

2015 Career and Technical Program Graduate Survey Overview for FY 2014 Graduates

The Career and Technical Program Graduate Survey is conducted annually by all Illinois community colleges. The ICCB requests survey results for specific career and technical programs on a five-year review cycle, and requests a 50% response rate for the graduates of those programs. The ICCB collects and aggregates the survey data and reports on the findings. Illinois Central College's response rate for FY 2014 career and technical program graduates designated for collection by the ICCB was **50.30%**. However, it is important to note that in an effort to enhance the program review efforts of all of the college's career and technical programs, the Office of Institutional Research annually surveys *each* program's graduates. The overall response rate for FY 2014 career and technical graduates was **42.40%**.

Method

Career and technical program graduates are surveyed six months following completion of the term during which they received their credential(s). July graduates are surveyed the following January, December graduates the following June, and May graduates the following November. This allows for greater comparability among graduates with respect to employment and educational status, as well as the distance from which they assess the college's programs and services, among other variables. FY 2014 includes summer 2013, fall 2013, and spring 2014 graduates.

The Office of Institutional Research provides the survey materials, which include a paper-based survey, a standard cover letter, and a postage-paid envelope. Program coordinators are invited to personalize the cover letter and include a program-specific survey with the mailing, if they so choose. Graduates who return completed surveys prior to the response deadline are entered into a random drawing for incentive prizes. The survey is mailed to non-responders up to three times. For FY 2014, the Office of Institutional Research mailed 1037 total surveys, of which 1007 were deemed deliverable and 427 (42.40% of deliverable surveys) were returned.

Response Rates

Meeting the 50% response rate requested by the ICCB has become a greater challenge over time for community colleges statewide. At ICC, response rates for all programs have decreased approx. 10 percentage points since FY 2010, falling steadily from 52.21% to 42.40% in FY 2014 (Exhibit 1). Response rates for ICCB required programs show greater variability from year to year, although an upward trend is evident due to our efforts to get responses from ICCB requested graduates (Exhibit 2). Response rates statewide have remained fairly flat over the past five years, and have failed to meet the 50% mark for five out of the past ten years.

Many variables may influence whether or not students respond to surveys. These include attitudinal characteristics, such as interest in the topic at hand¹. Survey fatigue may also play a role; students appear to be growing weary of requests for "just a few moments" of their time. However, data collected from surveys are often a key component of improvement processes at any institution. While low response rates do not necessarily mean that results are not representative and cannot be generalized to the population, the downward trend and the causes of it are a concern.

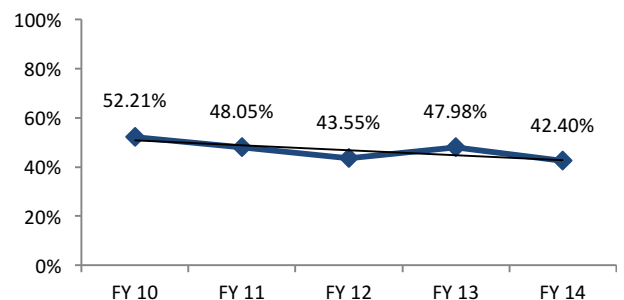


Exhibit 1. Response rates at ICC, all programs

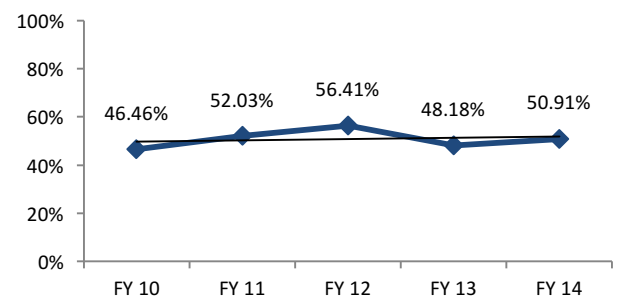


Exhibit 2. Response rates at ICC, ICCB required programs

¹ Rogelberg, S.G., & Luong, A. (1998). Nonresponse to Mailed Surveys: A Review and Guide. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 7, 60-65.

Results

Primary Attendance Objective and Academic Goal

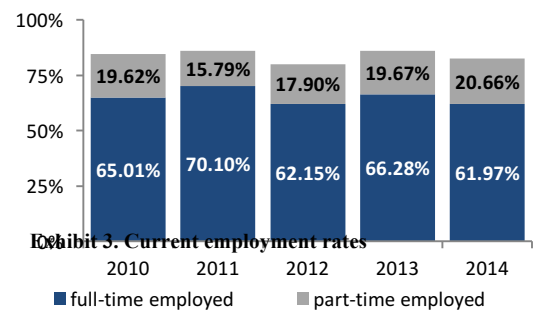
The majority of respondents (73.07%; N= 312) indicated that they attended ICC to obtain skills needed for entry into a new or different job. These percentages have remained stable for several administrations of the survey, varying between 72% and 75% since FY 2010. Nearly all respondents (97.66%; N = 417) agreed that they achieved their primary academic goal(s) while at ICC; more than 76% (N = 326) strongly agreed. Since this question was added to the survey in FY 2007, the percentage of agreement has consistently ranged between 96% and 98% but fell slightly (.18%) this past year.

Current Educational Status

The percentage of respondents enrolled in college courses at the time that they completed the survey fell slightly from last year's all-time high of 34.83%. This year, 34.12% (N = 145) reported being currently enrolled in a field of study either related or unrelated to their previous ICC program. This percentage has ranged between 28% and 35% since FY10.

Current Employment Status

Employment Rates and Status. Employment rates have decreased during the past year to 82.44% (N=352); with a 5 year range between 80% and 86%. FY 2014 employment rates have seen a slight shift between full-time and part-time employment. (Exhibit 3) Part-time employment increased another .24% in FY 2014 and were back at 5 year highs. The percentage of respondents employed full-time decreased 3.75 percentage points to 62.53% (N = 267) compared to last year. Over the past five years, full-time employment rates have ranged between 62 and 70%.



Unemployment Rates. Unemployment rates for FY 2014 respondents seeking employment increased during the year to 8.67% (N = 37). This percentage reversed the decrease in unemployment seen last year and is slightly below the 5 year average of 8.74%. Of the 8.67% (N = 37) who were unemployed and *not* seeking employment, the majority (43.2%; N = 16) were full-time students while the remainder had health issues or other family responsibilities.

Job Relatedness. A little over 76% (N = 270) of employed respondents reported having a job related to their ICC program of study, slightly down from last year. Since FY 2010, this percentage has ranged between 76% and 77%. Of the 23.51% (N = 83) with a job unrelated to their program of study, 24.10% (N = 20) could not find a job in their field of preparation which was down over 6% from last year. The majority of the rest found a temporary job while in transition (20.48%) or either preferred to work in another field or found a better paying job in another field.

Job Satisfaction. Respondents were asked to rate job satisfaction on a four-point scale (4 = very satisfied; 1 = very dissatisfied). FY 2014 respondents rated job satisfaction at 3.13; up .01 from the prior year. Within the past five years, ratings were lowest in FY 2010 at 3.04 and peaked at 3.19 in FY 2011.

Hours per Week/Rate of Pay. Employed respondents worked an average of over 35.4 hours per week, excluding overtime. At \$15.83, the rate of pay was below the five-year average of \$16.08 per hour.

Job Location. Over 79% (N = 275) of respondents remained within the ICC district to work, a decrease of nearly 4 percentage points compared to FY 2013 (which was at the highest % for the past five years). Since FY 2010, this percentage has ranged between 79% and

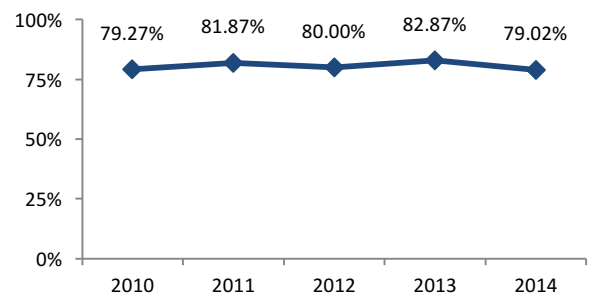


Exhibit 4. Graduates working within the district

83% (Exhibit 4). The rest of the students found work outside the district but within Illinois (15.5%, a 3.37% increase) while the rest found work outside Illinois (5.5%, a .49% increase).

Each year, it is important to make note of the percentage of graduates who remain within the district to work. These graduates enhance the well-being of all residents by contributing to the pool of workforce skills, adding to the tax base, reducing the burden on social services and the levels of publicly supported subsidies, and increasing the overall level of economic activity through purchases of goods and services.

Programs and Services Assessment

Average ratings for programs and services assessment are based on a four-point satisfaction scale (4 = very satisfied; 1 = very dissatisfied). Each year, respondents are **most satisfied** with **the content of courses taken within their program**. Since FY 2010, ratings have ranged between 3.64 and 3.74. Respondents are consistently **least satisfied** with **information on current employment opportunities and trends**. Average ratings had been climbing, peaking at 3.26 in FY 2013. However, the following year, the average rating fell back to 3.19; which is still slightly higher than the 5 year average of 3.16. (Exhibit 5).

Outside of their program, respondents are consistently **most satisfied** with **equipment, facilities, and materials**. The average rating for this item has ranged from 3.40 to 3.52 for the last five years. Respondents are also consistently **least satisfied** with **job preparation**, although the average rating for FY 2014 was at a five-year high of 3.22. Average ratings for this item have ranged from 3.01 to 3.22 for the past five years.

<i>Within major program of study</i>		FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Most Satisfied	Content of courses in your program	3.64	3.64	3.69	3.74	3.68
Least Satisfied	Information on current employment opportunities and trends	3.10	3.16	3.09	3.26	3.19
<i>Outside of major program of study</i>		FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Most Satisfied	Equipment, facilities and materials	3.40	3.45	3.52	3.52	3.52
Least Satisfied	Job preparation	3.01	3.11	3.10	3.20	3.22

Exhibit 5. Most, least satisfied items pertaining to programs

Over 71% (N = 304) of respondents reported that they used **library/audiovisual services** and rated it the **most satisfactory** service taking into account the past three years scores. Averages for this item have ranged between 3.44 and 3.64 for the past five years. At 3.56, **tutoring services** ranked as next among the **most satisfactory** of services using the past three years scores. Tutoring was up 0.03 points higher than FY 2013. At nearly 85% (N = 362), **academic advising** was the **most used** service with a satisfaction rating of 3.47, up .03 points from last year and at its peak compared to the past 5 years.

For FY 2014, it is important to note that while some programs and services were rated lower than others, none were rated lower than a 3, which represents “somewhat satisfied” on the rating scale. Regarding services, for example, the 3.25 average that **college transfer planning** earned is not a poor rating and it did rebound .09 from the prior year; although it is still the lowest rated service taking into account the past three years. **Career planning services** was rated 2nd lowest at 3.28, and fell .05 when compared to the prior year. (Exhibit 6).

		FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Most Satisfied	1) Library/Audiovisual Services	3.44	3.53	3.61	3.64	3.55
	2) Tutoring	3.41	3.35	3.41	3.53	3.56
Least Satisfied	1) College Transfer Planning	2.96	3.22	3.03	3.16	3.25
	2) Career Planning	3.21	3.15	3.10	3.33	3.28

Exhibit 6. Most, least satisfied items pertaining to services

Questions or comments? Please contact the Office of Institutional Research at (309) 694-8590 or at InstResearch@icc.edu.