



**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA ST. PETERSBURG**

**Alumni Survey**

# USF St. Petersburg Alumni Survey: Preliminary Write-up

## Findings as of 1/20/09

### Executive Summary

This preliminary report is based on analysis of select items from one hundred surveys. Findings suggest that USF St. Petersburg graduates are successful as measured by the large proportion of respondents that are employed or are continuing their education. 71% of respondents indicated that they were employed; 7% indicated they were continuing their education; and 13% indicated they were employed and continuing their education. Only 4% of respondents indicated that they were unemployed at this time.

A second measure of student success is that 79% of respondents indicated that USFSP had prepared them for their occupation at “least adequately or very well;” and 59% of respondents indicated that their major was “moderately or highly related” to their occupation.

The Alumni Survey also included questions relating to general education; and preliminary findings suggest that USF St. Petersburg has contributed to student success in general education areas such as: English Composition, Social Sciences, and Critical Thinking Skills. Findings however also suggest some slight weaknesses in Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Fine Arts.

Lastly, the survey includes items relating to institutional success; as 90% of respondents indicated that USFSP was their 1<sup>st</sup> choice for a university and 81% indicated that if they could start over, they would again choose USFSP.

### Background

The USF St. Petersburg Alumni Survey utilized a paper-and-pencil instrument developed by ACT, Inc. (American College Testing, Inc.). Students were sent a first-class mailing during the first week in December 2008. A follow-up reminder was sent electronically during the first week of January 2009. The Standard Error (SE) resulting from the adjusted response rate is  $\pm 9.5\%$ .

Campus specific data became available for USF St. Petersburg graduates beginning in spring 2005. Through summer 2008, the number of USFSP graduates totaled 2,890. Of these, 465 (16.1%) completed graduate degrees and 2,425 (83.9%) completed undergraduate degrees. Please see Table 1 for a distribution of total USFSP graduates by Academic Year (AY); where each AY includes fall, spring and summer semesters.

Table 1  
Distribution of Total USFSP Graduates by Academic Year (AY)

Degree	AY 0405*	AY0506	AY0607	AY0708	Total
Graduate	85	122	136	122	465
Undergraduate	384	679	668	694	2,425
Total	469	801	804	816	2,890

Note:

\*AY0405 includes only spring 2005 and summer 2005.

## Sample and Instrument

The instrument selected for use in this study was the ACT, Inc. product: “Alumni Survey,” a paper and pencil survey that is suitable for use by four-year universities. The first-class survey package was mailed during the first week in December 2008 and included a persuasion letter from the Regional Chancellor, an Alumni Survey, and a postage-paid business-reply envelope.

The proposed survey window was December 2008 through January 2009. A follow-up contact was scheduled for early-January with the contingency that depending on response rates—a second follow-up might be required. The follow-up contact was sent in electronic form during the first week in January. An analysis of survey response rates for both contacts suggests that non-response rates would persist regardless of additional contacts. The survey will close at the end of January; and at that time, responses will be bundled and sent to an ACT, Inc. data center for processing and analysis. It is anticipated that the Alumni Survey dataset will be available to USFSP in early-March 2009.

As such, a preliminary analysis of select items on the survey was hand-tallied by the IR Office in order to issue this report for use by campus decision-makers. Based on the distribution of graduates by semester, it was determined that a reasonable sample draw would include graduates in AY0607 and AY0708 for a total of 1,620 students. After eliminating duplicate records (students received undergraduate and graduate degrees) and records that contained no contact information, the adjusted sample totaled 1,541.

## Response Rates and Standard Error Calculations

To date, 1/20/09, there have only been five surveys returned to the IR Office as “Non-deliverable” which reduces the usable sample size from 1,541 to 1,536. Surveys were received from 100 respondents for an adjusted response rate of 6.5% response rate which represents a Standard Error (SE) of  $\pm 9.5\%$ . To reach an SE of  $\pm 5.0\%$ ; 307 responses or a 20% response rate would be required. For perspective, a 10% response rate (N=153) would only improve the SE to  $\pm 7.5\%$ .

## Preliminary Findings

General Education at USF St. Petersburg includes nine areas: English Composition; Quantitative Methods; Natural Sciences; Social Sciences; Historical Perspectives; Fine Arts; ALAMEA (African, Latin American, Middle Eastern or Asian Perspectives); Major Works and Issues; and Literature and Writing. The ACT Alumni Survey includes twenty-four items that typically relate to general education issues; and of these twenty-four items, seven relate directly to areas of USF St. Petersburg’s General Education program.

Table 2 subsets the seven survey items that relate more directly to areas of USF St. Petersburg’s General Education program. In all but one of the seven items relating to general education, between 67% and 90% of respondents indicated that USF St. Petersburg had contributed “somewhat or very much” to their personal growth in these areas. However, 42% of respondents

indicated that USF St. Petersburg had contributed “very little” to: “Understanding and applying mathematics in your daily activities.”

Table 2  
Subset of Alumni Survey Items Relating to USF St. Petersburg General Education Area

How much did your education at USF St. Petersburg contribute to your personal growth in each of the following areas?	Very Much		Somewhat		Very Little	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>USFSP GE Area: English Composition</i>						
Writing effectively	56	56.0	34	34.0	10	10.0
<i>USFSP GE Area: Quantitative Methods</i>						
Understanding graphic information	20	20.2	47	47.5	32	32.3
Understanding, applying mathematics in your daily activities	21	21.2	36	36.4	42	42.4
<i>USFSP GE Area: Social Sciences</i>						
Understanding different philosophies and cultures	46	46.5	39	39.4	14	14.1
Understanding the interaction of people and their environment	51	51.0	36	36.0	13	13.0
<i>USFSP GE Area: Fine Arts</i>						
Understanding and appreciating the arts	29	29.3	37	37.3	33	33.3
<i>USFSP GE Area: Natural Sciences</i>						
Understanding and applying scientific principles and methods	27	27.0	41	41.0	32	32.0

Analyses of additional select variables are found in [Table 3](#).

Table 3  
Select Variables by Screening Question: Number of Years Since Graduation

Year(s) since graduation:	< 1 Yr		1 Yr		≥ 2 Yrs		Total	
Section III, Q. A.								
Your rating of this college at the time you applied for admission								
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1 <sup>st</sup> Choice	30		33		27		90	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Choice	1		4		4		9	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Choice	0		0		1		1	
4 <sup>th</sup> or Lower Choice	0		0		0		0	
Total	31		37		32		100	100.0
Section III, Q. B.								
If you could start college over, would you choose to attend this college?								
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Definitely yes	16		20		16		52	
Probably yes	6		11		12		29	
Uncertain	4		2		1		7	
Probably no	4		2		2		8	
Definitely no	1		2		1		4	
Total	31		37		32		100	100.0

Section III, Q. E.

Regardless of the financial benefits, has your college education improved the quality of your life?

	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Definitely yes	20		23		17		60	
Probably yes	6		8		12		26	
Uncertain	4		4		2		10	
Probably no	1		1		1		3	
Definitely no	0		0		0		0	
Total	31		36		32		99	100.0

Section IV, Q. A

Which of the following describes what you are currently doing?

	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Employed Full time	14		22		27		64	
Employed Part time	1		2		0		3	
Self-employed	3		1		0		4	
In the Armed Forces	0		1		1		2	
Continuing my education	5		2		1		7	
Emplyd and contin educ	2		8		3		14	
Caring for a home/family	2		0		0		2	
Unemployed	3		0		1		4	
Other	0		0		0		0	
Total	30		36		33		100	100.0

Section IV, Q. D.

What was your annual salary/income in the first job you held after college?

	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
\$9,999 or less	3		2		1		5	
10,000 – 14,999	1		4		0		5	
15,000 – 19,999	3		0		0		3	
20,000 – 29,999	4		8		8		20	
30,000 – 39,999	6		8		10		25	
40,000 – 49,999	2		5		5		12	
50,000 – 59,999	1		1		5		6	
60,000 – 74,999	0		0		0		0	
75,000 – 99,999	0		1		0		1	
100,000 – 124,999	1		0		0		1	
125,000 – 149,999	1		0		0		1	
150,000 or more	0		0		0		0	
Total	22		29		29		79	100.0

Section IV, Q. K.

What is your current annual salary/income?

	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
\$9,999 or less	2		0		0		2	
10,000 – 14,999	2		4		1		7	
15,000 – 19,999	3		1		1		5	
20,000 – 29,999	2		7		2		11	
30,000 – 39,999	5		8		9		22	
40,000 – 49,999	2		4		7		13	
50,000 – 59,999	2		5		3		10	
60,000 – 74,999	1		0		4		5	
75,000 – 99,999	0		1		0		1	
100,000 – 124,999	1		0		0		1	
125,000 – 149,999	1		0		0		1	
150,000 or more	0		0		0		0	

Total	21	30	27	78	100.0
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Section IV, Q. L.

How well did this college prepare you for your present occupation?

	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Very well	9		17		8		34	
Adequately	10		5		16		31	
Poorly	1		2		0		3	
Not at all	2		9		6		17	
Total	22		33		30		85	100.0

Section IV, Q. M.

How closely related is your current occupation to your major at this college?

	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Highly related	10		14		11		35	
Moderately related	4		4		7		15	
Slightly related	3		9		4		16	
Not related	6		6		8		20	
Total	23		33		30		86	100.0