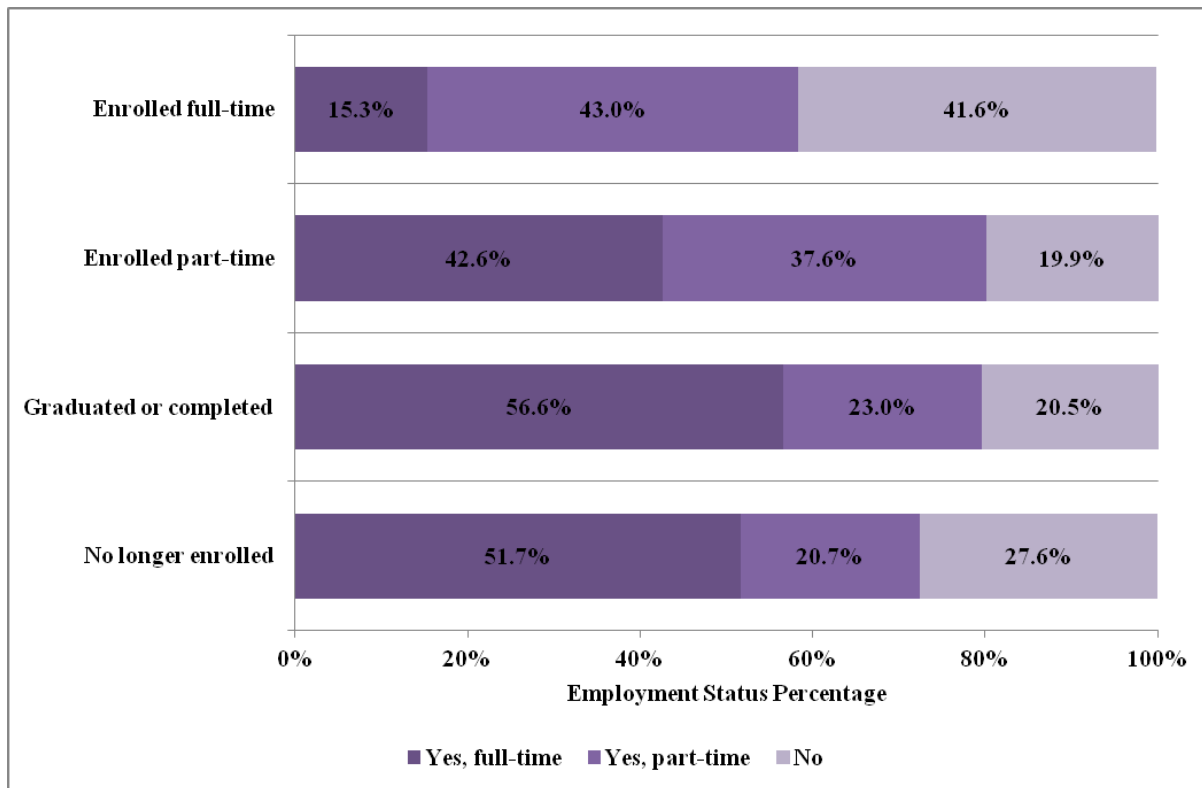


For-profit N=1,315

Note: There is further analysis of graduate work experience in section 4.D. *Post Institution Experience*.

One-third of all for-profit respondents enrolled full-time also report working full-time. There is little variation in employment status between those who are enrolled part-time and those who have graduated. There is only a 5% point difference in full-time employment status between those respondents who have graduated (47.4%) and those who are no longer enrolled (41.7%).

Figure 4.5. Current Work Status, Non-profit Respondents



Non-profit N=931

Note: There is further analysis of graduate work experience in section 4.D. *Post Institution Experience*.

Few non-profit respondents that are enrolled full-time also report working full-time (15.3%).

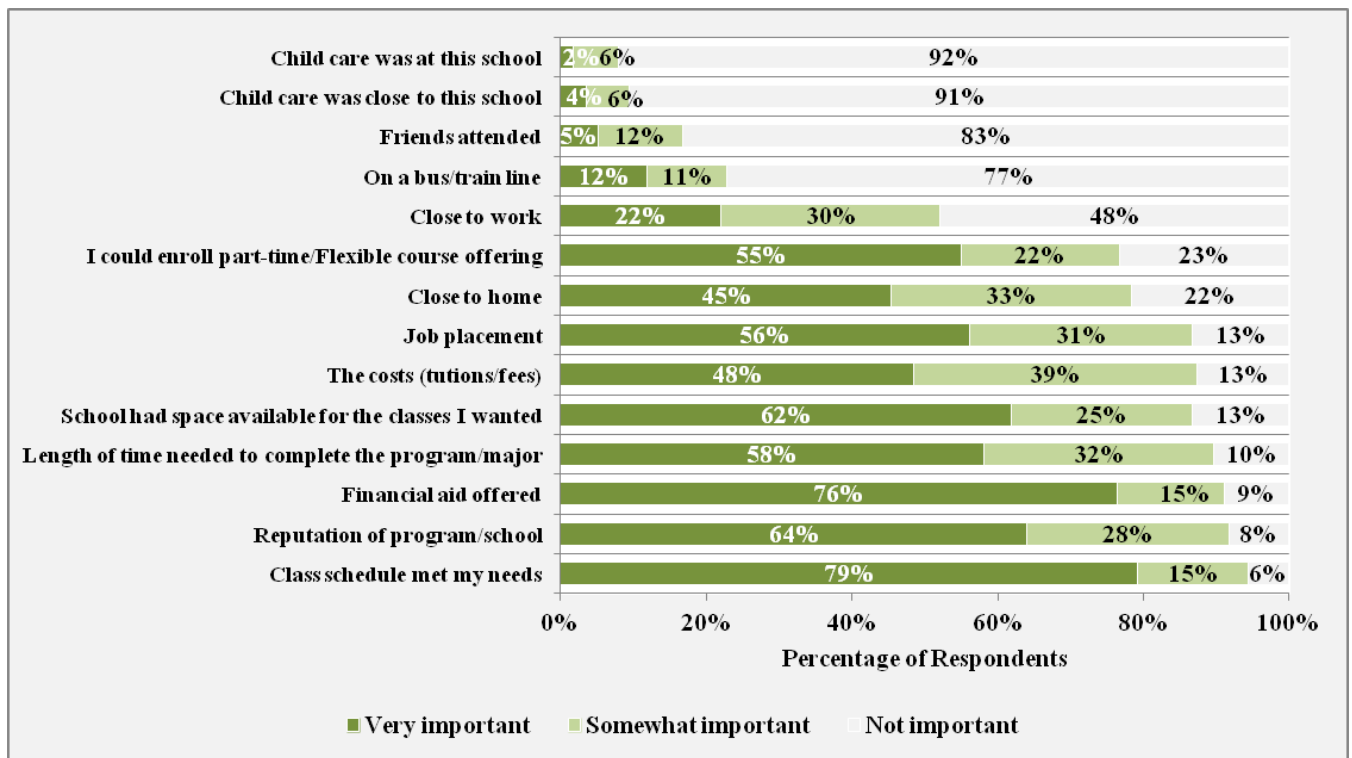
While about 80% of all graduated respondents report currently having a job, respondents who attended a non-profit school more frequently reported working full-time after graduation than those at for-profit institutions (56.6% versus 47.4%). Similar to above, there is only a 5% point difference in full-time employment status between those respondents who have graduated (56.6%) and those who are no longer enrolled (51.7%).

Later analysis will look at the frequency with which graduates report working in their field of study.

- *Decision to Choose Institution*

Respondents were asked to rank a number of factors for what led them to select their institution. While responses from both non-profit institutions and for-profit institutions followed similar patterns, there were also some notable differences.

Figure 4.6. Factors Choosing the Institution by Importance, For-profit Respondents



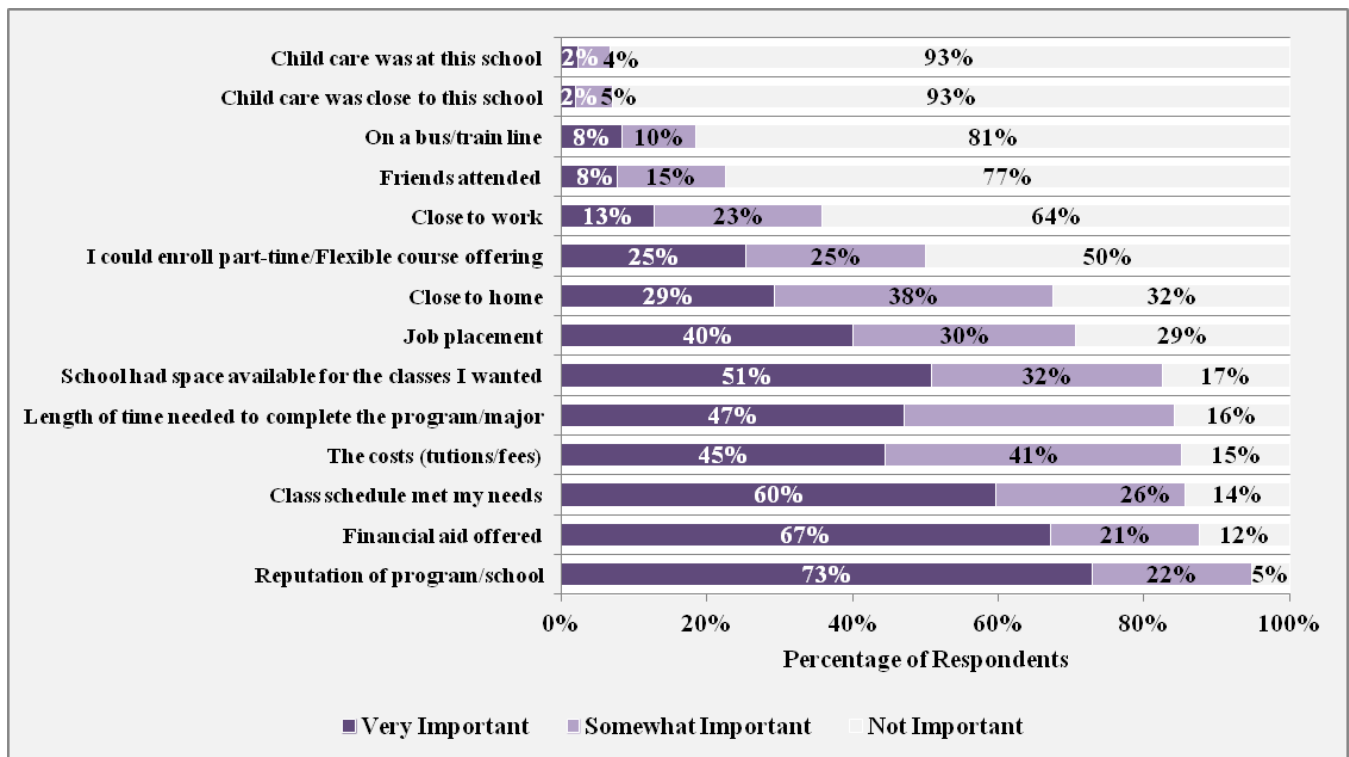
For-profit N=1,290

Almost all respondents from for-profit institutions ranked the following as either Very Important or Important as a factor in their choice of institution:

- Class schedule (94% of respondents)
- Financial aid offered (92% of respondents)
- Reputation of program/school (91% of respondents)
- Length of time needed to complete program/major (90% of respondents).

For-profit respondents cited a factor to be Very Important more frequently than those from non-profits, with 8 factors being identified as Very Important by more than half of all respondents. Proximity to childcare was not identified as a factor in school selection for almost all for-profit respondents.

Figure 4.7. Factors Choosing the Institution by Importance, Non-profit Respondents



For-profit N=921

Almost all respondents from for-profit institutions ranked the following as either Very Important or Important as a factor in their choice of institution:

- Reputation of program/school (95% of respondents)
- Financial aid offered (88% of respondents)
- Class schedule met my needs (86% of respondents)

These were the only three factors ranked as Very Important by at least half of respondents.

Similar to with for-profit respondents, proximity to childcare was not identified as a factor in school selection for almost all non-profit respondents.

Respondent Demographics

Table 4.4. Respondent Breakdown by Age, All Respondents

	19 and younger	20-24	25-34	35+
For-profit	7.6%	23.4%	36.6%	32.4%
Non-profit	4.8%	40.8%	27.9%	26.4%
Minnesota*	27.0%	39.0%	20.0%	14.0%

For-profit N=1,295

Non-profit N=916

* - OHE statistics for all undergraduates, *Enrollment by Age, Fall 2011*¹³

Similar to national trends, the majority of survey respondents are under the age of 35. In Minnesota, undergraduates age 25-34 have increased dramatically in recent years, and have been primarily enrolling in two-year institutions.¹⁴ This trend is most reflected in the for-profit respondent population, as 68% are 25 or older. On average, non-profit survey respondents are younger, with 45.6% under the age of 24.

Table 4.5. Respondent Breakdown by Race, All Respondents

	Asian or Pacific Islander	Black or African American	Caucasian	Hispanic or Latino	Native American or Alaska Native	Other/Multi-Racial
For-profit	5.7%	8.6%	74.6%	3.6%	2.9%	4.5%
Non-profit	7.9%	7.0%	76.5%	3.2%	2.3%	3.1%
Minnesota*	5.0%	9.0%	78.0%	4.0%	1.0%	3.0%

For-profit N=1,366

Non-profit N=972

*OHE statistics for all undergraduates, *Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity, Fall 2011*¹⁵

Survey respondents from both institution types had a similar breakdown, with the majority of respondents from for-profit and non-profit institutions identifying as Caucasian (74.6% and 76.5%, respectively). This compares to a statewide rate of 78.0% for all undergraduates. Students of color are slightly more represented than the state average. Whereas they make up 22% of the

¹³ Minnesota Office of Higher Education. *Age: Enrollment statistics at a glance.*

<https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=750>.

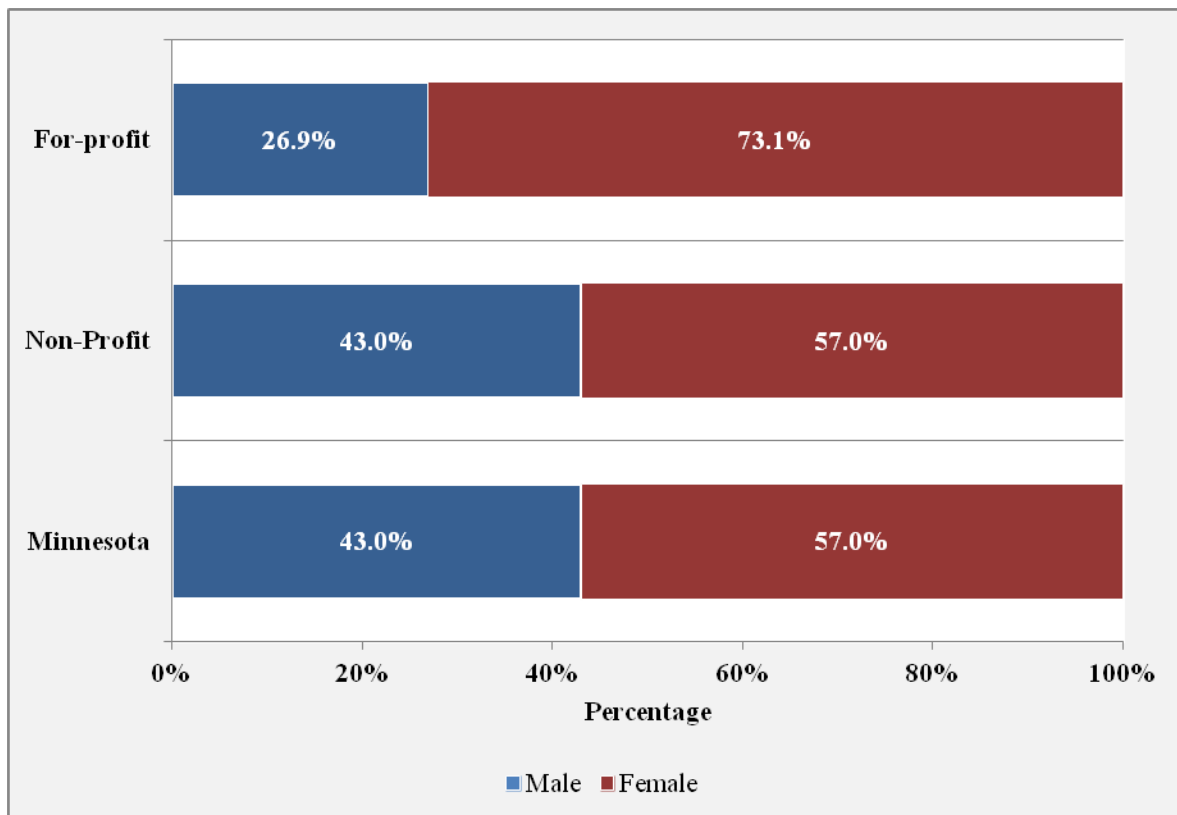
¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Minnesota Office of Higher Education. *Race/Ethnicity: Enrollment statistics at a glance.*

<https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/dPg.cfm?pageID=755>.

statewide population of all undergraduate postsecondary enrollment, they make up 25.3% of for-profit survey respondents and 23.5% of non-profit survey respondents.¹⁶

Table 4.6. Respondent Breakdown by Gender, All Respondents



For-profit N=1,303

Non-profit N=926

Note: Minnesota statistics are for all undergraduates, *Enrollment by Gender, Fall 2011*¹⁷

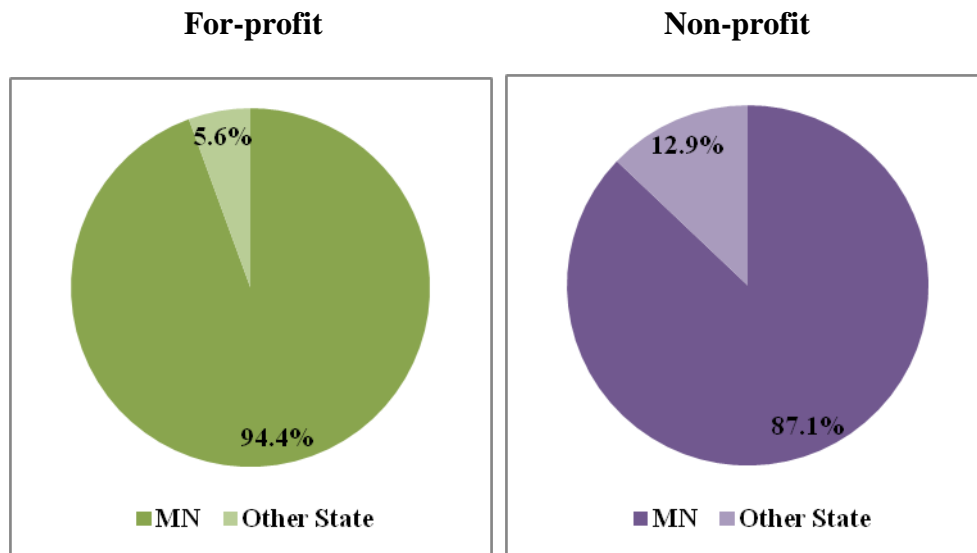
73.1% of for-profit respondents are female, a markedly larger majority than non-profit respondents. This discrepancy may be related to the academic programs offered by participating institutions. The non-profit respondent population has a gender breakdown that mirrors the Minnesota breakdown exactly, with 57.0% of female respondents and 43.0% of male respondents.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Minnesota Office of Higher Education. *Gender: Enrollment statistics at a glance.*

<https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=752>.

Figure 4.8. Respondent's Current Residence, All Respondents



For-profit N=1,291

Non-profit N=914

The for-profit respondent population was comprised of 94.4% of Minnesota residents, while Minnesota residents made up a slightly smaller percentage of the non-profit sample (87.1%). These proportions are higher than the statewide level of Minnesota residents in undergraduate enrollment, which is 81%.¹⁸

¹⁸ Minnesota Office of Higher Education. *Residence: Enrollment statistics at a glance*. <https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=756>. Note: this number is based off of all undergraduates.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

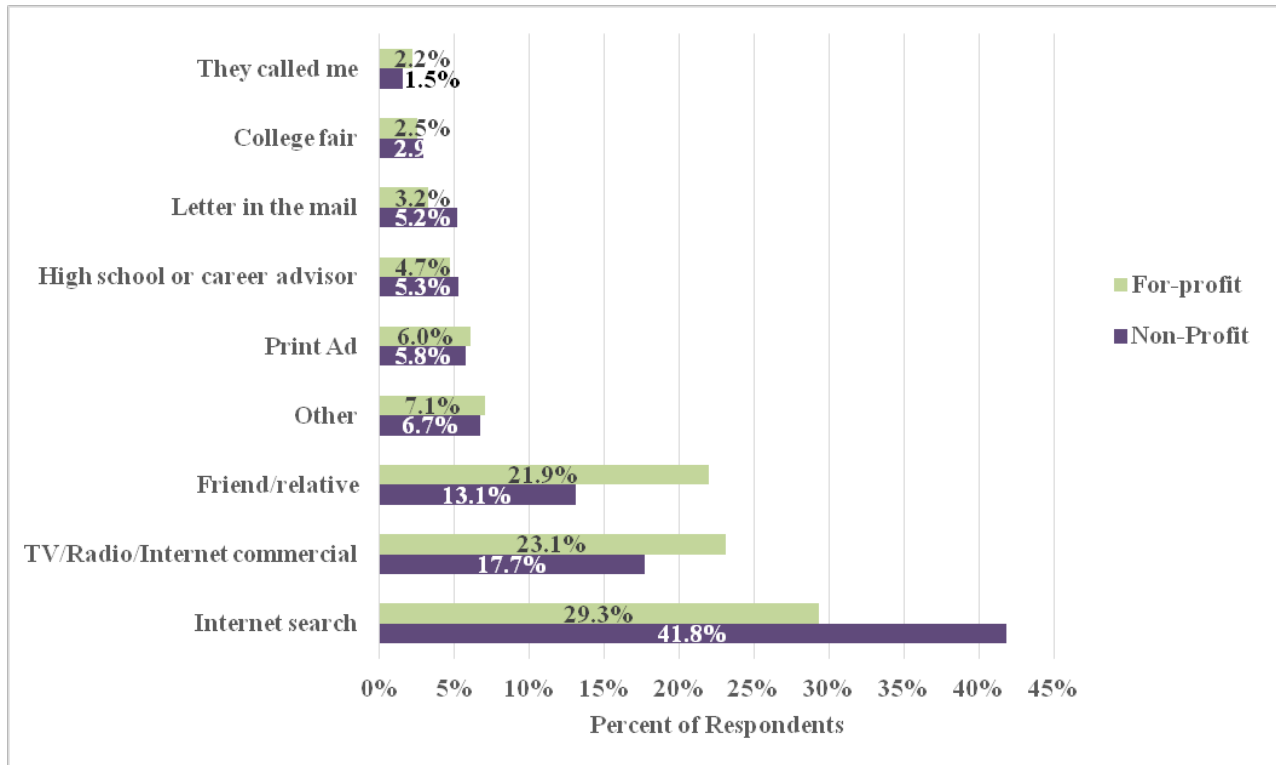
A. Marketing & Recruitment Practices

The following section includes an analysis of respondent's responses to questions related to the institution's marketing and recruitment practices. Questions in this section ask how respondents first heard about the institution to understand the methods used by institutions and which practices are actually reaching students/prospective students. In addition, an analysis of school choice is captured through the analysis of a question that allowed respondents to choose from a list of common reasons that draw students to choose an institution for enrollment. Responses to the following questions were collected in the survey:

How did you first hear about this institution (Select all that apply)?
Why are you or why did you go to this institution (Select all that

How Respondent First Heard About the Institution

Figure 5A.1. Marketing & Recruitment Methods, All Respondents



For-profit N=1,654; Non-profit N=1,193. Please note that respondents were given the option to choose all that apply, therefore N values may be larger than the total number of responses.

The top three methods that respondents from for-profit and non-profit institutions indicated hearing about their institution for the first time from are Internet search, TV/Radio/Internet commercial, and Friend/relative.

While a higher percentage of non-profit respondents indicated that they heard about the school through an internet search (41.8%), it was the most frequently selected choice for both respondent types. A higher percentage of for-profit respondents indicated that they heard about the institution for the first time on TV/Radio/Internet commercial (23.1%) or a Friend/relative (21.9%) than those from non-profits.

Reason for Attending Institution

The majority of for-profit respondents indicated that they attended the institution to begin a career. Of those respondents that chose to provide another reason outside of those provided in the survey, respondents indicated reasons that can be categorized into the following themes, listed in order of frequency: to gain a degree or specific skill(s), to develop new skills or training for the purposes of supporting a specific career or job, to fulfill a personal goal or aspiration (other than for a career or employment reason), and ease of transfer into the school due to acceptance of credits.

The majority of non-profit respondents indicated that they attended the institution to begin a career. Of those non-profit respondents that indicated another reason outside of those provided in the survey, respondents indicated reasons that can be categorized into the following themes, listed in order of frequency: to gain a degree or specific skill(s), to develop new skills or training for the purposes of supporting a specific career or job, personal goal or interest (including religious), scholarship program.

B. Student Financial Support

The survey had a strong focus on student's financial supports and the use and offerings of financial support services provided by institutions. The following analysis includes analysis on respondent's financial aid and their expectations about earnings upon completion of the program or goals at the institution. The following questions regarding student financial support included:

Did you receive financial aid? If yes, what type? (Select all that apply)

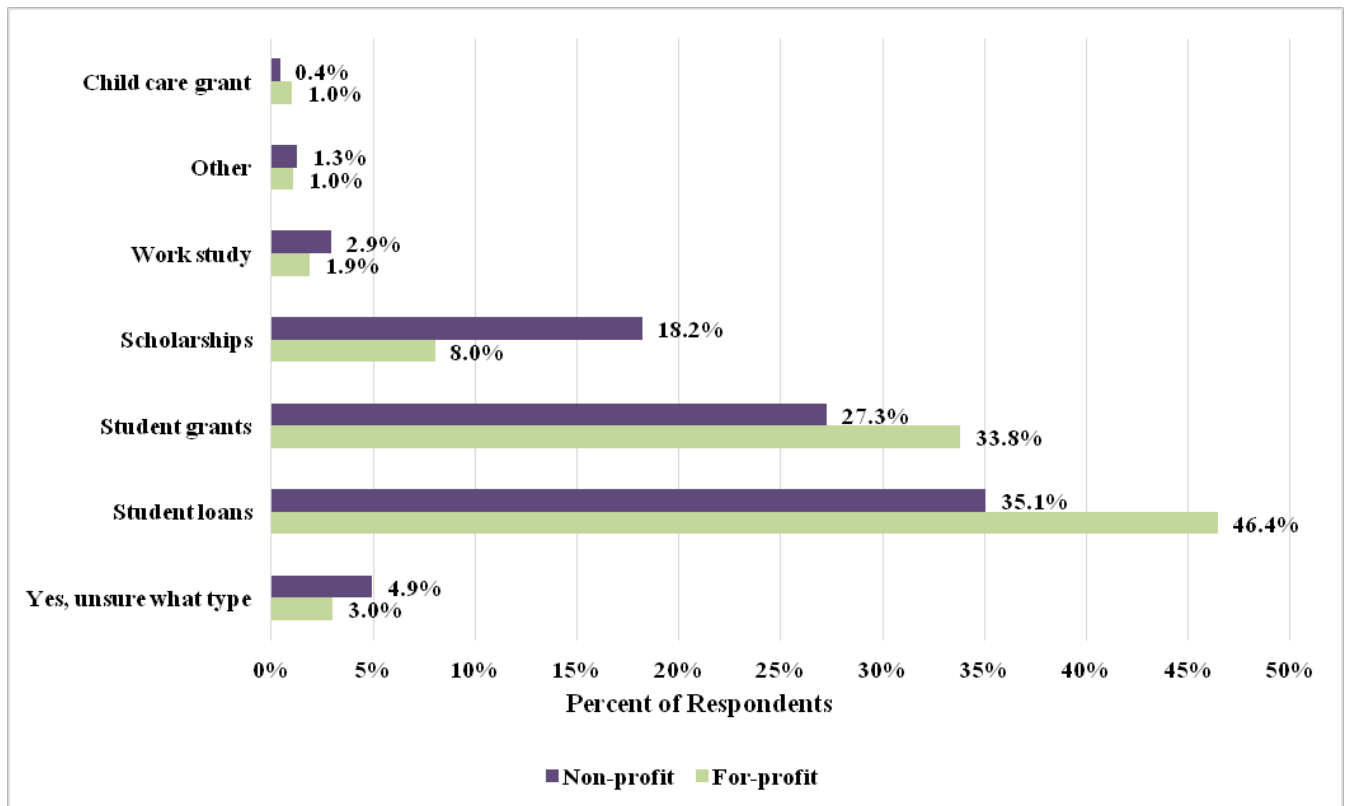
Did you complete the FAFSA to apply for financial aid to pay for this school?

Did you receive any of the following help from the school? (Select

Financial Aid

Respondents from for-profit and non-profit institutions were both likely to receive some type of financial aid; 74.2% of for-profit respondents and 83.4% of non-profit respondents indicated receiving one or more types of financial aid. The following table provides a display of which types of aid respondents were more likely to receive.

Figure 5B.1 Financial Aid by Type, All Respondents



For-profit N=2,392; Non-profit N=1,911. Please note that respondents were given the option to choose all that apply, therefore N values may be larger than the total number of responses.

Both for-profit and non-profit respondents indicated that their top three sources of financial aid are: student loans, student grants, and scholarships (from most common to least common). While student loans is the top source of financial aid for respondents attending both types of institutions, respondents attending for-profits reported a more frequent reliance on this source of support. Student attending non-profits were more than twice as likely to have received a scholarship.¹⁹ Of those that answered "Other," 26.5% of for-profit and non-profit respondents indicated that they received GI Bill funding.

The high dependence on student loans for survey respondents attending for-profit institutions is notable given recent national attention around student loan default rates. In a 2009 study, the

¹⁹ The survey did not ask respondent to indicate whether those scholarships were from the institution or outside scholarships. It can be assumed that some respondents received funding from outside sources.

GAO reported that in the repayment period, students who attended for-profit colleges were more likely to default on federal student loans than were students from other colleges.²⁰

For the top three financial aid sources (loans, grants, and scholarships), proportions of each type were similar for respondents enrolled full-time as compared to respondents enrolled part-time. Please see **Appendix A** for the full breakdown.

However, for those respondents that indicated that they received help completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), more for-profit respondents indicated receiving student loans while more non-profit respondents who received help with FAFSA received scholarships.

Table 5B.1 Received Financial Aid

Received help completing the FAFSA from institution	Received Aid		
	Loan	Grants	Scholarships
For-profit	92.6%	69.2%	15.0%
Non-profit	67.4%	58.6%	35.6%

For-profit received help with FAFSA N=740; non-profit N=399

- *FAFSA and Other Financial Aid Application*

Research has shown that students who complete the FAFSA are more likely to graduate than those that did not. Research also suggests that assistance completing the FAFSA and counseling related to aid increases college access.²¹

National rates of FAFSA completion vary by institution type. For-profit colleges have significantly higher FAFSA completion rates than non-profit and public colleges. 98.9% of students at for-profit 2-year colleges submit the FAFSA, compared with 43.9% of students at public 2-year colleges and 77.7% of students at non-profit 2-year colleges.²²

²⁰ GAO, *PROPRIETARY SCHOOLS: Stronger Department of Education Oversight Needed to Help Ensure Only Eligible Students Receive Federal Student Aid*, GAO-09-600 (Washington, D.C.: August 17, 2009).

²¹ *The Role of Simplification and Information in College Decisions: Results from the H&R Block FAFSA Experiment*, National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper No. 15361, September 2009 (www.nber.org/papers/w15361).

²² *FAFSA Completion Rates by Level and Control of Institution*. Student Aid Policy Analysis. October 14, 2009. (<http://www.finaid.org/educators/20091014fafsacompletion.pdf>).

The majority of survey respondents from both for-profit and non-profit institutions indicated that they completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to apply for financial aid to pay for this institution; 92% of for-profit respondents and 92% of non-profit respondents.

- *Help with Financial Services*

The importance of financial literacy achieved through financial counseling is an imperative aspect of successfully earning a certificate or associate degree.²³ However, many students are not aware of the options that they have, and student populations attending two-year programs may arguably be the least informed of all.²⁴ Research shows that students attending college, particularly community colleges and programs similar to those offered by two-year institutions, are not aware of their options when it comes to financing their higher education.²⁵ A study conducted by the Institute for College Access and Success found that two-thirds of students who were taking out private loans had not fully explored or taken advantage of flexible federal aid prior to seeking private loans.²⁶

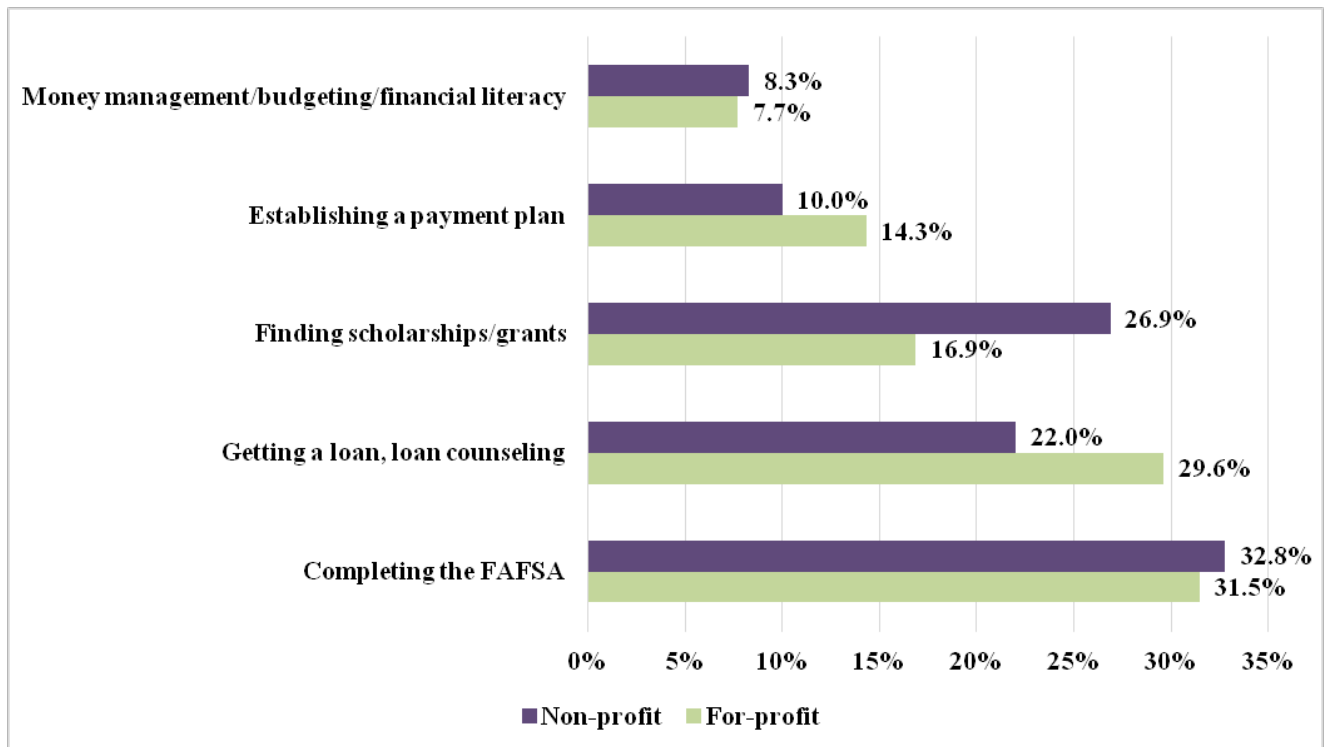
²³ Black, William L. (2012). *The Role of Community Colleges in Promoting Financial Literacy: A Proposed Model*. <http://www.princeton.edu/mcgraw/mcftp/papers/2012/Black.pdf>.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ The Institute for College Access and Success. (2009). Statement on College Board's Trend Report. Retrieved from http://www.ticas.org/files/pub/CB_statement_2009.pdf.

Figure 5B.2. Student Financial Help Received from Institution, All Respondents

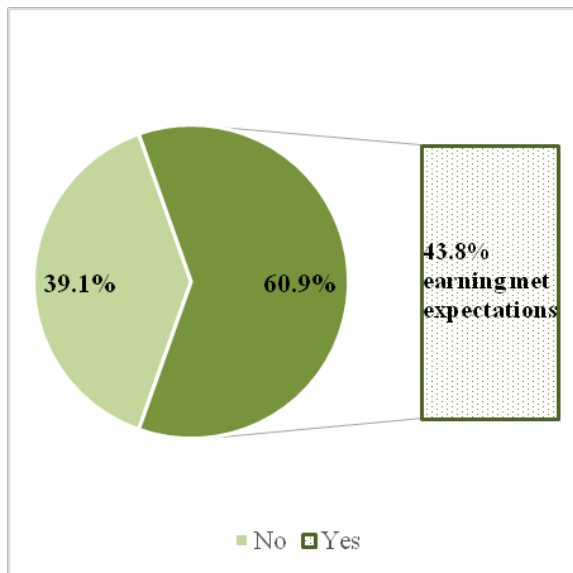


For-profit N=1,296; Non-profit N=913. Please note that respondents were given the option to choose all that apply, therefore N values may be larger than the total number of responses.

Most survey respondents report not receiving any financial counseling services from their institution. Those who did were most likely to receive support in figuring out how to pay for school. A third of those who received financial counseling from their institution got help completing the FAFSA. Students from non-profits more frequently reported receiving help finding scholarships or grants than those at for-profit institutions. For-profit respondents more frequently indicated the institution help them get a loan. Less than 10% of all respondents participated in any type of financial literacy program.

Expectations About Earnings

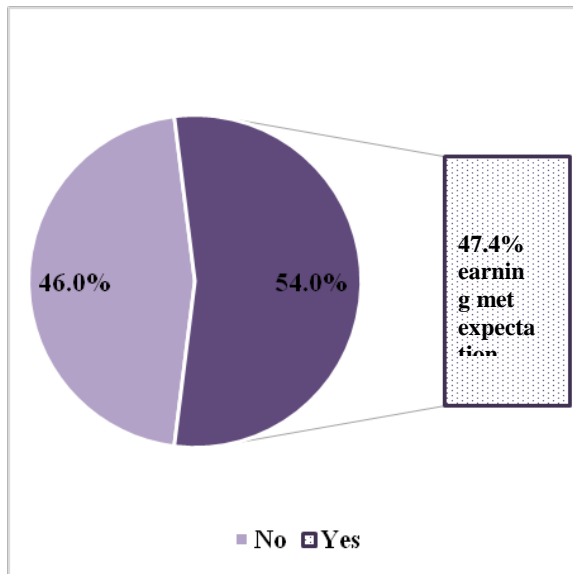
Figure 5B.3. Did your institution give you information about what earnings you might expect to earn after completing the program/major? If so, do your current earnings meet those expectations? For-profit



For-profit N=1,313; For-profit “Yes, the institution provided information on hourly or annual earnings” N=290

60.9% of all for-profit respondents (currently enrolled, graduated or completed, or no longer enrolled) received information about expected hourly or annual earnings from their institutions. Of the 290 respondents that graduated or completed their program, represented by the dotted box above, less than half (43.8%) currently have earnings that meet those expectations.

Figure 5B.4. Did your institution give you information about what earnings you might expect to earn after completing the program/major? If so, do your current earnings meet those expectations? Non-profit



Non-profit N=930; Non-profit “Yes, the institution provided information on hourly or annual earnings” N=114
Note: Only graduated/completed students answered this question

54.0% of all non-profit respondents (currently enrolled, graduated or completed, or no longer enrolled) received information about expected hourly or annual earnings from their institutions. Of the 114 respondents attending non-profit institutions that graduated or completed their program and received information about expected earnings, represented by the dotted box above, only 47.4% currently have earnings that meet those expectations.

While fewer respondents from non-profits reported receiving information from their institution about potential earnings, those that did were slightly more likely to have earnings that met their expectations.

C. Academic Experience

Research shows that academic advising and guidance is one of the most important student services that an institution can offer and one of the areas that students need the most help navigating.²⁷ The student experience survey examined student's perceptions regarding their institution's academic quality and career services. Questions regarding academic experience in the survey included:

How would you rate the quality of your academic experience?

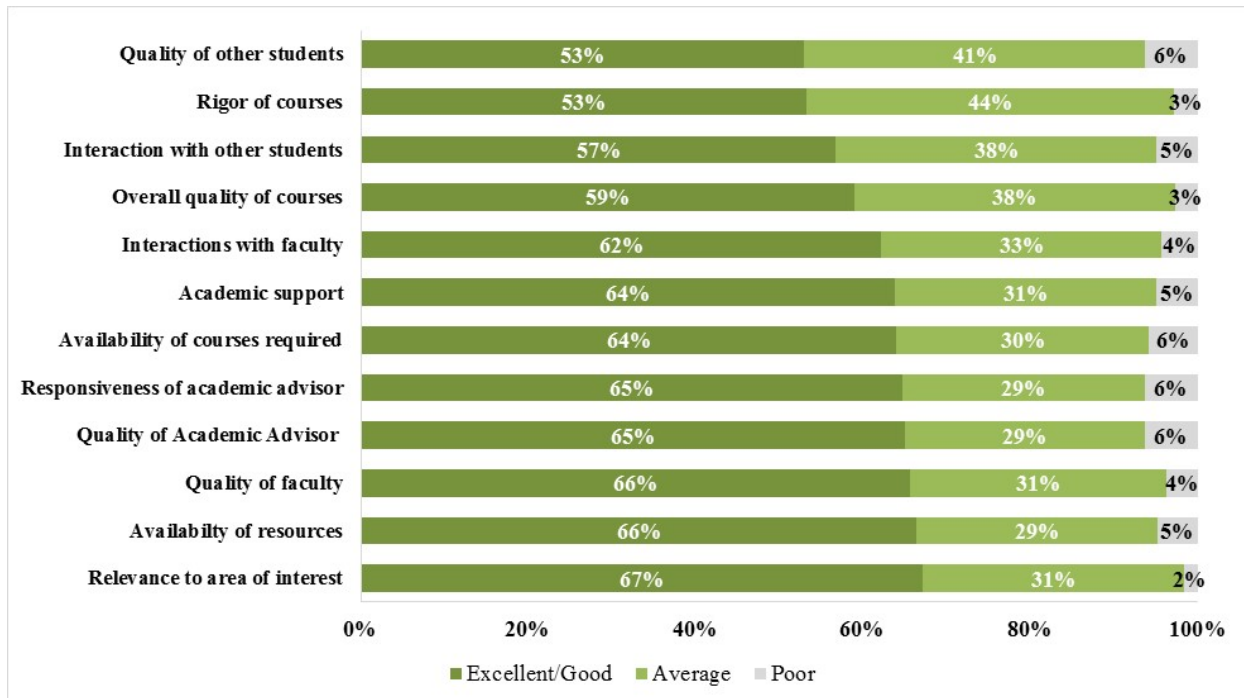
Did you receive any of the following academic help from the institution? (Select all that apply)

Did your institution require you to complete remedial or developmental courses (courses that did not count toward your

²⁷ Community College Research Center (2006). *What Community College Management Practices Are Effective in Promoting Student Success? A Study of High- and Low-Impact Institutions*. New York, NY.

Quality of Academic Experience

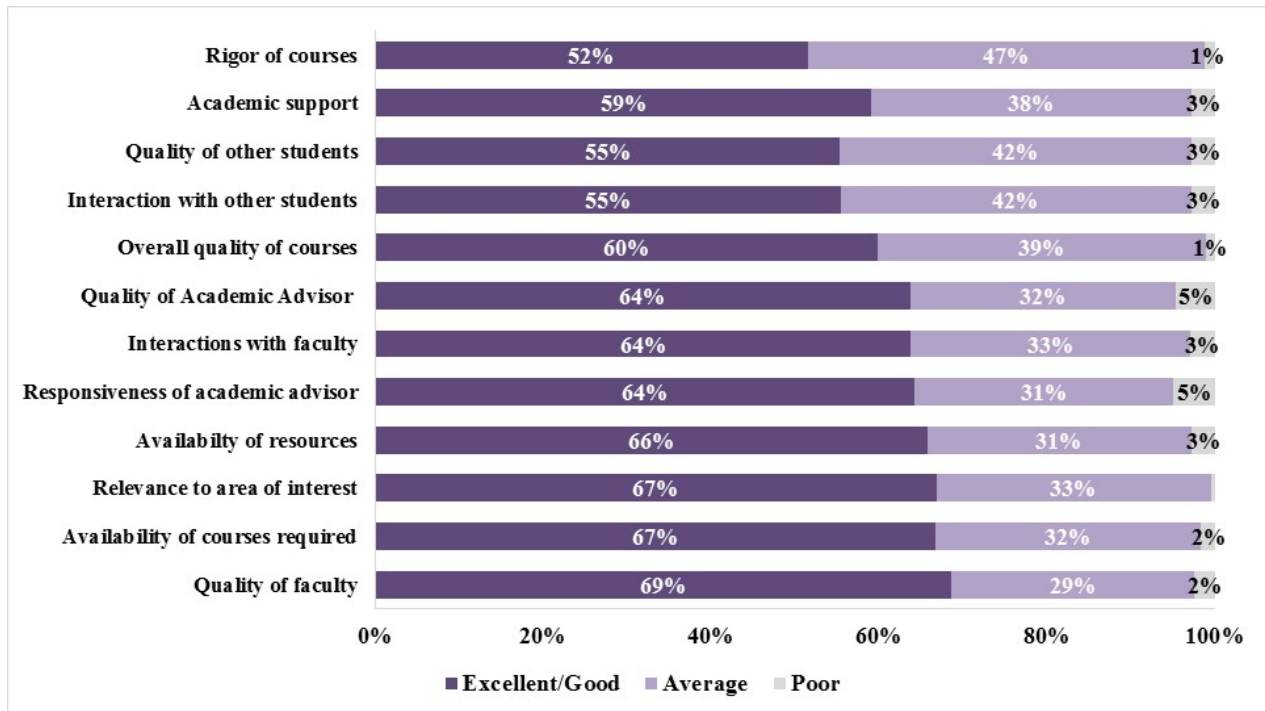
Figure 5C.1. Quality of Academic Experience, For-profit Respondents



For-profit N=1,314

Few for-profit respondents noted a poor academic experience. The weakest factors of the academic experience that earned a rating of Poor for non-profit respondents were responsiveness of academic advisor (6.4%), quality of other students (6.3%), and quality of academic advisor (6.3%). Factors that for-profit respondents rated most highly as Excellent/Good were relevance to area of interest (67.2%), availability of resources (66.4%), and quality of faculty (65.6%).

Figure 5C.2. Quality of Academic Experience, Non-profit Respondents

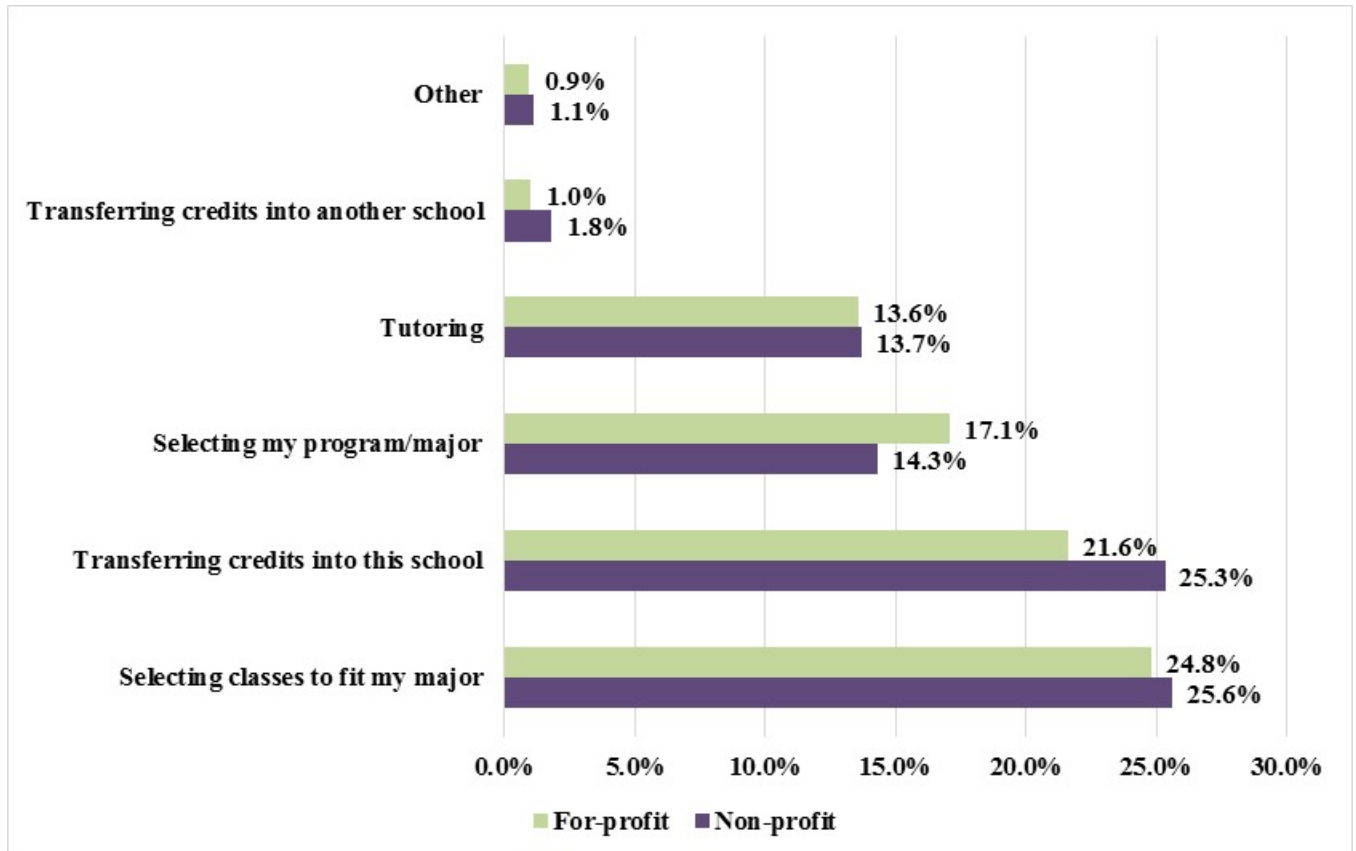


Non-profit N=932

Non-profit respondents had a slightly stronger perception of their academic experience, with smaller percentages of Poor ratings. The weakest factors of the non-profit academic experience according to respondents are all academic advisor/faculty centric as responsiveness of academic advisor (5.0%), quality of academic advisor (4.6%), and interactions with faculty (2.9%) were ranked the lowest. Interestingly, the factor that non-profit respondents rated most highly as Excellent/Good was quality of faculty (68.6%) resulting in a disconnect between quality of faculty and accessibility of faculty. The other factors rated most highly were availability of courses required (66.7%) and relevance to area of interest (66.8%).

- *Academic Help*

Figure 5C.3. Academic Help Received, All Respondents



For-profit N=1,244; 19.8% of respondents indicated "no or academic help was offered but I did not need it", while 1.1% indicated academic help was not provided. Non-profit N=1,792; 17.7% of respondents indicated "no or academic help was offered but I did not need it", while 0.5% indicated academic help was not provided. Please note that respondents were given the option to choose all that apply, therefore N values may be larger than the total number of responses.

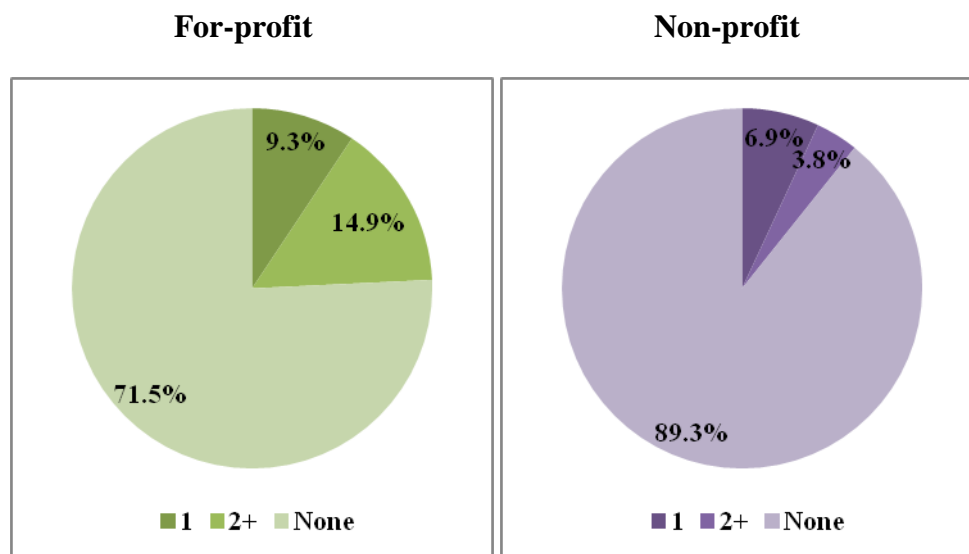
- *Remedial Course Requirements*

Remedial education is the term for classes that students are required to take on a college campus that are below college-level, in order for students to master the skills necessary to be successful in postsecondary education. Most remediation occurs in reading, writing, and math. Students must pay tuition for remedial courses, but do not receive college credit for remedial courses. Nationally anywhere from 20% to 40% of all first-time undergraduate students enroll in at least

one remedial course. When looking solely at community college students, remediation rates are upwards of 50%.²⁸

Remedial education is a big pitfall for students and institutions alike. The estimated cost to institutions for providing remedial education and students for enrolling in remedial education is around \$2.3 billion dollars each year. Remedial students are also more likely to drop out of college without earning a degree. Research shows that less than 50% of remedial students complete their remedial courses and less than 25% of remedial students attending community colleges earn a certificate or degree within eight years.²⁹

Figure 5C.4. Remedial Courses Taken, All Respondents



For-profit N=1,316; Non-profit N=929

Given the national data on remediation, reported completion of remedial courses among survey respondents was low. Most respondents attending for-profit institutions were not required to complete remedial courses (71.5%). 14.9% of respondents were required to complete 2 or more courses. Most respondents attending non-profit institutions were not required to complete remedial courses (83.2%). 6.5% were required to complete 1 course, while 10.3% reported completing 2+ courses.

²⁸ National Conference of State Legislatures. *Hot Topics in Higher Education: Reforming Remedial Education*. <http://www.ncsl.org/research/education/improving-college-completion-reforming-remedial.aspx>.

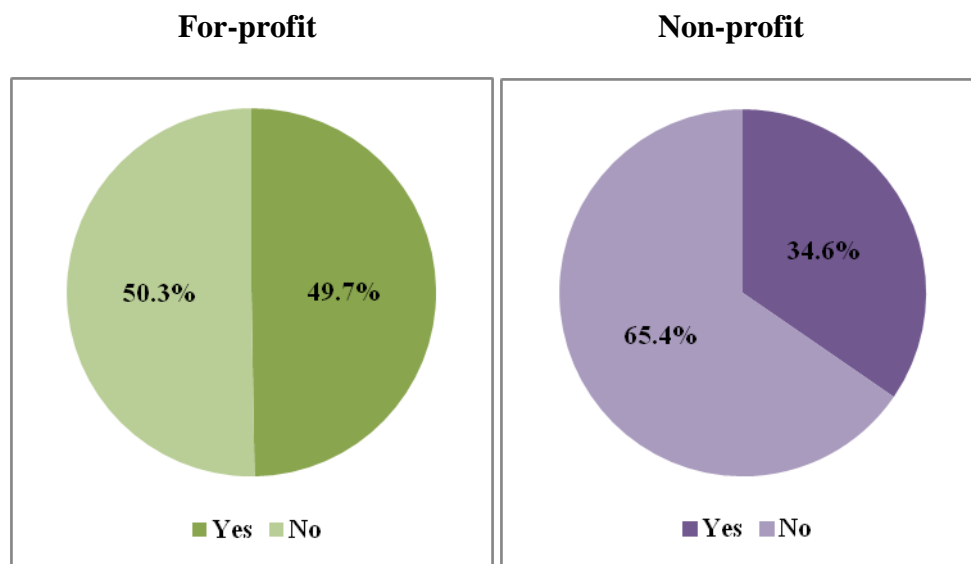
²⁹ Ibid.

By Enrollment Type: Of the for-profit respondents that had to take one remedial course, about half (48.8%) were enrolled full time and only 34.1% were enrolled part time. However, for non-profit respondents a significantly lower percent of respondents enrolled part-time took one or more remedial course compared to respondents enrolled full-time (66.7% of respondents enrolled full time took 1 remedial course, while 18.3% of part time respondents took 1 remedial course). **See Appendix A** for the full breakdown.

By Length of Time Enrolled at the Institution: Of the for-profit respondents that indicated enrollment in the institution for more than 2 years, 8.4% took one remedial course and 23.6% took two or more remedial courses. Non-profit respondents had similar results; 6.5% had taken 1 remedial course while 17.3% have taken two or more remedial courses. The finding suggests that non-profit and for-profit institutions have similar practices regarding the requirements for remedial courses; less than a quarter of respondents that are enrolled for a longer period of time (2 years or more) in both institution types are taking more than two remedial courses. (For-profit total number of students enrolled at the institution for more than two years N=356; Non-profit total number of students enrolled at the institution for more than two years N=231)

Career Services

Figure 5C.5 Career Help Taken, All Respondents



For-profit N=1,315; Non-profit N=928

Respondents attending for-profit institutions had almost an even split, with 49.7% of respondents reporting that they did take advantage of help from the Career Services Office and 50.3% reporting that they did not. The majority of respondents attending non-profit institutions did not take advantage of help from the Career Services Office (65.4%).

Of the 653 respondents attending for-profit institutions who took advantage of career help from their institution's Career Services Office, 87.1% found the help to be beneficial while 12.9% did not. Of the 317 respondents attending non-profit institutions who took advantage of career help from their institution's Career Services Office, 86.4% found the help to be beneficial while 13.6% did not. **See Appendix A** for the full breakdown.

- *Reasons for Not Participating in Career Services*

16.7% of for-profit respondents did not participate in Career Services because they were not aware of the services, 10.7% said office hours didn't fit their schedule and 11.9% of respondents did not find the services offered to be helpful.

60.8% of for-profit respondents chose "Other" as the reason for not participating in Career Services. Most responses can be categorized in the following themes: too early in their educational experience to start looking for a job or already had a job.

D. Post-Institution Experience

To gain an understanding of student’s perception after leaving the institutions whether due to completion of education goal, transferring or dropping out of the school, the project team collected information on the reasons for leaving the institution, post-institution employment outcomes, and overall satisfaction with the experience at the institution. To measure overall satisfaction, three questions were asked, one whether the program was worth the cost, or in other words whether the respondent’s return on investment was realized. Additionally, satisfaction with the length of time to complete the respondent’s education goal, and lastly, the desire to re-enroll (if a respondent had to “do it again”) was captured. The following questions pertaining to post-institution experience are included in the analysis:

What was the reason you dropped or left this institution? (Select all that apply)

Are you working in your field of study?

Are you using the skills learned at this institution at work?

Are you satisfied with the length of time it will or did take to finish

Reason for Dropping or Leaving the Institution

Table 5D.1. Reasons for Dropping or Leaving

Reason for leaving the institution	For-profit
Family circumstance	29.7%
Cost	23.4%
The courses were not helping me achieve my educational goals	15.6%

For-profit N=64. Please note the table only depicts reasons with 10% or more, see *Appendix A* for data for all answer choices

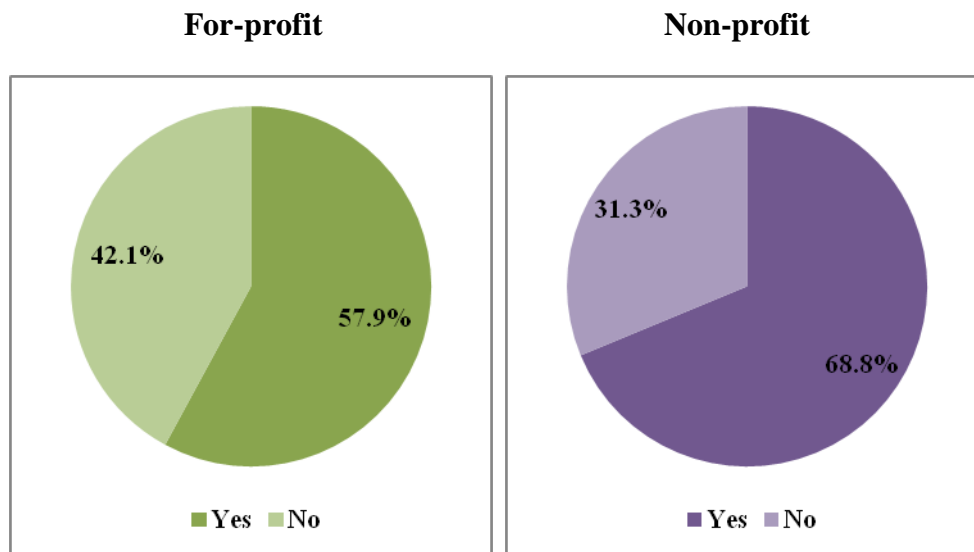
Reason for leaving the institution	Non-profit
Family circumstance	30.8%
Cost	23.1%
Employment	17.9%
I decided to pursue other interests	10.3%

Non-profit N=39. Please note the table only depicts reasons with 10% or more, see *Appendix A* for data for all answer choices

The top two reasons that respondents cited for leaving the institution are the same for for-profit and non-profit institution respondents: Family Circumstance and Cost. The percentage of respondents who selected those options is nearly identical, about 30.0% and 23.4% respectively. For-profit institution respondent's third most frequent response was that "The courses were not helping me to achieve my educational goals," while non-profit respondent's third most frequent response was employment, followed by "I decided to pursue other interests."

Employment After Graduating or Completing Program

Figure 5D.1. Working in Field of Study, Graduated or Completed Respondents



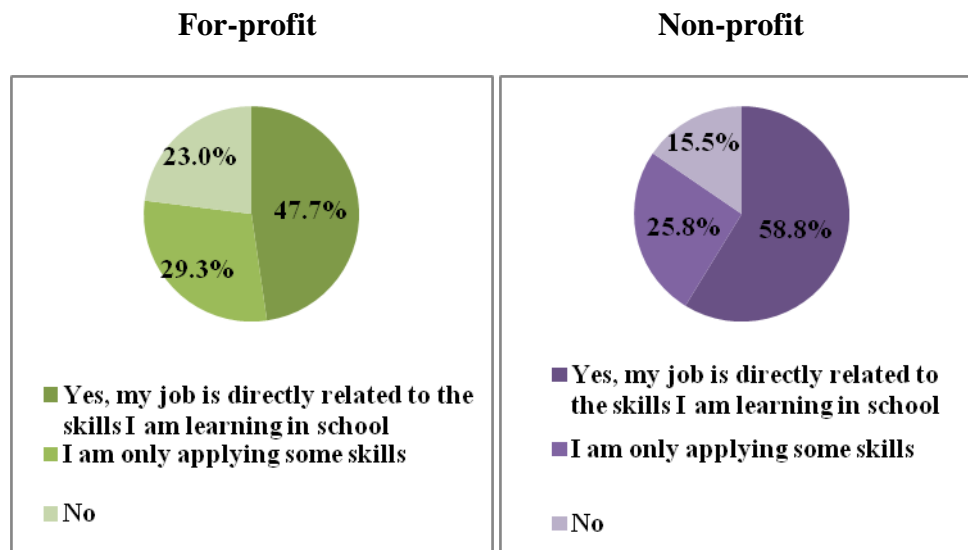
For-profit N=240; Non-profit N=96. Please note this display is filtered for graduated or completed respondents

Of the 240 respondents attending for-profit institutions who graduated/completed their programs, 57.9% are currently working in their field of study. Of the 96 respondents attending non-profit institutions who graduated/completed their programs, 68.8% are working in their field of study.

Of those for-profit respondents working in their field of study, 60.4% (or 84 out of 139 respondents) took advantage of career help from their institutions Career Services Office. About 5% less non-profit respondents who are working in their field of study took advantage of career help (56.1% or 37 out of 66 respondents). This finding suggests that it is unclear if there is a relationship between respondents who end up working in their field of study due to taking advantage of institutional support with career services.

- *Application of Skills at Work*

Figure 5D.2. Skills Used at Work, Graduated or Completed Respondents



For-profit N=239; Non-profit N=97. Please note this display is filtered for graduated or completed respondents

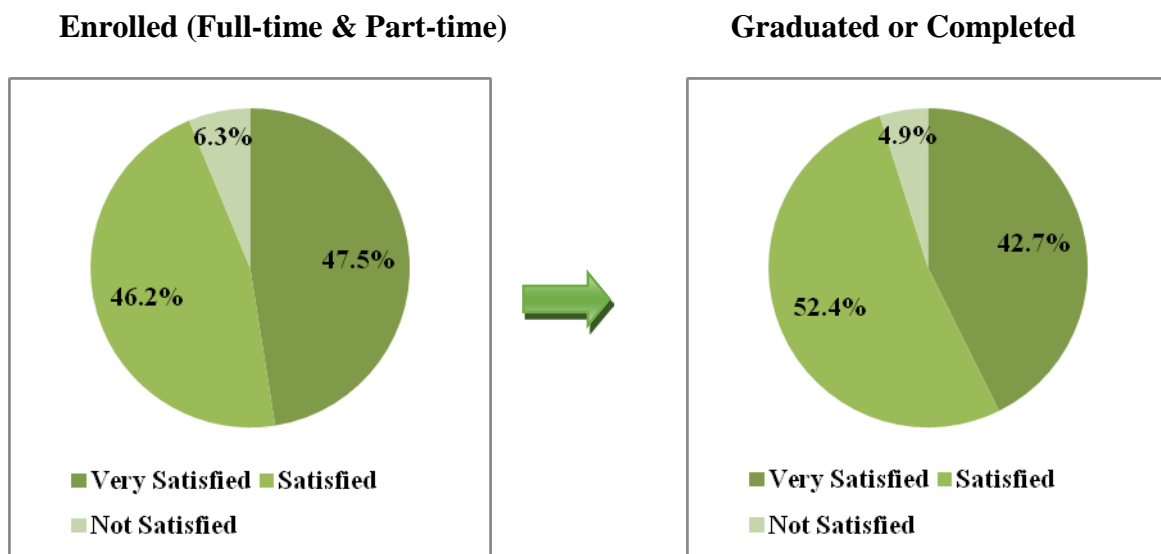
Of the 239 respondents attending for-profit institutions who graduated/completed their programs, almost half (47.7%) are directly using the skills learned at their institutions in the workplace while 23.0% are not at all.

Of the 97 respondents attending non-profit institutions who graduated/completed their programs, 58.8% are directly using skills learned at their institutions in the workplace, while 15.5% are not at all.

Satisfaction with Experience at Institution

- *Satisfaction with Length of Time to Finish Educational Goals*

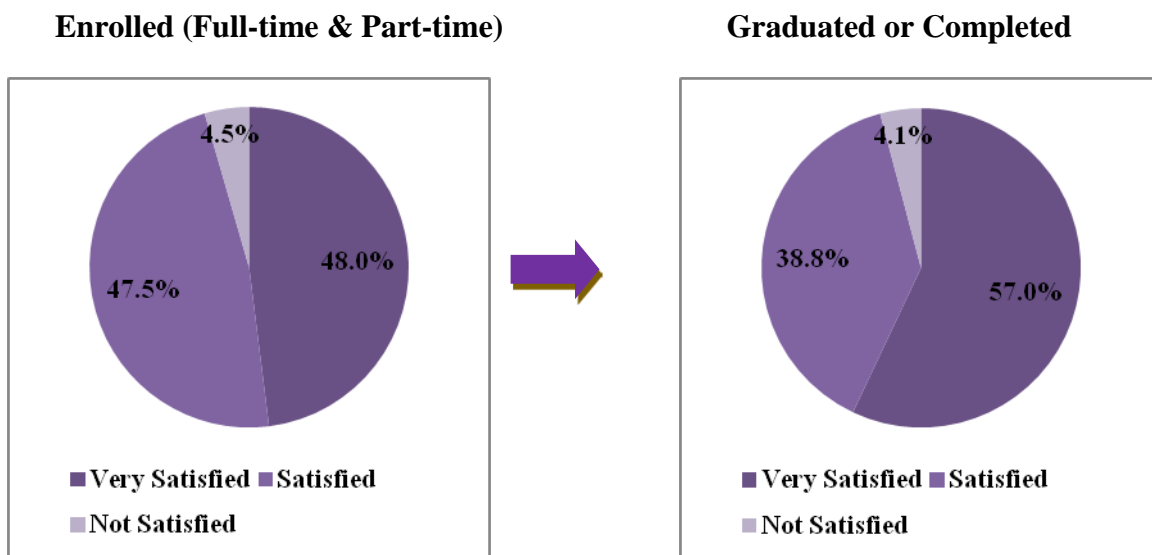
Figure 5D.3. Satisfied With Length of Time to Complete Educational Goal, For-profit Respondents



For-profit Enrolled N=958; For-profit Graduated or completed N=307

The majority of respondents attending for-profit institutions who are both currently enrolled or graduated/completed reported being Satisfied and Very Satisfied with the length of time it took to meet their educational goal. Though the percentage of respondents who identified as Very Satisfied dropped from 47.5% (enrolled) to 42.7% (graduated/completed), overall, graduated respondents were more satisfied as the percentage of Not Satisfied decreased from 6.3% (enrolled) to 4.9% (graduated/completed).

Figure 5D.4. Satisfied With Length of Time to Complete Educational Goal, Non-profit Respondents

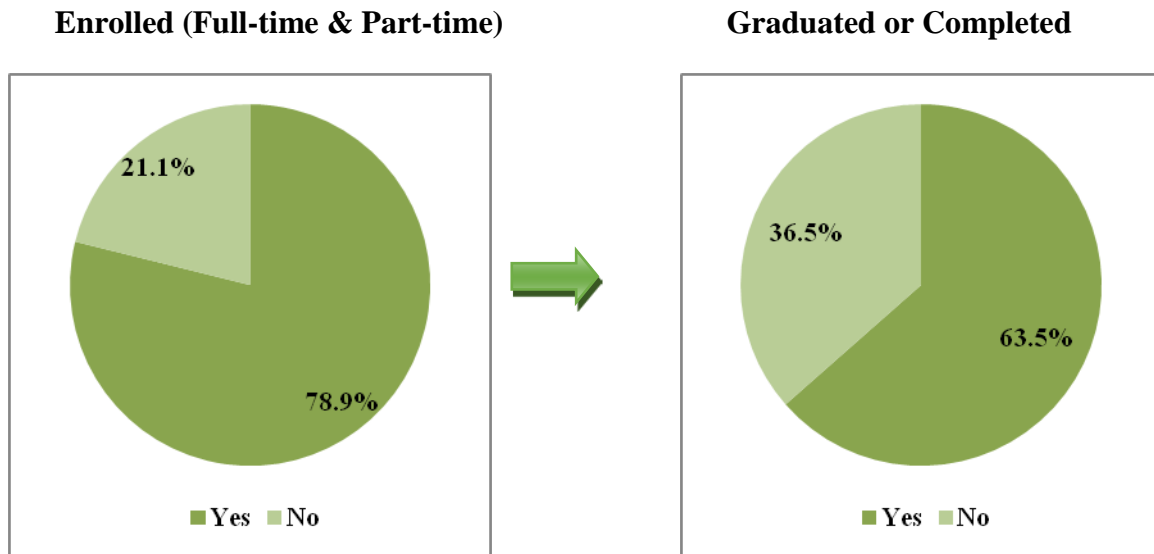


Non-profit Enrolled N=781; Non-profit Graduated or completed N=121

Respondents attending non-profit institutions have similar levels of satisfaction when enrolled versus graduating/completing their programs. The proportion of Very Satisfied increased from 48.0% for currently enrolled respondents to 57.0% for graduated or completed respondents, which may indicate that non-profit students are receiving what they thought they would from their institutions.

- *Satisfaction with Cost*

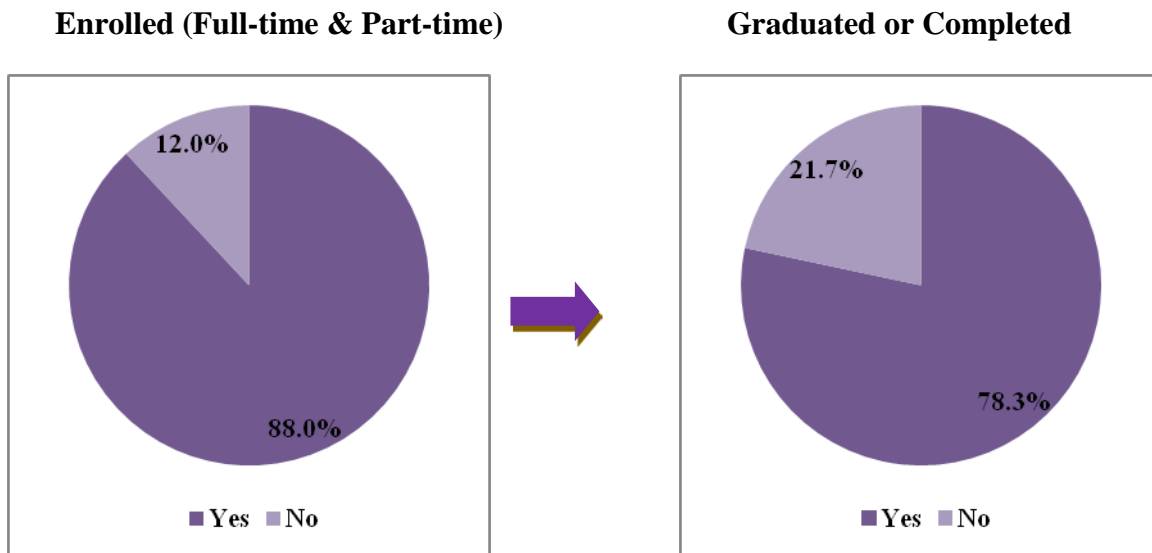
Figure 5D.5. Worth the Cost, For-profit Respondents



For-profit Enrolled N=956; For-profit Graduated or completed N=307

When asked if their program was worth the cost, 78.9% of currently enrolled respondents attending for-profit institutions thought that it was. Less respondents who have graduated or completed their programs felt the program was worth the cost, as the percentage in agreement dropped by 15%.

Figure 5D.6. Worth the Cost, Non-profit Respondents



Non-profit Enrolled N=778; Non-profit Graduated or completed N=120

When asked if their program was worth the cost, 88.0% of currently enrolled respondents attending non-profit institutions thought that it was. Less respondents who have graduated or completed their programs felt the program was worth the cost, as the percentage dropped almost 10 points to 78.3%.

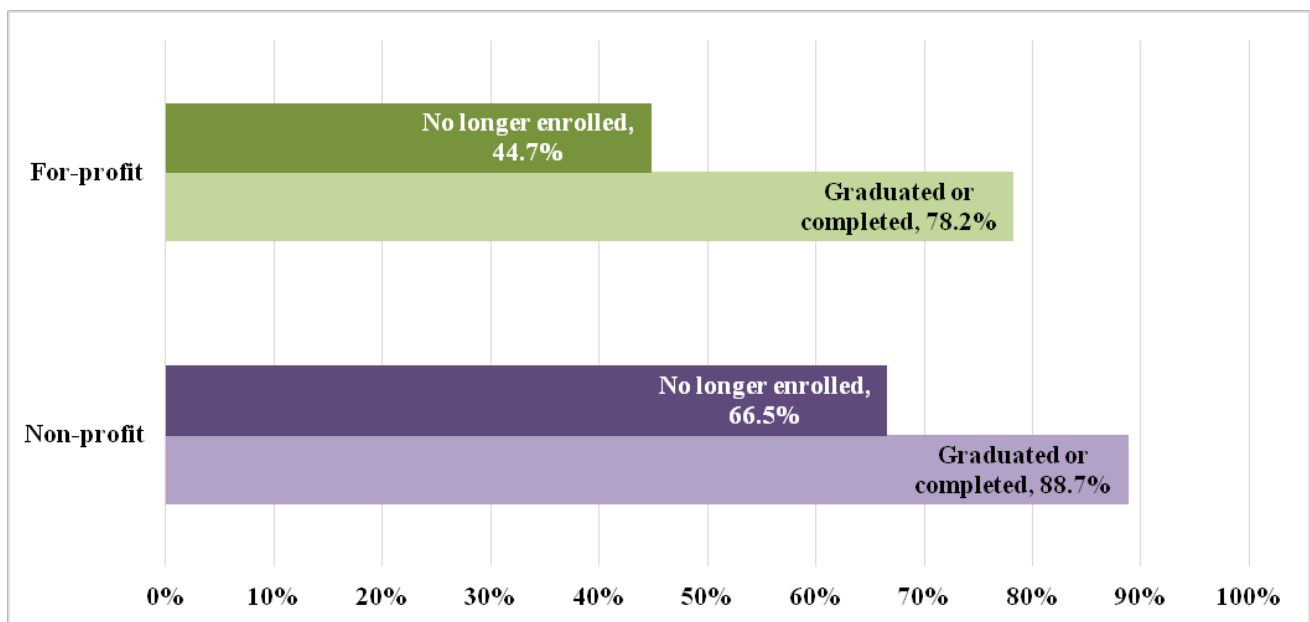
Perceptions on Worth of Cost of Program and Working in Field of Study: Of the 520 for-profit respondents currently enrolled (both full-time and part-time) that indicated their educational experience was worth the cost and are working and answered question 23, 35.8% are working in their field of study (or 186 out of 520 respondents). In comparison, of the 413 non-profit enrolled respondents that indicated their educational experience was worth the cost, only 38.7% are working in their field of study. This may suggest that whether or not respondents are working in their field of study is not a strong indicator of whether a respondent feels that their education at the institution was worth the cost.

On the other hand, for respondents that have graduated or completed their program, more respondents who felt the program was worth the cost are working in their field of study (65.4% of for-profit respondents and 75.3% of non-profit respondents). This may indicate that respondents that have completed their programs (in comparison to enrolled respondents) may be

less likely to indicate that the program is worth the cost, but of those that do feel the cost is worth it, likely have this perception due to the fact that they are working in their field of study.

- *Re-enrollment*³⁰

Figure 5D.7. Choose Institution Again, Graduated or Completed or No Longer Enrolled Respondents

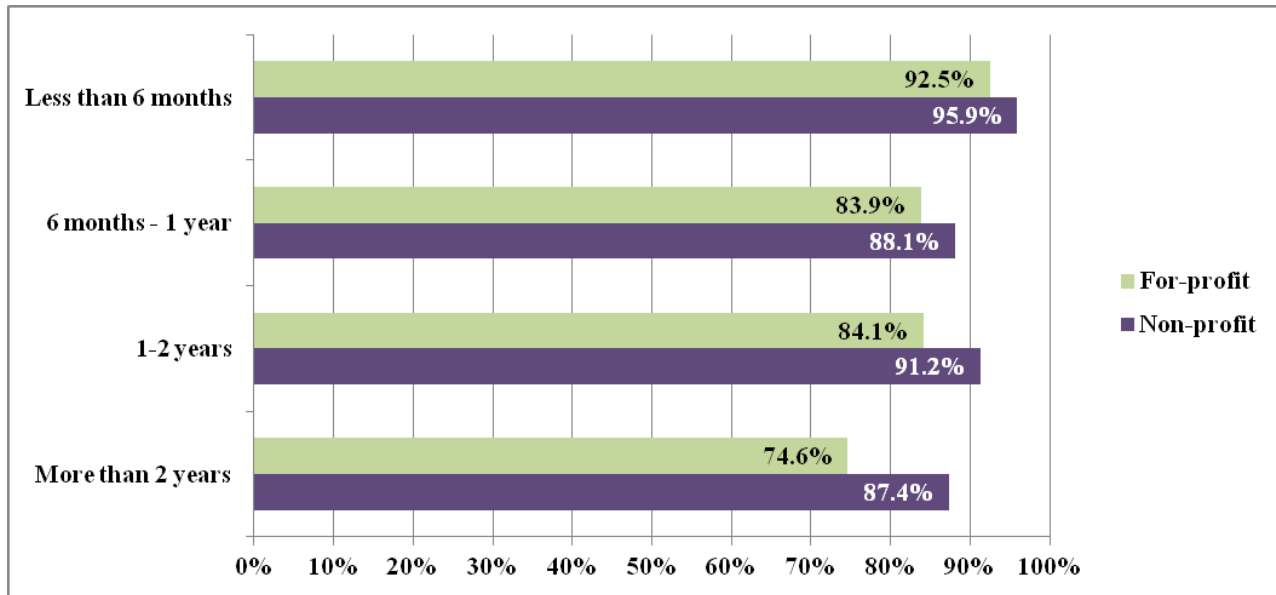


For-profit (Graduated or completed or No longer enrolled) N=350; Non-profit (Graduated or No longer enrolled) N=928)

For both institution types, respondents who have graduated or completed their programs are more likely to choose their institution again than those who are no longer enrolled. Non-profit respondents who have graduated or completed their program are more than 10 percentage points more likely to choose their institution again (88.7%) than their for-profit counterparts (78.2%).

³⁰ For the purposes of this survey, re-enrollment refers to a whether or not a student would make the same decision to re-enroll if he or she could go back in time.

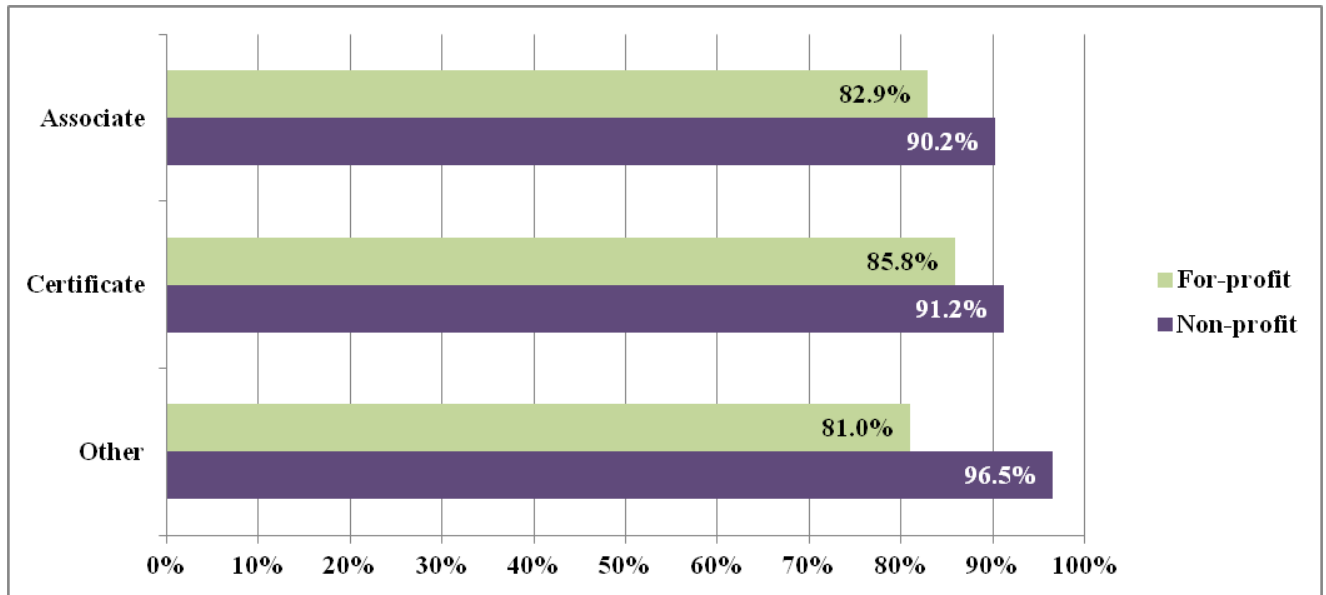
Figure 5D.8. Choose Institution Again, All Respondents by Length of Time Enrolled



For-profit N=1,303; Non-profit N=926

For both institution types, as the amount of time attending the institution increases, the percentage of respondents who indicated that they would choose the institution again decreases. 92.5% of respondents attending for-profit institutions for less than 6 months indicated that they would choose the institution again, compared with 74.6% of respondents who have been at the institution for more than 2 years. Similarly, 95.9% of respondents attending non-profit institutions indicated that they would choose the institution again, compared with 87.4% of respondents who have been at the institution for more than 2 years.

Figure 5D.9. Choose Institution Again, All Respondents by Program Type



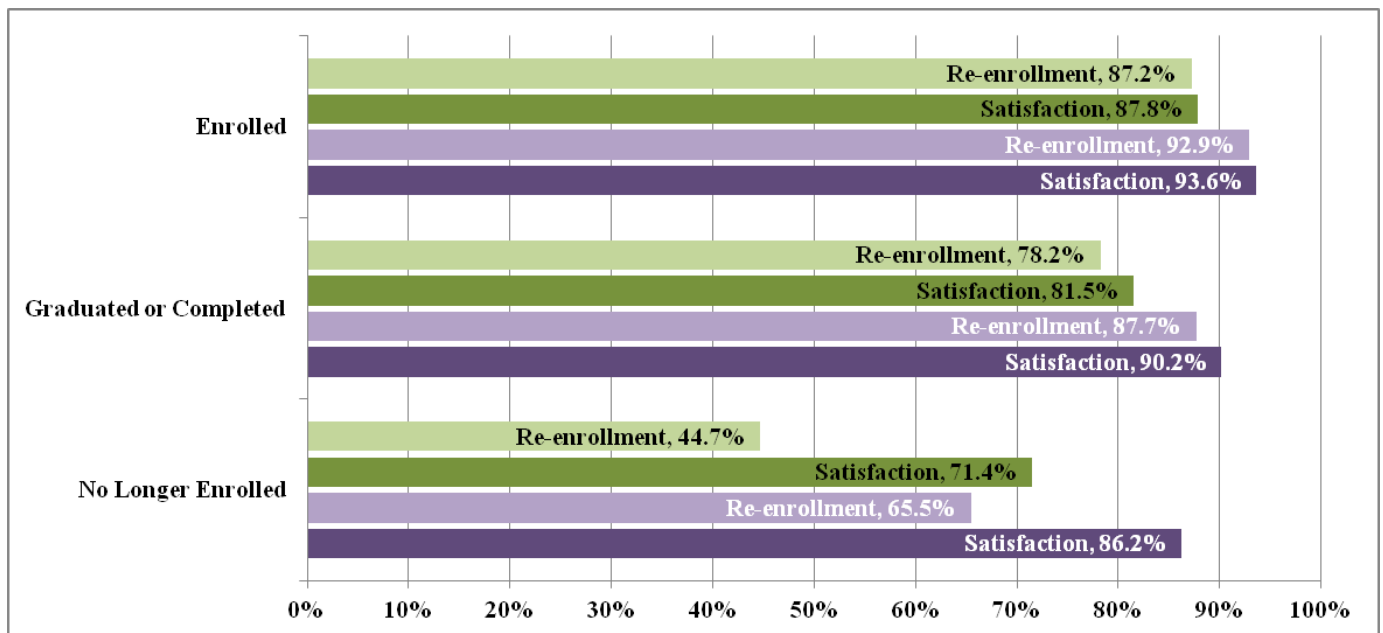
For-profit N=1,305; Non-profit N=928

Note: Omitted “A few courses” because of small sample size.

For-profit respondents in certificate programs were the most likely to choose their institution again (85.8%), followed by respondents pursuing an associate degree (82.9%), and those pursuing other degrees such as a bachelor’s, master’s, or doctorates (81.0%).

On the whole, respondents attending non-profit institutions were more likely to choose their institution again. Non-profit respondents pursuing other degrees such as a bachelor’s, master’s, or doctorates were the most likely (96.5%), followed by those in certificate programs (91.2%), and those pursuing an associate degree (90.2%).

Figure 5D.10. Satisfaction and Likelihood to Re-enroll, All Respondents by Enrollment Status



Re-enrollment: For-profit Enrolled N=956; For-profit Graduated N=303; For-profit No Longer Enrolled N=47
 Re-enrollment: Non-profit Enrolled N=777; Non-profit Graduated N=122; Non-profit No Longer Enrolled N=47
 Satisfaction: For-profit Enrolled N=953; For-profit Graduated N=308; For-profit No Longer Enrolled N=49
 Satisfaction: For-profit Enrolled N=780; For-profit Graduated N=122; For-profit No Longer Enrolled N=29

Note: “No Longer Enrolled” category has Ns that are small. However, they are an important group to include in the analysis as the two most cited reasons for no longer attending are family circumstance (30%) and cost (30%).

Across the board, respondents of all enrollment types attending non-profit institutions were more satisfied with their educational experience and were more likely to re-enroll.

Respondents that are currently enrolled had similar re-enrollment and satisfaction rates. 87.2% of for-profit respondents said they would re-enroll while 87.8% were satisfied with their education, while 92.9% of non-profit respondents indicated that they would re-enroll and 93.6% were satisfied with their educational experience.) These rates were also the highest across enrollment types.

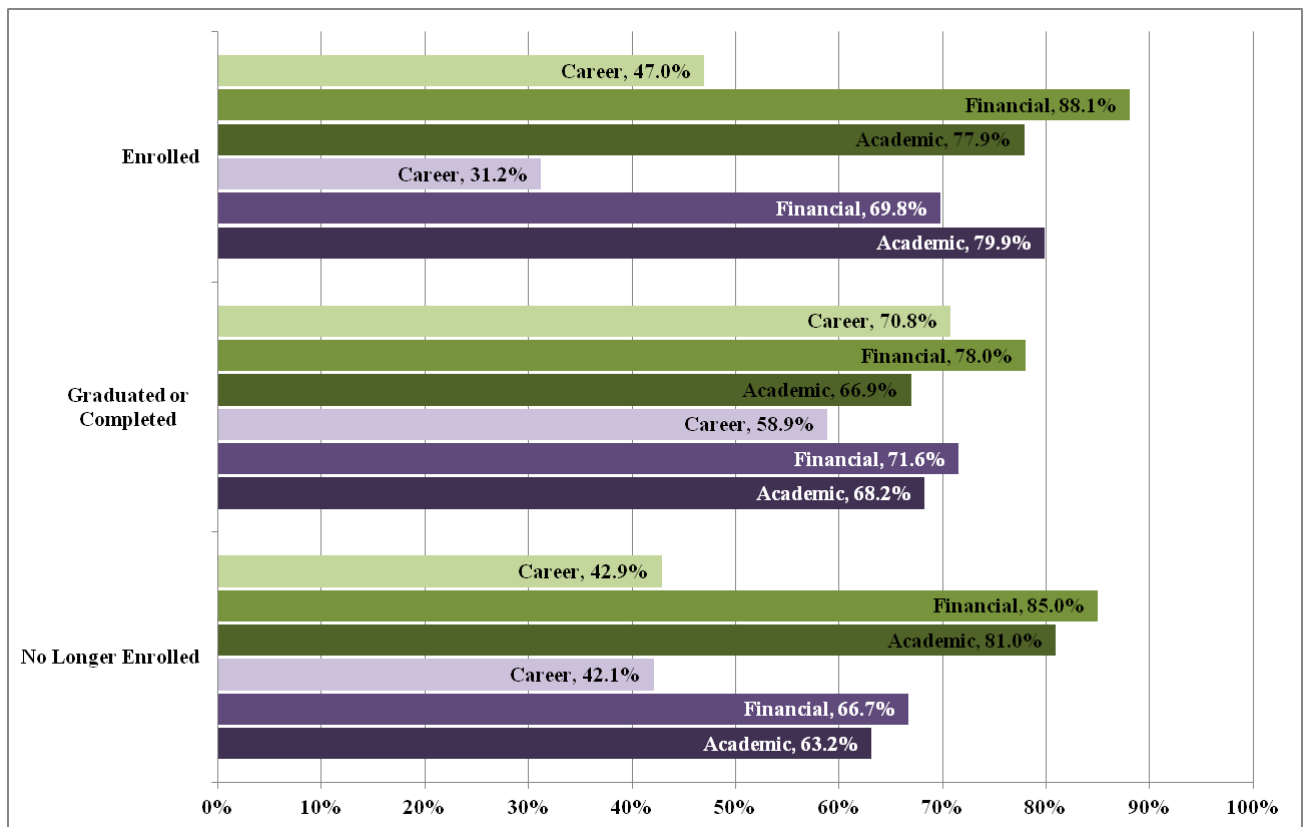
Respondents who are no longer enrolled had the lowest percentages, with only 44.7% of for-profit respondents who are no longer enrolled indicating that they would re-enroll. 65.5% of non-



profit respondents said that they would re-enroll, a large proportion which may be because most respondents who identified as no longer enrolled had to drop out due to family circumstance or cost.

The most effective student support services are those that have an integrated network of academic, social, and financial supports. In the case of institutions focused on in this report, we can replace social supports with career supports, as career development is a major part of student life since students are attending their institutions in order to begin a new career. When all three supports are implemented in a centralized, targeted, and comprehensive manner, they have been shown to improve student achievement.³¹

Figure 5D.11. Use of Institution Supports, All Respondents Who Would Re-enroll by Enrollment Status



Career Supports: For-profit Enrolled N=832; For-profit Graduated N=236; For-profit No Longer Enrolled N=21

Career Supports: Non-profit Enrolled N=718; Non-profit Graduated N=107; Non-profit No Longer Enrolled N=19

Financial Supports: For-profit Enrolled N=825; For-profit Graduated N=232; For-profit No Longer Enrolled N=20

³¹ Pathways to College Network. (2009); MDRC. (2009a). *More Guidance, Better Results? Three Year Effects of an Enhanced Student Services Program at Two Community Colleges*. New York, NY.

Financial Supports: For-profit Enrolled N=712; For-profit Graduated N=102; For-profit No Longer Enrolled N=18
Academic Supports: For-profit Enrolled N=832; For-profit Graduated N=236; For-profit No Longer Enrolled N=21
Academic Supports: For-profit Enrolled N=720; For-profit Graduated N=107; For-profit No Longer Enrolled N=19

Note: “No Longer Enrolled” category has N values that are small. However, they are an important subgroup to include in the analysis as the two most cited reasons for no longer attending are family circumstance (30%) and cost (30%).

Of respondents who indicated that they would re-enroll:

- For-profit respondents who have graduated or completed their program were the group most likely to take advantage of career services supports (70.8%), compared to for-profit respondents who are currently enrolled (47.0%) and no longer enrolled (42.9%).
- The majority of all for-profit respondents indicated that they received financial supports from their institutions.
- For-profit respondents who are no longer enrolled had the highest percentage of using academic supports (81.0%), followed by for-profit respondents who are currently enrolled (77.9%) and graduated or completed (66.9%).
- Non-profit respondents who have graduated or completed their program were the group most likely to take advantage of career services support (58.9%), compared to non-profit respondents who are no longer enrolled (42.1%) and currently enrolled (31.2%).
- The majority of all non-profit respondents indicated that they received financial supports from their institutions.
- Non-profit respondents who are currently enrolled had the highest percentage of using academic supports (79.9%), followed by for-profit respondents who are graduated/completed (68.2%) and no longer enrolled (63.2%).

6. KEY FINDINGS

Students from both institution types reported an overall positive satisfaction level with their institutions. Most survey respondents believed their institution was worth the cost of attendance and reported that they would choose their institution again. However, there were some notable variations of the reported experience between those attending for-profit and non-profit institutions. Non-profits respondents, in general, had a slightly more positive perception of their experience than those from for-profit institutions.

Key findings related to student's perception of their experience at their institution are highlighted below.

Overview and Profile of Respondents

- Respondents from non-profit institutions are more likely to have prior postsecondary experience than those in for-profits institutions, with most having more than two years of prior higher education experience.
- Most respondents pursuing an associate degree or certificate program in both for-profit and non-profit institutions were working full-time before enrolling in their institution, though the proportions are higher for for-profit institutions. The majority of all respondents noted they enrolled in their school to begin a career.
- On average, non-profit survey respondents are younger (45% are under the age of 24). A third of all for-profit respondents were over the age of 35.
- For-profits respondents are much more likely to be female (73%). Non-profit respondents mirror the state and national average of 57%.

Marketing and Recruitment Practices

- Respondents from both for-profit and non-profit institutions indicated that most often they first heard about the institution through the same medium; either an internet search, a TV/radio/internet commercial, or a friend/relative. Students from non-profits institutions most frequently cited the internet as their first introduction to the institution (41%), whereas those from for-profits had more diversity in their response.
- Top reasons for selecting institution are the same for both institution types:
 - Class schedule
 - Financial aid offered
 - Reputation of program/school

Student Financial Support

- Students from for-profit institutions reported receiving financial aid less frequently than those from non-profit institutions (74.2% and 83.4% respectively). While student loans are the top source of financial aid for respondents attending both types of institutions, respondents attending for-profits noted a more frequent reliance on this source of support. Student attending non-profits are more than twice as likely to have received a scholarship.
- Almost all respondents completed a FAFSA, and roughly one third of all respondents noted receiving help from their school to do so. For those respondents that indicated that they received help completing the FAFSA, more for-profit respondents indicated receiving student loans while more non-profit respondents who received help with their application received scholarships.
- Most survey respondents report not receiving any financial counseling services from their institution. Those who did were most likely to receive support in figuring out how to pay for school. For-profit respondents more frequently reported receiving help to get a loan, whereas non-profit respondents more frequently reported receiving help to find scholarships or grants. Less than 10% of all respondents participated in any type of financial literacy program.
- 60.9% of respondents attending for-profit institutions received information about expected hourly or annual earnings from their institutions. Of the respondents attending for-profit institutions who received this information, less than half currently have earnings that meet their expectations. While fewer respondents from non-profits reported receiving information from their institution about potential earnings (46%), those that did were slightly more likely to have earnings that meet their expectations.

Academic Experience

- Respondents reported an overall positive perception of the quality of their academic experience. Students responded the least favorably to academic advising and the quality of these interactions. Those from non-profit institutions perceived the quality of their experience slightly more favorably than those from for profits.
- Almost all students reported receiving some form of academic support from their institution. The most cited types of academic support from all respondents are selecting classes to fit my major and help transferring credits into this school.
- Given the national data on remediation, reported completion of remedial courses among survey respondents was low. Most respondents were not required to complete remedial

courses. Of the small number who did take remedial courses, most reported having taken two or more courses.

- The top two reasons that respondents cited for leaving the institution are the same for for-profit and non-profit institution respondents: Family Circumstance and Cost.
- Roughly half of all survey respondents took advantage of career services. There appears to be a weak relationship between respondents who end up working in their field of study due to taking advantage of this institutional support.

Post Institution Experience

- More non-profit graduates reported working in their field of study than those from for-profits. Non-profit graduates also more frequently cited using the skills they learned in their program of study at work.
- Fewer survey respondents who have graduated or completed their programs felt the program was worth the cost than those who are currently enrolled. Graduates who are working in their field of study are more likely to agree that their program was worth the cost.
- For both institution types, as the amount of time attending the institution increases, the percentage of respondents who indicated that they would choose the institution again decreases.
- Respondents from non-profit institutions were more satisfied with their educational experience and were more likely to re-enroll than those from for-profit institutions.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on PCG's analysis of the survey data. These recommendations focus on identifying areas for further study or action that will best support a positive postsecondary experience for Minnesota's students. They specifically focus on the practices and policies of private for-profit and non-profit institutions that offer two-year degrees or less, and in particular those that offer associates degrees and certificate programs. Recommendations emphasize actions that should be taken by OHE, but many will require the support or participations of the state's institutions of higher education.

- **Replicate survey for public institutions.** The lack of data related to the experience of students in public institutions presented significant limitations in the writing of this report. Students who attend public schools represent roughly half of all students who receive associates degrees in the state, yet this report is missing the perspective of this sizeable group. Given this exclusion, it is challenging to make system-wide policy recommendations. PCG recommends this survey be replicated for students who attend public institutions to better understand their perceived experience and to allow for a more global view of the Minnesota postsecondary landscape. Given the organizational structure of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, it may make the most sense to have the initial survey led by their internal research offices. For future surveys, PCG recommends that all institution types participate and do so using the same survey design.
- **More financial literacy/counseling needed.** School cost was frequently cited as a reason for leaving the school. Yet, most students did not participate in financial counseling services. More outreach should be done to provide access to quality financial counseling services and to encourage students to use these services. Services should assist students to better understand the full cost of the school and provide them with the necessary tools needed to plan for their education. There is also the need for much more emphasis on Financial Literacy courses for students.
 - While most students complete the FAFSA, only about a third received help from their school to complete this application. Given the research that demonstrates the connection between assistance with FAFSA completion on both college persistence and access, OHE should support institutions to develop programs that

would ensure more students receive this help. This counseling could be leveraged as an opportunity to provide additional financial guidance as well.

- However, it is equally critical that students are not being encouraged to take out loans that are inappropriate or unnecessary. The data suggests that students at for-profit institutions who received help on their FAFSA are also very likely to receive student loans. More examination of this relationship is warranted. PCG recommends further analysis of extant data provided by the institutions, as student self-reported data may present an inaccurate picture.
- **Use of institutional career services weak.** Respondents reported attending school to pursue a career. Yet, there appears to be a weak relationship between participation in career services programs and job placement. Equally, only half of all students chose to participate in these services. More support should be provided across both institution types for preparing and placing students into jobs related to their field of study. There is the need for further research to see how career services could better support students. For example, PCG did not look at the types of career services support (i.e. career fairs, mock interviews) and the relationship of those activities on student's employment status.
- **More information needed on quality of academic advising.** Respondents reported an overall positive perception of the quality of their academic experience. Students responded the least favorably to academic advising and the quality of these interactions. Given the importance of this role, PCG recommends further discovery by OHE related to the qualifications of academic advisors, their frequency of interaction with students and the typical composition of those interactions.
- **Strengthen institutional supports.** Respondents who participated in either academic or financial supports provided by the institution were more likely to say they would attend the school again and were more likely to be working in their field of study after graduation. It may be that participation in these types of activities helps to deepen a relationship with the school beyond that of just taking courses. Research shows that students who attend two year school (either for-profit or non-profit) often mirror the behavior of students at "commuter schools," where students are less likely to engage with their school beyond their classes. PCG recommends examination on how to use and expand these types of institutional support offerings to further strengthen student satisfaction.

- **Examine salary expectations.** A high percentage of students at for-profit institutions indicated that their school provided them with the salary they may expect to earn after graduation, yet most graduates did not have earnings that met those communicated expectations. This discrepancy in the data is an area that warrants further examination by OHE. While it may be the case of unrealistic or inflated expectations on the part of students, OHE should rule out any deceptive practices on the part of some institutions.
- **Investigate degree completion times trends.** The longer a student has attended an institution, the greater the dissatisfaction a student has with the school. This trend may be due to students who are taking longer than anticipated to complete their course of study. PCG recommends comparing anticipated to actual length of degree completion data to confirm this hypothesis and to determine if this discrepancy is more prevalent in some schools than others. When looking at these data, OHE may also want to compare published degree completion times to what students understand those completion times to be.
- **Engage in further data collection.** Survey data can only go so far in understanding the full picture of a student's experience with their institution. PCG recommends further data collection activities be completed by OHE to supplement this report. Specifically, PCG recommends OHE convenes focus groups of both current and recently graduated students' experience to dig deeper into institution recruitment, financial and post-graduation support practices that were touched on in this report. Institution site visits would also provide a more robust understanding of institution practices and the student experience.
- **Institute annual survey.** PCG recommends Minnesota OHE repeats a student experience survey on an annual basis to allow for more comparative data and the analysis of trends over time. If this survey is repeated, PCG recommends OHE identifies mechanisms to increase the number of participating for-profit and private non-profit institutions so that all schools are represented. PCG also encourages OHE to work directly with participating institutions to develop a centralized system to collect student contact information that would better allow for a random sample of the survey population.

APPENDIX A. ADDITIONAL TABLES & FIGURES

Table 1. Full List of Institutions Invited to Participate in the Student Experience Survey

Invited Institutions	
Academy College	Minneapolis Business College
American Indian OIC	Minneapolis Media Institute
Anthem College MN*	Minnesota School of Business
Argosy University*	Model College of Hair Design*
Argosy University (Education management Corporation)	Molar Barber School*
Art Institute International*	MRI School of MN*
Aveda Institute	National American Univ.
Brown College*	Northwestern Health Science Univ.
Center Point Massage and Shiatsu Therapy Care Palaver	Nova Academy of Cosmetology
Cosmetology Training Center*	Oak Hills Christian College
Crown College	Park Avenue School of Cosmetology
DeVry University	PCI Academy
Duluth Business University	Professional Salon Academy*
Dunwoody College	Rasmussen College
Empire Beauty School	Regency Beauty Institute
Everest Institute	Rochester School of Hair Design*
Globe University	St Catherine University
Institute of Production & Recording	St Mary's University of MN
Minnesota School of Cosmetology	St. Catherine University
Hastings Beauty School*	Summit Academy OIC
Herzing University/MN Career College Association	Transportation Center for Excellence*
ITT-Tech	Travel Academy
Le Cordon Bleu*	University of Northwestern St. Paul
Leech Lake Tribal College*	White Earth Tribal and Community College
McNally Smith College of Music	
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities*	

***Institution did not participate in the student experience survey**

Table 2. Tuition and Fees for Each Institution Represented in the Survey Results

The tuition listed represents the tuition and fees charged to students that are residents of Minnesota attending full time for an academic year (30 semester credits or 45 quarter credits) listed on the Minnesota Department of Higher Education website:

(<http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/sPages/TuitionChart.cfm?State=MN&pageID=101>)

The tuition and fees charged for full time students is displayed to provide a baseline picture of the cost of attending each of the institutions in the survey sample and is not to be a detailed list of the cost for each institution's associate and certificate program offerings.

For-profit	Tuition
McNally Smith College of Music	\$25,210
Minneapolis Media Institute	\$21,440
ITT-Tech	\$20,267
Globe University	\$19,125
Academy College	\$18,231
National American University	\$16,095
Duluth Business University	\$16,020
Center Point Massage and Shiatsu Therapy Care**	\$15,900
Herzing University/MN Career College Association	\$15,768
Rasmussen College	\$15,255
Minneapolis Business College	\$15,240
Aveda Institute	\$12,132
Empire Beauty School	\$9,054
Travel Academy**	\$4,698
Non-profit	Tuition
St Catherine University	\$32,590
St Mary's University of MN	\$29,315
Crown College	\$19,140
Dunwoody College	\$18,818
Oak Hills Christian College	\$15,300
Northwestern Health Science University	\$11,730
Summit Academy OIC	\$8,100
American Indian OIC	\$5,150

**The tuition was calculated using the average cost of attendance

Table 3. Response Rates by Institution

The following table includes response rates for each institution for which respondents were affiliated with. The average response rate for for-profit institutions was 9.1%, while the average rate for non-profit institutions was slightly higher at 13%.

For-profit	Response Rate
McNally Smith College of Music	13.7%
Minneapolis Media Institute	10.8%
ITT-Tech	11.1%
Globe University	8.7%
Academy College	9.9%
National American University	5.1%
Duluth Business University	5.2%
Center Point Massage and Shiatsu Therapy Care**	19.4%
Herzing University/MN Career College Association	10.9%
Rasmussen College	9.0%
Minneapolis Business College	n/a*
Aveda Institute	12.3%
Empire Beauty School	5.6%
Travel Academy	7.2%
DeVry University**	10.4%
Park Avenue School of Cosmetology**	8.9%
PCI Academy**	10.8%
Everest Institute**	2.4%
Nova Academy of Cosmetology**	1.7%
Regency Beauty Institute**	n/a*
Non-profit	Response Rate
St. Catherine University	13.7%
St. Mary's University of MN	10.6%
Crown College	14.0%
Dunwoody College	12.0%
Oak Hills Christian College	23.3%
Northwestern Health Science University	12.5%
Summit Academy OIC	2.6%
American Indian OIC	14.9%
University of Northwestern St. Paul**	n/a*
White Earth Tribal and Community College**	n/a*

*Response rates were not calculate; respondents were asked to answer the survey based on the institution in which they received the survey invitation however, respondents were given the option to choose the institution from a list of options. **Survey results with less than 10 respondents from the institution were excluded from the analysis due

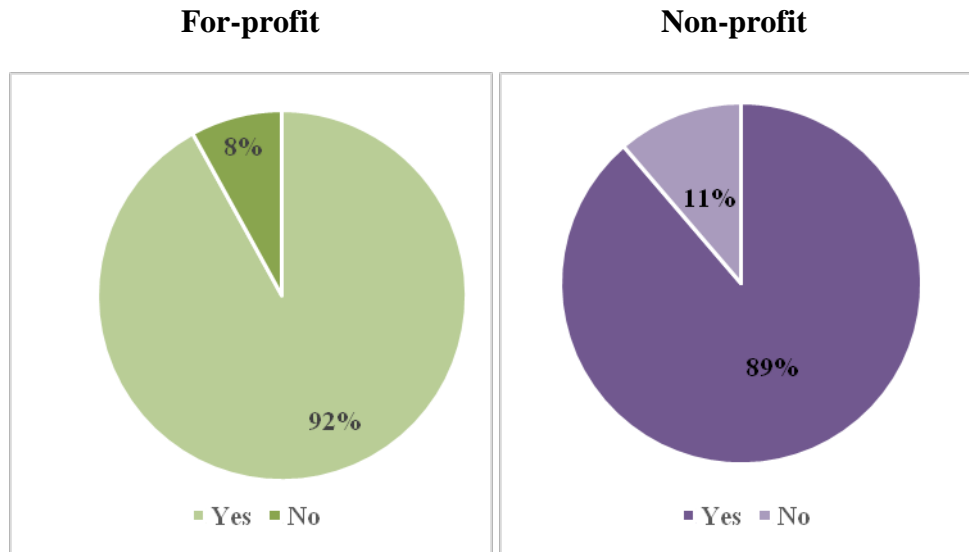
Table 4. Length of Time Enrolled at the Institution, by Institution Type and Enrollment Type

Institution Type		For-profit				Non-profit				Total
		Less than 6 months	6 months-1 year	1-2 years	More than 2 years	Less than 6 months	6 months-1 year	1-2 years	More than 2 years	
Enrolled Full Time	A few courses	3	1	1	2	4	0	1	1	13
	Associate	90	88	78	32	83	24	85	28	508
	Certificate	101	51	35	28	101	32	69	74	491
	Other	21	8	21	57	48	13	36	39	243
Enrolled Part Time	A few courses	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	3
	Associate	33	40	58	81	34	10	33	14	303
	Certificate	30	19	25	18	10	9	5	7	123
	Other	4	4	10	19	5	4	4	6	56
Graduated/Completed	A few courses	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Associate	0	4	79	58	1	0	21	6	169
	Certificate	42	21	50	20	5	26	11	39	214
	Other	0	1	3	30	1	0	1	11	47
No longer enrolled	A few courses	1	1	1	0	1	2	0	0	6
	Associate	3	8	6	7	1	2	4	3	34
	Certificate	4	1	3	1	4	4	1	2	20
	Other	4	4	4	1	1	1	2	1	18
Total		336	251	374	356	299	127	274	231	

Table 5. Reason for Leaving the Institution, by Institution Type

Reason for leaving the institution	For-profit	Non-profit
Family circumstance	29.7%	30.8%
Cost	23.4%	23.1%
The courses were not helping me achieve my educational goals	15.6%	7.7%
Employment	9.4%	17.9%
Course Schedule/times did not meet my needs	9.4%	5.1%
I decided to pursue other interests	7.8%	10.3%
Transportation	4.7%	5.1%
Left Career	0.0%	0.0%

Figure 1. Completion of FAFSA to Apply for Financial Aid to Pay for the Institution, by Institution Type



For-profit N=1,310; Non-profit N=922

Table 6. Financial Aid Type Received by Enrollment Status, Institution Type and Program Type

For-profit	Loan	Grants	Scholarships
Enrollment Status			
Enrolled full-time	50.7%	38.6%	10.7%
Enrolled part-time	53.6%	39.9%	6.6%
Program Type			
Associate	52.3%	40.3%	7.4%
Certificate	53.9%	36.5%	9.5%

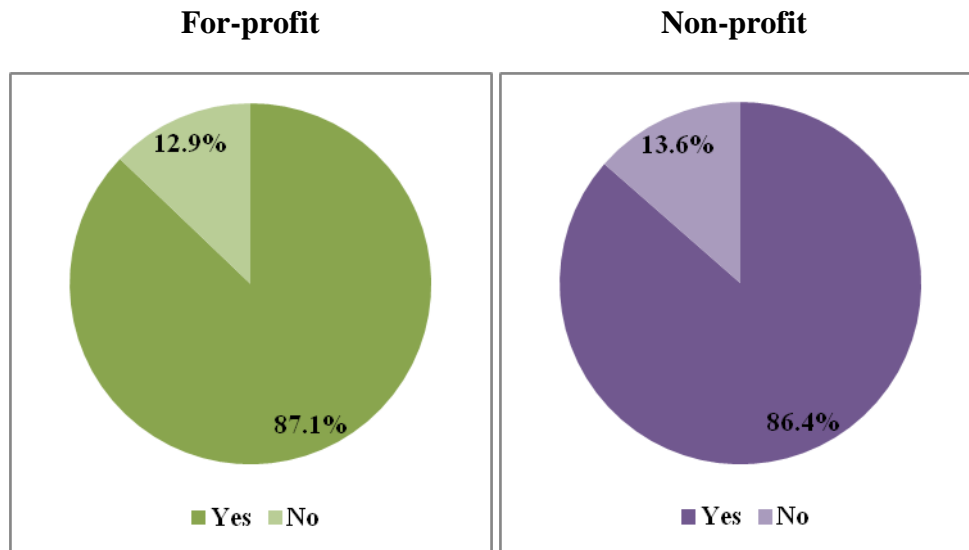
Non profit	Loan	Grants	Scholarships
Enrollment Status			
Enrolled full-time	42.6%	33.7%	23.7%
Enrolled part-time	53.5%	33.0%	13.5%
Program Type			
Associate	47.4%	33.9%	18.7%
Certificate	38.1%	35.6%	26.3%

Table 7. Total Number of Students That Take Remedial Courses, by Enrollment Type

For-profit	1	2+
Enrolled full-time	48.8%	37.8%
Enrolled part-time	34.1%	33.7%
Total respondents that took remedial courses	123	196

Non-profit	1	2+
Enrolled full-time	66.7%	62.5%
Enrolled part-time	18.3%	17.7%
Total respondents that took remedial courses	60	96

Figure 2. Whether or Not Career Services Were Beneficial to the Respondents, by Institution Type



For-profit N=653; Non-profit N=317



APPENDIX B. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH MATERIALS

The following section includes Student Experience Survey communication and outreach materials.

Directions for Institutions

Dear Minnesota Higher Education Administrator,

We have previously been in contact about a Student Experience survey that the Minnesota Office of Higher Education (OHE) launched on Monday. **If you are receiving this email, we do not have confirmation that your institution has sent out the survey.** If you have sent the survey out, please respond back to this email with the number of students that your institution sent invitations to. **If your institution has not yet sent out the survey, please forward the survey to currently enrolled, graduated, or dropped or transfer students from April 2012-September 2013.**

For your convenience and to ensure that all students understand this survey is implemented by the MN Office of Higher Education, **we are sending along the survey invitation for you to forward to your students.** The next email you will receive will be an email that you can forward. **The invite is a picture that is hyperlinked to the survey itself, and will only work if the email is forwarded.** If for some reason you cannot forward the survey invite, please send along the attached PDF document to your students.

Feel free to reach out with any questions you may have, we are eager to work together to get the highest response rate possible. Thank you, we look forward to your collaboration.

-Minnesota Student Experience Survey Team

Email Invitation to Students

**You could
win an iPad!**

Read to learn how to win!



Dear Minnesota Higher Education Student or Former Student,

You have been selected to participate in a statewide Student Experience Survey that the Minnesota Office of Higher Education (OHE) is conducting this year. OHE is always considering the quality of its institutions and the experience and success of the students who attend those institutions. This study is designed to capture the student experience for institutions of higher education across the state. Survey respondents will include current students, recent graduates, and non-returners (recently transferred or left the institution) to better understand the diversity of student experiences.

The survey is designed to take no more than 15 minutes to complete. **You can even take it on your phone!** Your result will be kept confidential and individual identifying information will not be collected. For questions regarding the survey please contact mnsurvey@pcgus.com.

To access the survey <http://surveys.pcgus.com/s3/mnsurvey>

The Office of Higher Education is giving all survey respondents a chance to win one of two iPads!

If you would like to be entered into the drawing for an iPad please input your email address on the survey. This information will be used only for the purposes of the raffle; your email will NOT be linked to your survey results.

Thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX C. SURVEY QUESTIONS AND MATRIX

MINNESOTA OFFICE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Student Experience Survey

Thank you for choosing to participate in the Minnesota Student Experience Survey! Your institution has been selected to participate in a Student Experience Survey administered by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education (OHE). OHE is always considering the quality of postsecondary institutions in Minnesota and the experience and success of the students who attend those institutions. This study is designed to capture the student experience for institutions of higher education across the state. Your information is vital in the success of analyzing how the state can better provide educational opportunities for students across the state of Minnesota.

The survey is short and will take no more than 15 minutes to complete. For a chance to win one of two iPads, please enter your contact information at the end of the survey. All responses will be confidential and personal identifying information will not be collected. For more information about OHE please visit: <https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/> or for questions about the survey please contact: mnsurvey@pcgus.com

1) *What is the name of the institution you currently attend or (if you are not a current student please select the institution you most recently attended from April 2012- September 2013)**

2) *What programs are you enrolled in or have you completed at this institution (select all that apply)?*

- Certificate/Diploma
- Associate
- I am taking courses but not seeking a certificate or degree
- Other, please specify

3) *How long have you/did you attended this institution?*

- Less than 6 months**
- 6 months-1 year**
- 1-2 years**
- More than 2 years**

4) *Before enrolling at this institution how many prior years of higher education (including time spent towards an associate degree) did you have?*

- None**
- Less than one year**
- 1-2 years**
- Over 2 years**

5) *What were you doing immediately before attending this institution? (Select all that apply)*

- In high school (within the past 14 months)**
- In the military**
- Working full-time (35 hours or greater/week)**
- Working part-time (less than 35 hours/week)**
- Unemployed**
- Retired**
- Enrolled in another institution**
- Other**

6) How did you first hear about this institution? (Select all that apply)

- High School or Career Advisor
- College Fair
- Letter in the mail
- They called me
- Friend/relative
- Print advertisement
- TV/radio/Internet commercial
- Internet search
- Other

7) What is your current enrollment status at this institution?*

- Enrolled full-time (12 or more credits)
- Enrolled part-time (less than 12 credits)
- Graduated/completed the program
- Not currently attending but plan to re-enroll within the next year
- No longer enrolled (did not complete my program)
- No longer enrolled, switched to another 2-year certificate granting institution
- No longer enrolled, switched to a 4-year college or university

New Page

Logic: Hidden unless: Question #7 contains any ("Not currently attending but plan to re-enroll within the next year", "No longer enrolled (did not complete my program)")

8) *What was the reason you left this institution? (Select all that apply)*

- The courses were not helping me to achieve my education goals
 - Family circumstances
 - Cost
 - Course schedule/times did not meet my needs
 - Transportation
 - I decided to pursue other interests
 - Employment
-

School Choice

9) *Why are you or why did you go to this institution? (Select all that apply)*

- To begin a career
 - To advance in my career
 - To change careers
 - Could not find a job, so I went back to school to learn a new skill
 - Other
-



10) What is or what was your educational goal at this institution? (Select all that apply)

- Want to receive a certificate/diploma
- Want to obtain an associate degree
- Want to take some classes at this school and then transfer to a 4-year college to obtain a bachelor's degree
- Want to take a few classes only (do not want to complete a program/major)
- Other

11) How important were each of the factors below in your decision to choose this institution?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important
On a bus/train line			
Close to home			
Close to work			
Length of time needed to complete the program/major			
Institution had space available for the classes I wanted			
Class schedule met my needs			
Friends attended			
Reputation of program/institution			
Child care was at this institution			
Child care was close to this institution			



The costs (tuition/fees)			
Financial aid offered			
I could enroll part-time/Flexible course offering			
Job placement services			

School Services & Experience

12) Did you receive any of the following academic help from the institution? (Select all that apply)

- Tutoring
- Selecting my program/major
- Selecting classes to fit my major
- Transferring credits into this institution
- Transferring credits into another institution
- Academic help was not provided
- Academic help was offered, but I did not need it
- No
- Other

13) While enrolled at this institution did you receive any of the following student services? (Select all that apply)

- Veteran's services
- Disability services
- TRIO services
- No
- Not Applicable
- Other

14) Did you complete the FAFSA to apply for financial aid to pay for this institution?

- Yes
- No

15) Did you receive financial aid? If yes, what type? (Select all that apply)

- Loans
- Grants
- Work study
- Child care grant
- Scholarships
- Yes, unsure what type
- No
- Other

16) Did you receive any of the following help from the institution? (Select all that apply)

- Completing the FAFSA
- Finding scholarships/grants
- Getting a loan, loan counseling
- Money management/budgeting/financial literacy
- Establishing a payment plan
- I did not receive any financial help

17) If you had to do it over again, would you choose this institution?

- Yes
- No

Comments:

18) Did your institution require you to complete remedial or developmental courses (courses that did not count toward your graduation requirements)? If so, how many did you take?

- No, I did not take any remedial courses
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 3+

19) Did you take advantage of career help from your institution's Career Services Office or have similar assistance in selecting a career or finding employment?

- Yes
- No

Career Services

Logic: Hidden unless: Question #19 contains any ("Yes")

20) Was your overall experience with the Career Services office or similar assistance in selecting a career or finding employment beneficial to you?

- Yes
- No

Comments:

Logic: Hidden unless: Question #19 contains any ("No")

21) Why did you not participate in Career Services Office opportunities or similar assistance in selecting a career or finding employment opportunities?

- Not aware of the services
- Office hours did not fit my schedule
- Services offered not helpful
- Other:

Career & Employment Outcomes

22) Are you currently working?

- Yes, 35 hours or greater/week
- Yes, less than 35 hours/week
- No

Experience

Logic: Hidden unless: Question #22 contains any ("Yes, 35 hours or greater/week","Yes, less than 35 hours/week")

23) *Are you working in your field of study?*

- Yes
- No

Logic: Hidden unless: Question #22 contains any ("Yes, 35 hours or greater/week","Yes, less than 35 hours/week")

24) *Are you using the skills learned at this institution at work?*

- Yes, my job is directly related to the skills I am learning at my institution
- I am only applying some skills
- No

25) *Did your institution give you information about what hourly or annual earnings you might expect to earn after completing the program/major?*

- Yes
- No

Logic: Hidden unless: Question #7 contains any ("Graduated/completed the program")

26) *If the institution gave you information about how much you would earn (after attending the institution), does your current earnings meet those expectations?*

- Yes
- No

Logic: Hidden unless: Question #7 contains any ("Enrolled full-time (12 or more credits)","Enrolled part-time (less than 12 credits)","Graduated/completed the program","Not currently attending but plan to re-enroll within the next year")

27) Are you satisfied with the length of time it will or did take you to finish your educational goals at this institution?

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Not Satisfied

28) Do you feel this program is worth the cost to you?

- Yes
- No

29) How would you rate the quality of your academic experience?

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
Overall quality of courses				
Rigor of courses				
Relevance to area of interest				
Quality of faculty				
Quality of other students				
Interactions with other students				
Interactions with faculty				
Availability of resources (e.g. library, technology)				
Academic support				
Availability of courses required to complete my program				

Quality of academic advisor				
Responsiveness of academic advisor				

30) Please share any other information about this institution that you feel is relevant.

About you

For the purposes of gaining a better understanding of the student characteristics at schools across the state, the following demographic questions are being asked. Please note that your response is optional and will be confidential.

31) *What year were you born?*

Drop down

32) *What race or ethnicity do you consider yourself? (Select all that apply)*

- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- Caucasian
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native American or Alaska Native
- Other/Multi-racial



33) *What is your gender?*

- Male
- Female

34) *Are you actively serving in the military or National Guard/reserves or a veteran?*

- Yes
- No

35) What is the zip code of your current residence?

36) What is the highest level of education completed by your parents?

	Highest Level of Education
Mother	<input type="text"/>
Father	<input type="text"/>

iPad Raffle

37) If you would like to be entered into the drawing for an iPad please input your email address. This information will be used only for the purposes of the raffle, your email will NOT be linked to your survey results.

Thank You!

Thank you for completing the Minnesota Office of Higher Education Student Satisfaction Survey. Your participation is greatly appreciated!



Question #	Question	Enrolled full-time	Enrolled part-time	Graduated/completed	Not currently attending but plan to re-enroll	No longer enrolled	No longer enrolled, transferred to another school	No longer enrolled, transferred to a 4-year college
1	What is the name of the school you currently attend or (if you are not a current student please select the school you most recently attended from December 2011- May 2013) *This question is required.	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
2	What programs are you enrolled in or have you completed at this school (select all that apply)?	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
3	How long have you/did you attended this school?	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
4	Before enrolling at this school how many prior years of higher education (including time spent towards an associate's degree) did you have?	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
5	What were you doing immediately before attending this school? (select all that apply)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
6	How did you first hear about this school? (Select all that apply)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
7	What is your current enrollment status at this school?	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
8	What was the reason you dropped or left this school? (Select all that apply)				x	x	x	x
9	Why are you or why did you go to this school? (Select all that apply)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
10	What is or what was your educational goal at this school? (Select all that apply)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
11	How important were each of the factors below in your decision to choose this school?	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
12	Did you receive any of the following academic help from the school? (Select all that apply)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
13	While enrolled at this school did you receive any of the following student services? (Select all that apply)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
14	Did you complete the FAFSA to apply for financial aid to pay for this school?	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
15	Did you receive financial aid? If yes, what type? (Select all that apply)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
16	Did you receive any of the following help from the school? (Select all that apply)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
17	If you had to do it over again, would you choose this school?	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
18	Did your school require you to complete remedial or developmental courses (courses that did not count toward your graduation requirements)? If so, how many did you take?	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
19	Did you take advantage of career help from your school's Career Services Office?	x	x	x	x	x	x	x



Question #	Question	Enrolled full-time	Enrolled part-time	Graduated/completed	Not currently attending but plan to re-enroll	No longer enrolled	No longer enrolled, transferred to another school	No longer enrolled, transferred to a 4-year college
20	Was your overall experience with the Career Services office beneficial to you?	If 19= yes						
21	Why did you not participate in Career Services Office opportunities?	If 19= no						
22	Are you currently working?	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
23	Are you working in your field of study?	If 22= yes part-time or yes full-time						
24	Are you using the skills learned at this school at work?	If 22= yes part-time or yes full-time						
25	Did your school give you information about what hourly or annual earnings you might expect to earn after completing the program/major	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
26	If the school gave you information about how much you would earn (after attending the school), does your current earnings meet those expectations?			x				
27	Are you satisfied with the length of time it will or did take you to finish your educational goals at this school?	x	x	x	x			
28	Do you feel this program is worth the cost to you?	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
29	How would you rate the quality of your academic experience?	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
30	Please share any other information about this school that we should know.	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
31	What year were you born?	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
32	What race or ethnicity do you consider yourself? (Select all that apply)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
33	What is your gender?	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
34	Are you actively serving in the military or National Guard/reserves or a veteran?	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
35	What is the zip code of your current residence?	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
36	What is the highest level of education completed by your parents	x	x	x	x	x	x	x