Attitudes and Opinions of Florida High School Seniors

Toward Community Colleges

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Introduction

The primary clientele of most community colleges is still the
traditional college age group. Although many in this group do not
enroll, full time, in the community college immediately following high
school graduation, a large percentage can be found enrolled. This
recognition of the importance of serving graduating seniors, and the
desire to meet their educational needs, lead to the design of this
study.

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study were (1) to determine the post high
school educational needs of high school seniors, and (2) to determine
their views on a variety of community college issues.

Procedure

A total of ten community colleges elected to participate in this
study. These colleges were part of a research consortium, The Florida
Community/Junior College Inter-Institutional Research Council (IRC)
administered through the Institute of Higher Education, University of
Florida. Table 1 shows these colleges, and the number of seniors in
each service area included in the study.

Each IRC college provided a representative who assisted in the
design of the survey instrument and arranged for administering the

Table 1

Participating Colleges and Number of

High School Seniors Included

College	Number	Percent
Brevard Community College	2,442	22.1
Edison Community College	230	2.1
Gulf Coast Community College	692	6.3
Lake Sumter Community College	817	7.4
Manatee Junior College	913	8.3
North Florida Junior College	506	4.6
Pasco-Hernando Community College	1,011	9.2
Santa Fe Community College	843	7.6
Seminole Community College	1,693	15.3
Valencia Community College	1,884	17.1
Total	11,031	100.00

survey instrument in their service areas. Each high school in the community colleges' service area agreed to participate and a sufficient number of instruments was provided for each senior to be surveyed. However, instruments were not returned from three high schools in time to be included in the analysis. Thus, the total population of seniors was surveyed except for those three high schools and students who were absent from school during the administration of the survey. The instrument (Figure 1) was printed in optical scan form to facilitate computer analysis of the responses. The survey was conducted during the spring of 1980.

Figure 1

LORIDA COMMUNITY JUNIOR COLLEGE
NTER-INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL
NIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, GAINESVILLE

HIGH SCHOOL SURVEY

PLEASE USE A NO. 2 PENCIL   **CORRECT:** ●◐●○●   **INCORRECT:** ⊘○⊗●◑

1. Please select the <u>one</u> AREA OF STUDY in which you are <u>most</u> interested. <u>Then</u> identify your preference of a SPECIFIC PROGRAM within that AREA OF STUDY.

AREAS OF STUDY
(Mark only one)

SPECIFIC PROGRAMS
(Mark only one in your occupational area)

AREA OF STUDY			
a. Agriculture	○ forestry ○ animal science	○ horticulture ○ other	○ plant science
b. Biological Sciences	○ botany	○ zoology	○ other
c. Business	○ accounting ○ marketing ○ other	○ business admin. ○ finance	○ industrial management ○ secretarial skills
d. Education	○ elementary ed. ○ secondary ed.	○ physical ed. ○ special ed.	○ business ed. ○ other
e. Health Related	○ doctor ○ nurse ○ asst. veterinarian	○ radiologist ○ dentist ○ other	○ occupational therapist ○ medical or dental tech
f. Home Economics	○ dietetics ○ family and child development	○ nutrition	○ textiles and clothing ○ other
g. Humanities and Arts	○ English ○ drama ○ religion	○ journalism ○ fine arts ○ modern & classical ○ foreign languages	○ philosophy ○ music ○ other
h. Mathematics	○ statistics	○ computer programmer	○ other
i. Physical Sciences	○ astronomy ○ biochemistry	○ chemistry ○ geology	○ physics ○ other
j. Social Sciences	○ economics ○ social work ○ sociology	○ history ○ government ○ other	○ political science ○ prelaw
k. Technical Occupation	○ aeronautical tech. ○ electronics ○ real estate ○ commercial pilot ○ banking ○ citrus processing	○ commercial art ○ food processing ○ fire fighting tech. ○ data processing ○ work processing ○ photography & optical technology	○ metallurgical technician ○ police administration ○ criminology & correction ○ fashion design & merchandising ○ other
l. Trade & Industrial Occupation	○ barbering ○ masonry ○ cabinet making ○ carpentry ○ other	○ cosmetology ○ food services ○ drafting ○ tool & die making	○ plumbing & pipefitting ○ interior decoration ○ tailoring millwork ○ auto repair

m. I do not know what area I am interested in yet.

2. **Which of the following best describes your career plans?**

○ a. have made a career choice
○ b. have made a tentative choice
○ c. have not made a career choice

3. **What is the highest level of education you plan to complete?**

○ a. high school
○ b. non-credit certificate in a vocational program
○ c. college credit certificate in a vocational program
○ d. a 1-year program
○ e. a 2-year specialized training program (for example, Associate of Science in electronics, nursing, laboratory technology)
○ f. a 2-year liberal arts degree (for example, Associate of Arts)
○ g. a 4-year college degree (Bachelor's degree)
○ h. a Master's degree
○ i. Doctoral, law, or other professional degree
○ j. other

4. **If you continue your education beyond high school, will you be a full-time or part-time student?**

○ a. full-time (4 courses or more)
○ b. about three-quarters time (3 courses)
○ c. about one-half time (2 courses)
○ d. about one-quarter time (1 course)
○ e. do not plan to continue my education beyond high school

5. **What are your work/education plans after high school? (Do not include work during summer vacations in your response.)**

○ a. work full-time and not continue my education
○ b. work part-time and not continue my education
○ c. work less than 5 hours a week and continue my education
○ d. work 5 to 10 hours a week and continue my education
○ e. work 11 to 20 hours a week and continue my education
○ f. work 21 to 30 hours a week and continue my education
○ g. work 31 to 40 hours a week and continue my education
○ h. do not plan to work while continuing my education
○ i. enter the military
○ j. do not plan to work or continue my education

6. **What is the next step in your educational plan following graduation from high school?**

○ a. attend the local community college
○ b. attend another Florida community college
○ c. attend an out-of-state community college
○ d. attend a Florida vocational, technical, or trade school
○ e. attend an out-of-state vocational, technical, or trade school
○ f. attend a Florida public university
○ g. attend a Florida private university
○ h. attend an out-of-state college or university
○ i. do not plan to continue my education

7. Please rate each of the following reasons for attending the college of your choice based on how important each reason is for you. Check the appropriate reason using the following scale:

    1 - A major reason
    2 - A minor reason
    3 - Not a reason

	(1) Major Reason	(2) Minor Reason	(3) Not a Reason
a. Conveniently located with easy access	O	O	O
b. Low tuition	O	O	O
c. Offers program or classes desired	O	O	O
d. Family wants me to attend	O	O	O
e. Friends attended	O	O	O
f. College's flexible hours fit my schedule	O	O	O
g. Reputation of academic programs	O	O	O
h. Offers financial aid	O	O	O
i. Want part-time college so I can continue employment	O	O	O
j. Want two years at a local school before going on to a four year school	O	O	O
k. I need further academic help to meet academic standards	O	O	O
l. I want to live at home and go to school	O	O	O
m. Know I will be accepted	O	O	O
n. I need help with math, English, or reading skills	O	O	O
o. Religious affiliation	O	O	O
p. Other (Please list):	O	O	O

PLEASE DO NOT
WRITE OUTSIDE
THIS BOX

8. How would you rate the educational quality of the instructional programs at your local community college?

O a. excellent
O b. above average
O c. average
O d. below average
O e. poor
O f. do not know

9. How do you feel the quality of community college programs compare to the quality of similar programs offered by four-year colleges or universities?

O a. community colleges are higher in quality
O b. community colleges are the same in quality
O c. community colleges are lower in quality
O d. do not know

	Yes	No	Do Not Know
10. Would you prefer to take community college courses offered: on campus	O	O	O
in local facilities other than on campus	O	O	O
11. Does your local community college offer student financial aid?	O	O	O
12. Have you been on your local community college campus?	O	O	O
13. Would you like a tour of your local community college campus?	O	O	O
14. Would you like visitors from your local community college to talk with you about their programs?	O	O	O

		Yes	No	Do Not Know

15. Would you prefer taking classes:

	Yes	No	Do Not Know
in the mornings	O	O	O
in the afternoons	O	O	O
in the late afternoons	O	O	O
in the evenings	O	O	O
on the weekends	O	O	O

16. Would you like special help from your local community college to increase your reading speed and comprehension?   O   O   O

17. Would you like special help from your local community college to increase your skill in mathematics?   O   O   O

18. Would you like special help from your local community college to increase your writing skills?   O   O   O

19. Would you like help from your local community college in developing good study techniques?   O   O   O

20. Would you like help from your local community college in finding part-time or full-time employment?   O   O   O

21. Do you feel that every person with a high school diploma, regardless of other academic qualifications, should be admitted to a community college?   O   O   O

22. Do you think that any of the following reasons are a major part of a college's reputation of quality?

	Yes	No	Do Not Know
a. academic qualifications of the students	O	O	O
b. number of graduates	O	O	O
c. number of faculty	O	O	O
d. educational degrees held by the faculty	O	O	O
e. attractiveness of the campus and facilities	O	O	O
f. finding jobs for the graduates	O	O	O
g. difficulty of getting "A" grades	O	O	O
h. difficulty of getting admitted	O	O	O

23. Do you feel that the presence of students from other countries enhances the quality of a college or university?   O   O   O

24. Would you enjoy attending classes with students from other countries?   O   O   O

25. Do you think your local community college is an educational asset to your community?   O   O   O

26. Do you feel that most of the programs at your local community college are:
- O a. too easy
- O b. too hard
- O c. about right
- O d. do not know

27. Sex:
- O a. Female
- O b. Male

28. Race or Ethnic Category:
- O a. American Indian or Alaskan Native
- O b. Asian or Pacific Islander
- O c. Black (not of Hispanic origin)
- O d. Hispanic
- O e. White (not of Hispanic origin)

29. CITZENSHIP:
- O a. United States
- O b. other

INSTITUTIONS QUESTIONS

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
2	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
3	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
4	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
5	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
6	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
7	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
8	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
9	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
10	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ

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Results and Discussion

Next Educational Step

Table 2 shows the next educational step anticipated by the seniors. It can be observed that a variety of options in choosing what kind of higher education (if any) they wished to pursue was indicated. This included vocational schools, colleges and universities, and community colleges. Over 40 percent intended to enroll in their local community college. Thirty percent chose a four-year college or university.

Table 2

Next Educational Step Anticipated by High School Seniors

Next Educational Step	Number	Percent
Local Community College	4135	40.3
Other Florida Community College	593	5.8
Out of State Community College	228	2.2
Florida Vocational Technical Center	955	7.3
Out of State Vocational Technical Center	298	2.9
Florida Public University	1654	16.1
Florida Private University	303	2.0
Out of State University	1200	11.7
No Further Education	888	8.7
Total	10254	100.0
Missing Cases	777	---

Nineteen percent opted for a technical institute or college outside their own community, and only eight percent had no plans for further

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education. Clearly, the local community college dominates the preference of most of the seniors for their next educational experience.

Of those students preferring their local community college over half planned to earn at least a bachelor's degree. Thirteen percent said they were seeking an associate degree in a specialized training program like nursing or medical technology. About ten percent were interested in non-degree vocational and technical programs.

Table 3 compares the number of students who plan to attend their local community college and those who do not, by desired level of educational objectives. It can be observed that students who do not plan to attend their local community college aspired to attain master's or higher degree more frequently than students who planned to attend their local community college. The community college group more frequently chose a two-year program. Reasons for the lower popularity of the community college as a step in the advanced degrees should be studied more extensively.

Table 4 shows the load the students expect to carry when they enroll in the community college. Over half planned to register for a full-time course load, and 30 percent of the others planned to go at least half time. Over 65 percent of the students, however, expected to work either part or full time (see Table 5). College planners have noticed an increase in part-time students in the past few years. These data suggest that this trend would continue.

Table 6 compares educational intentions of the high school seniors by sex. It can be observed from this table that 42 percent of the females planned to attend their community college compared to only 35

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Table 3

A Comparison of the Highest Level of Education

Sought by Seniors Who Plan to Attend the Local

Community College and Those Who Do Not

Projected Educational Level	Will Attend Local CC		Will Not Attend Local CC	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
High School	---	---	884	14.1
Non-Credit Certificate Voc.	54	1.3	226	3.6
College Credit Certificate Voc.	241	6.0	339	5.4
1 Year Program	157	3.9	166	2.6
2 Year Program Voc.	782	19.3	593	9.4
2 Year Liberal Arts	324	8.0	174	2.8
4 Year College Degree	1485	36.7	1826	29.1
Master's Degree	444	11.0	864	13.7
Professional Degree	290	7.2	845	13.4
Other	170	4.2	368	5.9
Total	4046	100.0	6285	100.0
Missing Cases	89	---	611	---

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community college. While 40 percent of the white and Hispanic students chose their community college, only 32 percent of the blacks, 31 percent of the Asian, and 35 percent of the American Indians chose their community college. Clearly, more recruitment work needs to be done among blacks.

Career Choices

Table 8 shows that only 38 percent of the seniors who plan to attend their community college have already made a career choice. The other 62 percent have only tentative career plans or no career plans at all. This suggests the importance of the community college's offering the opportunity to explore career alternatives even to high school students. Otherwise many students may change their minds about going to the community college if an alternative occurs. Therefore, some discrepancy between anticipated and actual enrollment can be expected.

Table 8

Seniors' Intention to Attend Community

College by Firmness of Career Plans

Career Intention	Number	Percent
Definite Career Plan	3994	38.2
Tentative Career Plan	4732	45.3
No Career Plan Yet	1718	16.4
Total	10444	100.0
Missing	587	--

Reasons for Choices of Institutions

Table 9 shows reasons why high school seniors choose community colleges instead of some other educational alternative. Among both the students who planned to attend the local community college, and those who chose another school, availability of the desired program was the major factor in their decision-making. But those who eventually decided

Table 9

Seniors' Reasons for Selecting Local Community College

Reason	Major Reason		Minor Reason		Not a Reason	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Offers Desired Programs	6491	69.0	2030	21.9	1013	10.7
Convenient Location	4336	46.1	3154	34.1	2137	22.5
Academic Reputation	3758	39.9	3400	36.7	2300	24.2
Low Tuition	2977	31.6	3507	37.9	3086	32.5
Financial Aid Offer	2936	31.2	2750	29.7	3732	39.3
Live at Home	2828	30.0	2359	25.5	4180	44.0
Part-Time College	2818	29.9	2029	21.9	4599	48.4
Two Years Local	2763	29.4	1927	20.8	4800	50.6
Flexible Hours	2656	28.2	3197	34.5	3644	38.4
Acceptance	2147	23.1	3255	35.2	3164	41.8
Academic Help	1689	17.9	2447	26.4	5305	55.9
Family Expectations	1365	14.5	3084	33.3	5094	53.7
Remedial Help	956	10.2	2048	22.1	6424	67.7
Friends Attended	920	9.8	2826	30.5	5734	60.4
Religious Affiliation	474	5.0	1041	11.2	7541	79.4

in favor of the local community college also cited convenience, the possibility of living near home, low tuition, and the option of going to school part time. Those who chose other educational alternatives tended to be somewhat more concerned with "academic reputation."

Low tuition, financial aid opportunities, flexible hours, and ease of acceptance were cited as major reasons for both groups.

Table 10 presents reasons for choosing an institution in preference to their local community college. It can be observed that "offering

Table 10

Seniors' Reasons for Selecting an Institution

Other Than Local Community College

Reason	Major Reason		Minor Reason		Not a Reason	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Offers Desired Program	4010	71.6	985	17.6	602	10.8
Academic Reputation	2579	46.5	1784	32.1	1186	21.4
Convenient Location	1866	33.1	1933	34.3	1838	32.6
Financial Aid Offered	1697	30.8	1598	29.0	2219	40.2
Low Tuition	1414	25.2	1982	35.3	2213	39.5
Flexible Hours	1220	22.0	1671	30.1	2664	48.0
Part-Time College	1143	20.7	1046	18.9	3339	60.4
Acceptance	1130	20.6	1854	33.8	2505	46.6
Live at Home	1103	20.1	1102	20.1	3269	59.7
Two Years Local	800	14.4	964	17.4	3787	68.2
Academic Help	792	14.3	1223	22.1	3510	63.5
Family's Expectations	697	12.5	1794	32.1	3101	55.5
Remedial Help	524	9.5	1050	19.0	3951	71.5
Friends Attended	504	9.1	1515	7.2	3584	63.7
Religious Affiliation	388	7.3	703	13.3	4213	79.4

the desired program" was the most frequently cited reason (72%) for their choices. Other important reasons for their choices were "academic reputation" (42%) and "financial aid offered" (31%). It appears that the major reasons for selecting local community colleges were also important for selecting another institution. The explanation for these similarities may lie in the absence of accurate information about the community college, the other institution, or both.

Perceived Academic Quality

The academic quality of the institution they choose clearly is a factor for these young people. Some 37 percent (Table 11) of the respondents said they felt programs at their local community college are of "excellent" or "above average" quality. Thirty-eight percent said they

Table 11

Students' Impression of the Quality of

Instructional Programs at the Local

Community College

Rating	Number	Percent
Excellent	1027	10.2
Above Average	2665	26.4
Average	3506	37.7
Below Average	249	2.5
Poor	117	1.2
Do Not Know	2538	25.1
Total	10102	100.0
Missing	929	----

thought the local community college programs were "average," and less than four percent thought the programs were "below average" or "poor." A significant 25 percent said they didn't know.

Comparing community colleges generally with four-year colleges and universities, the students seemed confused by the question of quality (see Table 12). Thirty-three percent said community colleges were the same or of higher quality than four-year institutions, 25 percent said they were of lower quality, and fully 43 percent said they did not know.

Table 12

Students' Impression of the Quality of Community College

Programs Compared to Those Offered by Four-Year Colleges

and Universities

Opinion	Number	Percent
Community colleges higher in quality	531	5.3
Community colleges same quality	2751	27.4
Community colleges lower in quality	2465	24.6
Do Not Know	4292	42.8
Total	10039	100.0
Missing	992	---

The inability of many to compare the quality of their community college to other institutions is indicated by their difficulty in choosing the qualities associated with a good reputation (see Table 13). There were, however, high instances of agreement (75.5%) that student qualifications are indicators of quality. "Difficulty of getting A

grades" was reported by only 36 percent of the students.

Table 13

Qualities Selected by Seniors as a Major Factor in a College's Reputation

Reason	Yes		No		Do Not Know	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Academic qualifications of students	7203	75.5	1389	14.6	946	9.9
Number of graduates	4223	44.8	4142	43.9	1061	11.3
Number of faculty	4527	48.4	3689	39.5	1129	12.1
Campus attractiveness	5498	59.8	2688	29.3	1001	10.9
Degrees held by the faculty	6469	69.9	1694	18.3	1095	11.8
Finding jobs for the graduates	5327	57.8	2656	28.8	1240	13.4
Difficulty of getting "A" grades	3312	35.8	4533	49.1	1395	15.1
Difficulty of getting admitted	3998	43.1	3980	42.9	1289	13.9

Table 14 indicates that the students also had difficulty in evaluating the quality of their local community college in terms of whether it is "too hard" or "too easy." Over half the students said they "didn't know." Since the respondents were all high school seniors, however, their answers were necessarily based on hearsay. Many of the respondents probably did not want to speculate.

It is clear that young people choose their local community college for practical reasons: it is convenient, inexpensive, and easy to get admitted. But it is also clear that they are not looking for an easy

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shortcut to an education. Their concern for program offerings, the quality of their fellow students, the qualifications of the faculty, and the widespread intent to combine work and study suggest a serious and purposeful attitude among this generation of students.

Table 14

Students' Impressions of the Degree of

Difficulty of Local Community College

Degree of Difficulty	Number	Percent
Too easy	600	6.1
Too hard	220	2.2
About right	3765	38.3
Do not know	5251	53.4
Total	9836	100.0
Missing	1195	---

Intended Areas of Study

In the IRC survey, the students were asked to choose the specific course of study that most interested them from among twelve broad categories. They could also choose an "undecided" option.

The survey results showed a wide distribution of study interests among the students, but there were three areas that attracted a particularly high proportion of student responses. The largest area was business, which attracted 19.3 percent of the students (see Table 15). Of the students planning to enroll in business studies, 33.3 percent were interested in business administration, 22 percent in secretarial studies, and 22 percent in accounting.

Table 15

Area of Study in Which Students Plan to Enroll

Subject	Number	Percent
Agriculture	502	5.5
Biological Sciences	162	1.8
Business	1774	19.3
Education	476	5.4
Health Related	1173	12.8
Home Economics	191	2.1
Humanities and Arts	789	8.6
Mathematics	421	4.6
Physical Sciences	222	2.4
Social Sciences	618	6.7
Technical Occupation	1403	15.3
Trade and Industrial	863	9.4
Do not know	571	6.2
Total	9185	100.0
Missing	1846	---

Another area of high interest among the respondents (15.3%) was technical programs. Electronics and data processing courses attracted particular interest among these students.

Health-related studies attracted 12.8 percent of the students. Of these, 26 percent planned to enroll in a nursing program, 20 percent were interested in medical, dental, radiology, or veterinary technician courses, and 20 percent said they were interested in pre-medical studies.

Interest in agriculture programs was, as expected, highest among students in rural counties. About half of these students were interested in forestry, the rest in plant or animal science. Among the 5.4 percent who planned to study education, 36 percent were interested in elementary education, and 29 percent in physical education. Among the students who chose Home Economics, 42 percent opted for courses in family and child development, 32 percent were interested in textiles, and 18 percent in nutrition and diet.

Among the 8.6 percent of students who chose arts and humanities as their prospective major, 26 percent were interested in music, 17 percent in journalism, and 17 percent in fine arts.

In math, 73 percent wanted specific course work in computer sciences reflecting, perhaps, the current emphasis on computers one finds in advertising. In the physical sciences, 27 percent planned to study chemistry, and 42 percent were interested in physics. Among the 6.9 percent planning on a major in social sciences, 20 percent were interested in social work, 40 percent in pre-law. Over nine percent of the prospective students were interested strictly in trade courses. Of these, 24 percent wanted to study auto mechanics, 19 percent wanted courses in drafting, and 14 percent planned to enroll in a cosmetology program.

The results presented in Table 16 show the intended areas of study, crosstabulated by sex.

These students still follow some of the traditional sex role patterns in their choice of career-oriented subjects, with women tending to enroll in health, business, and education courses, and men in

agriculture and trade occupations. In academic areas such as humanities and arts, social sciences, biological sciences, and mathematics, however, there is a more even male/female balance.

Table 16

Seniors' Intended Area of Study by Sex Category

Area of Study	Female		Male	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculture	112	2.4	341	8.7
Biological Sciences	75	1.6	78	2.0
Business	1126	23.9	566	14.4
Education	353	7.5	112	2.8
Health Related	856	18.1	269	6.8
Home Economics	152	3.2	14	.4
Humanities and Arts	477	10.1	284	7.2
Mathematics	178	3.8	215	5.5
Physical Sciences	62	1.3	155	3.9
Social Services	361	7.7	229	5.8
Technical	453	9.6	862	21.9
Trade and Industrial	235	5.0	571	14.5
Did not know	278	5.9	246	6.2
Total	4718	100.0	3942	100.0
Missing Cases	2371	---	---	---

In analyzing prospective community college enrollments by area of study and race (Table 17) it can be observed that interest in business

Table 17

Seniors' Intended Area of Study by Race Category

Area of Study	American Indian		Asian		Black		Hispanic		White	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Agriculture	12	6.8	1	1.1	30	2.9	11	5.9	390	5.5
Biological Sciences	2	1.1	3	3.4	11	1.1	3	1.6	132	1.9
Business	25	14.2	16	18.0	241	23.6	33	17.7	1369	19.3
Education	11	6.3	4	4.5	71	6.9	10	5.4	364	5.1
Health Related	18	10.2	11	12.4	122	11.9	28	15.1	934	13.2
Home Economics	3	1.7	--	--	52	5.1	3	1.6	107	1.5
Humanities & Arts	14	8.0	5	5.6	61	6.0	19	10.2	654	9.2
Mathematics	6	3.4	10	11.2	69	6.7	8	4.3	296	4.2
Physical Sciences	5	2.8	4	4.5	10	1.0	4	2.2	190	2.7
Social Sciences	13	7.4	8	9.0	67	6.5	11	5.9	488	6.9
Technical	26	14.8	17	19.1	149	14.6	32	17.2	1074	15.1
Trade & Industrial	30	17.0	6	6.7	87	8.5	15	8.1	657	9.3
Did not know	11	6.3	4	4.5	53	5.2	9	4.8	443	6.2
Total	176	100.0	89	100.0	1023	100.0	186	100.0	7098	100.0
Missing	2459	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

and technical courses was high among people of all races (see Table 16).
Blacks in particular showed a strong interest in business courses.
Hispanics and Asian students were strongly attracted to technical courses,
perhaps indicating that people who are not native English-speakers feel
more comfortable in "hands on" courses. Asians were also attracted to

business and academic subjects. Whites showed a strong interest pattern in business, health-related, and technical subjects, but little interest in home economics.

Special Needs

As this study shows, the young people entering Florida's junior colleges are strongly career-oriented, and in many cases will be combining work and school. Furthermore, they are looking for a good education, not a free ride. Consequently, the students exhibit a strong interest in special help programs, and also have special scheduling needs.

Over 55 percent said they wanted special help in developing good study techniques. Forty-six percent said they wanted help to increase math skills, and 41 percent said they wanted help improving reading speed and comprehension. Thirty-nine percent wanted help to increase their writing skills (see Table 18).

Table 18

Students' Desire for Special Help from Community College

Special Help Desired	Yes		No		Do Not Know		Missing Cases
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Reading Speed and Comprehension	4142	41.5	4931	48.4	904	9.1	1054
Math Skills	4573	45.6	4686	46.8	764	7.6	1008
Writing Skills	3863	39.0	5248	53.0	784	7.9	1136
Study Techniques	5478	55.1	3751	37.8	707	7.1	1095
Finding Employment	4412	44.3	4718	47.4	827	8.3	1074

These results suggest that this prospective community college population feels a real need for skills development in general, and for a study skills program in particular. Planners should consider offering a survey course in study techniques either as part of an orientation program, or as a credit course recommended for all incoming freshmen.

In addition to academic help, many of the students wanted community college assistance in finding full or part-time employment.

Since so many of the respondents plan to work at least part-time, the study results suggest that essential classes be scheduled relatively early in the day. Over 78 percent of the students expressed a preference for morning classes (see Table 19), and about half said afternoon classes would not inconvenience them. Fully 72 percent said they definitely did not want late afternoon classes. The needs of the students who work afternoons and evenings, however, must be balanced

Table 19

Class Scheduling Preferences of Prospective Junior College Students

Class Time	Yes		No		Do Not Know		Missing
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Cases
Mornings	7487	78.2	1547	16.2	543	5.7	9557
Afternoons	3995	48.0	3603	43.3	731	8.8	8329
Late Afternoons	1452	17.9	5872	72.3	795	9.8	2912
Evenings	2095	25.1	5490	65.8	764	9.2	8349
Weekends	376	4.6	7166	88.4	560	6.9	2929
Prefer Off-Campus Classes	1847	21.3	3392	40.9	2858	35.5	--

against those of the 25 percent who plan to work in the daytime and prefer evening classes. Clearly, considerable flexibility in scheduling is required. It should be noted that many students prefer off-campus classes (21.3%).

Recruiting New Students

As this study shows, the best recruiting "draw" of Florida's community colleges is their convenient location and the kinds of programs they offer. But the results also suggest other techniques that may be of value in attracting new students.

As Table 20 shows, many high school graduates are interested in further "outreach" activities from the community college, such as campus tours, visits from community college recruiters, and so forth. In addition, 3190 of the students surveyed did not know that financial aid is available from community colleges. Clearly, many qualified students may be passing up an opportunity to continue their education because they are not aware that they could get financial help.

Another positive factor in the views of many prospective community college students is the presence of international students on the campus. As shown in Table 21, 65 percent of the respondents said they would like to attend classes with foreign students, and 44 percent thought the presence of foreign students on campus enhanced the quality of the institution. Ninety-seven percent of the respondents were American citizens, so their interest in meeting people from other cultures suggests a value in making community colleges more attractive to foreign students.

Table 20

Seniors' Opinions/Knowledge of Local Community Colleges

	Will Attend CC Percent			Will Not Attend Percent			Total Frequency			Total Percent		
	Yes	No	Do Not Know	Yes	No	Do Not Know	Yes	No	Do Not Know	Yes	No	Do Not Know
Does Community College Offer Financial Aid	58.4	3.8	37.8	76.5	1.3	22.2	6621	285	3185	65.6	2.8	31.6
Have You Visited Local Community College	68.2	26.8	5.0	80.6	18.2	1.2	7404	2369	355	73.1	23.4	3.5
Desire Tour of Local Community College	36.9	53.9	9.2	69.1	25.4	5.5	5020	4292	778	49.8	42.5	7.7
Desire High School Visit from Community College Personnel	43.6	45.1	11.4	79.5	14.0	6.5	5841	3295	950	57.9	32.7	9.4

90

Table 21

Interest of Prospective Community College Students in

Attending Classes with Students from Other Countries

Opinion	Yes		No		Do Not Know	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Would enjoy attending with foreign students	6321	64.5	1627	16.6	1846	18.8
Foreign students enhance quality	4346	44.2	3750	38.1	1744	17.7

Summary and Conclusions

Florida's community colleges attract a wide variety of students from many different ethnic backgrounds. About half the students plan to work toward at least a bachelor's degree, and the rest are interested in trade and technical programs leading to specific careers. Their responses indicated a high degree of ambition and their desire to get what they consider a "quality" education, and to improve their academic skills.

Recruiters, however, should be aware that more attention needs to be given to black students, who are somewhat underrepresented among prospective entering classes at the community colleges. More work needs to be done to let students in general know about financial aid possibilities. The large number of working students among the entering class suggests a flexible approach to scheduling, and some consideration should be given to holding some classes in off-campus locations accessible to students from outlying areas. Some thought should also be given to the possibility of recruiting foreign students.

Attitudes and Opinions of Florida High School Seniors

Toward Community Colleges

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Introduction

The primary clientele of most community colleges is still the
traditional college age group. Although many in this group do not
enroll, full time, in the community college immediately following high
school graduation, a large percentage can be found enrolled. This
recognition of the importance of serving graduating seniors, and the
desire to meet their educational needs, lead to the design of this
study.

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study were (1) to determine the post high
school educational needs of high school seniors, and (2) to determine
their views on a variety of community college issues.

Procedure

A total of ten community colleges elected to participate in this
study. These colleges were part of a research consortium, The Florida
Community/Junior College Inter-Institutional Research Council (IRC)
administered through the Institute of Higher Education, University of
Florida. Table 1 shows these colleges, and the number of seniors in
each service area included in the study.

Each IRC college provided a representative who assisted in the
design of the survey instrument and arranged for administering the