



**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA ST. PETERSBURG**

**Employer Survey**

# Employer Survey Write-up

## USF St. Petersburg

### Executive Summary

USF St. Petersburg administered its first Employer Survey in Spring 2009. Employers were asked to rate graduates' skills, knowledge or abilities within the five areas of USF St. Petersburg's general education program. In addition, employers were also asked if specific areas of general education were important to their industry sector.

The overwhelming majority of respondents indicated that USF St. Petersburg graduates possessed high levels of communication skills and quantitative skills but did not seem to possess the same high levels of skills in the social sciences. Perhaps more of a reflection of survey respondents, the areas of natural sciences, history and fine arts were not deemed as applicable to the career of our graduates.

### Background

In order to assess student learning, question stems that could be answered via Likert-scale responses were developed for each to assess knowledge, skills and abilities for each student learning outcome within the

Findings from the NSSE can be used for many purposes however the emphasis of this report is general education. Responses by freshmen and seniors are compared on a bank of sixteen questions relating to knowledge, skills and personal development resulting from general education. Responses are collected via Likert-scale, so USF St. Petersburg group mean responses can be compared with national responses.

### Findings

Table 1 focuses on the subset of items that relate to USF St. Petersburg. In order to facilitate comparison, response categories have been collapsed from four to two. On Item #1: Acquiring a broad general education – the overwhelming response by freshmen and seniors, across four years, is that the institution contributed “quite a bit or very much” to their knowledge, skills and personal development in this area. In contrast, on Items #12 and #13, responses for freshmen and seniors across all years are split evenly by response categories. Students indicated that the institution did not overwhelmingly contribute to their knowledge, skills or personal development in “Understanding people of other racial and ethnic groups” and “Solving complex real world problems.” Detailed responses to the sixteen general education items including average mean scores which can be used to compare to national statistics are reported in Appendix 1.

Table 1  
Items Relating to USF St. Petersburg's General Education

	SA or A	D or SD	Not Applicable
<b>In English, USF St. Pete graduates...</b>			
Demonstrate the ability to communicate appropriately with intended audiences	100%		
Demonstrate abilities in analytical writing and critical thinking	100%		
Demonstrate the ability to use feedback to improve communication	100%		
Demonstrate the ability to use a variety of media for communication purposes	100%		
These <u>English Skills</u> are important to my Industry	100%		
<b>In Mathematics, USF St. Pete graduates...</b>			
Demonstrate the ability to use mathematics to solve everyday problems	91%		9%
Demonstrate the ability to understand mathematical information that is numeric, graphic or symbolic	91%		9%
Demonstrate the ability to interpret mathematical findings used to answer questions	91%		9%
These <u>Mathematics Skills</u> are important to my Industry	91%		9%
<b>In Natural Sciences, USF St. Pete graduates...</b>			
Appreciate and understand the scientific method of inquiry	27%		73%
Demonstrate knowledge of the models that scientists use to make judgments about the natural world	27%		73%
Demonstrate knowledge of how natural sciences relate to societal issues including ethics	27%		73%
These <u>Natural Sciences Skills</u> are important to my Industry	18%	27%	55%
<b>In Social Sciences, USF St. Pete graduates...</b>			
Demonstrate knowledge of the methods that social scientists use to understand the human condition	55%	18%	27%
Demonstrate knowledge of the role of social factors (race, age, gender, etc.) in human interaction	73%	9%	18%
Demonstrate awareness of the ethical dimensions of human behavior	82%		18%
These <u>Social Sciences Skills</u> are important to my Industry	82%		18%
<b>In History, USF St. Pete graduates...</b>			
Demonstrate an awareness of the influence of civilizations, societies and cultures on the contemporary world	36%		64%
Demonstrate the ability to place historical events in context and construct historical arguments	36%		64%
These <u>History Skills</u> are important to my Industry	27%	18%	55%
<b>In Fine Arts, USF St. Pete graduates...</b>			
Demonstrate an appreciation of social, historical, cultural, and intellectual contexts of works of creative art	36%	9%	55%
Demonstrate an appreciation of the tradition and achievement of the creative process	45%		55%
Demonstrate awareness of the relationship of the fine arts to everyday life	36%	9%	55%
These <u>Fine Arts Skills</u> are important to my Industry	27%	9%	64%

Response categories are collapsed: Strongly Agree or Agree; Disagree or Strongly Disagree; and Not Applicable.

## Discussion

Responses suggest that USF St. Petersburg is consistently contributing to students' knowledge, skills and personal development in general education. However, two response categories may suggest areas of institutional concern. Students indicated that the institution did not overwhelmingly contribute to their knowledge, skills or personal development in "understanding people of other racial and ethnic groups" nor in "solving complex real world problems."

## Actions Taken

These findings have been forwarded to the GE Committee for discussion by GE Taskforces.