



VENTURA COLLEGE
TITLE V – HSI *VELOCIDAD* GRANT
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
GRANT AWARD NUMBER: P031S120073-14

**A SURVEY TO
EXPLORE THE COMMONALITY
OF STUDENT EXPERIENCES
AT VENTURA COLLEGE**

PART A
◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
THE FIRST OF TWO REPORTS ON SURVEY RESULTS

PRESENTED TO
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A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

■ **INTRODUCTION**

In spring 2014, Chelsea Guillermo-Wann, Ph.D., the qualitative research analyst at Ventura College, undertook a study to chronicle the direct experiences of students related to their enrollment at VC. The study addressed both matriculation (student services) and classroom experiences. These college-related experiences were obtained through focus group sessions and interviews with twenty-seven (27) Ventura College students. Many of the reported experiences were constructive and they exerted positive influences on the overall success of the individual students. However, there were also experiences which were detrimental to student achievement and their attitudes toward the institution.

Dr. Guillermo-Wann documented her findings in “Students’ Voices on Success at Ventura College.” Embedded in that report are many direct quotations of perceptions and experiences voiced by students during focus group interactions or interviews. This survey is a follow-up to Dr. Guillermo-Wann’s study.

The **purpose** of the survey is to determine the extent to which the quotations in Dr. Guillermo-Wann’s report are reflective of the attitudes of other Ventura College students. Each quotation is associated with one of The RP Group’s “Six Factors that Support Student Achievement”, that is:

- Directed** Students have a goal and know how to achieve it
- Focused** Students stay on track, keeping their eyes on the prize
- Nurtured** Students feel somebody wants and helps them to succeed
- Engaged** Students actively participate in class and extracurriculars
- Connected** Students feel like they are part of the college community
- Valued** Students’ skills, talents, abilities, and experiences are recognized; they have opportunities to contribute on campus and feel their contributions are appreciated

Fourteen (14) of the quotations from Dr. Guillermo-Wann’s report served as the basis for the surveys. Because most of the quotations were relatively lengthy, they were edited into more succinct versions. Rather than assemble **one** large survey with all fourteen quotations, **two** shorter surveys were created and administered to **two** separate student groups. This report presents the findings for **Survey A**. Findings for **Survey B** are published in a separate report.

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A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

■ ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES

Question A-1

“My perception of community college has been that it’s almost a stepping stone towards transferring to a university, but many get lost in that process. So in other words, it would almost be like sort of a trap, unless you can manage to get out of that trap and almost steer yourself by your own independent ways and be able to make it as far as going towards a university.”

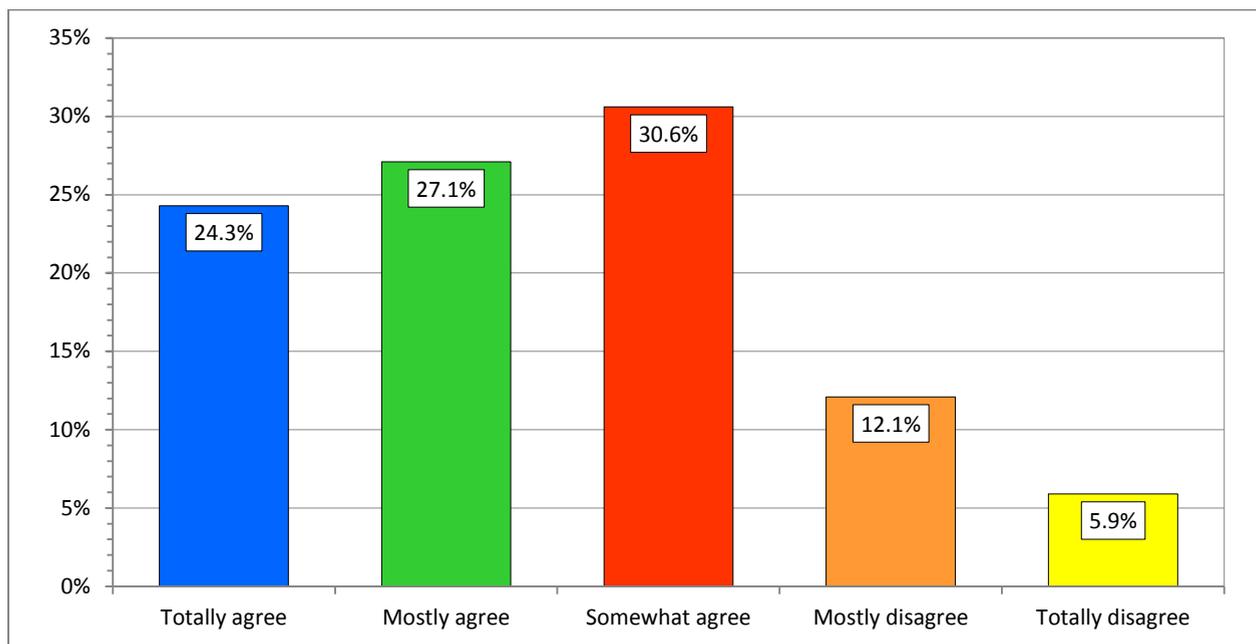
► To what extent do you agree with the above statement?

Success Factor: Directed

Desired Result: A high percentage of “totally disagree” or “mostly disagree.”

Actual Result: Only 18% of the respondents “totally disagree” or “mostly disagree.”

Interpretation: Respondents perceive VC as providing preparation for university transfer; however, students must navigate the institution on their own without a firm sense of direction.



Question A-1. Distribution of Survey Respondents

Response Category	Respondents		Relevant Responses	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Totally agree	70	23.9%	70	24.3%
Mostly agree	78	26.6%	78	27.1%
Sub-total: Totally agree or Mostly agree	148	50.5%	148	51.4%
Somewhat agree	88	30.0%	88	30.6%
Mostly disagree	35	12.0%	35	12.1%
Totally disagree	17	5.8%	17	5.9%
Did not respond	5	1.7%	---	---
Totals	293	100.0%	288	100.0%

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Question A-2

“I think it was one of my English teachers. She really inspired me and made me feel good about different strengths that I had in that specific area of my education. And so I explored a little further into different majors, and that’s how I found my major and finalized it – from a teacher that kind of gave me inspiration to try to look for that.”

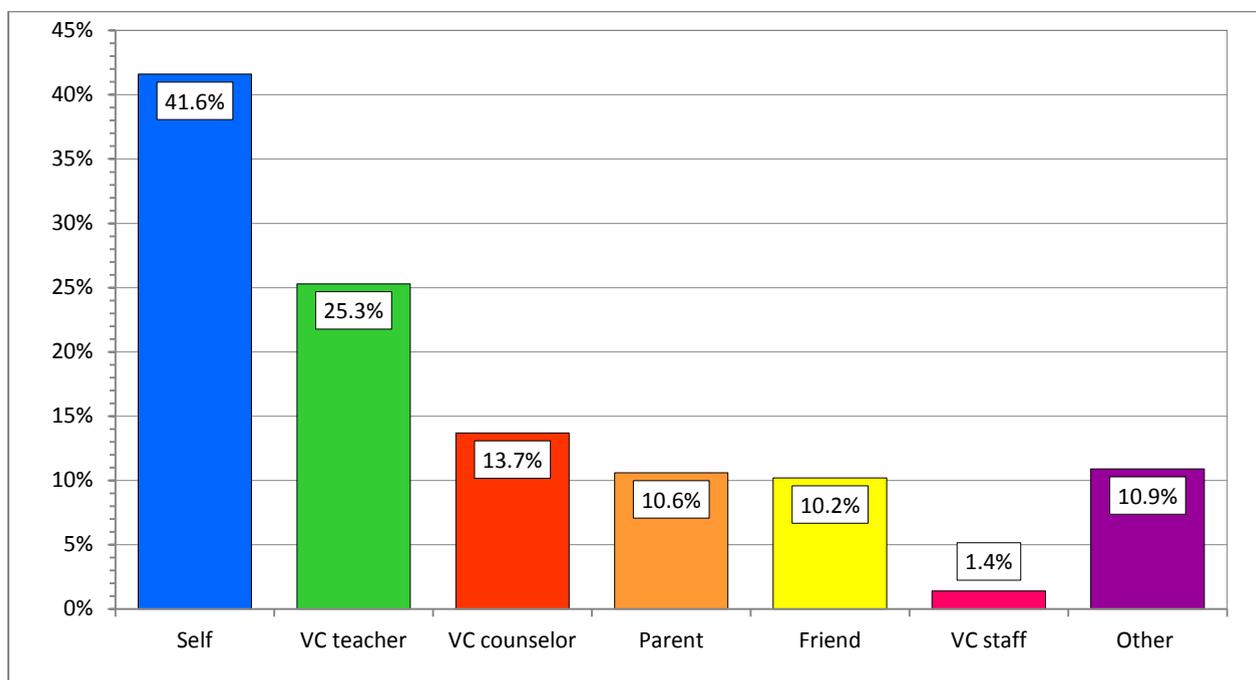
► What person, or persons, was most helpful to you in deciding on your VC major?

Success Factor: Directed

Desired Result: A **low** percentage of “I did it all by myself.”

Actual Result: Almost **42%** of the respondents “did it all by myself.”

Interpretation: Over **40%** of respondents chose a major without assistance; this uninformed choice can result in subsequent changes of major and a lack of true direction.



Question A-2. Distribution of Survey Respondents

Response Category	Respondents		Other Responses			
	Number	Percent	Response	No.	Response	No.
VC counselor	40	13.7%	HS teacher	7	HS project	1
VC teacher	74	25.3%	Unreported	4	Vocal coach	1
VC staff or administrator	4	1.4%	Spouse	3	Holistic club	1
My mother or my father	31	10.6%	EOPS	2	Aunt	1
Friend	30	10.2%	Therapist	2	Dentist	1
I did it all by myself	122	41.6%	No one	2	God	1
Other (please specify)	32	10.9%	Undecided	2	Various people	1
Did not respond	4	1.4%	Sibling	2	Softball coaches	1

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

Question A-3

“When I first came to this college, I didn’t really have guidance, I didn’t really have anybody telling me, ‘Ok, this is to help you reach your goal.’ I was lost, so that’s probably why I dropped out of college, and then I started working, and then four years later I come back, and finally I had a goal. It was all because, I started digging deep into myself; ‘This is not what I want to do forever, so that’s why I came back to school.’”

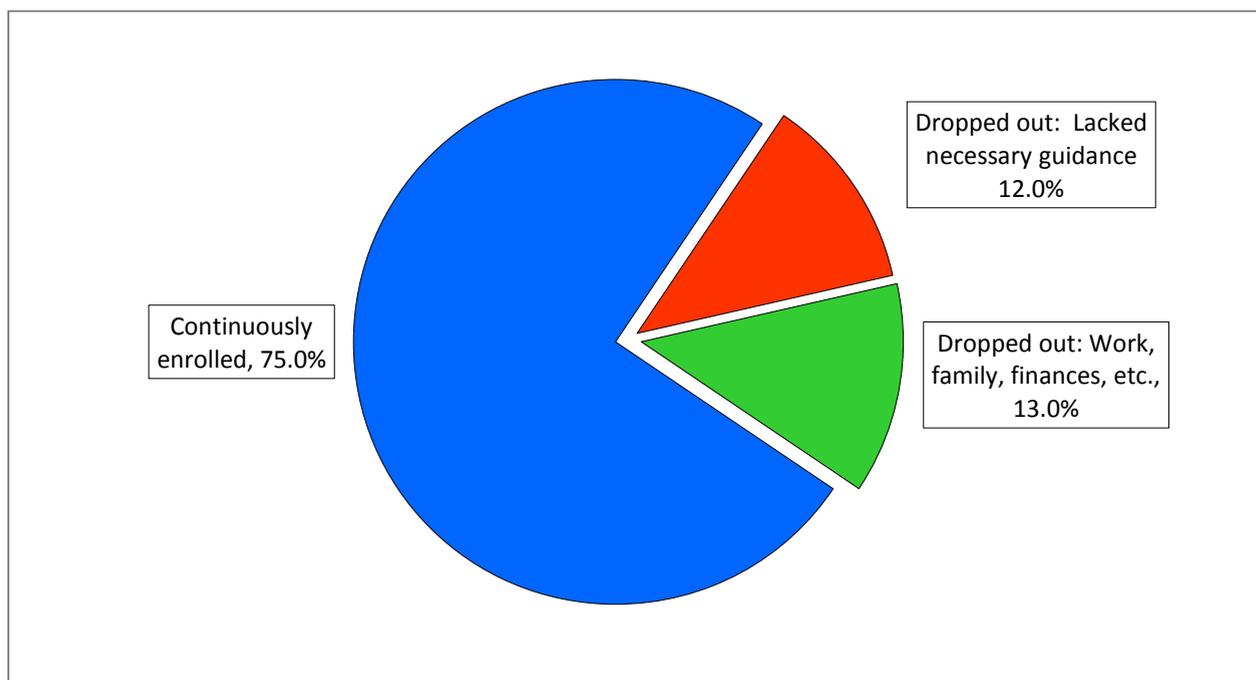
► Have you ever dropped out of VC (for two or more semesters)?

Success Factor: Focused

Desired Result: A **low** percentage of “Yes, I dropped out for lack of necessary guidance.”

Actual Result: About **12%** of all respondents were drop-outs due to lack of necessary guidance.

Interpretation: Almost **90%** of respondents were continuously enrolled **or** dropped out for **non-guidance** related reasons – i.e., most students were focused on their goal.



Question A-3. Distribution of Survey Respondents

Response Category	Respondents		Relevant Responses	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes, I dropped out: Lacked necessary guidance	34	11.6%	34	12.0%
Yes, I dropped out: Work, family, finances, etc.	37	12.6%	37	13.0%
No, I have been continuously enrolled	213	72.7%	213	75.0%
Did not respond	9	3.1%	---	---
Totals	293	100.0%	284	100.0%

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

Question A-4

“When I first came to this college, I didn’t really have guidance, I didn’t really have anybody telling me, ‘Ok, this is to help you reach your goal.’ I was lost, so that’s probably why I dropped out of college, and then I started working, and then four years later I come back, and finally I had a goal. It was all because, I started digging deep into myself; ‘This is not what I want to do forever, so that’s why I came back to school.”

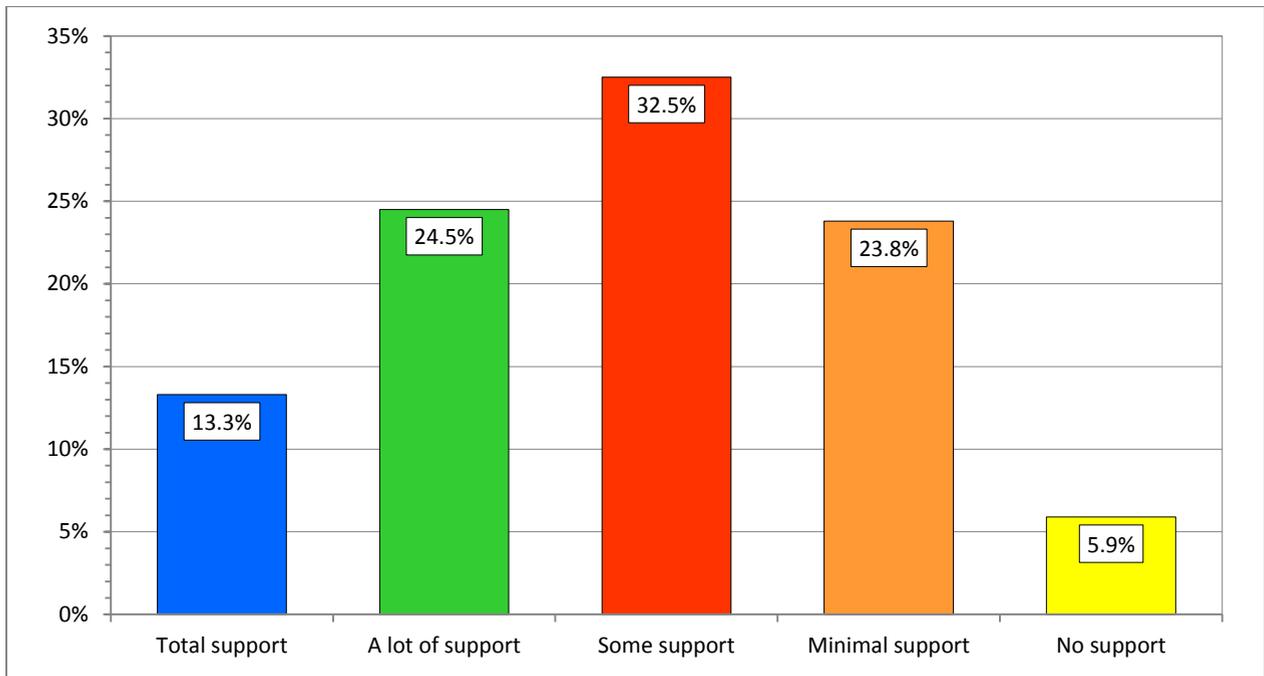
- ▶ To what extent has Ventura College provided you with the support (guidance or assistance) that you feel you need to achieve your educational goal?

Success Factor: Focused

Desired Result: A high percentage of “total support”, “a lot of support”, or “some support.”

Actual Result: Over **70%** answered “total support”, “a lot of support”, or “some support.”

Interpretation: Most respondents received the support necessary to remain focused on their goal.



Question A-4. Distribution of Survey Respondents

Response Category	Respondents		Relevant Responses	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total support	38	13.0%	38	13.3%
A lot of support	70	23.9%	70	24.5%
Some support	93	31.7%	93	32.5%
Sub-total: Total, a lot of, or some support	201	68.6%	201	70.3%
Minimal support	68	23.2%	68	23.8%
No support	17	5.8%	17	5.9%
Did not respond	7	2.4%	---	---
Totals	293	100.0%	286	100.0%

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

Question A-5

“My math professor made me think, ‘Yeah, I would be stupid not to take advantage of the instructor for help, because, I could either ask her a thirty-second question right now, or spend three hours over the weekend trying to puzzle out what she did in this one step.’ You just have to say to yourself, ‘It’s ok not to know. It’s ok to be ignorant, because it’s stupid when the source is right in front of you and you don’t use it.’”

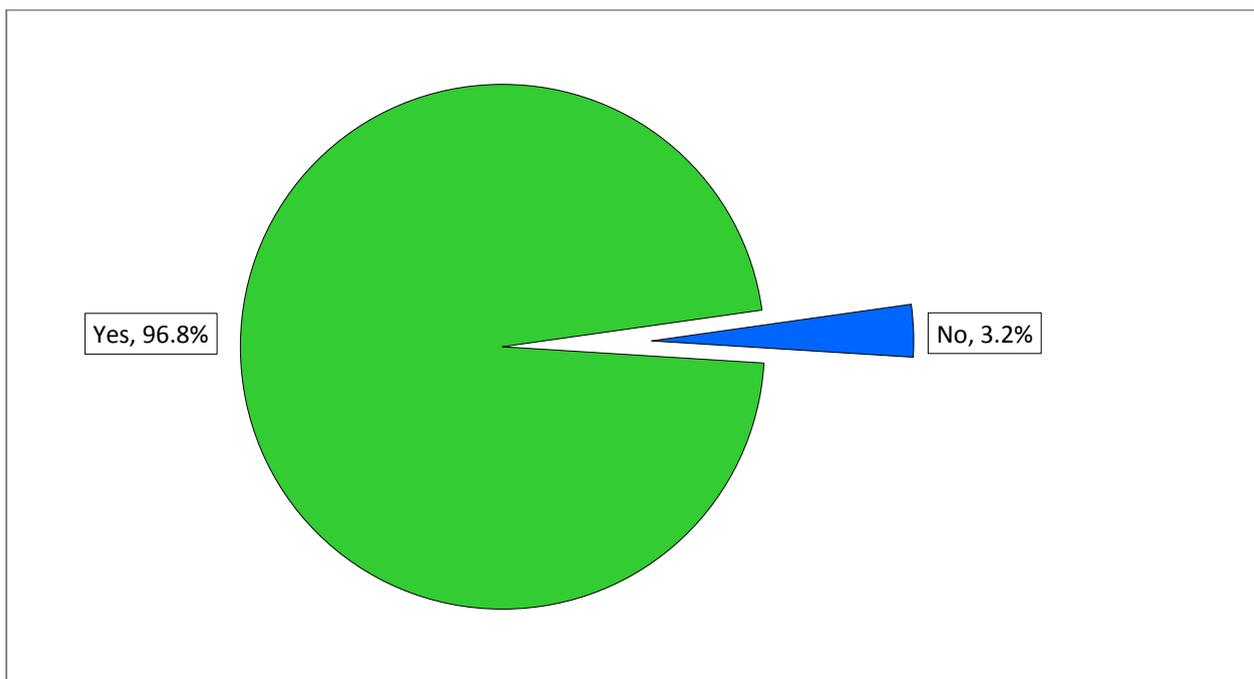
► Has any VC professor encouraged you to ask questions during the class?

Success Factor: Focused

Desired Result: A high percentage of “yes” responses.

Actual Result: Almost 97% of respondents answered “yes.”

Interpretation: Nearly **all** respondents received encouragement from their professors to ask questions during class. A professor’s supportive attitude reduces student anxiety and helps them focus on achieving a successful course outcome.



Question A-5. Distribution of Survey Respondents

Response Category	Respondents		Relevant Responses	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	272	92.8%	272	96.8%
No	9	3.0%	9	3.2%
Can't remember	6	2.1%	---	---
Did not respond	6	2.1%	---	---
Totals	293	100.0%	281	100.0%

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

Question A-6

“I did have a teacher; he was mean. People would ask questions and he’d say ‘Come on, you don’t get that? Aren’t you paying attention?’ He was rude and in front of the whole entire class would belittle and demean students; and that was my first semester back after a lengthy absence. I was like, ‘Oh, my gosh, this is horrible.’”

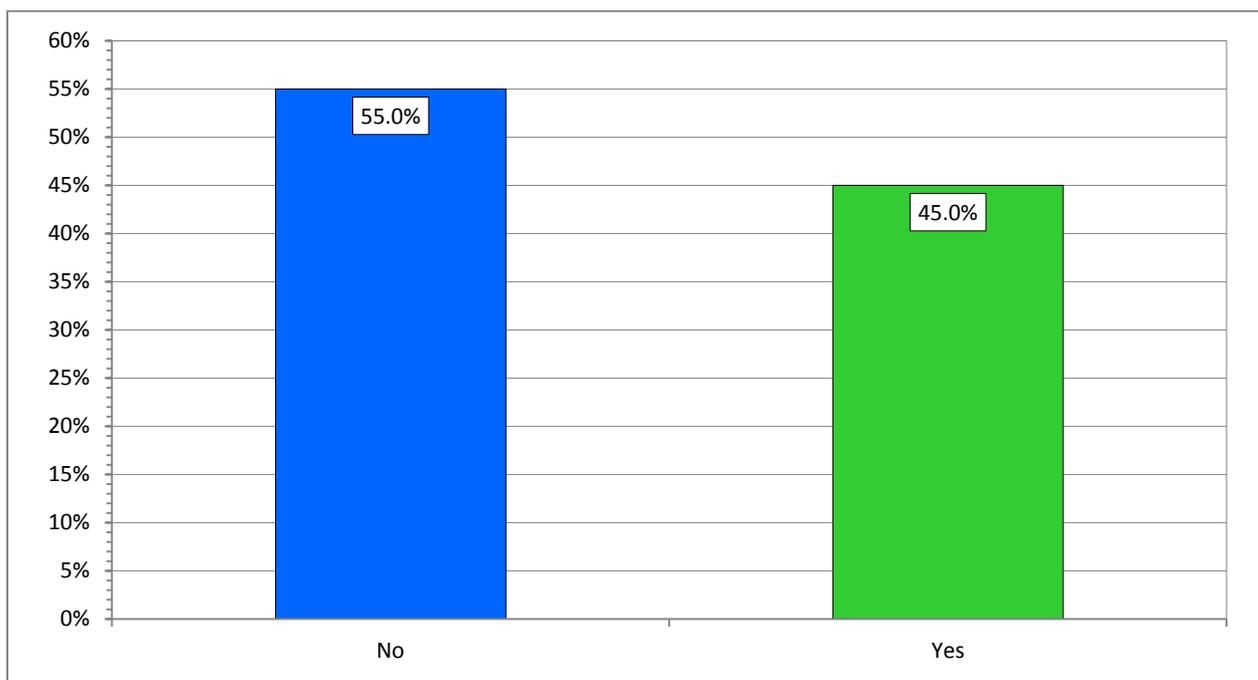
- ▶ Have you been in a class where a VC professor has responded to questions in a rude or disrespectful manner?

Success Factor: Nurtured

Desired Result: A high percentage of “no” responses.

Actual Result: Fifty-five percent (55%) of the respondents answered “no.”

Interpretation: About 45% of respondents have been in a class where the professor was rude or disrespectful, which does not reflect a nurturing class environment.



Question A-6. Distribution of Survey Respondents

Response Category	Respondents		Relevant Responses	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	121	41.3%	121	45.0%
No	148	50.5%	148	55.0%
Can't remember	21	7.2%	--	---
Did not respond	3	1.0%	---	---
Totals	293	100.0%	269	100.0%

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

Question A-7

“The instructor listened to what someone had to say, would take that information, validate it, and reframe it. In reframing what she thought the student expressed, the instructor validated that student’s idea. The instructor then asked the student, ‘Did I understand you correctly?’ And then someone else would say something and the instructor would reframe it in a way to ask the other side of the discussion (question). I really appreciated that. I was like, ‘Oh, so that’s how it’s done.’”

- ▶ Have you been in a class where a VC professor has modeled the type of listening and academic discussion that is reported above?

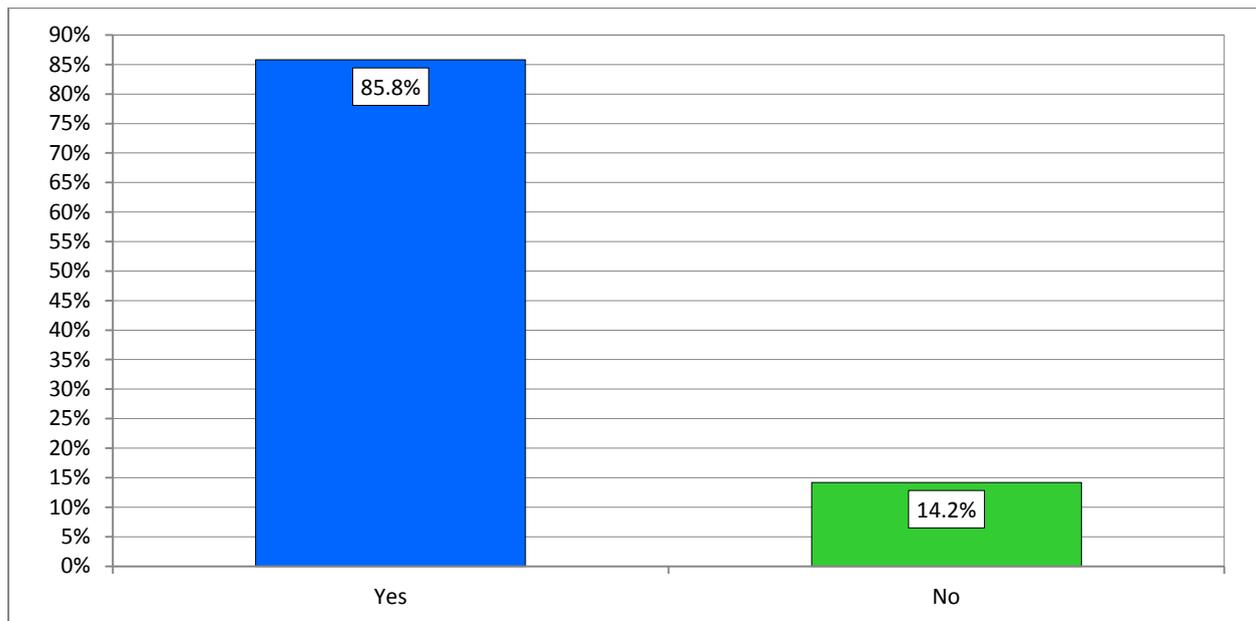
Success Factor: Nurtured

Desired Result: A high percentage of “yes” responses.

Actual Result: Almost **86%** of respondents answered “yes.”

Interpretation: A **very high** percentage of respondents have been in a class where the professor used elements of academic discourse to clarify student questions and ensure that the answers were understandable. This practice fostered a nurturing class setting.

Reference: <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/sammamish-6-academic-discourse-PBL-danielle-lynch>



Question A-7. Distribution of Survey Respondents

Response Category	Respondents		Relevant Responses	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	211	72.0%	211	85.8%
No	35	12.0%	35	14.2%
Can't remember	39	13.3%	---	---
Did not respond	8	2.7%	---	---
Totals	293	100.0%	246	100.0%

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

■ DEMOGRAPHICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

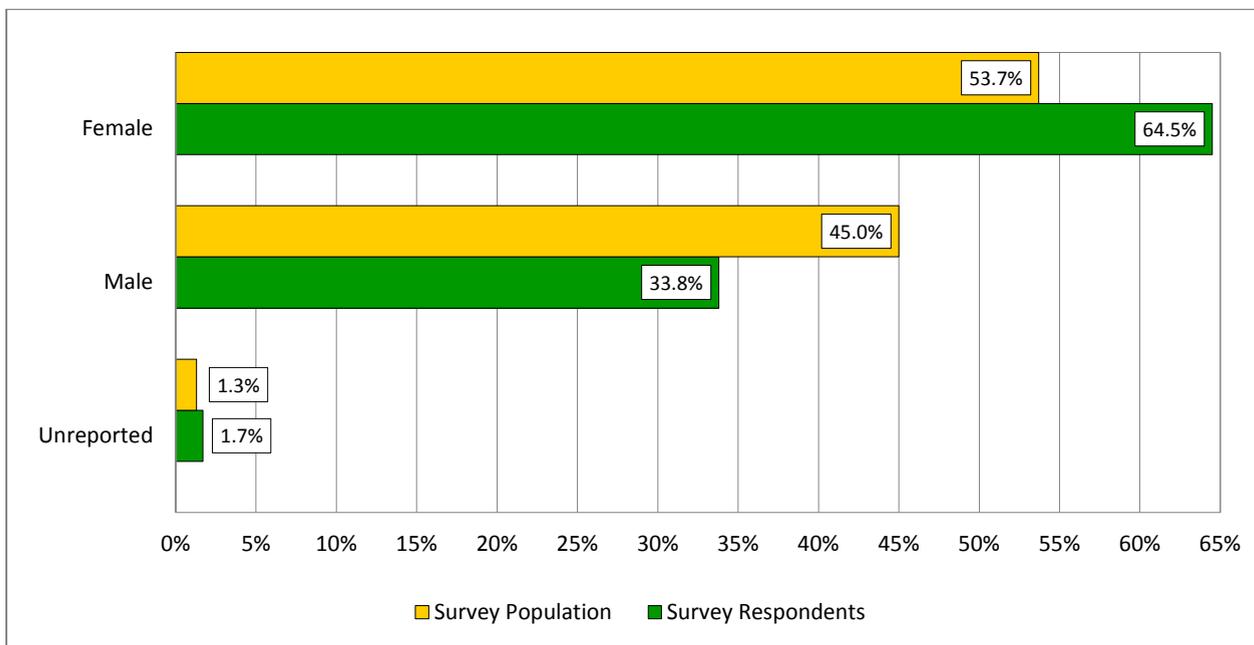
For each demographic characteristic, survey population and survey respondent data are presented. Additionally, proportionality indexes were computed for groups within each demographic characteristic.
 Proportionality Index = Survey Respondent Percentage ÷ Survey Population Percentage

Index	Interpretation – For a specific demographic group:
Above 1.00	Percentage of survey respondents is greater than their percentage in the survey population
Equal to 1.00	Percentage of survey respondents is equal to their percentage in the survey population
Below 1.00	Percentage of survey respondents is less than their percentage in the survey population

The proportionality index provides a measure by which to gauge the proportional representation of survey respondents by demographic group.

Gender

Over **53%** of the survey population was female; almost **65%** of respondents were female. Female survey respondents exceed their representation in the survey population by 20%.



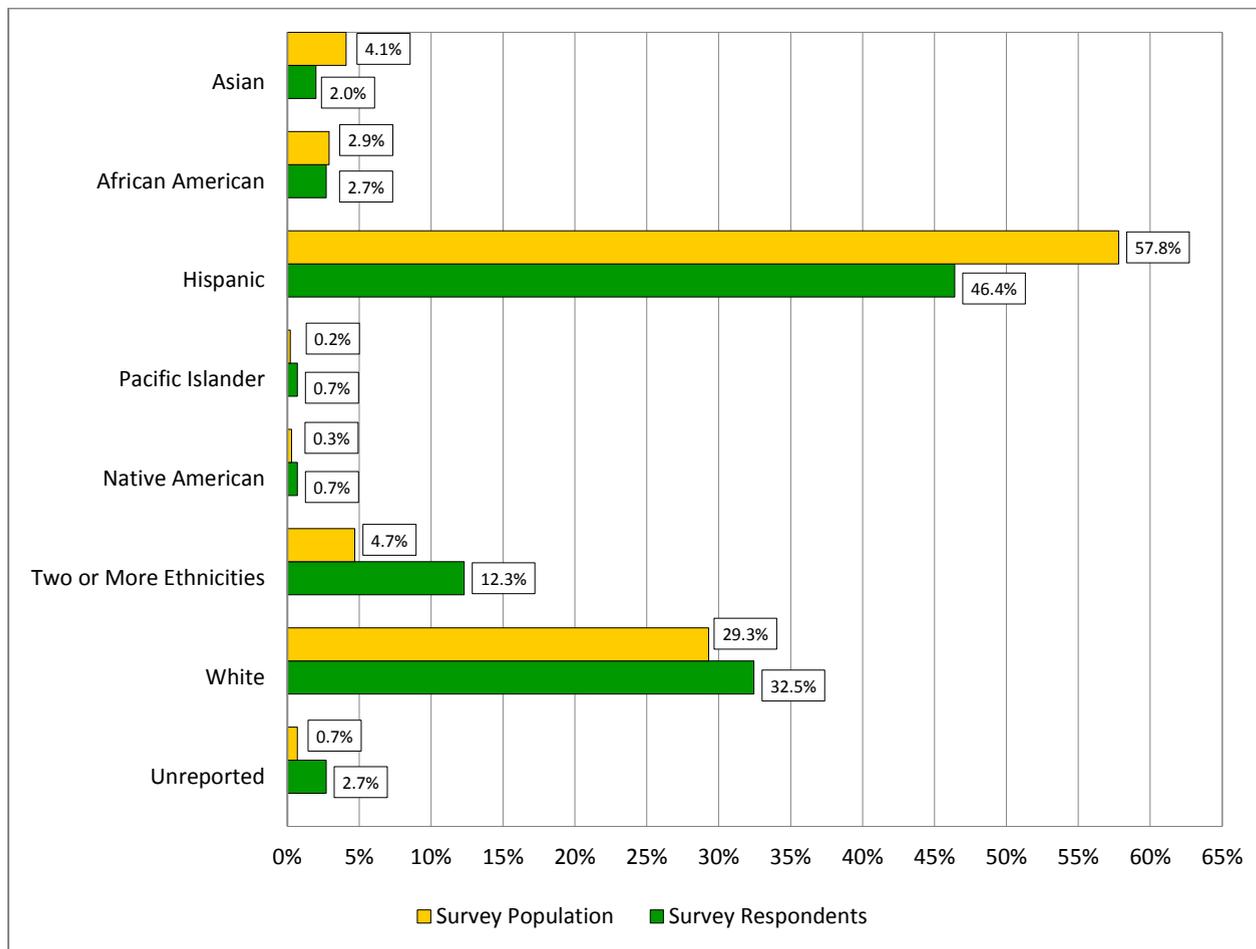
Question A-8. Distribution of Survey Respondents and Survey Population

Response Category	Survey Respondents		Survey Population		Proportion Index
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Female	189	64.5%	541	53.7%	1.20
Male	99	33.8%	454	45.0%	0.75
Unreported	5	1.7%	41	1.3%	1.31
Totals	293	100.0%	1,008	100.0%	1.00

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

Ethnicity

Although the percentage of Hispanic respondents was the largest of all ethnic groups at **46%**, they represent **58%** of the total survey population (proportionality index of 0.80). Two or More Ethnicities and Whites exceed their representation in the survey population. Indexes for Native American, Pacific Islander and Unreported were not computed due to their low representation in the survey population.



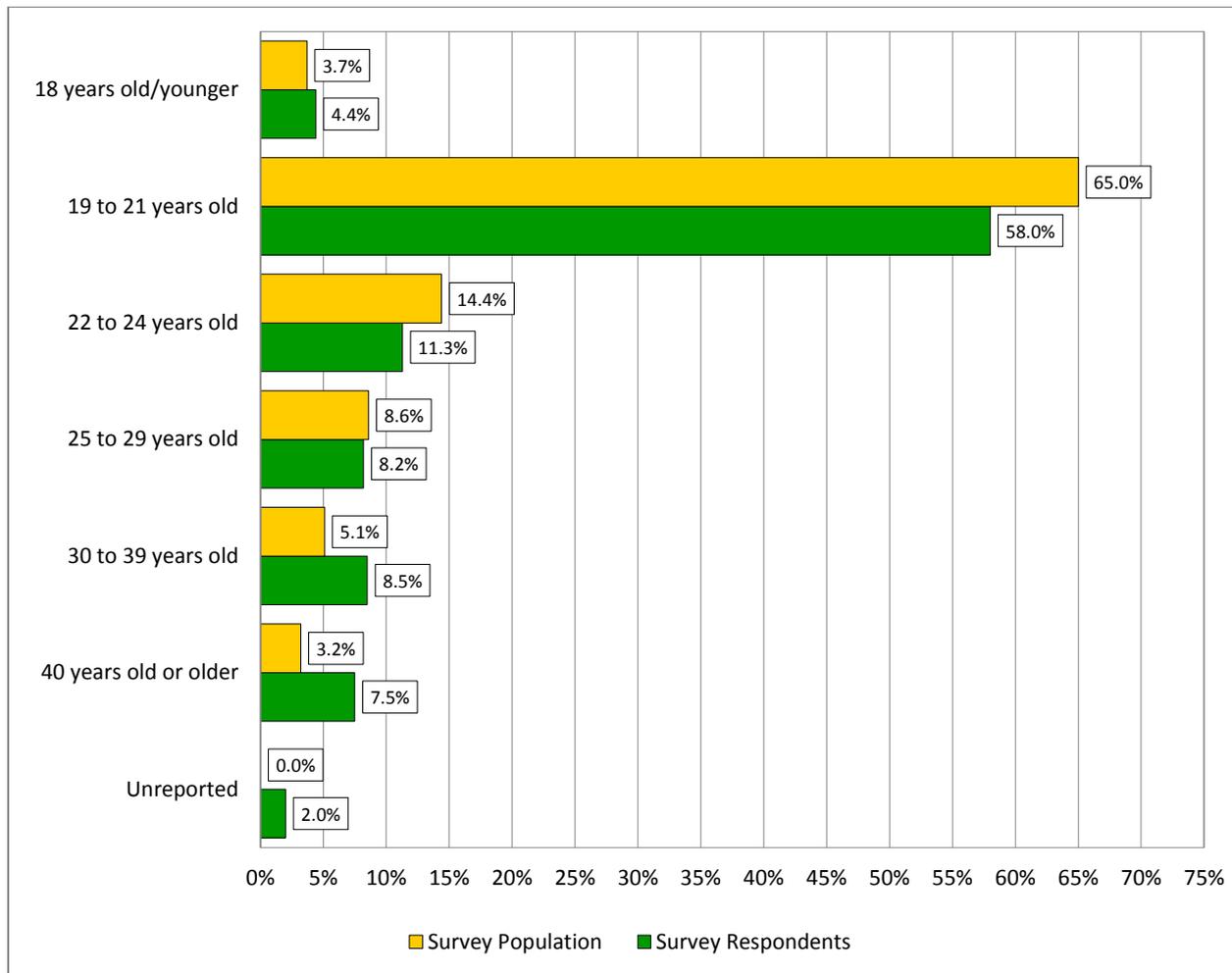
Question A-9. Distribution of Survey Respondents and Survey Population

Response Category	Survey Respondents		Survey Population		Proportion Index
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Asian	6	2.0%	41	4.1%	0.49
Black or African-American	8	2.7%	29	2.9%	0.93
Hispanic	136	46.4%	583	57.8%	0.80
Native American	2	0.7%	3	0.3%	----
Pacific Islander	2	0.7%	2	0.2%	----
Two or More Ethnicities	36	12.3%	47	4.7%	2.62
White	95	32.4%	296	29.3%	1.11
Unreported	8	2.7%	7	0.7%	----
Totals	293	100.0%	1,008	100.0%	1.00

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

Age Group

Although the percentage of 19 to 21 year old respondents was the largest of all ethnic groups at **58%**, they represent **65%** of the total survey population (proportionality index of 0.89). Over represented groups include 30 to 39 year olds, 40 years and older, and 18 years old or younger.



Question A-10. Distribution of Survey Respondents and Survey Population

Response Category	Survey Respondents		Survey Population		Proportion Index
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
18 years old or younger	13	4.4%	37	3.7%	1.19
19 to 21 years old	170	58.0%	655	65.0%	0.89
22 to 24 years old	33	11.3%	145	14.4%	0.78
25 to 29 years old	24	8.2%	87	8.6%	0.95
30 to 39 years old	25	8.5%	52	5.1%	1.67
40 years old or older	22	7.5%	32	3.2%	1.34
Unreported	6	2.0%	0	0.0	----
Totals	293	100.0%	1,008	100.0%	1.00

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

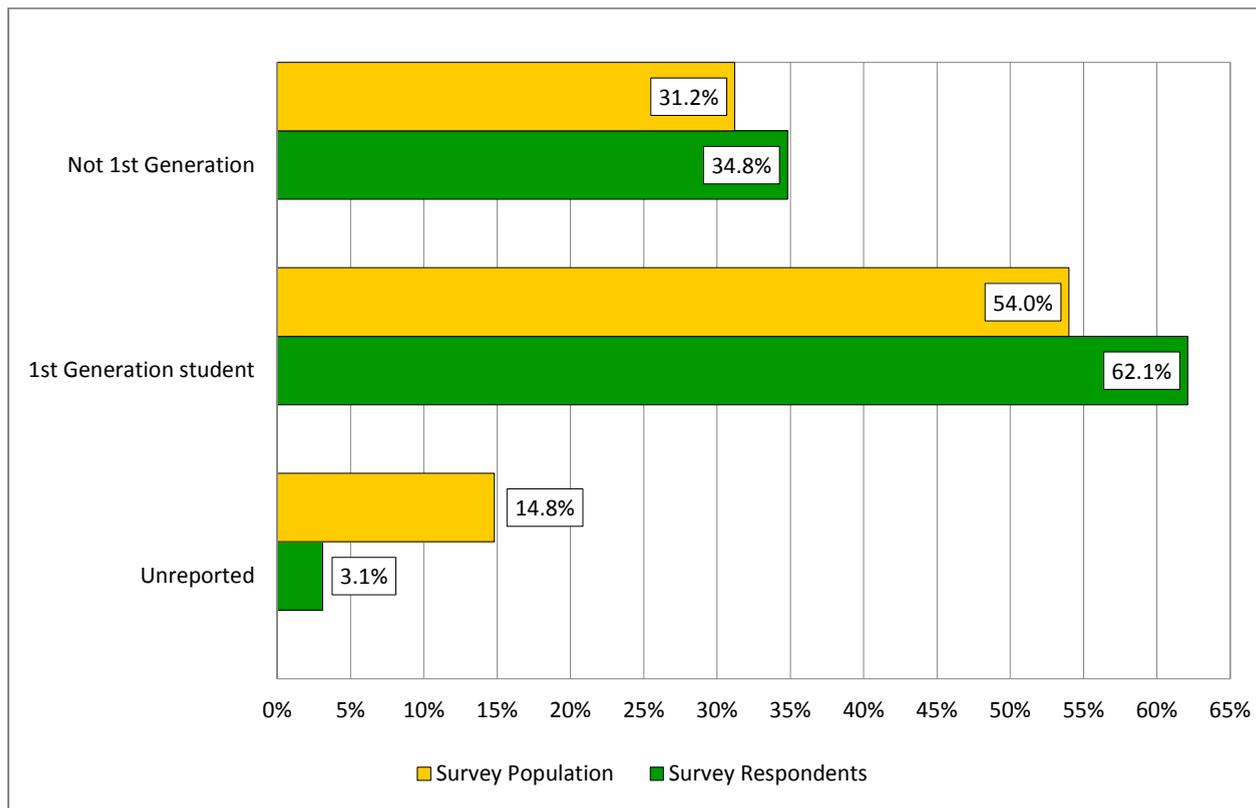
First-Generation College Student

Survey respondents were asked: Does either of your parents or guardians have a college degree?

A “yes” response indicated that the respondent was **not** a first-generation student and a “no” response signified that the respondent **was** a first-generation student.

First-generation students accounted for **62%** of respondents, while non-first-generation students represented **35%** of respondents. Both groups **exceeded** their respective representation in the survey population.

The “Not sure/Unreported” group was grossly under represented (proportional index of 0.21).



Question A-11. Distribution of Survey Respondents and Survey Population

Response Category	Survey Respondents		Survey Population		Proportion Index
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Yes (Not 1st Generation)	102	34.8%	315	31.2%	1.12
No (1st Generation student)	182	62.1%	544	54.0%	1.15
Not sure / Unreported	9	3.1%	149	14.8%	0.21
Totals	293	100.0%	1,008	100.0%	1.00

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

■ **COMMENTS**

There are **57** comments, which are related to **19%** of the survey respondents.

Instructor names were redacted from comments if the comments were critical of the individual.

Survey ID	Comment
3404728798	The counseling department at this college is a joke. Counselors are not available when students need them the most, we have to wait long period of time to see a counselor even for a quick question. During registration time counselors are not available specially during the summer time when students are enrolling in fall classes. Counseling department needs to do a better job at meeting the needs of students.
3410734336	The counselors at VC really discouraged me during my meeting with one.
3410709256	Jeremy Kaye and Roland Petrello are the most amazing teachers in the community college system
3410660019	Professor XXXXXXXXX, was a very tough professor where a very rude additude. Always has a smart remark answer to reply to your question. I mean she was hired to help out the student to purse their education not to judge them or critics them. She was very unfair about late work. She only accepted late work from her "favorite students" and they others where thrown out the window. I mean that was my only bad experience at Ventura college in the English department other thank that I had a great experience there except that English class I took. English VO1A
3410594524	VC Counselors should really guide students to their major, especially those who are new freshman.
3410002762	I have been attending VC for two years and it has been a good experience for me so far. The professors I've had so far are great. The student services are great, and have nice staff, but some not so nice, and sort of rude like in the Admissions and Records (some XXXX that works there and sits XXXXXXXX). Also, there is a big need to bring back a cafeteria with actual nutritional food back on campus. The vending machines are great for a quick snack, but it isn't good for someone who does not have enough time to get lunch at a store, and have to stick with eating chips and sugary snacks. Sorry I am being critical but I am only doing this for constructive criticism, and hopefully something can be done about these issues to make it better for other incoming students. Thank you for your time.
3409465353	I returned to college after a 17 year hiatus, I was terrified! Ventura College has been an amazing gift to me. The resources available to the students here are incredible. The true gift is the staff, everyone that I have come into contact with over the course of these last 2 years have been so wonderful. The professors have always made me feel as though their only motives are my success. I truly appreciate the encouraging and approachable attitudes of all of the staff on campus.
3404295837	I have had many experiences in which an instructor did not understand my question and he/she either never answered it, or left no opportunity to clarify or discuss it.
3403701544	I have one parent with a college degree but he obtained it through the use of his GI bill and after I had already moved out of the house and to another state. When I started college I had nobody in my life that could guide me as to how to find resources on planning my collegiate "map" or how to best assess my responsibilities and properly align them with my academic goals. I had to work to provide for myself and I found that the college counselors were unavailable to me during the hours that I was available to meet with them. As a result, I made some mistakes that are still impacting my academic career in a way that I am not sure will ever allow me to fully accomplish the future that I had set out to achieve. I would suggest mandatory meeting with counselors for all new students so that other kids do not end up making mistakes that they do not understand will impact them for their entire academic career simply because they are trying to navigate college and adult life entirely on their own.
3403108413	Instructors at VC rock!

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Comments – Continued

Survey ID	Comment
3402380633	I would have to say I gained a lot of information and resources to guide me to the right direction from VC. Although I would say the counselors are not that great, at least the professors take roles of counseling students. As in my case Mr. Bowen was like my mentor instead of my counselor who told me "that I won't get into medical school" pretty much. She was not what I expected. Mesa department is amazing as a pre-med I gained a lot. Thank you Amy!!
3402163759	My time at VCC was great! I had an exceptional counselor Yia Vang. He was so helpful and patient. I also had a wonderful experience taking science courses with Steve Gadbois. He has a particular skill in explaining things in such a great way. The only negative aspect of all of my time at VCC was when I took a xxxxx course with XXXXXXXX. I found her rude, unprepared, short tempered, unapproachable, negative, and terrible as teacher. She was particularly rude to any students that asked questions or clarification of the material. Although I made an A in the class I found the whole experience to be a waste of the course material.
3402113582	your nursing program sucks! waiting lists are a stupid carrot used to keep otherwise focused and organized students around and squeeze money out of them. but parking at vc is very well organized.
3402030973	I just want to say thank you for being a great stepping stone between high school and a university! I am now transferred out of VC to the school of my dreams, a place I never thought I'd get to. However, thanks to the support and awesome professors at VC I was able to completely astonish myself and realize that I could go to the school of my dreams and now I am!!! Again thank you so much and keep up the great work!!!!
3402002128	I think my biggest problem with VC is that there was no help in the beginning and I had no idea what to do. I feel like VC should send a email right after the acceptance email with step by step instructions of what needs to be done next to get classes, financial aide, and other help!
3401987950	Counselors and admin. changes really caused my experience to be drawn-out and painful, even though I finally got a really good one (Corey Wendt), YET ANOTHER Fin. Aid/Admin. change has screwed things up a little more. Now I'm pretending to be seeking an AA instead of an AS, which is a strange way for things to be when I'm a TRANSFER w/o student! As an older man, I must say I think teaching young people to prepare for such a world, though it is somewhat true is pathetic. I will make it out of here despite several deaths in the family and a stroke, none of which were allowed for by 75% of my instructors, but I can see how people simply settle for an Associates and go back to a slightly less menial job. Also if you are a disabled, Fin. Aid dependent student, you will end up sleeping on the beach before your money comes. Why do we use a bank in Connecticut? Let me guess...
3401399477	The challenge I have experienced since the fall semester of 2012 is the lack of guidance/consistency with the counselors. I have seen three different counselors, and they have all told me something different about my "path to success".
3421116077	I had a great time at VC!
3420201920	Thanks for being here, I love going to school
3418492246	It saddens me that VC doesn't do more to encourage graduation. I had to keep going into the student office and figure out where I stood and what I needed to do and received a lot of conflicting information. I even missed my graduation application deadline.
3418199516	None
3417395968	I have had amazing instructors at Ventura College. Dr. Pardee, Mrs. Aguilar, Dr. Dalton, and Ms. Bundy. They truly made a difference in my life. Dr. Pardee makes you work for your grade but, he is fun. I remember most of the material he has taught in Anatomy and Physiology, just an awesome man. Ms. Bundy very upbeat and willing to go out of her way for you. These instructors made it easier to achieve my goals, considering I am an EAC student who has struggled in school most of my life. I am very successful now because I learned how to study and manage my time.

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

Comments – Continued

Survey ID	Comment
3417019478	I was a very active participate in class and I did my homework one instructor fell behind with the grade book then undated it two weeks before class was over the grades confused me I was very discourage with two of my instructors when all semester long I thought they were pro student I felt they were discrimination regarding my age. Because of this I have not signed up for any classes.
3416514945	I am attending Ventura College with my daughter. We take every class together, and are working towards the same goal to become attorneys. I share this because having a partner makes a by difference. I realize that for most students this isn't possible. One thing I noticed the counselling center their is only one counselor that has been helpful. I have heard from many students the same complaint. Corey Went knows his job and does it well. However the other counsellors fall short and provide little to no help.
3415754554	In my opinion there is a serious lack of managerial etiquette in nearly every department of Ventura College that i have interacted with. Some of the staff seem to be there for the right reason which is to help students get an education. However many of the staff members treat students rudely (myself included) on a daily basis and do not have the best interest of the students in mind. I believe that their job has transformed from knowledgeable guide, to self preserving bureaucrat. It seems that their need to maintain a high paying positions has stamped out their creativity and zest for their jobs. So sad to see that Ventura College is full of potential yet full of dead weight.
3415676730	The financial aid building needs work, I was told, for almost four semesters different stories on why I couldn't get financial aid, and that the next semester I'd have it. That was two years ago, for them to tell me my last year, my step dad made too much money. Even if it was twenty dollars, it would help, you know, since you let Barnes & Noble buy the book store, and make the prices even higher, its the least you could do for a deans list student. Also I feel its unfair that me and most the people I know have bought parking passes, yet have nowhere to park. Other than those few bugs, VC is awesome I love it here.
3415387805	There is no "Other" option in your question regarding ethnicity. Your survey would be more accurate with clearer, more specific choices.
3415245477	we need more communication classes for a better major prep when we transfer to Universitys! Also, we need an improvement in
3415216539	I really liked how the admissions advisors from the universities come to VC, and the school holds many informational fairs. If the resources are all there there's no excuse not to take advantage of them! VC definitely helped me with the confidence to apply to my dream school and I got in! I'm going to miss VC definitely.
3415124488	Tell people about the short careers. I found out 2yrs late that there was a cnc program
3412514033	Professor Jason Baumwirt is the best and most inspiring teacher I've ever had.
3412279112	It wasn't until I took English Critical Thinking in the Summer of '14, with Professor Kraus, that I realized what I wanted to do and how to do. I can definitely speak for the rest of the class, as well as myself; She really went above and beyond in helping me expand my thought process and take a deeper look into who I was and my capabilities through well picked lesson plans. I have experienced a few good teachers, and a couple whom were average, but she was the first that truly inspired me in my academic plan as well as my life.
3411493597	I feel like most students would appreciate more personal guidance, counseling, and assistance in setting and achieving academic goals.
3411273976	I was absent for a few years and was happily surprised how professional the campus looked and impressed by the caliber of the teachers and their knowledge. It did not feel that the level of education was any different from the 4 years colleges that my children attended, both in California and out of state.

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

Comments – Continued

Survey ID	Comment
3399895764	I would like to see a lot more support for Ventura County Fusion on campus.
3399711420	I don't think the rule for retaking classes is very fair because even if you fail a class twice and there's only one more chance to take it for credit, why would someone want to pay for a class that they may or may not get credit for, but their still willing to retake that course anyway?
3399451615	When need learning skill class to go along with main stream class not for credits but to help one go through the move with the support they offer that give one the feeling that they can do it their like a cheer leading section for one that dont have confident in them self
3399354111	I don't think that these questions have even scraped the top of the experiences I have been a part of classes at VC. Both good and bad.
3399265068	Find better professors for the math department
3398758912	I've only met with a counselor once & because it was such a negative experience, I never went back. it's not that he was rude, he was just not helpful. I'm starting my third year & still no chosen major. counselors need to be more concerned with students like me instead of quickly moving through to get the line of kids in & out.
3398151011	Im in my 3 year at VC and i dont know whether or not i have enough credits to see a councilor. Wish i would be able to see what classes i have left.
3397841118	Oddly specific and familiar.
3396832305	I love Ventura college! A professor I that really helped me out was Peter Yi he is the best math professor and really helped me enjoy math.
3396630447	Nothing has been easy to accomplish administrative-wise at the ventura campus. I was sent in circles on several different occasions when looking for information or guidance to achieve the task at hand. This made my experience at VC very frustrating while trying to transfer, as well as overall.
3395832777	Ventura college needs more room and classes
3394852165	I love Ventura College. It has helped me ease into the adult lifestyle and has furthered my education in unimaginable ways.
3394730403	With the exception of Ms. Beard, all of the math professors I have taken classes with are not helpful. They always ask that we hold questions until the end & they do not office hours because they are not full-time professors. The tutor center gets too packed with students to be effective. Too many good professors only teach during the day & many night classes have professors who come off as apathetic & unenthused about their subject. I have a 3.3 gpa but the school refuses to give me financial aid because I withdrew from two classes over 4 years ago due to transportation issues & financial setbacks. I have been a student at VC since Fall 2009 & it is projected that it will take me another year & a half. When the school did allow me to return after kicking me out after the first year & demanding all of my grant money back (which I obviously did not have because if I have a couple thousand sitting around I would have fixed my car and made it to the end of the semester. & I know you're thinking of public transit but it was a 2 hr. bus ride with transfers from El Rio & I had to work as well.) I was only allowed to take 1 class at a time. Then, I also withdrew from Precalculus this past Spring because it was strictly online & Professor XXXXX powerpoints were unhelpful & confusing since that material did not match the homework or tests. Many professors are disrespectful to their students for no rational reason. The only reason I still attend VC is that I cannot afford to commute or move anywhere else that might have efficient help. Oh & the counselors are the worst! They constantly deny people the proper time & care & put things off & say they will figure out more details right before I graduate. They have sent me away countless times advising that I basically should try to figure classes & transferring & everything else on my own on the internet. My last visit, I specifically asked for an Ed Plan & had made an appointment. I told him I wanted a plan to graduate with an A.S. & transfer but he made a plan only for the transfer & locked it so I cannot change anything on DegreeWorks.

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

Comments – Continued

Survey ID	Comment
3394593233	Counselors have gotten better. Always room for improvement. Excited to graduate from vc and move in to bigger and better life goals.
3394564153	They need to help students find out a major So we dont waste time or feel like we are. Its more motivational to be at college if you know what you want to do
3394520628	I am very glad to have made the decision to go to VC before transferring to a university. I have met an amazing number of teachers and staff that made my 2 years there very enjoyable. Good school filled with professors who genuinely care about the success and future of their students.
3394519692	I have, on the whole, only one single complaint about my time at VC: the counselors. I have spoken to a counselor three different times- each time a different person- and each time I went I had pretty much the exact same experience (You guys are consistent, I'll give you that much). The wait times are incredibly long (yes, I did make an appointment, and yes, I did check. I still had to wait 40 minutes before a counselor would see me. After the first time I found I'd achieve the same 'efficiency' if I just walked in when I had an hour or so free). I understand that that is unavoidable to a certain extent, what with the population size of VC, but at least some standards should be upheld. As for the actual experience? Well. Each time I've gone, the counselors have been rude to me. When I ask questions, they are answered snidely, shortly, vaguely, and generally with the air that I am wasting their time. In addition, I've found I'm more likely to get several different answers to the same question than any actual clarification. I have- in general- enjoyed my time at VC. The counselors, however, leave much to be desired.
3394513071	Mrs. Newcomb is the best she has helped me get even more motivated after going through a difficult time.
3394466775	Students need to be able to work with the same guidance councilors, not see a different councilor every time they go in. I received contradicting information everyone I saw a councilor
3394455751	There are some instructors at the college whom go above and beyond to make sure they're helping each student out. However, there are instructors who show up and just do the bare minimum. I recently enrolled in a class and the prerequisite only had a lower math class required. I received an email from that instructor telling me to consider swapping to another class the instructor teaches which had a prerequisite I have not completed claiming it would be easier. I looked the classes up in the college catalog and thought it would be absurd to do so because the class I enrolled in was almost an introductory class for the one the instructor was telling students to enroll in. The class I enrolled into is closed and the other classes the instructor was teaching only had 10 spots taken. I felt like the instructor was encouraging students to take another class, so to get paid for those classes. The instructor made the claim it would be harder than the other one which doesn't make sense if someone were to read the college catalog. The instructor is the only one whom teaches this course at Ventura College and I feel like the instructor can get away with whatever they want because of this situation.
3394454449	The addition of graduation requirements has been made it very difficult to attain a degree and transfer to a university to work on a Bachelor's Degree.
3394416173	I think a lot of people view it as a trap because they are too dumb to follow a basic outline for school. I know people who've been attending continuously for 5 years and still haven't finished basic core classes like college algebra, speech, or a foreign language! The problem isn't VC or the professors. People come into college and expect it to be like high school and have every single step spoon fed to them. Every day I saw students cheating or plagiarizing and then complaining when they get caught and blaming the professor for making the work "too hard". Not everyone is meant to go to school beyond high school.
3394378682	When professors incorporate students with discussion, it makes students want to come back. This makes the class feel more like a family, sharing opinions and getting to know each other. It also makes the teacher very likable.

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

■ **SURVEY CHARACTERISTICS**

● **Survey Instruments**

The survey instruments were designed by Michael Callahan, Institutional Research Officer at Ventura College. Fourteen of the quotations from Dr. Guillermo-Wann's report served as the basis of the survey. Because most of the quotations were relatively lengthy, the IR Officer edited them into more succinct versions. To facilitate a satisfactory response rate, the abridged quotations were assembled into **two** surveys – six quotations in one survey and eight quotations in the other. It was felt that one survey with all fourteen quotations (plus four demographic questions) would require an inordinate amount of time to complete and would probably dissuade many respondents from completing it.

Each quotation was followed by a question related to the perception or experience expressed in that quotation (one of the quotations had two questions associated with it). In addition to questions related to the quotes, there were four demographic questions – gender, ethnicity, age, and parents' education – plus an area for comments.

Both surveys (all fifteen questions) were reviewed by the Title V-*Velocidad* Director, Bill Hart, and by Oxnard College Professor Tom O'Neil. As a result of Professor O'Neil's critique of the surveys, changes were made to three of the questions.

The revised surveys were then rendered into **two** electronic SurveyMonkey forms. Rachel Marchioni, Title V Administrative Assistant and Peer Mentor Program Project Specialist, arranged for five peer mentors to pilot test each survey. As a consequence of feedback from the peer mentors, a couple of minor modifications were made to the surveys.

A hardcopy of **Survey A** appears as **Appendix A**.

● **Response Rates**

The surveys were administered on August 6, 2014 via email. A hyperlink to the SurveyMonkey form (either Survey A or Survey B) was embedded in an email sent to each student in the survey populations. Three emails were returned as undeliverable – one from Survey Group A and two from Survey Group B.

Survey reminders were emailed to both survey populations (Groups A and B) on August 11, 16, and 19. The reminders thanked students who had submitted surveys and encouraged non-responders to take the survey.

SurveyMonkey collectors were closed on September 14, 2014.

Each survey had been sent to **1,008** students. Response rates were:

Survey A: 29% (293 students)

Survey B: 30% (306 students)

Both surveys exceeded the number of responses (278) required for statistical significance (at the 95% confidence level with $\pm .05$ interval).

● **Internet Links**

Students' Voices on Success at Ventura College – May 12, 2014, Chelsea Guillermo-Wann, Ph.D.

http://www.venturacollege.edu/sites/default/files/files/college-information/titlev-velocidad/studentsuccessreport_final.pdf

Student Support (Re)defined, The RP Group

<http://www.rpgroup.org/projects/student-support-redefined>

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

■ **SURVEY POPULATION**

● **Selection Criteria**

The criteria used to select the survey population relate to the goals of the Title V - *Velocidad* Grant, which is the funding source for Dr. Guillermo-Wann’s study and for this survey. Activities associated with the *Velocidad* Grant are focused on increasing student transfer, improving success rates in the “20 High-Risk Barrier Courses”, and decreasing the gap in achievement rates between Hispanic students and the overall student body.

Students were selected for inclusion in the survey population if, in **spring 2014**, they:

- Had taken one or more of the “20 High-Risk Barrier Courses”, and
- Had an Educational Goal of Transfer (with or without an associate’s degree), and
- Had taken 22.0 to 72.5 VCCCD units by the beginning of the semester, and
- Did not already possess a college degree (associate’s degree or higher)

Selection Criteria and Associated Numbers of Students

Spring 2014 Category	Grade Records		Students	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Spring 2014 (Banner Extract on June 19, 2014)	34,773	100%	12,683	100%
20 High-Risk Barrier Courses *	8,947	26%	6,214	49%
Had an Educational Goal of Transfer			4,783	38%
Did not have an associate’s degree or higher			4,694	37%
Had cumulative VCCCD Units of 22.0 to 72.5			2,016	16%
Survey Cohort			2,016	16%

* In spring 2014, these students received a grade notation in one or more of the “20 High-Risk Barrier Courses.” A listing of the “20 High-Risk Barrier Courses” appears in **Appendix C**.

● **Study Group and the Survey Population**

All **27** students in Dr. Guillermo-Wann’s study, and the **2,016** students in both survey groups, had taken at least one High-Risk Barrier Course. In the table below, ethnicity, gender, and first-generation status of students in Dr. Guillermo-Wann’s Study are compared to those in the Survey Population. Detailed demographics of the entire survey population are presented in the next section.

Demographic Group	Guillermo-Wann Study		Survey Population		Diff. in Percent (b) – (a)
	Students	Percent (a)	Students	Percent (b)	
Asian	1	4%	80	4%	0
African American	0	0%	59	3%	+ 3
Hispanic	15	55%	1,167	58%	+ 3
Other	0	0%	100	5%	+ 5
White	10	37%	594	29%	- 8
Unreported	1	4%	16	1%	- 3
Total	27	100%	2,016	100%	0
Female	15	56%	1,084	54%	- 2
Male	12	44%	913	45%	+ 1
Unreported	0	0%	19	1%	+ 1
Total	27	100%	2,016	100%	0
1st Generation	5	19%	1,076	53%	+ 34

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

• **Demographics of the Survey Population**

As mentioned previously (Survey Instruments), **two** electronic survey instruments were created.

An effort was made to ensure that the demographics of the survey groups were as similar as possible. Each student in the Total Student Population was assigned a code that represented the student's gender, ethnicity, and age group. In the table below, the letter to the left of each demographic group is used to represent students in those groups. For example, a 19 year-old, female, Hispanic student was coded **FHB** (F for female, H for Hispanic, and B for 18 – 22 years old).

The set of **FHB** students, at **509**, constitutes the largest of the groupings. Of the **509** students, **254** were assigned to Survey Group A and **255** were assigned to Survey Group B. The remaining groupings were divided as evenly as possible between Survey Groups (when the set contained an odd number of students, one additional student was assigned to one of the surveys).

The Demographics Table indicates the numbers and percentages of students, by demographic group, in the Total Survey Population and in Survey Group A and Survey Group B.

Demographics Table

Characteristic Group	Total Survey Pop.		Survey Group A		Survey Group B	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Ethnicity						
A Asian	80	4.0%	41	4.1%	39	3.9%
B Black or African American	59	2.9%	29	2.9%	30	3.0%
H Hispanic	1,167	57.9%	583	57.8%	584	57.9%
N Native American	6	0.3%	3	0.3%	3	0.3%
P Pacific Islander	3	0.1%	2	0.2%	1	0.1%
T Two or More Ethnicities	91	4.5%	47	4.7%	44	4.4%
W White	594	29.5%	296	29.3%	298	29.5%
X Unreported	16	0.8%	7	0.7%	9	0.9%
Totals	2,016	100.0%	1,008	100.0%	1,008	100.0%
Gender						
F Female	1,084	53.8%	541	53.7%	543	53.9%
M Male	913	45.3%	454	45.0%	459	45.5%
N Unreported	19	0.9%	13	1.3%	6	0.6%
Totals	2,016	100.0%	1,008	100.0%	1,008	100.0%
Age Group						
A 17 years old or younger	9	0.4%	5	0.5%	4	0.4%
B 18 – 22 years old	1,499	74.4%	751	74.5%	748	74.2%
C 23 – 29 years old	334	16.6%	168	16.7%	166	16.5%
D 30 – 39 years old	107	5.3%	52	5.1%	55	5.4%
E 40 years old and older	67	3.3%	32	3.2%	35	3.5%
Totals	2,016	100.0%	1,008	100.0%	1,008	100.0%
1st-Generation College						
Yes	1,076	53.4%	544	54.0%	532	52.8%
No	656	32.5%	315	31.2%	341	33.8%
Not Known	284	14.1%	149	14.8%	135	13.4%
Totals	2,016	100.0%	1,008	100.0%	1,008	100.0%

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

Appendix A – Students’ Observations – Survey A

The quotations in this survey are condensed versions of quotations that appear in ‘Students’ Voices on Success at Ventura College – May 12, 2014.’ Please read each quotation and then answer the question associated with the quotation. We would like to know the extent to which these quotes reflect the attitudes of most Ventura College students. There are a total of 11 questions; 4 of the questions relate to your gender, ethnicity, age, or parents’ education. The survey is completely autonomous.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

“My perception of community college has been that it’s almost a stepping stone towards transferring to a university, but many get lost in that process. So in other words, it would almost be like sort of a trap, unless you can manage to get out of that trap and almost steer yourself by your own independent ways and be able to make it as far as going towards a university.”

1. To what extent do you agree with the above statement?
 - A. Totally agree
 - B. Mostly agree
 - C. Somewhat agree
 - D. Mostly disagree
 - E. Totally disagree

“I think it was one of my English teachers. She really inspired me and made me feel good about different strengths that I had in that specific area of my education. And so I explored a little further into different majors, and that’s how I found my major and finalized it – from a teacher that kind of gave me inspiration to try to look for that.”

2. What person, or persons, was most helpful to you in deciding on your VC major?
 - A. VC counselor
 - B. VC teacher
 - C. VC staff member or administrator
 - D. My mother or my father
 - E. Friend
 - F. I did it all by myself
 - G. Other – Please specify: _____

“When I first came to this college, I didn’t really have guidance, I didn’t really have anybody telling me, ‘Ok, this is to help you reach your goal.’ I was lost, so that’s probably why I dropped out of college, and then I started working, and then four years later I come back, and finally I had a goal. It was all because, I started digging deep into myself; ‘This is not what I want to do forever, so that’s why I came back to school.’”

3. Have you ever dropped out of VC (for two or more semesters)?
 - A. Yes, I also didn’t have the necessary guidance on how to reach my educational goal
 - B. Yes, I dropped out due to work commitments, family responsibilities, financial issues, etc.
 - C. No, I have been continuously enrolled
4. To what extent has Ventura College provided you with the support (guidance or assistance) that you feel you need to achieve your educational goal?
 - A. Total support
 - B. A lot of support
 - C. Some support
 - D. Minimal support
 - E. No support

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

Appendix A – Continued

“My math professor made me think, ‘Yeah, I would be stupid not to take advantage of the instructor for help, because, I could either ask her a thirty-second question right now, or spend three hours over the weekend trying to puzzle out what she did in this one step.’ You just have to say to yourself, ‘It’s ok not to know. It’s ok to be ignorant, because it’s stupid when the source is right in front of you and you don’t use it.’”

5. Has any VC professor encouraged you to ask questions during the class?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. I can’t remember

“I did have a teacher; he was mean. People would ask questions and he’d say ‘Come on, you don’t get that? Aren’t you paying attention?’ He was rude and in front of the whole entire class would belittle and demean students; and that was my first semester back after a lengthy absence. I was like, ‘Oh, my gosh, this is horrible.’”

6. Have you been in a class where a VC professor has responded to questions in a rude or disrespectful manner?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. I can’t remember

“The instructor listened to what someone had to say, would take that information, validate it, and reframe it. In reframing what she thought the student expressed, the instructor validated that student’s idea. The instructor then asked the student, ‘Did I understand you correctly?’ And then someone else would say something and the instructor would reframe it in a way to ask the other side of the discussion (question). I really appreciated that. I was like, ‘Oh, so that’s how it’s done.’”

7. Have you been in a class where a VC professor has modeled the type of listening and academic discussion that is reported above?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. I can’t remember
8. What is your gender?
- A. Female
 - B. Male
9. What is your ethnicity?
- A. Asian
 - B. Black or African-American
 - C. Hispanic
 - D. Native American
 - E. Pacific Islander
 - F. Two or more ethnicities
 - G. White
10. What is your age?
- A. 18 years old or younger
 - B. 19 to 21 years old
 - C. 22 to 24 years old
 - D. 25 to 29 years old
 - E. 30 to 39 years old
 - F. 40 years old or older
11. Does either of your parents or guardians have a college degree?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. Not sure

If you would like to make a comment, please do so below.

A Survey to Explore Commonality of Student Experiences at Ventura College – Part A

Appendix B – Twenty High-Risk Barrier Courses

Introduction

The **Title V – Velocidad Grant** lists **20 High-Risk or Barrier Courses** at VC which are impeding the progress of students with educational goals of transfer and/or degree (pages 9 –10, Velocidad Grant). Additionally, success rates for Hispanic students in these courses are **lower** than success rates for all students in the courses. The twenty high-risk/barrier courses were identified using success data for the fall 2010 and spring 2011 terms. **Table B** on page 2 replicates the fall 2010/spring 2011 data table that appears on page 10 of the grant. **Table C** (page 2) provides course success rates for 2011-2012, **Table D** (page 3) indicates success rates for 2012-2013, and **Table E** (page 3) provides 2013-2014 success rates. **Table A** compares 2010–2011 success rates to 2013-2014.

Success Rate Comparisons

Success in a course is defined as a final grade of A, B, IB, C, IC, or P. Data in **Table A** are used to determine whether the gap between the success rates of Hispanic Students and All Students has **narrowed** or **widened** in 2013–2014 as compared to 2010–2011. **Positive** numbers in the “Change in Gap” column mean that the gap has **narrowed**; **negative** numbers mean that the gap has **widened**. The goal of grant **Objective 5** is to decrease (by September 2017) the gap between success rates of All Students and Hispanic students from **8.3%** to **5.6%**; the 2013–2014 difference is **5.2%**.

On average, the gap between success rates (of Hispanic and All Students) has **narrowed** by **37%** from 2010–2011 to 2013–2014 (see **blue box** at bottom of the far right column). In one course, POLS V01, Hispanic success rates are higher than the success rates for all students (**green**).

Table A. 2010–2011 and 2012–2013: Success Rates of Hispanic Students Compared to Success Rates for All Students

20 High-Risk or Transfer Barrier Courses		Differences Between the Success Rates of Hispanic and All Students		Change in Gap 2010–2011 to 2013–2014	
				Percentage Points	Percentage Change
Course	Course Title	2010 – 2011	2013 – 2014		
ENGL V01A	English Composition	-4.3%	-1.2%	3.1	72.4%
MATH V03	Intermediate Algebra	-10.4%	-4.8%	5.6	54.0%
BIOL V01	Principles of Biology	-17.9%	-9.7%	8.2	45.6%
ENGL V02	Fundamentals of English Composition	-4.4%	-0.4%	3.9	90.3%
ART V01	Art Appreciation	-12.6%	-3.5%	9.1	71.9%
POLS V01	American Government	-5.6%	0.4%	6.0	107.4%
PHIL V01	Introduction to Philosophy	-5.1%	-8.5%	-3.4	-66.0%
MATH V44	Elementary Statistics	-8.5%	-9.6%	-1.2	-13.9%
GEOG V01	Elements of Physical Geography	-12.8%	-9.6%	3.2	24.9%
HIST V07A	United States History I	-6.3%	-7.0%	-0.6	-10.3%
MATH V04	College Algebra	-9.6%	-4.4%	5.2	54.2%
ECON V01A	Principles of Macro-Economics	-14.1%	-6.9%	7.1	50.7%
ANTH V01	Physical Anthropology	-9.2%	-9.1%	0.1	0.8%
AST V01	Elementary Astronomy	-25.5%	-7.1%	18.4	72.1%
POLS V03	Introduction to Political Science	-2.0%	-1.2%	0.8	41.5%
MUS V08	Music Appreciation	-3.3%	-2.1%	1.2	35.2%
BUS V30	Introduction to Business	-10.3%	-2.7%	7.6	73.6%
CHEM V20	Elementary Chemistry	-9.8%	-7.9%	1.9	19.5%
CJ V01	Introduction to Criminal Justice	-3.9%	-4.1%	-0.2	-5.4%
MATH V21A	Calculus and Analytic Geometry I	-11.8%	-9.7%	2.1	17.5%
Average Differences		- 8.3%	-5.2%	3.1	37.3%

Change in Gap – Formulae:

Percentage Points: (Success Rate Difference Fall 2013) **minus** (Success Rate Difference 2010–2011)
Extent of the Change in Gap: **Positive** points show that the gap has **narrowed**.

Percentage Change: [(Percentage Points) **divided by** (Success Rate Difference 2010–2011)] **times** 100
Degree of change between “Success Rate Diff. 2010–2011” and “Success Rate Diff. Fall 2013”