

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF PHILADELPHIA

*Assessment of Mission Effectiveness:
Development of General Education Skills
- CCP Graduates in 2003 and 2004 -*

OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH
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Assessment of Mission Effectiveness: Development of General Education Skills for CCP Graduates

Introduction

The General Education Standard in Middle State's *Characteristics of Excellence* is as follows:

The institution's curricula are designed so that students acquire and demonstrate college-level proficiency in general education and essential skills, including oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, technological competency, and information literacy.

In addition to these established general education goals, the College's Mission commits the institution to creating an environment that encourages students to achieve interpersonal growth, an appreciation for diversity, intellectual curiosity, and community involvement.

This report considers the goal accomplishment of 2003 and 2004 CCP graduates relative to the development of general education skills and affective attributes. The information that is used to evaluate the College's effectiveness with respect to these aspects of its mission was gathered through the annual survey of CCP graduates¹.

Measures of mission effectiveness are based on graduates' self-assessments of the progress they made on objectives while enrolled at the College. Graduates are asked the global question, *Have you accomplished the educational objectives you set for yourself at CCP?* For the most part, graduates achieved their educational objectives in full. None of the graduates in 2003 and very few in 2004 indicated they did not accomplish their objectives (Table 1).

¹ In both 2003 and 2004, this survey had a response rate of approximately 24%.

Table 1
Accomplishment of Educational Objectives
2003 Graduates

Level of Accomplishment	Frequency	Percent
Fully	270	79.6
Partly	69	20.4
Not accomplished	0	0.0
Total	339	100.0

2004 Graduates

Level of Accomplishment	Frequency	Percent
Fully	304	78.9
Partly	78	20.3
Not accomplished	3	0.8
Total	385	100.0

Table 2 contains a list of 19 goals that were included as part of a questionnaire item that asked graduates to indicate *the level of progress made on each goal while at the College*. The following four-point response scale was provided for this item: 1) considerable progress, 2) some progress, 3) little progress, and 4) no progress.

Table 2
General Education Goals and Affective Attributes
Included on Graduate Survey

1. Improved my oral communication skills
2. Improved my written communication skills
3. Improved my quantitative reasoning skills
4. Improved my scientific reasoning skills
5. Improved my ability to critically evaluate ideas
6. Developed an interest or openness to new ideas
7. Enhanced my ability to work as part of a group
8. Developed interpersonal skills and the ability to relate to others
9. Enhanced my understanding of my own and different cultures
10. Improved my leadership abilities
11. Developed meaningful career goals
12. Enhanced my self-confidence
13. Improved my self-reliance
14. Improved my self-discipline
15. Improved my preparation for active participation in community activities

- 16. Preparation for continued personal and intellectual growth after college
- 17. Developed into a more informed citizen
- 18. Improved my ability to use internet and online resources effectively
- 19. Enhanced my ability to express myself creatively

A factor analysis indicated there were two clusters on which 17 of the 19 goals loaded. Items 1 through 5 in Table 2, which define one of the clusters, appear to comprise a general education factor while items 6 through 17, which define the second factor, represent affective attributes that address issues in the College’s Mission Statement. Items 18 and 19 are items that statistically did not cluster with the other goals.

General Education Goals

Table 3 contains the distribution of graduate responses to the goals that represent the General Education cluster. As a group, graduates made significant progress across the five general education goals. Between 49% and 58% of all graduates in 2004 reported they made considerable progress in all five areas of general education and another 36% to 49% made some progress on these goals while enrolled at the College. These figures are similar to the progress reported by 2003 graduates.

**Table 3
Progress on General Education Goals
2003 and 2004 Graduates**

General Education Goals	Considerable Progress (%)		Some Progress (%)		Little Progress (%)		No Progress (%)	
	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004
Improved my oral communication skills	51.5	52.0	41.3	39.2	5.0	5.3	2.3	3.5
Improved my written communication skills	60.7	58.0	33.3	36.4	4.3	3.8	1.7	1.7
Improved my quantitative reasoning skills	54.0	52.5	37.1	39.1	7.6	7.0	1.3	1.5
Improved my scientific reasoning skills	42.7	48.8	43.0	35.9	11.0	12.1	3.3	3.2
Improved my ability to critically evaluate ideas	50.8	53.8	40.3	37.5	6.9	6.4	2.0	2.3

Responses to two of the general education goals stand out from the rest; *improving written communication skills* and *improving scientific reasoning skills*. While only 6.0% of graduates in 2003 and 5.5% in 2004 reported making little or no progress in the area of written communication, over twice as many (14.3% and 15.3% in 2003 and 2004, respectively) reported making little or no progress in the area of scientific reasoning².

Affective Attribute Goals

Table 4 contains the distribution of responses to the goals that represent the Affective Attributes cluster. Between 41% and 64% of all 2004 graduates reported they made considerable progress in most of the affective areas contained on the questionnaire and another 28% to 35% made some progress on these goals while enrolled at the College. These figures are comparable to those reported by 2003 graduates.

Once again, the distribution of responses to several of these goals distinguish themselves from the others. Most notable are the responses associated with preparation for active participation in community activities. Seventy-four percent (74%) of graduates in 2003 and 76% in 2004 reported at least some progress in this area, which is considerably smaller than those reporting at least some progress in developing an interest or openness to new ideas and in developing interpersonal skills and the ability to relate to others.

² In addition to providing empirical support that CCP's educational delivery systems are effective in educating students, the consistency of graduate responses across 2003 and 2004 also speaks to the credibility of the information gathered through the Annual Survey of Graduates.

Table 4
Progress on Affective Attributes
2003 and 2004 Graduates

Affective Attribute Goals	Considerable Progress (%)		Some Progress (%)		Little Progress (%)		No Progress (%)	
	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004
Graduation Year								
Developed an interest or openness to new ideas	60.9	61.0	33.8	31.4	3.3	4.1	2.0	3.5
Enhanced my ability to work as part of a group	55.9	56.0	30.8	32.0	8.4	8.5	5.0	3.4
Developed interpersonal skills and the ability to relate to others	58.1	57.2	32.2	32.8	5.6	5.9	4.0	4.1
Enhanced my understanding of my own and different cultures	52.6	60.8	33.4	27.6	9.6	6.7	4.3	4.9
Improved my leadership abilities	50.7	49.4	37.7	34.5	8.3	10.8	3.3	5.3
Developed meaningful career goals	58.1	57.6	30.7	30.1	8.3	9.4	3.0	2.9
Enhanced my self-confidence	56.6	56.7	33.8	33.7	6.0	6.4	3.6	3.2
Improved my self-reliance	58.5	58.0	33.2	33.3	6.3	6.1	2.0	2.6
Improved my self-discipline	56.8	57.7	33.6	31.8	6.6	7.6	3.0	2.9
Improved my preparation for active participation in community activities	42.2	40.5	33.6	33.5	14.3	18.7	10.0	7.3
Preparation for continued personal and intellectual growth after college	62.0	63.7	29.0	28.5	5.6	6.1	3.3	1.7
Developed into a more informed citizen	57.1	57.6	34.0	29.1	6.3	8.8	2.6	4.4

Other Goals

Responses to the two remaining goals that did not load onto the factors represented in the preceding tables appear in Table 5. Compared with other areas of student development, both of these goals reflect areas of lesser progress for the College's graduates. Approximately 25% of 2003 graduates reported they made little or no progress in *enhancing their ability to express themselves creatively* and nearly 20% reported little or no progress in *improving their ability to use the Internet and online resources effectively*. Graduates in 2004 reported more progress along these two dimensions.

Table 5
Progress on Goals Reported by 2003 and 2004 Graduates

Other Goals	Considerable progress (%)		Some Progress (%)		Little Progress (%)		No Progress (%)	
	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004
Improved my ability to use internet and online resources effectively	41.9	47.4	39.6	33.1	9.4	10.5	9.1	9.0
Enhanced my ability to express myself creatively	37.2	45.3	38.5	32.6	13.3	11.2	11.0	10.9

Comparisons Across Degree Type

Reported progress was compared for three groups of graduate respondents based on the nature of the degree they were awarded: 1) Associate in Applied Sciences, 2) Associate in Arts and 3) Associate in Science³. Among respondents to the survey, there were 173 graduates who were awarded an Associate in Applied Science, 155 graduates who received an Associate in Arts, and 10 graduates who earned an Associate in Science.

For ease of comparison, responses to each item were coded as follows: No Progress = 0; Little Progress = 1; Some Progress = 2; and Considerable Progress = 3. Group means⁴ for 2004 graduates were calculated for each goal that appears in Table 6. The shaded column in Table 6 contains the difference between the average for 2004 and 2003.

³ Since the General Studies program has been discontinued, graduates who were awarded a degree in this area were not included as part of this analysis.

⁴ Given the scale of measurement, the maximum mean value possible is 3.0.

Table 6
Progress on Goals Reported by Graduates by Degree Type

	Associate in Applied Science n = 173		Associate in Arts n = 155		Associate in Science n = 10	
	2004 Mean	Difference 2004-2003	2004 Mean	Difference 2004-2003	2004 Mean	Difference 2004-2003
General Education Goals						
Improved my oral communication skills	2.42	.08	2.34	-.15	2.80	.4
Improved my written communication skills	2.50	.02	2.50	-.1	2.50	-.1
Improved my quantitative reasoning skills	2.49	.03	2.35	-.07	2.50	-.3
Improved my scientific reasoning skills	2.34	.15	2.21	-.03	2.80	.1
Improved my ability to critically evaluate ideas	2.51	.16	2.34	-.13	2.40	.0
Affective Attribute Goals						
Developed an interest or openness to new ideas	2.51	0	2.46	-.14	2.70	.5
Enhanced my ability to work as part of a group	2.50	.09	2.29	-.07	2.40	.2
Developed interpersonal skills and the ability to relate to others	2.50	.04	2.33	-.09	2.67	.5
Enhanced my understanding of my own and different cultures	2.42	.07	2.45	.1	2.70	.5
Improved my leadership abilities	2.37	0	2.19	-.19	2.10	-.4
Developed meaningful career goals	2.49	-.0	2.34	-.02	2.50	.6
Enhanced my self-confidence	2.48	0	2.38	-.04	2.60	.2
Improved my self-reliance	2.49	-.0	2.44	-.05	2.50	.3
Improved my self-discipline	2.49	.05	2.38	-.05	2.60	.2
Improved my preparation for active participation in community activities	2.16	.02	1.97	-.02	2.00	.5
Preparation for continued personal and intellectual growth after college	2.57	.14	2.51	-.04	2.40	.2
Developed into a more informed citizen	2.42	-.0	2.36	-.07	2.56	.3
Other Goals						
Improved my ability to use internet and online resources effectively	2.26	.16	2.10	-.15	2.00	0
Enhanced my ability to express myself artistically	2.12	.07	2.14	.1	1.70	-.2

The most striking difference across degree types is that respondents who earned an Associate in Arts degree consistently reported less progress on general education goals than other graduates. For the most part, the respondents with an Associate in Science degree reported

greater progress than other graduates in the area of general education. The biggest differences across 2003 and 2004 are associated with the Associate in Science respondents who reported significantly greater progress in 2004 in the development of oral communication skills and significantly less progress in the development of quantitative reasoning skills⁵.

Summary

The Middle States Evaluation Team noted that *indicators of the overall effectiveness of CCP in achieving the General Education Standard suggests that the educational delivery systems are effectively educating the community.*⁶ The information in this report supports this observation that the College is effectively providing students with opportunities and experiences that support many aspects of its mission. Most of the graduates who responded to this survey benefited from their CCP enrollment in many ways. The general education skills and affective attributes that graduates hone while enrolled at the College have contributed to the positive employment and transfer outcomes many graduates experienced after leaving the College.⁷

While the information in this report, taken as a whole, indicates that the College is effectively addressing its Mission, it also points out the existence of some disparities in graduate achievement across curricular clusters that should be addressed by the College. With the exception of written communication skills, Associate in Arts graduates consistently reported less progress than other graduates in the area of general education while enrolled at CCP.

⁵ However, the 2003 A.S. sample was only six respondents, so that particular group has seen a 40% increase in participation. This may account for some of the differences.

⁶ Report to the Faculty, Administration, Trustees and Students of Community College of Philadelphia (@ http://www.ccp.edu/scurtis/Middle_states.pdf)

⁷ Outcome Reports for both 2003 and 2004 Career Program graduates (Report #141 & 141B, & Report 153) and Transfer Program graduates for 2003 and 2004 (Report #143 & Report 152) can be found on the Institutional Research Reports Webpage @ http://www.ccp.edu/VPFIN-PL/ir/reports_available_on.htm