



U N I V E R S I T Y O F
SOUTH CAROLINA[®]
A I K E N

Survey of Alumni ('98-'99 and '99-'00)
Conducted in Spring 2003

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Executive Summary

In Spring 2003, Alumni from the classes of 1998-99 and 1999-2000 were surveyed about their experiences at USCA and following graduation. Of the 1,000 degree recipients from this period, 202 responses were received; this sample population over-represents women, Caucasians, and full-time students. In general, African Americans responded slightly more positively than the aggregate population in terms of satisfaction with USCA and with academic/personal growth. Future surveys of alumni should be designed to increase the response rate, especially among male and African American graduates.

Respondents indicated a very positive overall impression of USCA as a whole. An overwhelming majority reported that their education at USCA had improved their quality of life regardless of the financial benefits and would attend USCA if they were to start college over again. These students also observed, however, that the primary reason they chose USCA was location rather than other factors, such as cost or quality.

A majority of alumni reported that USCA had contributed very much to their academic and personal growth. A larger number of respondents indicated that dispositions necessary for academic success in a four-year higher education institution, such as independent learning, working cooperatively, planning and carrying out projects, and organizing time effectively, increased than more complex abilities, such as writing, understanding graphic information, and critical thinking. Mathematics and using symbolic systems were areas in which fewest respondents reported significant growth. Levels of satisfaction with the curriculum and the quality of instruction were in the 80-90% range, with the quality of faculty advisement receiving the fewest positive responses (78%). Strong statistical correlations between satisfaction with instruction and perception of program quality were observed.

Levels of civic engagement ranged broadly among respondents. While many alumni indicated that USCA somewhat or moderately affected their support of the arts, participation in social groups, and volunteer or community service, the effects of their college experience were more pronounced in pursuing career training and lifelong learning. Higher levels of job satisfaction and a higher estimation of skills such as communication and critical thinking are observable among students who reported higher levels of civic engagement, although these differences were not statistically significant given the size of the population responding to the survey.

Graduates responding to the survey reported a great deal of high and moderate job satisfaction, especially in their assessment of job challenge (88.2%) and location (89.2). Alumni expressed highest levels of dissatisfaction or high dissatisfaction, with their salary and benefits (23.7%), advancement potential (18.2%), and career potential (12.0%).

Methodology

This survey of graduates from the University of South Carolina Aiken who completed their degrees between December 1998 and August 2000 was conducted in 2003 in part to comply with Section 59-101-350(B)(6), (C)(4) of the South Carolina Code of Laws, which requires USCA to ask alumni questions regarding their employment and general satisfaction with their college preparation. In addition to these questions, a battery of supplementary questions were asked, including self-assessment of critical thinking skills, academic and personal growth, intellectual and civic engagement.

In Spring 2003, a six-page questionnaire was prepared by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and mailed to alumni (1998-2000) based on the current address on file in the USCA data management system. Because initial response rates were below the 20% mandated by law, surveys were mailed a second time.

From the class of 1998-99, 82 surveys were returned (14.7% response rate) and from the class of 1999-2000, 124 surveys were returned (27.9% response rate), for a total of 202 returned surveys and a combined response rate of 20.2%. Surveys were processed using a NCS Pearson OpScan 4U optical scanner and processed with Bubble Publishing Software and Microsoft Excel for statistical analysis.

Notes

Valid Percent and Response Rate

When completing surveys, especially longer surveys such as this one (100 questions over six pages), it is typical that respondents will often skip a question or provide an invalid response, usually by multi-marking answers. Responses to such questions are considered invalid responses; consequently, these responses are not considered in the calculation of Valid Percent, and the number of responses will often not add up to the full total of 202.

Order of Questions

This report presents the results of responses on the questionnaire by category of response rather than in strict numerical order of questions. Thus, occasionally, some questions appear out of the order in which they were asked, but their content is grouped with a more appropriate set of questions. For instance, question #91 about current annual salary is presented with demographic information as well as in current employment, and overall impressions of USCA (Questions #50-53) are presented early in this report rather than in the middle of the survey where they were asked to alumni. A copy of the survey instrument appears in the appendix.

Demographic Profile

	Respondents (N=202)	Valid %
2. Gender		
Female	156	78.0%
Male	44	22.0%
3. Race		
African American	16	8.1%
Caucasian	177	89.8%
All other responses	4	2%
11. Highest current degree		
Associate's degree	9	4.5%
Bachelor's degree	163	81.1%
Master's degree	27	13.4%
Professional degree	2	1.0%
71. Current status		
Continuing my education	6	3.2%
Self-employed	5	2.7%
Employed & continuing education	40	21.5%
Employed full-time	118	63.4%
Employed part-time	6	3.2%
Serving in the armed forces	1	0.5%
Unemployed seeking employment	3	1.6%
Unemployed not seeking employment	1	0.5%
Caring for a home/family	5	2.7%
Other	1	0.5%
91. Current annual salary		
Less than \$10,000	3	1.7%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	9	5.0%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	17	9.4%
\$25,000 to \$39,999	98	54.1%
\$40,000 to \$49,999	30	16.6%
\$50,000 to \$69,999	19	10.5%
\$70,000 or more	5	2.8%

This sample of 202 USCA alumni graduating between December 1998 and August 2000 represent just over 20% of all degrees awarded for the period. During this time, USCA awarded exactly 1,000 associate, baccalaureate, and master's degrees. Of enrolled students at this time, 96% were undergraduates; 66.8% were full-time students; 66.3% were female; and 21.3% were African American.

The group of alumni who completed this survey included proportionally more women, more full-time students, and more Caucasian students than the graduating classes.

Response rates for surveys of alumni populations are directly related to two primary factors: 1) maintenance of correct address information with USCA and 2) motivation to complete the survey. Both factors may be indicative of students' level of connection to the institution. Inferences drawn from this survey should be placed within the context of this sample of respondents. Special care should be made when examining smaller subsets, such as majors, to infer conclusions about specific groups of graduates.

The vast majority of respondents (84.9%) indicated they were employed full-time; of these 21.5% were also continuing their education. In addition, another 9.1% were either in school full-time (3.2%), self-employed (2.7%), caring for a family full-time (2.7%), or in the armed forces (0.5%). Even though the U.S. Department of Labor reported that the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the country ranged between 5.8% and 6.0% during the period when this study was conducted, only 1.6% of USCA graduates reported they were unemployed and actively seeking employment. More than 50% of graduates indicated that their salaries 3-5 years after graduation were between \$25,000 and \$40,000, with well over a quarter (29.9%) reporting higher annual salaries.

Chart 1. Male and Female Respondents

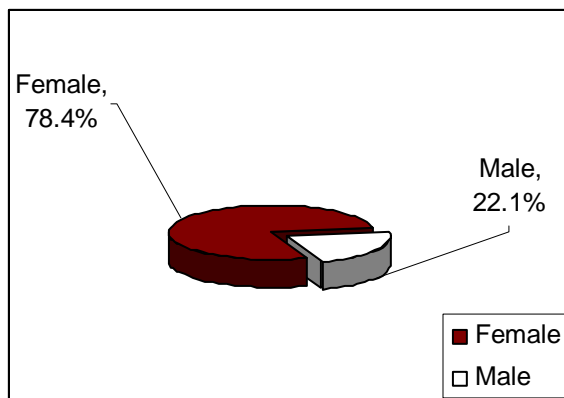
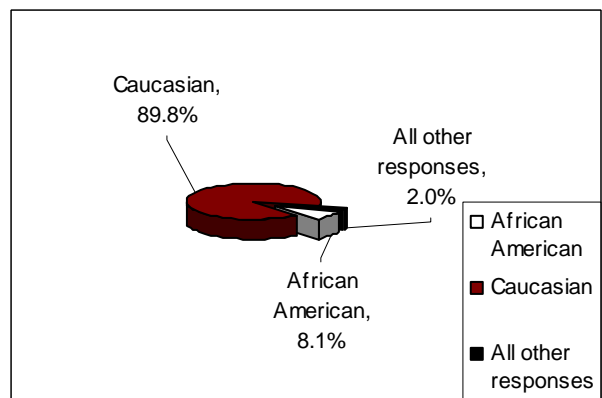


Chart 2. Ethnicity of Respondents



USCA Attendance

	Respondents (N=202)	Valid %
4. Highest degree from USCA		
Associate's Degree	12	5.9%
Bachelor's Degree	181	89.6%
Master's Degree	9	4.5%
5. USCA Graduation Class		
1998-1999	81	40.1%
1999-2000	121	59.9%
6. USCA attendance status		
Full-time student	165	82.5%
Part-time student	35	17.5%
7. Duration attended USCA		
Year or less	4	2.0%
Two years	26	12.9%
Three years	34	16.9%
Four years	70	34.8%
Five years or more	67	33.3%
8. Primary USCA campus		
Aiken	179	89.9%
Beaufort	14	7.0%
Salkehatchie	1	0.5%
Sumter	5	2.5%
9. USCA Major		
Biology	16	8.9%
Business Administration	41	22.8%
Chemistry	3	1.7%
Communications	3	1.7%
Early Childhood Education	23	12.8%
Elementary Education	25	13.9%
Secondary Education	5	2.8%
Exercise & Sports Science	8	4.4%
English	2	1.1%
Fine Arts	1	0.6%
History	6	3.3%
Interdisciplinary Studies	4	2.2%
Math & Computer Science	2	1.1%
Industrial Mathematics	1	0.6%
Nursing (BSN)	11	6.1%
Nursing (ADN)	14	7.8%
Political Science	3	1.7%
Psychology	6	3.3%
Sociology	6	3.3%

Undergraduate students comprise over 95% of the respondents. Further, graduates who attended USCA as full-time undergraduates seeking a bachelor's degree represent a full 75% of the population that responded to the survey. The proportion of respondents is also heavily weighted toward students who spent four years or more at USCA (68.1%), a factor which may be linked to increased motivation to respond to the survey.

Chart 3. Duration of USCA Attendance

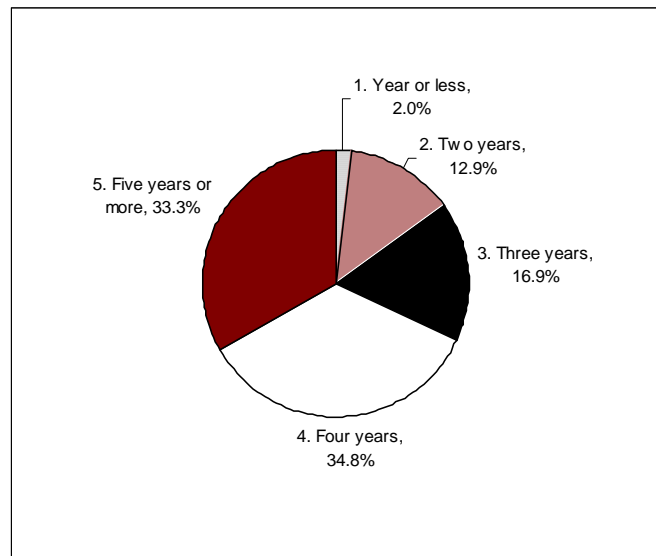
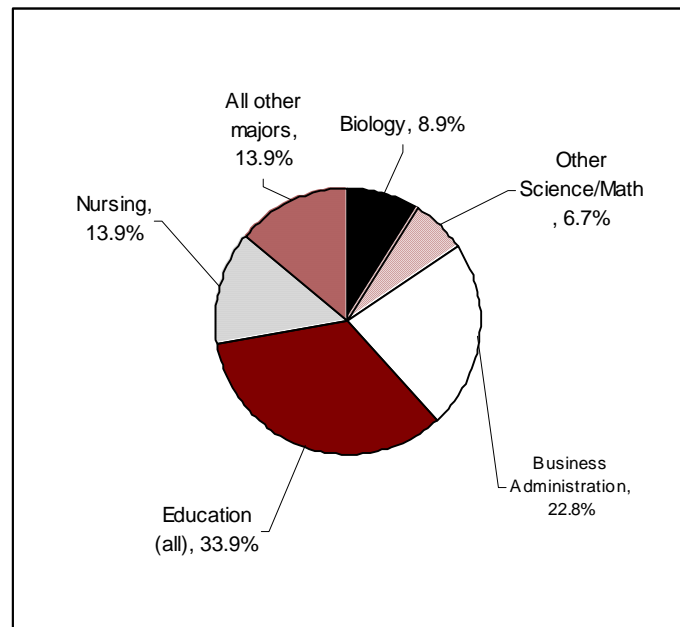


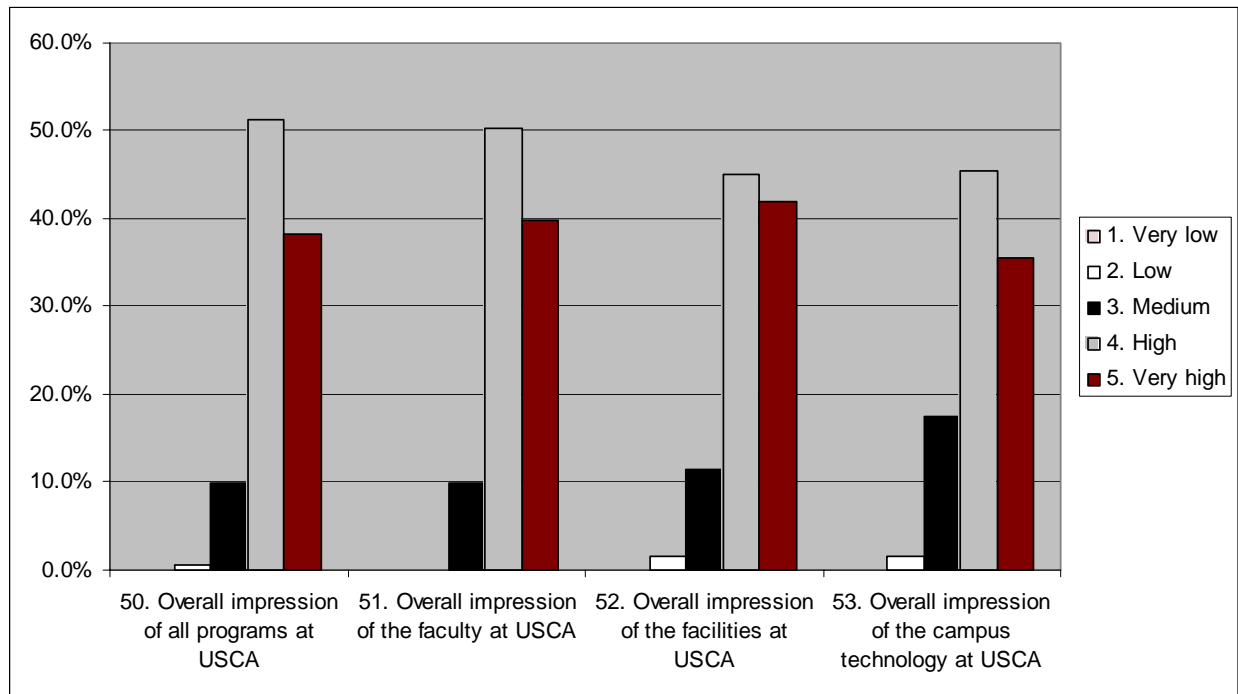
Chart 4. Respondents by Major



Overall Impressions of USCA

	Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very high
50. Overall impression of all USCA programs	0.0%	0.5%	10.0%	51.2%	38.3%
51. Overall impression of USCA faculty	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	50.2%	39.8%
52. Overall impression of USCA facilities	0.0%	1.5%	11.5%	45.0%	42.0%
53. Overall impression of USCA campus technology	0.0%	1.5%	17.5%	45.5%	35.5%

Chart 5. Overall Impressions of USCA



Respondents indicated a very positive overall impression of USCA as a whole. More than a third of USCA graduates issued a rating of very high to the institution's programs (38.3%), the faculty (39.8%), facilities (42.0%), and campus technology (35.5%). When ratings of very high and high are aggregated, positive responses for these categories all top 80% and approach 90% in the programs and faculty areas. Negative ratings of low in a few areas were offered by only six individual respondents. Campus technology was the area that received the least positive ratings, with just over one sixth of the population rating the technology on campus as medium.

When placed in context of responses regarding satisfaction with curriculum and instruction (see p. 13), these results paint a very favorable picture of alumni perception of and satisfaction with USCA. Graduates were consistent in awarding USCA high ratings as they responded to variants of the same questions at different points in the survey.

USCA Experience

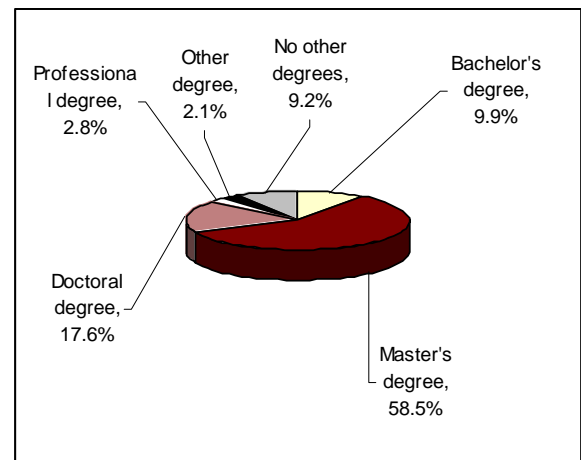
	Respondents (N=202)	Valid %
14. Regardless of financial benefits, USCA education has improved my quality of life		
Definitely yes	145	73.2%
Probably yes	46	23.2%
Uncertain	4	2.0%
Probably no	2	1.0%
Definitely no	1	0.5%
15. Reason chose USCA		
Academic reputation	9	6.8%
Admission standards	5	3.8%
Advice of H.S. personnel	0	0.0%
Advice of parents/family	2	1.5%
Availability of scholarships/fin aid	9	6.8%
Cost	8	6.0%
Location	74	55.6%
Size	9	6.8%
Social atmosphere	0	0.0%
To be with friends	2	1.5%
Type of programs avail.	12	9.0%
Other	3	2.3%
12. Would attend USCA if started college over		
Definitely yes	106	53.0%
Probably yes	75	37.5%
Uncertain	8	4.0%
Probably no	7	3.5%
Definitely no	2	1.0%
13. Would pursue same major if started college over		
Definitely yes	82	41.4%
Probably yes	63	31.8%
Uncertain	22	11.1%
Probably no	25	12.6%
Definitely no	6	3.0%
10. Plan future studies at USCA		
Yes	44	21.8%
No	95	47.0%
Undecided	63	31.2%
68. Highest degree planned		
Bachelor's degree	14	9.9%
Master's degree	83	58.5%
Doctoral degree	25	17.6%
Professional degree	4	2.8%
Other degree	3	2.1%
No other degrees	13	9.2%

Responses to the set of questions about why students initially chose to attend USCA and the effect that a USCA education has had on their lives are overwhelmingly positive. Almost three-fourths of students indicated that even without considering the financial benefits of their degrees, the education they received at USCA had definitely improved their quality of life. Fewer than 5% of respondents indicated that USCA had not had a positive effect in this regard. Indications that more than 90% would choose to pursue their education at USCA if they were to start college over again confirm this high level of satisfaction, although a significant percentage (26.9%) indicated that they might or definitely would pursue a different course of study were they to start college over.

Nevertheless, only about one fifth of respondents reported that they definitely planned to attend USCA for future studies while almost another third indicated that they had not made a decision about future studies at USCA. Almost half indicated that they did not plan future studies at USCA, even though 58.5% planned to pursue a master's degree.

More than half of all respondents indicated that they initially chose USCA because of its location. In fact, six times more graduates indicated that location was the primary reason behind their decision to attend USCA than the 9% who reported that the types of programs were the driving factor behind choosing USCA. No respondents indicated that social atmosphere or advice of high school personnel were the primary reasons why they chose USCA.

Chart 6. Highest Degree Planned



Academic and Personal Growth

16-32. Indicate how much your education at USCA contributed to your personal growth in each of the following areas

	Very much	Some-what	Very little
16. Writing effectively	54.3%	43.7%	2.0%
17. Speaking Effectively	52.8%	43.7%	3.6%
18. Understanding written information	54.6%	40.3%	5.1%
19. Learning on your own	65.8%	28.6%	5.6%
20. Organizing your time effectively	63.8%	30.1%	6.1%
21. Planning and carrying out projects	64.0%	33.0%	3.0%
22. Persisting at difficult tasks	59.7%	34.2%	6.1%
23. Working independently	60.2%	31.6%	8.2%
24. Working cooperatively as a member of a group or team	65.5%	29.9%	4.6%
25. Understanding and applying Mathematics in your daily activities	38.8%	40.3%	20.9%
26. Defining and solving problems	51.5%	42.9%	5.6%
27. Understanding philosophies and cultures different from your own	49.5%	41.8%	8.7%
28. Following directions	51.3%	39.0%	9.7%
29. Understanding graphic information	44.6%	45.6%	9.7%
30. Using the library	49.7%	35.8%	14.1%
31. Caring for your own physical and mental health	36.9%	35.9%	27.0%
32. Recognizing your rights, responsibilities, and privileges as a citizen	46.2%	32.8%	21.0%

The majority of respondents in most categories of academic and personal growth indicated that USCA had contributed to their development very much. Somewhat unsurprisingly, there are moderate ($p > 0.50$) and high ($p > 0.60$) correlations among many of the various self-reported ratings of academic and personal development (see Correlations section below). Graduates' ratings of these contributions were highest in developing dispositions necessary for academic success in a four-year higher education institution: independent learning (65.8%), working cooperatively (65.6%), planning and carrying out projects (64.0%), and organizing time effectively (63.8%). Respondents reported lower levels of development in areas of writing effectively (54.3%), understanding written information (54.6%), speaking effectively.

Respondents also reported, however, that USCA was less effective at developing some aspects of their portfolio of academic and personal skills. Lowest levels of significant development were indicated in the areas of understanding graphic information (44.6%), understanding and applying mathematics (38.8%), and caring for physical and mental health (36.9%). Corresponding levels of development are apparent in other general education goals (see page 12). Conversely these were also some of the areas where the largest number of respondents reported little growth; these areas were caring for their own physical and mental health (27.0%), recognizing their rights and responsibilities as citizens (21.0%), understanding and applying mathematics in daily activities (20.9%), and using the library (14.1%).

Chart 7. Responses to Questions 16-24.¹

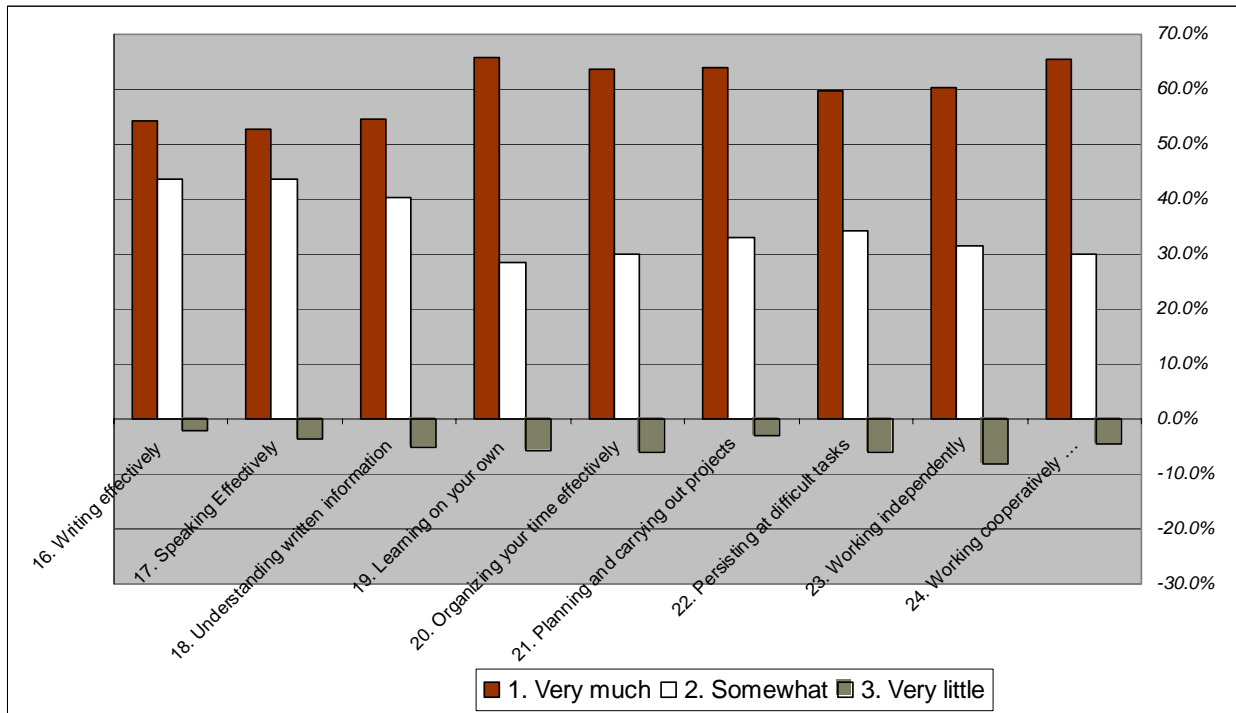
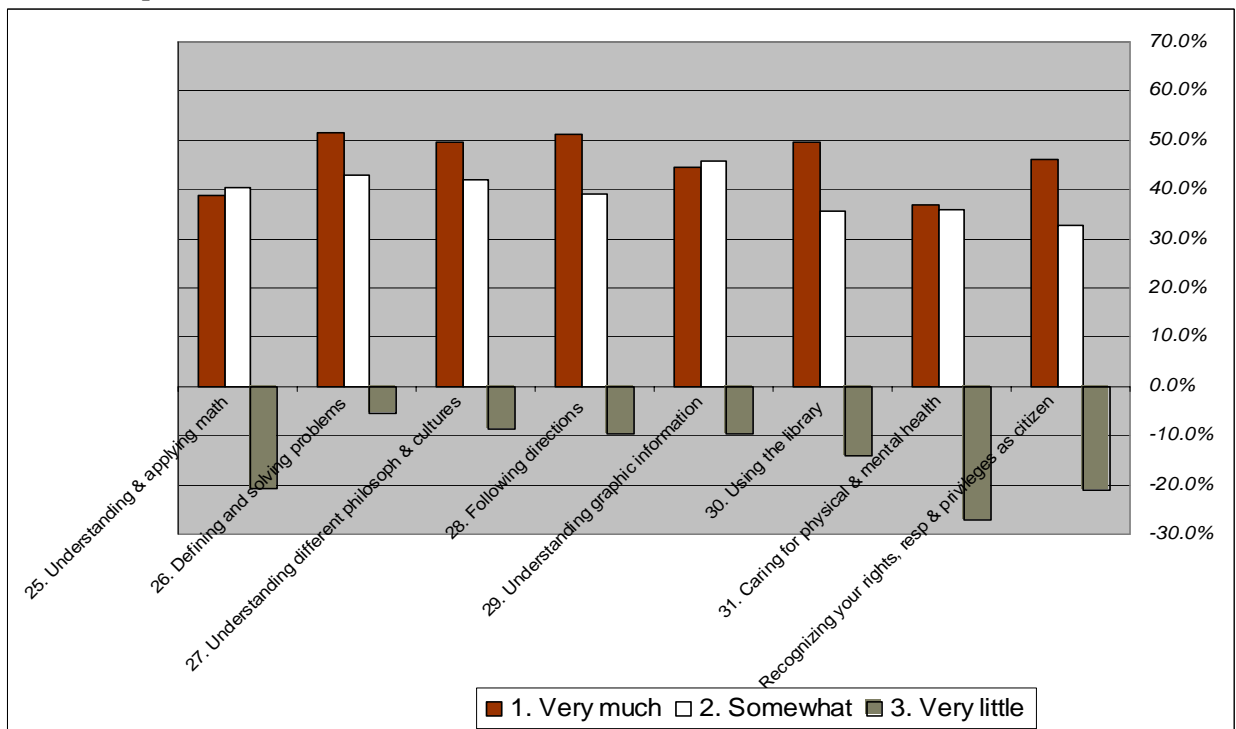


Chart 8. Responses to Questions 25-32.¹



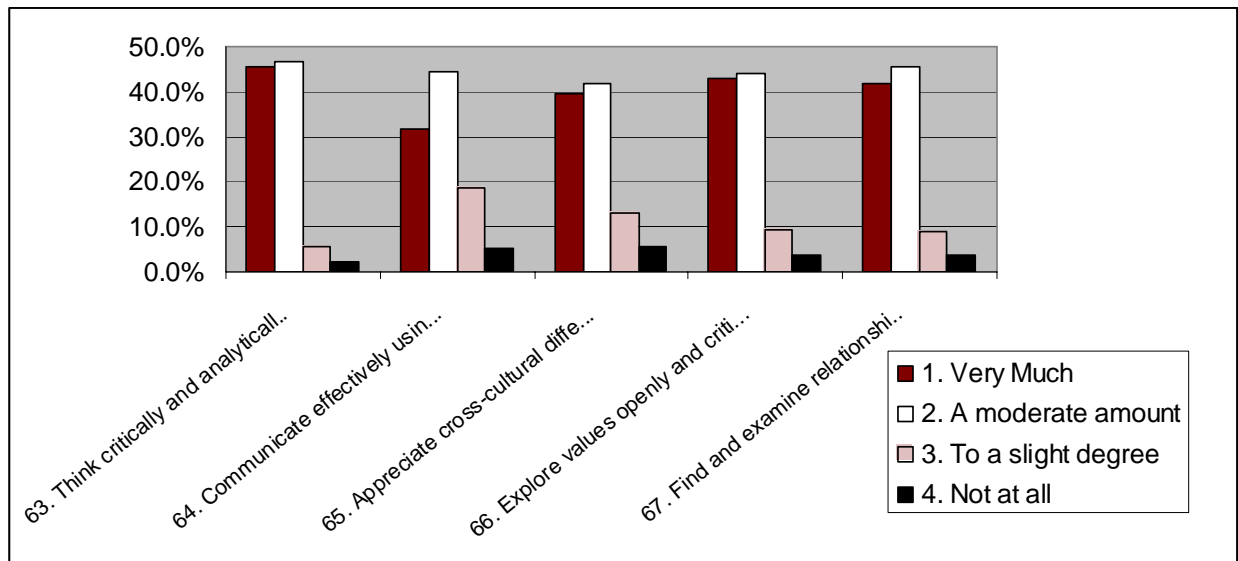
¹ Responses of “Very little” are charted as negative percentages as an illustrative aide.

General Education Courses

63-67. Indicate how much you feel the abilities listed in each of the following items improved as a result of your experience in general education courses at USCA

	Very Much	A moderate amount	To a slight degree	Not at all
63. Your ability to think critically and analytically, question and search out concepts	45.6%	46.6%	5.7%	2.1%
64. Your ability to communicate effectively using numerical, notational and other symbolic systems	31.8%	44.3%	18.8%	5.2%
65. Your ability to appreciate cross-cultural differences	39.7%	41.8%	12.9%	5.7%
66. Your ability to explore values openly and critically	43.0%	44.0%	9.3%	3.6%
67. Your ability to find and examine relationships among disciplines, concepts and areas of study	42.0%	45.6%	8.8%	3.6%

Chart 9. Contribution of General Education Courses to Development



When placed in context with questions about academic and personal growth (Questions #16-32, see pages 9-11), students reported lower levels of growth than in basic skills required for academic success, such as following directions, although the difference in rating skills may be a factor when comparing these categories. One pitfall in drawing useful inferences from these results may lie in the absence of specific, articulated outcomes for the USCA general education program.

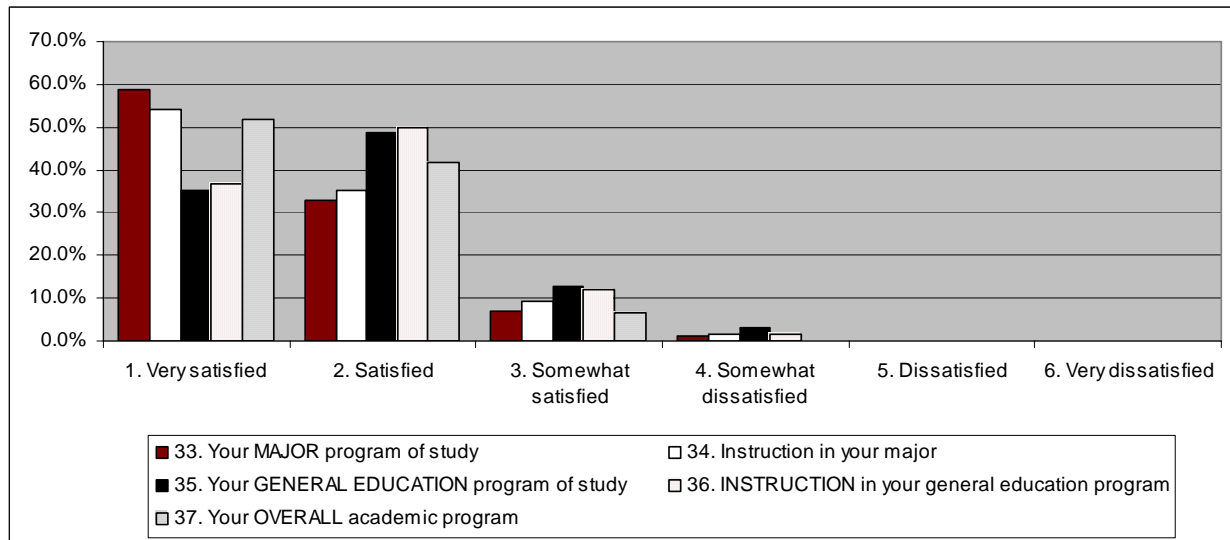
Satisfaction with Curriculum and Instruction

33-37. Rate your satisfaction with the quality of:

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Dis-satisfied	6. Very dis-satisfied
33. Your MAJOR program of study	58.9%	33.0%	7.1%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%
34. Instruction in your major program	54.0%	35.4%	9.1%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%
35. Your GENERAL EDUCATION program of study	35.2%	48.7%	13.0%	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%
36. INSTRUCTION in your general education program	36.6%	50.0%	11.9%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%
37. Your OVERALL academic	51.8%	41.6%	6.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

More than 50% of respondents indicated they were very satisfied with their major program of study, instruction in their major program of study and their overall academic programs. More than 90% indicated that they were either very satisfied or satisfied with these categories, and more than 80% reported similar levels of satisfaction with their general education program. Very strong correlations ($\rho > 0.70$) were found between satisfaction with the programs of study and instruction in both the major and in general education courses, and very strong correlations were also observed between satisfaction with the major program of study and the overall academic program (see Correlation section below).

Chart 10. Satisfaction with Educational Quality

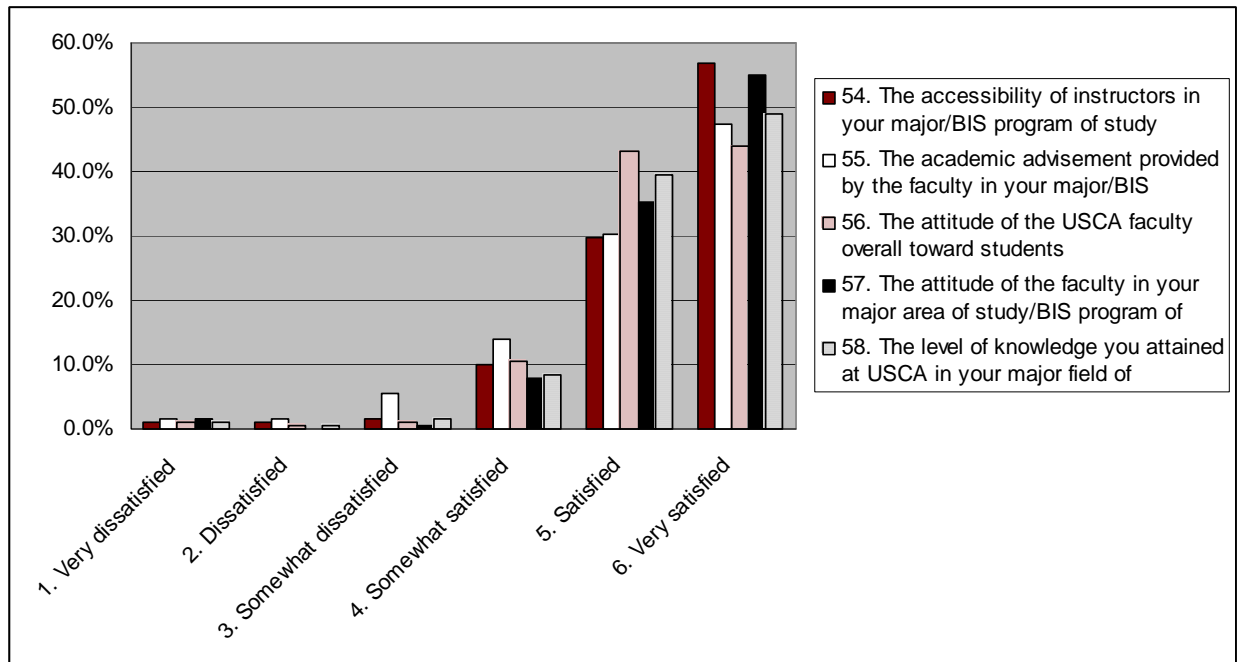


Satisfaction with Faculty Engagement

	Very dissatisfied	Dis-satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Satisfied	6. Very satisfied
54. The accessibility of instructors in your major program of study*	1.0%	1.0%	1.5%	9.9%	29.7%	56.9%
55. The academic advisement provided by the faculty in your major program of study*	1.5%	1.5%	5.5%	13.9%	30.3%	47.3%
56. The attitude of the USCA faculty overall toward students	1.0%	0.5%	1.0%	10.4%	43.1%	44.1%
57. The attitude of the faculty in your major area of study program of study*	1.5%	0.0%	0.5%	7.9%	35.1%	55.0%
58. The level of knowledge you attained at USCA in your major field of study*	1.0%	0.5%	1.5%	8.4%	39.6%	49.0%

* Questions specifically included BIS as an option for program of study.

Chart 11. Satisfaction with Faculty Engagement



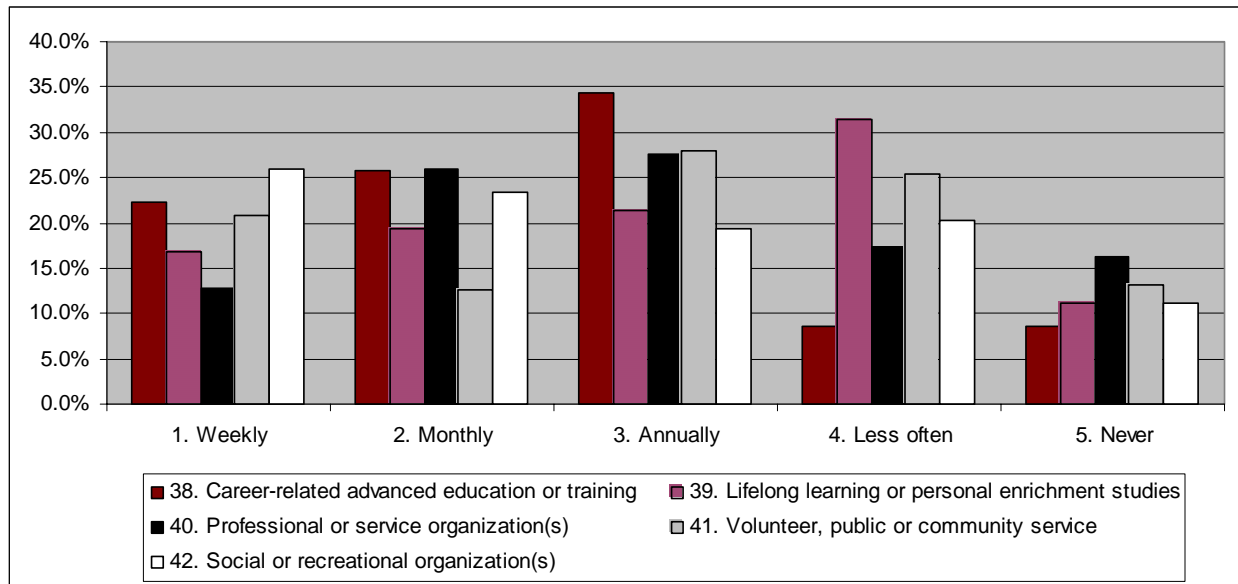
Alumni expressed great satisfaction with the faculty in all responses, with ratings of very satisfied or satisfied accounting for 78-90% of all responses. The least positive level of satisfaction appears in the area of faculty advising in the major program of study (78%) and the highest levels of dissatisfaction (3%), although these levels of dissatisfaction account for only 6 respondents. There was a strong statistical correlation between satisfaction with faculty advisement and satisfaction with accessibility of faculty ($\rho > 0.67$).

Intellectual, Community, and Civic Engagement (Current Frequency)

38-42. Indicate how frequently you are currently involved in each of the following types of activities (on or off the job)

	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Less often	Never
38. Career-related advanced education or training	22.2%	25.8%	34.3%	8.6%	8.6%
39. Lifelong learning or personal enrichment studies	16.8%	19.3%	21.3%	31.5%	11.2%
40. Professional or service organization(s)	12.8%	26.0%	27.6%	17.3%	16.3%
41. Volunteer, public or community service	20.8%	12.7%	27.9%	25.4%	13.2%
42. Social or recreational organization(s)	25.9%	23.4%	19.3%	20.3%	11.2%

Chart 12. Frequency of Involvement in Activities.



49. Voted in ___ elections since leaving college:

	(N=202)	Valid %
All	64	32.5%
Most	72	36.5%
Some	28	14.2%
Few	10	5.1%
None	23	11.7%

Alumni reported a wide range of levels of participation in activities that would indicate continued intellectual, community or civic engagement. About a third to a half indicated regular (weekly or monthly) participation in community service, lifelong learning, professional

development, or social/recreational organizations. In most categories, however, such participation was at most on an annual or less frequent basis. Voter participation was somewhat higher, with about two-thirds of graduates reporting that they had voted in most or all of the elections since leaving college. Some mild correlations ($\rho > 0.40$) among types of participation were apparent, although participation in elections showed no significant correlations with any category ($\rho > 0.21$).

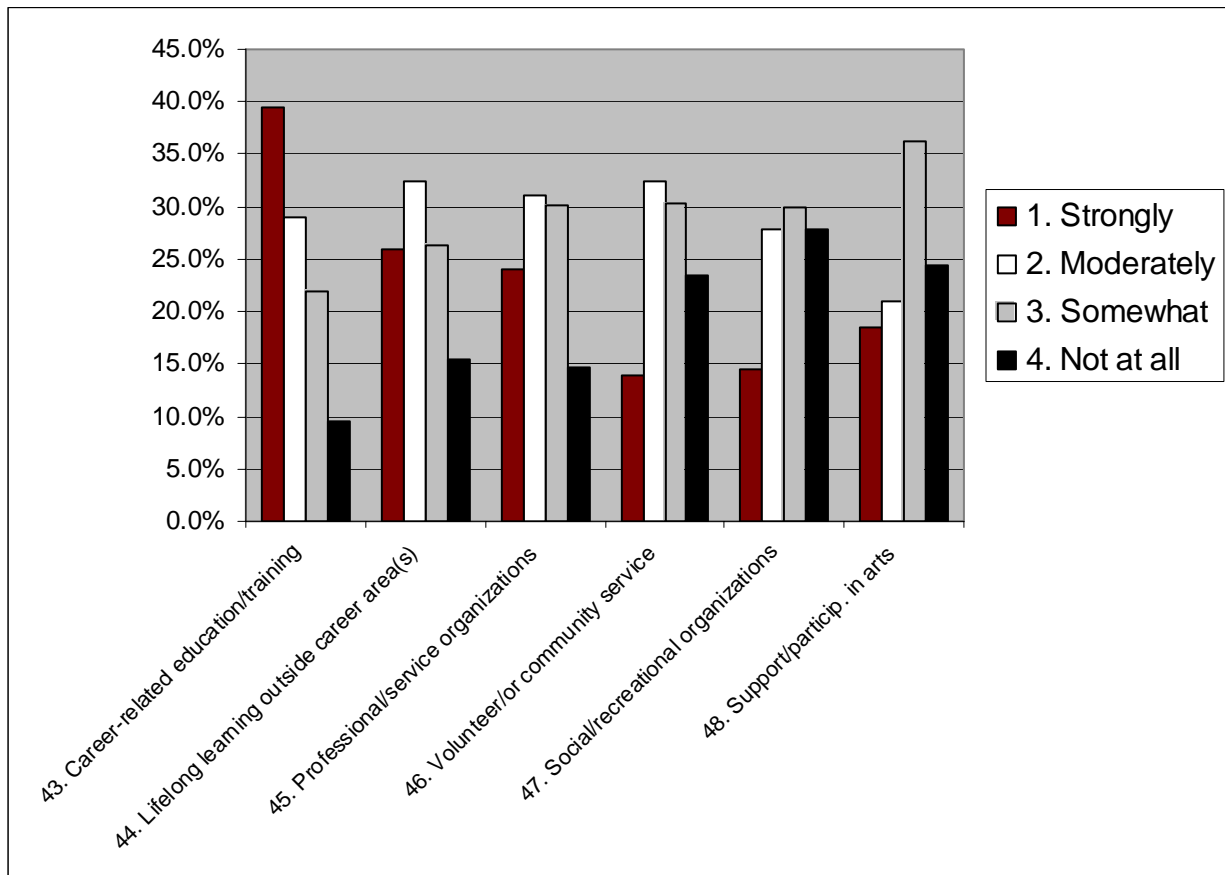
Intellectual, Community, and Civic Engagement (USCA Contribution Toward)

43-47. Indicate how your college experience influenced your participation in the following activities:

	Strongly	Moderately	Somewhat	Not at all
43. Career-related advanced education or training	39.5%	29.0%	22.0%	9.5%
44. Lifelong learning or personal enrichment studies outside your career area(s)	25.9%	32.3%	26.4%	15.4%
45. Professional or service organization(s)	24.1%	31.2%	30.2%	14.6%
46. Volunteer, public or community service	13.9%	32.3%	30.3%	23.4%
47. Social or recreational organization(s)	14.4%	27.9%	29.9%	27.9%
48. Support or participation in the arts	18.4%	20.9%	36.3%	24.4%

Graduates indicated that USCA strongly or moderately influenced their participation in activities that reflect intellectual, community, and civic engagement, especially in the areas career-related training (68.5%), lifelong learning in other fields (58.2%), and professional or service organizations (55.3%). The contribution USCA made in the areas of community service (46.2%), social or recreational organizations (44.3%), and support of the arts (39.3%), was much less pronounced, and more graduates reported that USCA had only somewhat or no effect on their current levels of participation in these activities.

Chart 13. USCA Contribution Toward Current Intellectual, Community, and Civic Engagement



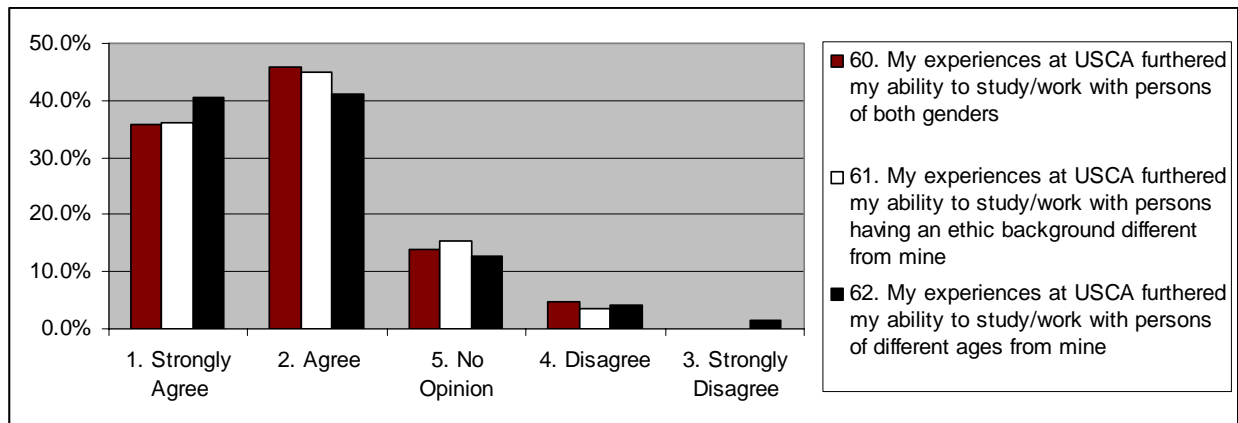
Experience Working With Other Groups

	Very dissatisfied	Dis-satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Satisfied	6. Very satisfied
59. The environment for students with disabilities	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.3%	53.9%	35.8%

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion ²	Disagree ²	Strongly Disagree ²
60. My experiences at USCA furthered my ability to study/work with persons of both genders	35.7%	45.9%	13.8%	4.6%	0.0%
61. My experiences at USCA furthered my ability to study/work with persons having an ethic background different from mine	36.1%	44.8%	15.5%	3.6%	0.0%
62. My experiences at USCA furthered my ability to study/work with persons of different ages from mine	40.5%	41.0%	12.8%	4.1%	1.5%

The vast majority of respondents (more than 80%) agreed or strongly agreed that their experiences at USCA had furthered their abilities to interact with individuals of different ages, genders, and ethnicities. While it may be hypothesized that respondents' own age, gender, or race would affect their responses to these questions, no statistically significant correlations among gender or race with responses to questions 59-62 were observed (the survey did not ask respondents to indicate age or any disabilities). It is important to note, however, that only 16 African Americans returned a survey (8.1% of study population) and only just over 20% of respondents were men.

Chart 14. Experience Working with Other Groups



² The responses have been reordered to indicate level of satisfaction more clearly.

Employment Following College

	(N=202)	Valid %
72. Length it took to obtain first full-time job after graduation		
Prior to leaving college	78	42.2%
Less than 1 month	34	18.4%
1 to 3 months	33	17.8%
4 to 6 months	15	8.1%
7 to 12 months	9	4.9%
Over 12 months	4	2.2%
Have not obtained full-time job	4	2.2%
Did not seek full-time job	8	4.3%
73. Relationship between college major and that first job.		
Highly related	134	66.7%
Moderately related	18	9.0%
Slightly related	22	10.9%
Not related	23	11.4%
Not yet employed	4	2.0%
74. Location of first job after graduation.		
South Carolina	137	69.2%
Southeast, outside of SC	45	22.7%
Outside of southeast	12	6.1%
Not yet employed	4	2.0%

75. Sources from which learned about the first full-time professional job after graduation

Job does not require degree	10	6.0%
USCA Career Svcs/CoopEdOff	6	3.6%
USCA advisor/counselor	2	1.2%
USCA faculty	10	6.0%
Parent or relative	19	11.3%
Newspaper/trade publication	15	8.9%
Professional meeting	3	1.8%
Another student/friend	14	8.3%
Recruited by employer	34	20.2%
Public/private employment agency	7	4.2%
Other source	48	28.6%

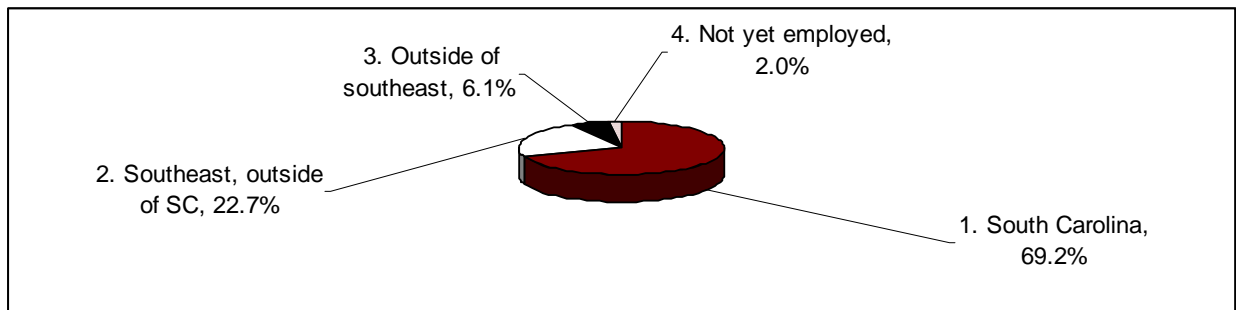
86. Annual salary in the first full-time professional job after attending USCA

Less than \$10,000	3	1.7%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	6	3.4%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	45	25.9%
\$25,000 to \$39,999	97	55.7%
\$40,000 to \$49,999	15	8.6%
\$50,000 or more	8	4.6%

Note: for the profile of current alumni employment status, see the following section.

The responses of alumni indicate that USCA graduates are remarkably successful in obtaining a full-time professional job following graduation. When not including graduates who were not seeking work, almost two thirds of respondents (63.3%) indicated they found a professional position before or within one month of completing their. Almost another fifth (18.6%) were employed within 3 months when not counting those who were not seeking work. Almost 10%, however, did not find full-time professional employment for at least seven months or had not yet found work. The location in which graduates found employment confirms the contribution USCA makes to the state and the region in preparing an educated work force, with almost 70% obtaining employment in South Carolina.

Chart 15. Location of First Job Following Graduation



76-8 Indicate the extent to which each of the following was a problem in obtaining your first full-time professional job after graduating from USCA.

	Major problem	Minor problem	Not a problem
76. Deciding what I wanted to do	10.3%	16.6%	73.1%
77. Knowing how to find job openings	7.0%	17.0%	76.0%
78. Scheduling interviews	0.6%	11.8%	87.6%
79. Writing a resume, vita, or letter of introduction	1.7%	22.4%	75.9%
80. Finding a job that paid enough	19.9%	28.1%	52.0%
81. Completing job applications	0.0%	4.1%	95.9%
82. Finding a job for which I was trained	8.2%	18.8%	72.9%
83. Finding a job where I wanted to live	7.6%	17.1%	75.3%
84. Finding the kind of job I wanted	8.8%	26.9%	64.3%
85. Race/gender discrimination	0.0%	4.7%	95.3%

Graduates reported few problems with the process of searching for employment. The only significant major problems were in the areas of finding a job that offered enough compensation (19.9%) and deciding what career field to enter (10.3%).

Chart 16. Problems in Obtaining First Job, Part 1

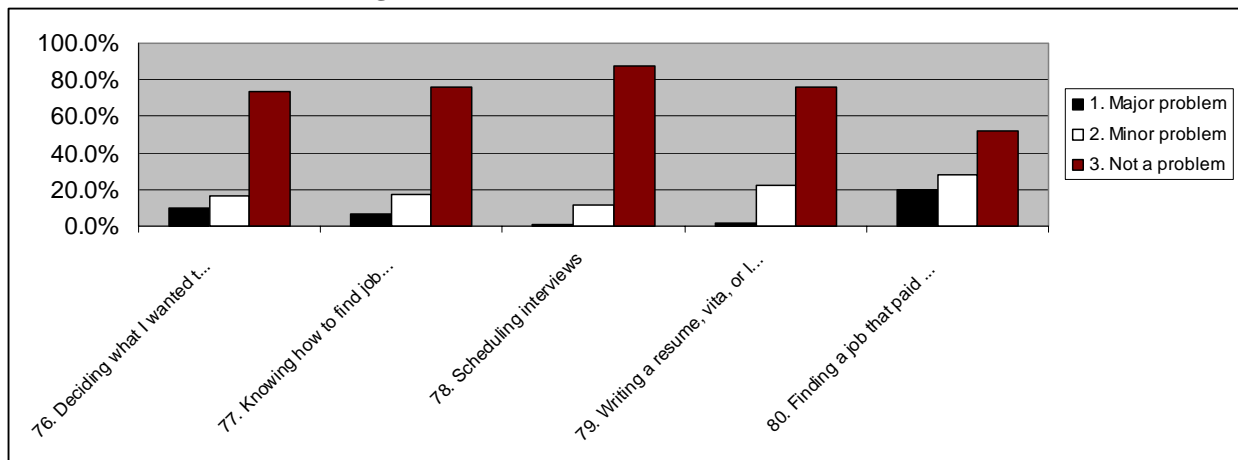
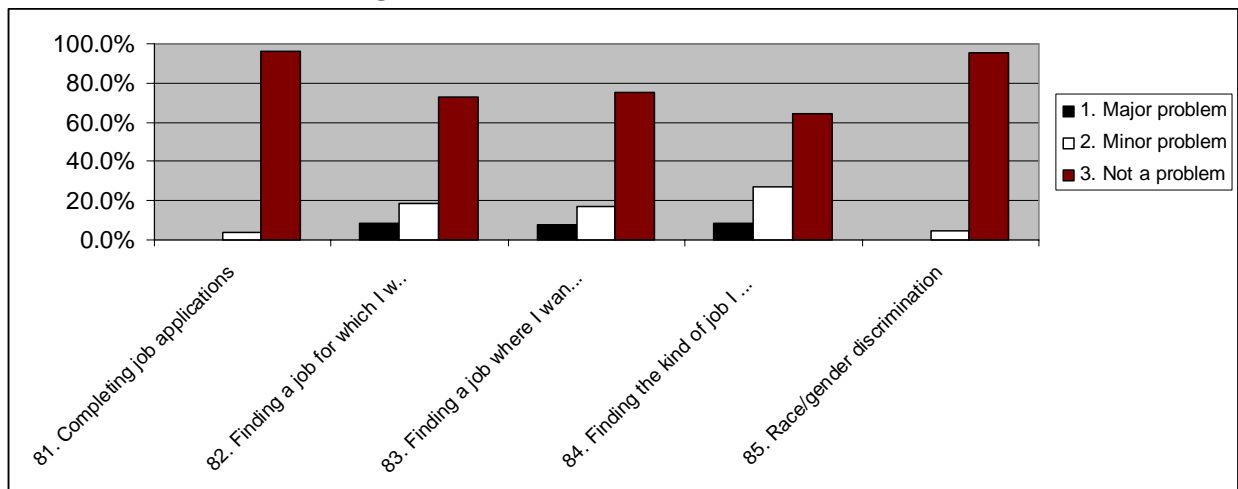


Chart 16.2 Problems in Obtaining First Job, Part 2



Current Employment and Job Satisfaction

92-97. Indicate your satisfaction with each of the following aspects of your current job:

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
92. Challenge	52.0%	36.2%	6.2%	4.0%	1.7%
93. Location	60.6%	28.6%	6.9%	2.9%	1.1%
94. Salary and Benefits	22.3%	40.6%	15.4%	17.1%	4.6%
95. Advancement Potential	25.6%	33.0%	23.3%	11.4%	6.8%
96. Working Conditions	44.8%	33.3%	12.1%	7.5%	2.3%
97. Career Potential	38.0%	34.3%	15.7%	7.2%	4.8%

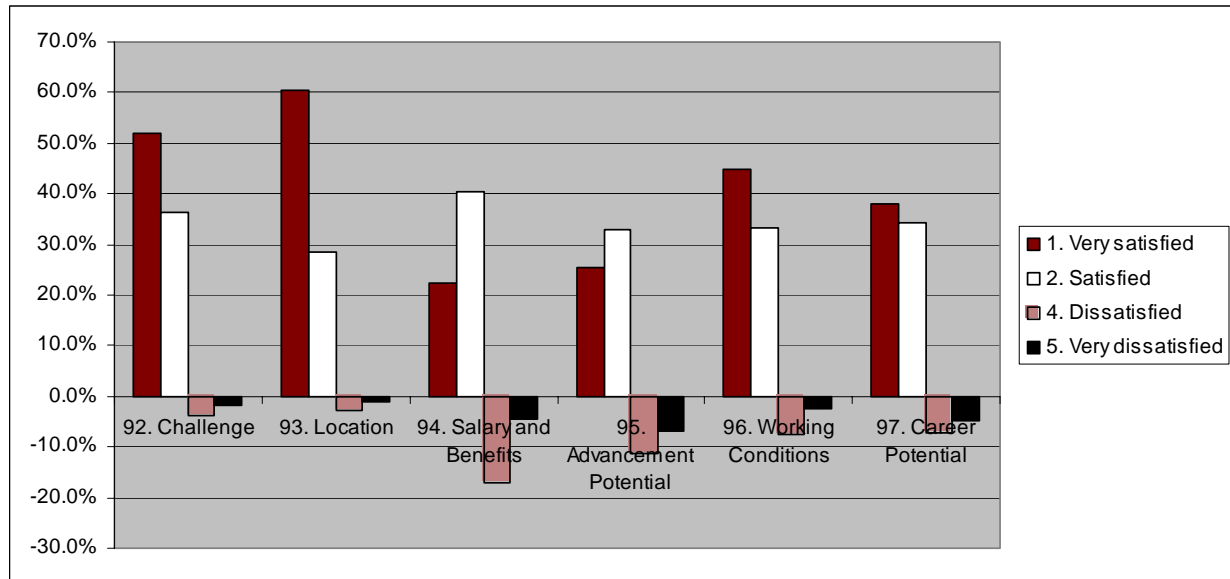
91. Indicate your CURRENT annual salary		
	(N=202)	Valid %
Less than \$10,000	3	1.7%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	9	5.0%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	17	9.4%
\$25,000 to \$39,999	98	54.1%
\$40,000 to \$49,999	30	16.6%
\$50,000 to \$69,999	19	10.5%
\$70,000 or more	5	2.8%

98. Indicate how well USCA prepared you for your CURRENT JOB		
Very well	82	50.9%
Adequately	69	42.9%
Poorly	3	1.9%
Not at all	7	4.3%

99. Indicate the relationship between your college major and your CURRENT JOB		
	(N=202)	Valid %
Highly related	121	66.5%
Moderately related	30	16.5%
Slightly related	14	7.7%
Not related	17	9.3%
Not yet employed	0	0.0%

100. Do you feel that your level of education qualifies you for a much better job in your field?		
Yes	105	62.9%
No	62	37.1%

Chart 17. Job Satisfaction³



³ Responses of dissatisfied and very dissatisfied are displayed as negative percentages for illustrative purposes.

African American Alumni

African Americans reported significantly higher ratings in certain areas of learning outcomes and civic engagement. These findings are charted below against the aggregate responses of the general population. While these results suggest significant gains by African Americans, inferences should be placed within the context of the response rate of ethnic minorities. Future studies should be conducted to encourage a greater response rate among these groups.

	General Population (n=202)	African Americans (n=16)
23. Working independently		
Very much	60.2%	75.0%
Somewhat	31.6%	25.0%
Very little	8.2%	0.0%
25. Understanding and applying Mathematics in your daily activities		
Very much	38.8%	56.0%
Somewhat	40.3%	38.0%
Very little	20.9%	6.0%
26. Defining and solving problems		
Very much	51.5%	63.0%
Somewhat	42.9%	38.0%
Very little	5.6%	0.0%
28. Following directions		
Very much	51.3%	63.0%
Somewhat	39.0%	38.0%
Very little	9.7%	
29. Understanding graphic information		
Very much	44.6%	63.0%
Somewhat	45.6%	31.0%
Very little	9.7%	6.0%
30. Using the library		
Very much	49.7%	63.0%
Somewhat	35.8%	31.0%
Very little	14.5%	6.0%
31. Caring for your own physical and mental health		
Very much	36.9%	38.0%
Somewhat	35.9%	50.0%
Very little	27.3%	13.0%
32. Recognizing your rights, responsibilities, and privileges as a citizen		
Very much	46.2%	63.0%
Somewhat	32.8%	31.0%
Very little	21.0%	6.0%

	General Population (n=202)	African Americans (n=16)
38. Career-related advanced education or training		
Weekly	22.2%	38.0%
Monthly	25.8%	13.0%
Annually	34.3%	44.0%
Less often	8.6%	5.0%
Never	8.6%	0.0%
39. Lifelong learning or personal enrichment studies		
Weekly	16.8%	50.0%
Monthly	19.3%	13.0%
Annually	21.3%	13.0%
Less often	31.5%	25.0%
Never	11.2%	0.0%
40. Professional or service organization(s)		
Weekly	12.8%	31.0%
Monthly	26.0%	25.0%
Annually	27.6%	31.0%
Less often	17.3%	0.0%
Never	16.3%	6.0%
41. Volunteer, public or community service		
Weekly	20.8%	31.0%
Monthly	12.7%	25.0%
Annually	27.9%	13.0%
Less often	25.4%	25.0%
Never	13.2%	6.0%
42. Social or recreational organization(s)		
Weekly	25.9%	13.0%
Monthly	23.4%	50.0%
Annually	19.3%	13.0%
Less often	20.3%	19.0%
Never	11.2%	5.0%

	General Population (n=202)	African Americans (n=16)
43. Career-related advanced education or training		
Strongly	39.5%	39.5%
Moderately	29.0%	29.0%
Somewhat	22.0%	22.0%
Not at all	9.5%	9.5%
44. Lifelong learning or personal enrichment studies outside your career area(s)		
Strongly	25.9%	44.0%
Moderately	32.3%	44.0%
Somewhat	26.4%	13.0%
Not at all	15.4%	0.0%
45. Professional or service organization(s)		
Strongly	24.1%	5.0%
Moderately	31.2%	19.0%
Somewhat	30.2%	31.0%
Not at all	14.6%	0.0%
46. Volunteer, public or community service		
Strongly	13.9%	38.0%
Moderately	32.3%	19.0%
Somewhat	30.3%	25.0%
Not at all	23.4%	13.0%
47. Social or recreational organization(s)		
Strongly	14.4%	38.0%
Moderately	27.9%	25.0%
Somewhat	29.9%	31.0%
Not at all	27.9%	2.0%
48. Support or participation in the arts		
Strongly	18.4%	44.0%
Moderately	20.9%	19.0%
Somewhat	36.3%	19.0%
Not at all	24.4%	13.0%