

Oakland Community College
Outcomes Assessment
Cohort One (Fall 1994 Students) Second Follow-up Study

Introduction

The cohort study described on the following pages represents a central component of the assessment plan developed by the Student Outcomes Assessment Committee of Oakland Community College's Academic Senate. By using a longitudinal model to track students' experience at OCC over a number of years, the study is intended to provide better understanding of student progression through the college, beginning with admission and continuing through departure, transfer, graduation, or return. In order to determine whether students in the cohort have met intended outcomes, progress is measured at the start of each fall term. This report constitutes the third such measurement for the first cohort. This group entered the college as first time students in the fall of 1994.

At this data collection point, members of the original cohort had split into three subgroups: those who have been enrolled each fall semester since 1994 (continuing) those who have left the college since the last measurement in fall 1995 (departed), and those who were not enrolled in fall 1995 but have returned to the college and are registered for classes in fall 1996 (returning). Those students who had left the college at the last measurement point (Fall 1995) and have not returned were not included as a subgroup, as they were surveyed last year. These groups were surveyed separately in order to determine not only progress toward college outcomes as well as educational and career goals, but also to identify reasons for departure and factors influencing the return to the college.

Methodology

At the start of the cohort study in 1994, we estimated (using statistical guidelines noted by Van Marte & Gilbreath, 1980; and Narins, 1994) that a final cohort size of 385 would be required for validity. Based on expected rates of attrition, we selected a cohort of 800. At the Fall 1995 measurement point, we were able to contact 456 of these students, 271 of whom were registered for classes and 185 who had left the college since the Fall 1994 measurement point. At the Fall 1996 measurement point, we attempted to contact students currently enrolled at the college as well as those who had departed since the Fall 1995 term. We were able to reach 256 of the 405 students in these categories:



Outcomes Assessment Cohort

1994 Cohort Follow-up Study



Intended Student Outcomes

- ❖ Students will identify their longterm educational goals
 - ❖ Students will achieve their OCC educational goals
 - ❖ Students will identify their career goals
 - ❖ Students will perceive progress toward career goals
 - ❖ Students will be retained at OCC for expected length of stay
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Intended Student Outcomes

- ❖ Students will perceive they have gained specific knowledge and skills related to their goals
- ❖ Underprepared students will successfully complete developmental classes
- ❖ Students intending to transfer will successfully do so



Intended Student Outcomes

- ❖ Students intending to take state licensing exams will be certified
 - ❖ Students who seek employment will obtain job placement in a training-related area
 - ❖ Students who have met OCC general education requirements will perceive they have made progress towards achieving core competencies
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Purpose of Study

- ❖ Follow-up study of Fall 1994 cohort
- ❖ Determine progress in educational and career goal completion
- ❖ Determine progress in core competencies



Methodology

- ❖ Study conducted in Fall 1995
 - ❖ From the original cohort of 800, we surveyed 456 students
 - ❖ 271 continuing students and 185 nonreturning students completed surveys
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Demographics of Respondents

- ❖ Males overrepresented among nonreturners
 - ❖ Continuing students younger on average
 - ❖ Minorities overrepresented in nonreturners
 - ❖ Higher educational attainment among parents of continuing students
 - ❖ Household income comparable for continuing and nonreturning students
 - ❖ Mean ASSET scores comparable
 - ❖ Two-thirds of nonreturners are employed fulltime versus one-third of continuing students
-

Continuing Students

Reasons for being at OCC

1995	1994	
3%	4%	To gain a certificate
33%	24%	To gain an associate degree
54%	48%	To gain transfer credits
4%	6%	Job skills for a new career
1%	2%	Upgrade existing job skills
3%	3%	Personal enrichment
2%	14%	Other reasons



Continuing Students

- ❖ The largest group (27%) expect to stay at OCC one more year. An additional 21% expect to stay two more years.
 - ❖ The largest group (24%) expect to complete 62 credits at OCC.
 - ❖ Three-quarters (74%) intend to transfer to a four-year school.
-



Nonreturning Students

- ❖ One-third of nonreturning students completed their educational goal while at OCC, while two-thirds did not.
 - ❖ Of those who accomplished their goal, the majority identified this goal as the completion of one or more courses
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Nonreturning Students

- ❖ Of those students who did not complete their educational goal at OCC, the most commonly cited reasons were personal (63%) and financial (45%).
- ❖ Of those citing financial reasons, the majority (68%) did not have enough money to pay tuition at the time of registration
- ❖ Of those citing personal reasons, schedule conflicts (45%) and “other” reasons (38%) were most common



Nonreturning Students

- ❖ Two-thirds (65%) stated that they plan to return to OCC in the future, while an additional 18% are uncertain whether they will return.



Long-term Educational Goals

Goal	Continuing	Nonreturning
Personal improvement	3%	7%
Professional development	5%	5%
Certification	6%	10%
Associate degree	8%	26%
Bachelor's degree	39%	31%
Professional degree	35%	19%
Other	3%	2%

Progress in Competencies: Continuers

Competency	Significant	Some	None
Independent learning skills	42%	52%	6%
Communication skills	34%	56%	10%
Ability to solve complex problems	28%	63%	9%
Ability to attain personal goals	49%	46%	5%
Mathematical skills	23%	45%	33%
Interpersonal skills	32%	60%	8%
Greater awareness of world problems	31%	45%	24%
Effective use of technology	26%	48%	25%
Understanding scientific method	20%	47%	34%

Progress in Competencies: Nonreturners

Competency	Significant	Some	None
Independent learning skills	28%	56%	15%
Communication skills	22%	53%	24%
Ability to solve complex problems	19%	54%	27%
Ability to attain personal goals	28%	51%	21%
Mathematical skills	15%	30%	55%
Interpersonal skills	23%	54%	23%
Greater awareness of world problems	25%	40%	35%
Effective use of technology	19%	45%	37%
Understanding scientific method	12%	37%	51%

HIGHLIGHTS

- Returning and nonreturning students differ on several key demographic variables. Nonreturning students are on average older than continuing students, and tend to have less well-educated parents. Males are overrepresented among nonreturning students, as are minority students.
- The percentage of continuing students stating an intention to gain an associate degree or credits for transfer increased between 1994 and 1995. Nearly half (46%) of these students reported that this shift was due to a change in educational plans or goals. Nearly three quarters (74%) of continuing students plan eventually to earn a bachelor's degree or higher.
- Nearly half (49%) of continuing students feel that they have made significant progress in attaining their personal goals while at OCC. An additional 42% feel they have also made significant progress in independent learning skills. Over one third of continuing students feel they have made no progress in understanding the scientific method (34%) and in mathematical skills (33%). A full quarter (25%) feel they have not made progress in the effective use of technology.
- Just under one third of nonreturning students stated that they achieved their educational goals while at OCC, while two thirds said they did not. Among the students who did meet their goal, the most common one was the completion of a specific course (59%) or successful transfer to another college (28%).
- Among nonreturning students who did not complete their goals while at OCC, nearly half (44%) stated that financial reasons had influenced their decision not to reenroll at the college. When probed for details, the majority said they did not have tuition money at the deadline, or were unable to earn enough money while enrolled.
- Nearly two thirds (63%) of nonreturners stated that their decision not to enroll was due to personal reasons. While nearly half (45%) of these respondents said that these problems were related to scheduling conflicts, over one third (38%) did not provide specific details, saying only that "other" personal reasons influenced them.
- Just under two thirds (65%) say that returning to OCC is part of their long-term educational plan. One half (50%) of nonreturning students surveyed say they intend to complete at least a bachelor's degree.
- Overall, nonreturning students feel they made less progress while at OCC than did continuing students. Nonreturners feel they made the most progress in their independent learning skills (28%) and their ability to achieve personal goals (28%). However, they felt they made no progress in mathematical skills (55%), understanding scientific method (51%), and effective use of technology (37%).
- Nearly two-thirds(64%) of nonreturning students reported that they are working full-time. Almost three quarters (73%) of those working feel that their current employment is related to their studies at OCC.

**Outcomes Assessment
First Term Survey-Fall 1994**

Cohort: 800

Response Rate:

Interviewed: 617

Refused: 12

Not Eligible: 52
(Never attended or dropped)

Not Interviewed: 120

Cooperation Rate = I divided by R + I

= 98%

Response Rate = I divided by I + R + NI

= 82%

1994 COHORT CONTINUING STUDENT SURVEY 2

Hello, I'm calling from Oakland Community College. As you may recall, in the fall of 1994, we asked for your help with a new project to help us better understand our students' goals. You might also have spoken with us last fall as part of our follow-up to this project. This year, we are contacting the same group of students again to find out how they feel about the progress they've made while at OCC. This will only take a few minutes. OK? *(If no, discontinue survey)*

1. The last time we spoke to you, we asked you about your reasons for attending OCC. Now, we'd like to know which of the following is the single most important reason why you are currently attending OCC: *(read all answers, select one only)*

- 1 To gain a certificate
 - 2 To gain an associate's degree
 - 3 To gain transfer credits
 - 4 To gain job skills for a new career
 - 5 To upgrade existing job skills
 - 6 To gain personal enrichment
 - 7 Or do you have another reason; could you please explain?
- 100 5-3*
-
-

2. Has your reason for attending OCC changed at all during the time you have been here? (If yes, please specify)
-
-

3. Can you tell me how much longer do you expect to stay at OCC? *(Check only one answer)*

- 1 One term *(Skip to question #5)*
 - 2 Two terms
 - 3 Three terms
 - 4 Four terms
 - 5 Five terms
 - 6 Six terms
 - 7 More than six terms
 - 8 Unsure; please explain _____
- 7 1-2*

4. Do you expect to enroll continuously at OCC or do you expect to take a break between terms? *(Please check only one answer)*

- 1 Continuously enroll (Fall, Winter, Spring)
 - 2 Take a break between terms
 - 3 Uncertain at this time
- 100 2-3*

5. How many credits in total do you expect to take at OCC? (*Ask for a specific number*)

_____ Credits

Credits 5

6. We'd also like to hear about your educational goals beyond OCC. Do you intend to transfer to another college or university after leaving OCC? (**IF YES**) Do you intend to transfer to a 2-year, 4-year college, or another type of school? (*Check only one answer.*)

- 1 _____ *Not intending to transfer* (*SKIP TO 9*)
- 2 _____ *Undecided about transfer*
- 3 _____ *To a 2-year college*
- 4 _____ *To a 4-year college*
- 5 _____ *Another type of school or college*

transfer

7. Still thinking about your future educational plans, which of the following best describes the amount of education you want to complete in the long-term after OCC? (*Read responses 1-6, check only one answer*)

- 1 _____ *Personal improvement courses*
- 2 _____ *Professional development courses*
- 3 _____ *Professional certification*
- 4 _____ *Associate degree*
- 5 _____ *A bachelor's degree*
- 6 _____ *A professional, master's degree or doctorate*
- 7 _____ *Other:* _____

long term

8. Are you very sure, somewhat sure or not at all sure about this long-term educational goal? (*Check only one answer.*)

- 3 _____ *Very sure*
- 2 _____ *Somewhat sure*
- 1 _____ *Not sure at all*

sure

9. I'd also like to ask how you feel about the educational progress you've made while at OCC. Using the scale Significant Progress, Some Progress, or No Progress, to what extent have you made progress in the following educational areas as a result of your attendance at OCC?

	Significant Progress	Some Progress	No Progress
a. Independent learning skills <i>independent</i>	3	2	1
b. Communication skills <i>communication</i>	3	2	1
c. Ability to solve complex problems <i>problem</i>	3	2	1
d. Ability to attain personal goals <i>personal</i>	3	2	1
e. Mathematical skills <i>math skills</i>	3	2	1
f. Interpersonal skills <i>interpersonal</i>	3	2	1
g. Greater awareness of world problems <i>world</i>	3	2	1
h. Effective use of technology <i>technology</i>	3	2	1
i. Understanding scientific methods <i>scientific</i>	3	2	1

10. Now, I would like you to think about your career goals. Using the same scale Significant Progress, Some Progress, or No Progress, to what extent have you made progress towards your career goal as a result of your attendance at OCC?

- 3 _____ Significant progress *career?*
 2 _____ Some progress
 1 _____ No progress (*Skip to question 12*)
 7 _____ Attendance at OCC was not related to a career goal (*Skip to question 12*)

11. Could you explain in what way you made progress? Did you:

- 3 _____ Define your goal more clearly? *how?*
 2 _____ Gain some of the skills needed? or
 1 _____ Achieve your goal?
 7 _____ Other (Please explain) _____

12. I'd also like to ask you about your employment situation. Are you currently employed? If so, are you employed full or part-time?

- 1 _____ Employed full-time *current?*
 2 _____ Employed part-time
 3 _____ Unemployed (seeking work) (*Skip to question 14*)
 4 _____ Not employed and not seeking employment (*Skip to question 14*)
 5 _____ Self employed

13. To what extent is your current job related to your studies at OCC?

- 3 _____ Highly related
- 2 _____ Somewhat related
- 1 _____ Not at all related

related 3

14. Have you taken any state licensing or professional examinations related to your academic studies at OCC?

- 1 _____ Yes (*Please specify field*) _____
- 0 _____ No (*Skip to end of survey*)

license 3

15. Did you pass this examination?

- 1 _____ Yes
- 0 _____ No

pass

This completes my questions. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. We appreciate your help.

Interviewer: _____ **Date:** _____

1994 Cohort -Returning Student Survey Codes

Question #3 (What you did in your time off)

- 10 - Personal (Family needs /responsibility, marriage, family death, career change, contemplation time for self assessment)
- 20 - Financial - (Had to work to save for tuition, ran out of money)
- 30 - Location - (Out of country, moved, travelled)
- 40 - Attending another college

Question#4 (Factors influencing your decision to return)

- 10 - Financial (cheaper than University, cheapest around)
- 20 - Transfer credits - (To gain transfer credits, better transfer credits)
- 30 - To Obtain a degree/Associates
- 40 - Continuing Education (Time is right, motivated to finish, need an education)
- 50 - School's reputation _ (nice campus, good teachers, liked course offerings)
- 60 - Location - (Close to work, convenient to home)

1994 COHORT RECENTLY DEPARTED STUDENT SURVEY

Hello, I'm calling from Oakland Community College. As you may recall, in the fall of 1994 we asked for your help with a project to help us better understand our students' goals. Our records show that you have since left the college, and we'd like to ask you a few questions about your experiences while you were here. The information will help us improve our programs and services for other students. This will only take a few minutes. OK? (If no, *discontinue survey*)

1. First of all, did you accomplish your educational goal while attending OCC?

- 1 Yes *ASK 2, then skip to 9* *complete*
 0 No (*Skip to question 3*)

2. Was your educational goal

- 1 to transfer to another college? (*If yes, specify*) _____ *where*
 2 to complete a course or courses _____
 3 or did you have some other goal? (*If yes, specify*) _____

3. Now, I'd like to ask about your decision not to enroll at OCC this fall. There are many reasons why students do not re-enroll at the college. We have grouped them into three main categories of **financial, personal, or academic**. Can you tell me whether your decision was related to financial reasons?

- 1 Yes *finance*
 0 No (*Skip to question 5*)

4. I'm going to read you a list of **financial** reasons, and would like you to tell me whether each of these reasons was *very important, somewhat important, or not at all important* in your decision not to enroll at OCC this fall.

	VI	SI	NI
a. Tuition was too expensive <i>tuition</i>	1	2	3
b. Did not apply for financial aid <i>not app</i>	1	2	3
c. Financial aid denied <i>denied</i>	1	2	3
d. Insufficient financial aid <i>insuffic</i>	1	2	3
e. Could not earn enough income while enrolled <i>enough</i>	1	2	3
f. Did not have enough money at registration <i>register</i>	1	2	3

g. Or, are there other financial reasons which impacted your decision not to enroll? (*Please specify*)

other

5. Was your decision not to enroll in classes at OCC related to **personal** matters?

- 1 Yes
 0 No (*Skip to question 7*) *personal*

6. I'm going to read you a list of personal reasons and would like you to tell me whether each one was *very important, somewhat important, or not at all important* in your decision not to enroll at OCC this fall.

	VI	SI	NI
a. Moved away from the college <i>moved</i>	1	2	3
b. College experience was not what I expected <i>expect</i>	1	2	3
c. Accepted a new job <i>accept</i>	1	2	3
d. Time/schedule conflict with job and classes <i>conflict</i>	1	2	3
e. Personal illness <i>illness</i>	1	2	3
f. Family illness or death <i>family</i>	1	2	3

g. Or was there another personal reason for your decision not to enroll: *(please explain)*

other

7. Was your decision not to enroll at OCC this fall related to **any academic** reasons? This includes course availability, scheduling, and instructors.

1 Yes

0 No *(Skip to question 9)*

academic

8. Please tell me whether each of the following reasons was *very important, somewhat important, or not at all important* in your decision not to enroll in OCC classes.

	VI	SI	NI
a. Courses I needed were not available <i>available</i>	1	2	3
b. Courses were too difficult <i>difficult</i>	1	2	3
c. Courses were not challenging <i>no chall</i>	1	2	3
d. Dissatisfied with quality of education <i>quality</i>	1	2	3
e. Dissatisfied with my academic performance <i>perform</i>	1	2	3
f. Dissatisfied with the instructor <i>instruct</i>	1	2	3

g. Or was there another academic reason for your decision not to enroll?

other

9. Now I'd like to ask you to think about your future educational plans. At this point, do you plan to return to OCC in the future?

1 Yes

0 No

7 Unsure

return

10. Still thinking in terms of your future plans, which of the following best describes the amount of education you want to complete in the **long-term**? (Read all categories; check **only one** answer)

- 1 _____ Personal improvement courses
- 2 _____ Professional development courses
- 3 _____ Professional certification
- 4 _____ Associate degree
- 5 _____ A bachelor's degree
- 6 _____ A professional, master's degree or doctorate
- 7 _____ Or do you have another longterm educational goal? _____

longer 2

11. Are you very sure, somewhat sure or not at all sure about this long-term educational goal? (Check **only one** answer.)

- 3 _____ Very sure
- 2 _____ Somewhat sure
- 1 _____ Not sure at all

sure 2

12. I'd also like to ask you about how you feel about the educational progress you made while at OCC. Using the scale **Significant Progress**, **Some Progress**, or **No Progress**, to what extent have you made progress in the following **educational** areas as a result of your attendance at OCC?

	Significant Progress	Some Progress	No Progress
a. Independent learning skills <i>learning</i>	3	2	1
b. Communication skills <i>communic</i>	3	2	1
c. Ability to solve complex problems <i>problems</i>	3	2	1
d. Ability to attain personal goals <i>goals</i>	3	2	1
e. Mathematical skills <i>math</i>	3	2	1
f. Interpersonal skills <i>interper</i>	3	2	1
g. Greater awareness of world problems <i>world</i>	3	2	1
h. Effective use of technology <i>technol</i>	3	2	1
I. Understanding scientific methods <i>scientif</i>	3	2	1

13. Now, I would like you to think about your career goals. Using the same scale **Significant Progress**, **Some Progress**, or **No Progress**, to what extent have you made progress towards your career goal as a result of your attendance at OCC?

- 3 _____ Significant progress
- 2 _____ Some progress
- 1 _____ No progress (Skip to question 15)
- 7 _____ Attendance at OCC was not related to a career goal (Skip to question 15)

career 2

14. Could you explain in what way you made progress? Did you:

- 3 Define your goal more clearly?
- 2 Gain some of the skills needed? or
- 1 Achieve your goal?
- 7 Other (Please explain) _____

way

15. I'd also like to ask you about your current employment situation. Which of the following best describes your current situation? (*Read all responses; check only one answer*)

- 1 Employed full-time
- 2 Employed part-time
- 3 Unemployed (seeking work) (*Skip to question 17*)
- 4 Not employed and not seeking employment (*Skip to question 17*)
- 5 Self employed

employed

16. Thinking about your studies at OCC, would you say that your current job is highly related, somewhat related, or not at all related?

- 3 Highly related
- 2 Somewhat related
- 1 Not at all related

related 2

17. Have you taken any state licensing or professional examinations related to your academic studies at OCC?

- 1 Yes, in which field _____
- 0 No (*Skip to end of survey*)

exam 2

18. Did you pass this examination?

- 1 Yes
- 0 No

passed

Those are all my questions. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. We appreciate your help.

Oakland Community College
College Assessment Activities

Intended Student Outcome	Assessment Measure	Responsibility	Results Distributed To	Use of Results	Assessment Schedule	Assessment Instrument
1. Students will identify their long term educational goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is your long term (5+ years) educational goal? - To what extent did OCC help you identify this goal? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Office of Institutional Planning & Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic Senate - Faculty - Deans - Administration 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All assessment points 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Admissions 2. FTS 3. CSS 4. Returning 5. Non-returning 7. GES 8. GFS
2. Students will achieve their OCC educational goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is your OCC educational goal? - Has your OCC educational goal changed? - Why did your goal change? - SIS outcome data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Office of Institutional Planning & Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic Senate - Faculty - Deans - Administration 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All assessment points 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. FTS 3. CSS 4. Returning 5. Non-returning 6. Transfer 7. GES 8. GFS
3. Students will identify their career goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is your career goal? - To what extent did OCC help you identify this goal? - Has your career goal changed? - Why did your goal change? - Graduate Follow Up Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Office of Institutional Planning & Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic Senate - Faculty - Deans - Administration 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All assessment points 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Admissions 2. FTS 3. CSS 4. Returning 5. Non-returning 7. GES 8. GFS
4. Students will perceive that they have made progress toward achieving their career goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent have you made progress towards your career goal? - To what extent has OCC helped you? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Office of Institutional Planning & Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic Senate - Faculty - Deans - Administration 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment points 2 and beyond 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. FTS 3. CSS 4. Returning 5. Non-returning 6. Transfer 7. GES 8. GFS

Oakland Community College
College Assessment Activities

Intended Student Outcome	Assessment Measure	Responsibility	Results Distributed To:	Use of Results	Assessment Schedule	Assessment Instrument
10. Students who seek employment will obtain job placement in a training related area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will you be seeking new employment on completion of your goal at OCC? - Have you obtained new employment? - Is it related to your training at OCC? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Office of Institutional Planning & Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic Senate - Faculty - Deans - Administration 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All assessment points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. FTS 3. CSS 4. Returning 5. Non-returning 7. GES 8. GFS
11. Students who have met OCC general education requirements will perceive they have made progress towards achieving the college's core competencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent have you made progress in the following areas: - independent learning - communication ability - creative and critical thinking - personal management - interpersonal skills - computation - global environmental awareness - scientific and technological literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Office of Institutional Planning & Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic Senate - Faculty - Deans - Administration 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment point 2 and beyond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. FTS 3. CSS 4. Returning 5. Non-returning 6. Transfer 7. GES 8. GFS



OAKLAND
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

1994 COHORT NON-RETURNING STUDENT SURVEY

Please make any name and/or address changes here.

228 cases = 50% of 456 students eligible

As you may recall, last fall you were invited as a first-time student to participate in a new project to measure student success at Oakland Community College. We greatly appreciated your help at that time. Now, as you are not currently enrolled at the college we would like to ask you a few follow-up questions.

1. First of all, did you accomplish your **educational** goal while attending the College?
31.4% Yes
68.6% No

- 1a. Was your educational **goal**
27.6% to transfer to another college? Where? *Wayne State 25%, Michigan State 13%*
58.6% to complete a course or courses
6.9% another goal? Please explain:

6.9% no response

2. Now, I'd like to ask about your decision not to enroll at OCC this fall. There are many reasons why students do not re-enroll at the college. We have grouped them into three main categories of **financial, personal, or academic**. Was your decision related to financial reasons?
43.8% Yes
54.7% No
1.6% No response

3. I'm going to read you a list of **financial** reasons. Please tell me which apply to you:

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
a. Tuition was too expensive	<i>41.1%</i>	<i>58.9%</i>
b. Did not apply for financial aid	<i>33.9%</i>	<i>64.3%</i>
c. Financial aid denied	<i>12.5%</i>	<i>82.1%</i>
d. Insufficient financial aid	<i>8.9%</i>	<i>83.9%</i>
e. Could not earn enough income while enrolled	<i>62.5%</i>	<i>35.7%</i>
f. Did not have enough money at registration	<i>67.9%</i>	<i>30.4%</i>
g. Other:	<i>17.9%</i>	<i>71.4%</i>

4. Was your decision not to enroll in classes at OCC related to **personal** matters?

62.5% Yes

36.7% No

5. Please tell me which of the following reasons apply to you:

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
a. Moved away from the College	7.5%	90%
b. College experience was not what I expected	6.3%	91.3%
c. Accepted a new job	27.5%	70%
d. Time/schedule conflict with job and classes	45%	53.8%
e. Personal illness	7.4%	90.1%
f. Family illness or death	9.9%	87.7%
g. Other:	38.3%	58%

6. Was your decision not to enroll this fall at OCC related to **academic** reasons? (*such as the courses available, the schedule, instructors etc.*)

23.1% Yes

74.6% No

7. Please tell me which of these reasons apply to you:

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
a. Courses I needed were not available	32.3%	64.5%
b. Courses were too difficult	10%	86.7%
c. Courses were not challenging	10%	83.3%
d. Dissatisfied with quality of education	33.3%	63.3%
e. Dissatisfied with my academic performance	33.3%	63.3%
f. Dissatisfied with the instructor	40%	56.7%
g. Other:	33.3%	60%

8. Thinking in terms of your future educational plans, do you plan to return to OCC ?

64.9% Yes

16.2% No

18.4% Unsure

9. Still thinking in terms of future plans, which of the following best describes the amount of education you want to complete in the **long-term**? (Read responses 1-6, check only one answer)

- 6.6% Personal improvement courses
- 4.9% Professional development courses
- 9.9% Professional certification
- 26.4% Associate degree
- 31.3% A bachelor's degree
- 19.2% A professional, master's degree or doctorate
- 1.6% Other

10. Are you very **sure, somewhat sure or not at all sure** about this **long-term** educational goal? (Check only one answer.)

- 55.2% Very sure
- 36.1% Somewhat sure
- 8.7% Not sure at all

The next set of questions deals with your feelings about the progress you made while at OCC.

11. Using the scale **Significant Progress, Some Progress, or No Progress**, to what extent have you made progress in the following **educational** areas as a result of your attendance at OCC?

	Significant Progress	Some Progress	No Progress
a. Independent learning skills?	① 28.4%	56.3%	15.3%
b. Communication skills?	22.2%	53.3%	24.4%
c. Ability to solve complex problems?	18.7%	54.4%	26.9%
d. Ability to attain personal goals?	② 27.5%	51.1%	21.4%
e. Mathematical skills?	14.8%	30.2%	54.9% ①
f. Interpersonal skills? <i>Personal skills?</i>	22.5%	54.4%	23.1%
g. Greater awareness of world problems?	③ 25.3%	40.1%	34.6% ③
h. Effective use of technology?	18.6%	44.8%	36.6% ↓
i. Understanding scientific methods?	12.2%	36.5%	51.4% ②

12. Now, I would like you to think about your career goals. Using the same scale **Significant Progress, Some Progress, or No Progress**, to what extent have you made progress towards your career goal as a result of your attendance at OCC?

- 12.5%** Significant progress
- 48.4%** Some progress
- 36.4%** No progress
- 2.7%** Attendance at OCC was not related to a career goal)

13. Could you explain in what way you made progress? Did you:

- 22.1%** Define your goal more clearly?
- 67.3%** Gain some of the skills needed? or
- 5.3%** Achieve your goal?
- 3.5%** Other (Please explain)

14. Are you currently employed? If so, are you employed full or part-time?

- 64.3%** Employed full-time
- 16.2%** Employed part-time
- 7.6%** Unemployed (seeking work)
- 9.2%** Not employed and not seeking employment
- 2.7%** Self employed

15. To what extent is your current job related to your studies at OCC?

- 73.1%** Highly related
- 25.6%** Somewhat related
- 0.0%** Not at all related

16. Have you taken any state licensing or professional examinations related to your academic studies at OCC?

- 7.3%** Yes, in which field
- 92.7%** No

17. Did you pass this examination?

- 66.7%** Yes
- 20%** No

This completes my questions. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. We appreciate your help.

Table One
Response Rates

Category	Number	Responses	Response rate
Continuing	205	148	72%
Departed	154	77	50%
Returning	46	31	67%

It should be noted that 395 students of the original cohort were not counted as part of the 1996 sample. These students left the college after the Fall 1994 term and have not re-enrolled in either Fall 1995 or Fall 1996. Since a sample of these students was surveyed in Fall 1995 as “departed”, we did not attempt to recontact them in Fall 1996.

As Table One indicates, the response rate for departed students was substantially lower than the rates for continuing and returning students. After repeated attempts at contact, we were not able to reach half of this group. The difference may be partially explained by the transient nature of the population. Interviewing records indicate that 28 (18%) had moved without leaving forwarding address or telephone information. An additional 26 (17%) had disconnected or inaccurate phone numbers listed.

Continuing Students

Of the 800 students in the original cohort, 205 were registered for classes in the fall of 1995 and again in the fall of 1996. We surveyed 148 of these continuing students to determine whether their reason for being at OCC and their expected length of stay had changed since the previous point of contact. We also asked continuing students about their longterm career and educational goals as well as the amount of progress they feel they have made in academic areas since coming to OCC. Analysis of demographic variables indicates that 55% of continuing students are female and 45% male. Eighty-four percent are white and 9% are African-American, while 4% are Asian and 3% are Hispanic. Overall, the college is 60% female and 40% male. Eighty percent of all students enrolled in Fall 1996 are white, while 13% are African-American and 4% are Asian (source: Fall 1996 Enrollment Trends Report), indicating that females and African-Americans are slightly underrepresented in this data.

Reason for Attending OCC:

The majority of continuing students report that the most important reason for their enrollment at OCC is either to obtain an associate degree (48%) or to gain credits for transfer (43%). While the percent attending to gain an associate degree has increased 15% since the fall of 1995, the percent attending to gain transfer credit has dropped 11%, suggesting a possible shift in

educational goals among continuing students. However, when respondents were asked about longterm educational goals, the majority say they intend to transfer to a four year institution. While the data we have collected do not explain this difference, it is possible that as respondents accumulate credits at OCC, the longterm goal of transferring and eventually earning a bachelors degree takes second place to the more immediate goal of earning an associate degree.

Table Two
Most Important Reason for Attending OCC

<i>Reason</i>	<i>% Citing in 95</i>	<i>% Citing in 96</i>
To gain a certificate	3%	3%
To gain an associate degree	33%	48.%
To gain credits for transfer	54%	43%
To gain job skills for a new career	4%	2%
To upgrade existing job skills	1%	1%
To gain personal enrichment	3%	2%
Other	2%	1%

Almost two-thirds (65%) of 1996 survey respondents stated that they intend to stay at the college a maximum of three additional terms. Since these students first enrolled at OCC in Fall 94 and were enrolled in both Fall 95 and Fall 96, it is likely that many will have completed sufficient credits to transfer or to obtain an associate degree by next fall.

Longterm Educational Goals:

The majority of respondents (71%) say they plan eventually to attend a four-year college or university. More than half (53%) of all respondents intend to earn a bachelor's degree, while an additional one-third (33%) plan to obtain an advanced degree. When compared to last year's results, it appears that more continuing students now plan to earn a bachelors degree, while slightly fewer intend to earn an associate degree or an advanced degree. However, in both 1995 and 1996, the majority stated an intention to transfer to a four year college or university with a long term educational goal of at least a bachelor's degree. In addition, the majority of continuing students surveyed both years said they were "very sure" about educational goals. This suggests that while short-term educational goals may have shifted, students' longterm aspirations have remained constant over time.

Table Three
 Longterm Educational Goals

<i>Goal</i>	<i>% Citing in 95</i>	<i>% Citing in 96</i>
Personal improvement courses	3%	1%
Professional development courses	5%	2%
Professional certification	6%	4%
Associate degree	8%	2%
Bachelor's degree	39%	53%
Professional or masters degree	35%	33%
Other	3%	5%

Educational Progress:

In both the 1995 and 1996 surveys, continuing students were asked to respond to a series of questions about their progress in specific academic areas. As was the case in 1995, 1996 responses revealed that students were most likely to report significant progress toward personal goals and independent learning skills. In both 1995 and 1996, continuing students were most likely to report no progress in mathematical skills, awareness of world problems, use of technology, and understanding of the scientific method.

Table Four
Educational Progress

<i>Area</i>	<i>% Citing Significant Progress in 95</i>	<i>% Citing Significant Progress in 96</i>
Independent learning skills	42%	45%
Communication skills	34%	39%
Ability to solve complex problems	28%	29%
Ability to attain personal goals	49%	48%
Mathematical skills	23%	20%
Interpersonal skills	32%	37%
Greater awareness of world problems	31%	26%
Understanding scientific method	20%	24%
Effective use of technology	26%	28%

Analysis by gender suggests that women are more likely than men to say that they made significant progress in interpersonal skills while at OCC. While men outnumber women in reporting significant progress in independent learning skills, complex problem-solving, technology use, and understanding scientific method, these differences are not statistically significant. Analysis reveals no statistically significant racial differences in response to these questions.

Career Goals

Nearly one half (49%) of 1996 respondents reported significant progress toward their career goals while at OCC, and an additional 43% reported some progress. These figures represent a positive shift from last year's responses, when fewer students reported significant progress and more reported some progress.. When asked to explain their progress, over half (56%) said that they had gained some of the skills needed, and just over one quarter (26%) said that they had defined their goal more clearly. Further analysis indicates that there are no significant gender or racial differences in reporting progress toward career goals.

Table Five
Progress Toward Career Goals

<i>Progress</i>	<i>% Citing in 95</i>	<i>% Citing in 96</i>
Significant progress	38%	49%
Some progress	55%	43%
No progress	7%	8%

Employment

Forty-two percent of 1996 respondents reported that they are currently employed full-time; an additional 44% are employed part-time. These figures are comparable to those reported last year, although full-time employment has increased 6% while part-time has decreased 4%. Nearly half (47%) say that their current employment is not at all related to their OCC studies. This represents a major shift from last year, when less than one fifth reported that their employment was not at all related. Current data do not shed any light on this shift, suggesting that this might be an appropriate area for further investigation.

Departed Students

A total of 154 students from the original cohort were no longer enrolled at OCC in Fall 1996 although all had been enrolled in Fall 1994 and Fall 1995. These students were categorized as "departed" and were surveyed in order to determine their reasons for leaving OCC as well as their feelings about the progress they made while at OCC. We were able to contact by telephone 77 of the departed students. An additional 394 students from the original cohort were not enrolled in the Fall 1996 term, but as this group was also absent in the Fall 1995 term they were not surveyed at this point.

Educational Attainment

When asked to state whether they had accomplished their educational goal at OCC, respondents were nearly evenly split. Just under half (48%) said that they had accomplished their goal, while the remaining 52% reported that they had not. When compared to the responses of last year's departing students, more completed their goals before leaving the college, possibly due to their longer stay.

When asked what their goal had been, over one-half (54%) said that they had planned to transfer to another institution, while an additional one-third (35%) had planned to complete a specific course or set of courses. Among those who responded that they had transferred, the most popular transfer institution was Oakland University (27%). Eastern Michigan University, Wayne State University, and University of Michigan-Dearborn each accounted for an additional 9% of

transfers.

Table Six
Goal Completion

<i>Goal Completed</i>	<i>% Citing in 95</i>	<i>% Citing in 96</i>
Yes	31%	48%
No	69%	52%

Reasons for Departure

Those who reported that they had not accomplished their goal were asked to state whether their decision not to leave the college could be categorized as financial, academic, or personal. As was also found in last year's study of 1995 departing students, financial and personal reasons were most commonly cited.

Table Seven
Reasons for Departure

<i>Reason</i>	<i>% Citing in 95</i>	<i>% Citing in 96</i>
Financial	45%	40%
Personal	63%	65%
Academic	25%	13%

Within the financial category, a lack of money at the time of registration and an inability to earn enough money while enrolled were frequently cited. Within the personal category, scheduling conflicts and confidential or personal reasons were commonly mentioned.

Longterm Educational Goals

Over half (55%) of respondents reported longterm plans to earn at least a bachelor's degree. Half of respondents say they are very sure about their goal. These figures are consistent with departed students surveyed in 1995. When compared to continuing students, however, far fewer of departing students intend to earn a four year or advanced degree.

Table Eight
 Longterm Educational Goals

<i>Goal</i>	<i>% Citing in 95</i>	<i>% Citing in 96</i>
Associate degree	26%	24%
Bachelors degree	31%	36%
Masters/professional degree	19%	20%

Plans to return to OCC:

Just under half (49%) of departing students surveyed reported that they plan to return to OCC at some time in the future. An additional one-third (33%) do not plan to return, while 17% are unsure. In 1995, nearly two-thirds stated an intention to return and only 16% had no plans to return.

Educational Progress:

Departing students were also asked about their progress in specific educational areas. On average, departing students are less likely to feel that they made significant progress in these areas while at OCC. However, both continuing and departing students were most likely to cite significant progress in independent learning skills and the ability to attain personal goals, and most likely to report no progress in mathematical skills, understanding the scientific method, and effective use of technology. The following graph displays responses. The same patterns are apparent in last year's departing students, suggesting that mathematics, science and technology may be areas of particular concern.

Table Nine
Educational Progress

<i>Area</i>	<i>% Citing Significant Progress in 95</i>	<i>% Citing Significant Progress in 96</i>
Independent learning skills	28%	34%
Communication skills	22%	25%
Ability to solve complex problems	19%	21%
Ability to attain personal goals	28%	35%
Mathematical skills	15%	13%
Interpersonal skills	23%	27%
Greater awareness of world problems	25%	23%
Understanding scientific method	12%	9%
Effective use of technology	19%	21%

Career Goals

The majority of respondents (62%) reported some progress toward career goals while at OCC, while nearly a quarter (23%) reported significant progress and 10% reported no progress. In 1995, over one-third of departing students felt they had made no progress toward career goals, and just 13% reported significant progress. These shifts in responses may be due in part to the additional year 1996 respondents spent at OCC.

Table Ten
Progress Toward Career Goals

<i>Progress</i>	<i>% Citing in 95</i>	<i>% Citing in 96</i>
Significant progress	13%	23%
Some progress	48%	62%
No progress	36%	10%

Employment

Over half (56%) of respondents are currently working full-time, and additional 20% are working

full-time. Ten percent are unemployed, while the remaining 14% are either unemployed but not seeking work or self-employed. These figures are consistent with responses from departing students surveyed in 1995, suggesting that the majority of students leaving the college without completing a degree or transferring to another institution are going directly back into the workforce.

Returning Students

In fall 1996, 46 students who were not enrolled the previous fall returned to OCC. Thirty-one of these students were contacted in order to gain a better understanding of their activities during the time away from the college as well as their reasons for returning.

Educational Goals:

Nearly half (48%) of respondents indicated that they had returned to OCC in order to gain an associate degree, while an additional 39% plan to gain transfer credits. Three percent are here to upgrade existing skills or to gain skills for a new career, and the remaining 7% are here for personal enrichment. When asked their current reason for attending OCC, half stated the same reason noted on the initial 1994 survey.

Table Eleven
Most Important Reason for Returning to OCC

<i>Reason</i>	<i>% Citing</i>
To gain an associate degree	48%
To gain credits for transfer	39%
To gain job skills for a new career	3%
To upgrade existing job skills	3%
To gain personal enrichment	7%

In order to determine how many respondents had returned to OCC for the same reason they initially enrolled, we crosstabulated responses for 1994 and 1996. One-quarter (25%) indicated in 1994 and again after returning in 1996 that they were attending OCC in order to gain an associate degree, and an additional one-quarter (25%) indicated in both years that they were attending to gain transfer credits. However, it should be noted that these percentages represent relatively small actual numbers as only 31 returning students responded to the survey.

Return to OCC

Students returning to the college were also asked about the factors which had most influenced their decision to return. The decision to earn an OCC degree was the most frequently cited influence, followed by an increased motivation to continue the educational process.

Table Twelve
Factors Influencing Return to OCC

<i>Factor</i>	<i>% Citing</i>
OCC is the best option financially	10%
Need additional credits for transfer	16%
Decided to earn an OCC degree	32%
Increased motivation to continue education	23%
OCC reputation	13%
OCC location	6%

When asked how long they expect to stay at OCC, returning student responses varied considerably. The most frequently cited response was three additional terms (29%), although responses ranged from as low as one semester (3%) to as high six or more semesters (22%). The majority of respondents (83%) intend to enroll continuously, and more than half (52%) plan to complete 60-62 credits.

Nearly half (48%) of respondents plan to earn a bachelor's degree in the long term, and an additional 23% plan to earn an advanced or professional degree. These responses are consistent with those of continuing students, suggesting that time off from college does not necessarily influence longterm educational goals. The majority of respondents said they were very sure of these goals, which is also consistent with the responses of continuing students.

Table Thirteen
Longterm Educational Goals

<i>Goal</i>	<i>% Citing</i>
Associate degree	3%
Bachelors degree	48%
Masters degree	23%
Other	3%

Amount of Time Away from OCC:

Over one-third (36%) of respondents said they had taken off a total of three terms before returning to OCC. An additional third (29%) were gone for two terms, while 13% were gone one term. Because enrollment records indicate that all returning students were enrolled in Fall 1995, none could have been unenrolled for more than three terms.

Use of Time Away from OCC:

Respondents were also asked to explain how they spent their time away from OCC. Over half (52%) said that they had spent their time off attending to personal business. In many cases, respondents indicated that family issues--births, deaths, and illnesses--had occupied most of their time. Twenty-six percent mentioned financial issues, explaining that they spent their time away from OCC working to save money for tuition. An additional 16% either spent the time travelling, or moved away from the area temporarily. The remaining 6% took classes at another college during their time off.

DRAFT DRAFT
Oakland Community College
Outcomes Assessment
Cohort One (Fall 1994 Students) Second Follow-up Study

Introduction

The cohort study described on the following pages represents a central component of the assessment plan developed by the Student Outcomes Assessment Committee of Oakland Community College's Academic Senate. By using a longitudinal model to track students' experience at OCC over a number of years, the study is intended to provide better understanding of student progression through the college, beginning with admission and continuing through departure, transfer, graduation, or return. In order to determine whether students in the cohort have met intended outcomes, progress is measured at the start of each fall term. This report constitutes the third such measurement for the first cohort. This group entered the college as first time students in the fall of 1994.

At this data collection point, members of the original cohort had split into three subgroups: those who have been enrolled each fall semester since 1994 (continuing) those who have left the college since the last measurement in fall 1995 (departed), and those who were not enrolled in fall 1995 but have returned to the college and are registered for classes in fall 1996 (returning). Those students who had left the college at the last measurement point (Fall 1995) and have not returned were not included as a subgroup, as they were surveyed last year. These groups were surveyed separately in order to determine not only progress toward college outcomes as well as educational and career goals, but also to identify reasons for departure and factors influencing the return to the college.

Methodology

At the start of the cohort study in 1994, we estimated (using statistical guidelines noted by Van Marte & Gilbreath, 1980; and Narins, 1994) that a final cohort size of 385 would be required for validity. Based on expected rates of attrition, we selected a cohort of 800. At the Fall 1995 measurement point, we were able to contact 456 of these students, 271 of whom were registered for classes and 185 who had left the college since the Fall 1994 measurement point. At the Fall 1996 measurement point, we attempted to contact students currently enrolled at the college as well as those who had departed since the Fall 1995 term. We were able to reach 256 of the 405 students in these categories:

Table One
Response Rates

Category	Number	Responses	Response rate
Continuing	205	148	72%
Departed	154	77	50%
Returning	46	31	67%

It should be noted that 395 students of the original cohort were not counted as part of the 1996 sample. These students left the college after the Fall 1994 term and have not re-enrolled in either Fall 1995 or Fall 1996. Since a sample of these students was surveyed in Fall 1995 as “departed”, we did not attempt to recontact them in Fall 1996.

Continuing Students

Of the 800 students in the original cohort, 205 were registered for classes in the fall of 1995 and again in the fall of 1996. We surveyed 148 of these continuing students to determine whether their reason for being at OCC and their expected length of stay had changed since the previous point of contact. We also asked continuing students about their longterm career and educational goals as well as the amount of progress they feel they have made in academic areas since coming to OCC. Analysis of demographic variables indicates that 55% of continuing students are female and 45% male. Eighty-four percent are white and 9% are African-American, while 4% are Asian and 3% are Hispanic. Overall, the college is 60% female and 40% male. Eighty percent of all students enrolled in Fall 1996 are white, while 13% are African-American and 4% are Asian (source: Fall 1996 Enrollment Trends Report).

Educational Goals:

The majority of continuing students report that the most important reason for their enrollment at OCC is either to obtain an associate degree (48%) or to gain credits for transfer (43%). While the percent attending to gain an associate degree has increased 15% since the fall of 1995, the percent attending to gain transfer credit has dropped 11%, suggesting a possible shift in educational goals among continuing students. However, when respondents were asked about longterm educational goals (see below), the majority say they intend to transfer to a four year institution. While the data we have collected do not explain this difference, it is possible that as respondents accumulate credits at OCC, the longterm goal of transferring and eventually earning a bachelors degree takes second place to the more immediate goal of earning a bachelors degree.

associate

Table Two
 Most Important Reason for Attending OCC

add 95 column

Reason	% Citing	
To gain a certificate	3%	
To gain an associate degree	48%	
To gain credits for transfer	43%	
To gain job skills for a new career	2%	
To upgrade existing job skills	1%	
To gain personal enrichment	2%	
Other	1%	

Almost two-thirds (65%) of 1996 survey respondents stated that they intend to stay at the college a maximum of three additional terms, which is consistent with the fact that these students have been enrolled for three consecutive fall terms, and the fact that the majority of them intend to earn an associate degree or gain credits for transfer. *Since most students first enrolled in fall 94, it is likely they were enrolled in both fall 95-96.*

The majority of respondents (71%) say they plan eventually to attend a four-year college or university. More than half (53%) of all respondents intend to earn a bachelor's degree, while an additional one-third (33%) plan to obtain an advanced degree. When compared to last year's results, it appears that continuing students' longterm educational goals have remained stable. In both 1995 and 1996, the majority stated an intention to transfer to a four year college or university with a long term educational goal of at least a bachelor's degree. In addition, the majority of continuing students surveyed both years said they were "very sure" about educational goals. This suggests that while short-term educational goals may have shifted, students' longterm aspirations have remained constant over time. *It is likely that many will have completed their goal already.*

enough credit for transfer or a degree by next fall.

Table Three
 Longterm Educational Goals

<i>Goal</i>	<i>% Citing</i>
Personal improvement courses	1%
Professional development courses	2%
Professional certification	4%
Associate degree	2%
Bachelor's degree	53%
Professional or masters degree	33%
Other	5%

Educational Progress:

In both the 1995 and 1996 surveys, continuing students were asked to respond to a series of questions about their progress in specific academic areas. As was the case in 1995, 1996 responses revealed that students were most likely to report significant progress toward personal goals and independent learning skills. In both 1995 and 1996, continuing students were most likely to report no progress in mathematical skills, awareness of world problems, use of technology, and understanding of the scientific method.

Table Four
Educational Progress

<i>Area</i>	<i>% Citing Significant Progress</i>	
Independent learning skills	45%	<i>96 figures</i>
Communication skills	39%	
Ability to solve complex problems	29%	
Ability to attain personal goals	48%	
Mathematical skills	20%	
Interpersonal skills	37%	
Greater awareness of world problems	26%	
Understanding scientific method	24%	
Effective use of technology	28%	

Analysis by gender and race suggests that women are more likely than men to say that they made significant progress in interpersonal skills while at OCC. While men outnumber women in reporting significant progress in learning skills, complex problem-solving, technology use, and understanding scientific method, these differences are not statistically significant. Analysis reveals no statistically significant racial differences in response to these questions.

Career Goals

Nearly one half (49%) of 1996 respondents reported significant progress toward their career goals while at OCC, and an additional 43% reported some progress. These figures represent a positive shift from last year's responses, when fewer students reported significant progress and more reported some progress. When asked to explain their progress, over half (56%) said that they had gained some of the skills needed, and just over one quarter (26%) said that they had defined their goal more clearly. Further analysis indicates that there are no significant gender or racial differences in reporting progress toward career goals.

↓ *Table of Career Goals - 95+96*

Employment

Forty-two percent of 1996 respondents reported that they are currently employed full-time; an additional 44% are employed part-time. These figures are comparable to those reported last year, although full-time employment has increased 6% while part-time has decreased 4%. Nearly half (47%) say that their current employment is not at all related to their OCC studies. This represents

↓ *Table of Employment - 95+96* ⁵

a major shift from last year, when less than one fifth reported that their employment was not at all related. Current data do not shed any light on this shift, suggesting that this might be an appropriate area for further investigation.

Departed Students

A total of 154 students from the original cohort were no longer enrolled at OCC in Fall 1996 although all had been enrolled in Fall 1994 and Fall 1995. These students were categorized as "departed" and were surveyed in order to determine their reasons for leaving OCC as well as their feelings about the progress they made while at OCC. We were able to contact by telephone 77 of the departed students. An additional 394 students from the original cohort were not enrolled in the Fall 1996 term, but as this group was also absent in the Fall 1995 term they were not surveyed at this point.

Educational Attainment

When asked to state whether they had accomplished their educational goal at OCC, respondents were nearly evenly split. Just under half (48%) said that they had accomplished their goal, while the remaining 52% reported that they had not. When asked what their goal had been, over one-half (54%) said that they had planned to transfer to another institution, while an additional one-third (35%) had planned to complete a specific course or set of courses. Among those who responded that they had transferred, the most popular transfer institution was Oakland University (27%). Eastern Michigan University, Wayne State University, and University of Michigan-Dearborn each accounted for an additional 9% of transfers.

Table for Goal Completion - 95 + 96

Reasons for Departure

Those who reported that they had not accomplished their goal were asked to state whether their decision not to leave the college could be categorized as financial, academic, or personal. As was also found in last year's study of 1995 departing students, financial and personal reasons were most commonly cited.

Table Five
Reasons for Departure

<i>Reason</i>	<i>% Citing</i> 95 96
Financial	40%
Personal	65%
Academic	13%

Within the financial category, a lack of money at the time of registration and an inability to earn enough money while enrolled were frequently cited. Within the personal category, scheduling

Career Goals

The majority of respondents (62%) reported some progress toward career goals while at OCC, while nearly a quarter (23%) reported significant progress and 10% reported no progress. In 1995, nearly one-third of departing students felt they had made no progress toward career goals, and just 13% reported significant progress. These shifts in responses may be due in part to the additional year 1996 respondents spent at OCC.

career

Employment

Over half (56%) of respondents are currently working full-time, and additional 20% are working full-time. Ten percent unemployed, while the remaining 14% are either unemployed but not seeking work or self-employed. These figures are consistent with responses from departing students surveyed in 1995, suggesting that the majority of students leaving the college without completing a degree or transferring to another institution are going directly back into the workforce.

employ.

Returning Students

In fall 1996, 46 students who were not enrolled the previous fall returned to OCC. Thirty-one of these students were contacted in order to gain a better understanding of their activities during the time away from the college as well as their reasons for returning.

Educational Goals:

Nearly half (48%) of respondents indicated that they had returned to OCC in order to gain an associate degree, while an additional 39% plan to gain transfer credits. Six percent are here to upgrade existing skills or to gain skills for a new career, and the remaining 6% are here for personal enrichment. When asked their current reason for attending OCC, half stated the same reason noted on the initial 1994 survey.

reasons table

In order to determine how many respondents had returned to OCC for the same reason they initially enrolled, we crosstabulated responses for 1994 and 1996. One-quarter (25%) indicated in 1994 and again after returning in 1996 that they were attending OCC in order to gain an associate degree, and an additional one-quarter (25%) indicated in both years that they were attending to gain transfer credits. However, it should be noted that these percentages represent relatively small actual numbers as only 31 returning students responded to the survey.

Return to OCC.

Return to

most frag. cited = degree + motivation

Table Seven
 Factors Influencing Return to OCC

<i>Factor</i>	<i>% Citing</i>
OCC is the best option financially	10%
Need additional credits for transfer	16%
Decided to earn an OCC degree	32%
Increased motivation to continue education	23%
OCC reputation	13%
OCC location	6%

When asked how long they expect to stay at OCC, returning student responses varied considerably. The most frequently cited response was three additional terms (29%), although responses ranged from as low as one semester (3%) to as high six or more semesters (22%). The majority of respondents (83%) intend to enroll continuously, and more than half (52%) plan to complete 60-62 credits.

Nearly half (48%) of respondents plan to earn a bachelor's degree in the long term, and an additional 23% plan to earn an advanced or professional degree. These responses are consistent with those of continuing students, suggesting that taking time off during college does not necessarily lower longterm educational goals. The majority of respondents said they were very sure of these goals, which is also consistent with the responses of continuing students.

Table Eight
 Longterm Educational Goals

<i>Goal</i>	<i>% Citing</i>
Associate degree	3%
Bachelors degree	48%
Masters degree	23%
Other	3%

Time Away from OCC:

Over one-third (36%) of respondents said they had taken off a total of three terms before returning to OCC. An additional third (29%) were gone for two terms, while 13% were gone one term. Because enrollment records indicate that all returning students were enrolled in Fall 1995, none could have been unenrolled for more than three terms.

Respondents were also asked to explain how they spent their time away from OCC. Over half (52%) said that they had spent their time off attending to personal business. In many cases, respondents indicated that family issues--births, deaths, and illnesses--had occupied most of their time. Twenty-six percent mentioned financial issues, explaining that they spent their time away from OCC working to save money for tuition. An additional 16% either spent the time travelling, or moved away from the area temporarily. The remaining 6% took classes at another college during their time off.

Use of Time Away from OCC table.

When asked to elaborate on the factors influencing their decision to return to OCC, over one-third of respondents (32%) said they decided that they wanted to obtain an associate degree. An additional 23% gave a related answer, saying that they had become motivated to return during their time away. Sixteen percent realized that they wanted more credits for transfer purposes, while 13% returned to OCC for its reputation. Ten percent returned to OCC for its inexpensive tuition, and the remaining 6% returned for its location. These reasons are displayed below.

Table Nine

Factors Influencing Return to OCC

<i>Reason</i>	<i>% Citing</i>
Want to obtain associate degree	32%
Motivated to return during time off	23%
Want to obtain additional credits for transfer	16%
OCC's reputation	13%
OCC's inexpensive tuition	10%
OCC's location	6%