Learner Success Agenda

Market Intelligence 1.1: Graduate Satisfaction

High school, continuing education, and credit graduates from 2008-2009 and 2010-2011 were surveyed to measure success and satisfaction of their experience at Kirkwood Community College.

Kirkwood Community College

8/31/2012

**Summary**

Kirkwood Community College (Kirkwood), through the Learner Success Agenda, has identified key areas for consideration and exploration to improve the success of Kirkwood students. Under the Market Intelligence category, a key objective is to increase understanding of Kirkwood student/learner and organizational customers through a formal study process. Market Intelligence Tactic Team 1.1 was charged with development of a follow up initiative to measure success and satisfaction data from key groups: graduates, transfer students, leavers, and stop-outs from credit and non-credit programs.

Tactic Team 1.1 members began meeting in the fall of 2011 to develop a graduate follow-up survey, measuring success and satisfaction indicators of graduates from the 2008-2009 and 2010-2011 academic years. GED/Adult High School graduates, successful completers from continuing education certificate programs, and graduates from credit programs were included in the survey. Tactic Team 1.1 worked in collaboration with RuffaloCODY™ in the development, deployment, and collection of survey data. A separate survey is currently being developed to gather similar information from leavers/stop-outs.

A total of 3,881 Kirkwood completers were included in the survey pool out of a total of 7,079 graduates. The survey pool included 2,187 credit graduates, 1,294 continuing education certificate graduates, and 400 GED/adult diploma graduates. Calls were made by RuffaloCODY™ from November 29, 2011 through January 3, 2012. Of the 3,881 individuals included in the survey pool, 1,531 completed the survey while 59 completed a portion of the survey for a total of 1,590 respondents. This accounts for 22% of the total 2008-2009 and 2010-2011 academic year graduates. Of these, 6 percent were GED/adult diploma graduates, 37 percent were continuing education completers, and 57 percent were credit graduates.

**Key Findings**

Of those who responded to the survey:

* Ninety-six percent live in Iowa.
* Ninety-four percent of those who work do so in Iowa, with 79% of those respondents working in the Kirkwood service area.
* Kirkwood was the only choice for 67% of respondents. Other frequently considered institutions included the University of Iowa, Mount Mercy University, Iowa State University, and the University of Northern Iowa.
* When asked why students attended Kirkwood, location (30%), cost (21%), and program availability (21%) were the most frequently cited reasons.
* Seventy-one percent of graduates who indicated intent in furthering their education after Kirkwood continued their education.
* Ninety-four percent of those students who continued their education said Kirkwood prepared them well or very well for that education.
* Most credit graduates continuing their education attended a state public 4-year institution (52%), while nearly equal proportions of continuing education completers remained at Kirkwood (33%) and went to a state public 4-year institution (30%).
* Seventy-one percent of respondents stated they attended Kirkwood to prepare for a new career.
* Eighty-four percent of employed graduates surveyed stated Kirkwood prepared them well or very well for their current career. Of those who are employed in their area of study, 96% indicated Kirkwood prepared them well or very well for their career.
* More than 97% of respondents expressed satisfaction with their overall education and experience at Kirkwood.

**Specific Results**

1. **Students who complete Kirkwood programs predominantly work in Iowa.**

Credit

GED/adult high school

Continuing Education

redit

Of the 1,247 respondents who work, 92% of GED/adult high school graduates, 95% of continuing education completers, and 93% of credit graduates work in Iowa.

Further analysis shows, of those who work, 91% of first year (2010-2011 academic year) GED/adult diploma graduates and 93% of third year (2008-2009 academic year) graduates work in Iowa. Ninety-five percent of Continuing Education first year completers and 94% of third year completers work in Iowa. For credit programs, 93% of first year graduates and 93% of third year graduates work in Iowa.

**2. Kirkwood graduates remain in the Kirkwood Service Area.**

Survey respondents were asked to identify the city in which they currently work. Eighty-three percent of GED/adult diploma graduates, 80% of continuing education completers, and 69% of credit graduates identified cities located within Kirkwood’s seven county service area. A total of 1,247 respondents answered this question.

Further analysis shows 83% of first year GED/adult diploma graduates and 82% of third year graduates work in Kirkwood’s seven county service area. Eighty-one percent of Continuing Education first year completers and 81% of third year completers work in the district. For credit programs, 73% of first year graduates and 66% of third year graduates work in the district.

**3. Kirkwood was the first or only choice of a majority of students attending Kirkwood.**

Continuing Education

Credit

GED/adult high school

Of those who responded, Kirkwood was the only choice for a majority of graduates in all three categories. Eighty-three percent of GED/Adult High school graduates, 77% of continuing education completers, and 61% of credit graduates indicated Kirkwood was their only choice when asked what other colleges or universities were considered prior to choosing Kirkwood. A total of 1,678 respondents answered this question.

Further analysis shows that 88% of first year GED/Adult High School graduates listed Kirkwood as their only choice, compared to 76% of third year graduates. Seventy-four percent of first year continuing education completers and 81% of third year graduates listed Kirkwood as their only choice. For credit programs, 60% of first year graduates and 61% of third year graduates listed Kirkwood as their only choice.

**4. Kirkwood prepared graduates for future education.**

Of those who responded, the majority of students initially did not plan to continue their education after earning their Kirkwood diploma, degree, or certificate. Forty-six percent of GED/adult diploma graduates, 35% of continuing education completers, and 47 percent of credit graduates initially intended to continue their studies. A total of 1,558 responses were received for this question.

Further analysis shows that 42% of first year and 50% of third year GED/adult diploma graduates had the intention of continuing their studies. Thirty-six percent of first year and 32% of third year continuing education completers planned to further their education. Forty-Seven percent of first year and 48% of third year credit graduates responding the same.

When those who responded affirmatively that they planned to continue their education were asked if after completing a program of study at Kirkwood they continued their education, the majority of those students did continue. Sixty-five percent of GED/adult diploma graduates, 74% of continuing education completers, and 71% of credit graduates who responded to this question did continue their studies. A total of 663 responses were received for this question.

Further analysis shows that 72% of first year and 59% of third year GED/adult diploma graduates, 73% of first year and 76% of third year continuing education completers, and 66% of first year and 75% of third year credit graduates continued their education.

When asked if Kirkwood programs prepared them for further education, respondents agreed by large margins. Ninety-two percent of GED/adult diploma graduates stated Kirkwood prepared them very well or well. Ninety-seven percent of continuing education completers stated Kirkwood prepared them very well or well. Ninety-three percent of credit graduates responded in a similar manner. A total of 472 responses were received for this question.

Further analysis shows that 91% of first year and 92% of third year GED/adult diploma graduates responded Kirkwood programs prepared them well or very well. Ninety-nine percent of first year and 92% of third year continuing education program completers responded that Kirkwood prepared them very well or well. For credit programs, 91% of first year graduates and 94% of third year graduates responded likewise.

**5. Most credit graduates who continue their studies do so at an Iowa public 4-year college or university, while continuing education completers who continue their studies do so at Kirkwood or an Iowa public 4 year institution.**

Credit

Continuing Education

When respondents were asked where they continued their education, 33% of continuing education completers continued at Kirkwood, while 31% sought further education at an Iowa 4-year public college or university, and 21% attended an in-state private college or university. Fifty-two percent of credit graduates stated they continued their studies at an Iowa public four year college or university, 21% stated they continued at an in-state private college or university, and 14% continued studies at Kirkwood. A total of 472 responses were received for this question.

Further analysis shows that, of first year continuing education completers, 37% continued at Kirkwood, 28% continued at an Iowa public four year institution, and 22% continued at an in-state private four year institution. Third year continuing education completers rates were 26% for Kirkwood, 35% for an Iowa public four year institution, and 20% for an in state private four year school. For credit programs, 52% of first year graduates moved on to an Iowa public four-year school, 17% went on to attend an in-state private four-year institution, and 16% continued at Kirkwood. Three year credit rates were 51% attended Iowa public four-year institutions, 24% continued at an Iowa private four-year institution, and 11% continued their studies at Kirkwood.

**6. Kirkwood program graduates attend Kirkwood to prepare for new careers.**

When asked why program graduates attended a Kirkwood program, to prepare for a new career was the majority answer. Sixty-eight percent of GED/adult diploma graduates, 66% of continuing education completers, and 73% of credit graduates stated to prepare for a new career as their primary reason for attending Kirkwood. A total of 1,251 responses were received for this question.

Further analysis of data shows that 57% of first year and 78% three year GED/adult diploma graduates stated they attended to prepare for new careers. Sixty-nine percent of first year and 61% of three year continuing education completers attended to prepare for new careers. Seventy-five percent of first year and 71% of third year credit graduates attended to prepare for new careers.

**7. Students who graduated from Kirkwood feel they were prepared well for their current career.**

Credit

GED/adult high school

Continuing Education

When asked if Kirkwood prepared graduates for their current career, again the overwhelming majority of graduates agreed. Eighty-one percent of GED/adult diploma graduates, 81% of Continuing Education completers, and 85% of credit graduates responded that Kirkwood prepared them very well or well for their current career. A total of 1,256 responses were received for this question.

Further analysis of data shows that 80% of first year and 82% of third year GED/adult diploma graduates stated they were very well or well prepared. Seventy-nine percent of first year and 85% of third year continuing education completers stated they were very well or well prepared. Eighty-four percent of first year and 86% of third year credit graduates stated they were very well or well prepared.

**8. Students who graduated from Kirkwood are satisfied with the overall education received at Kirkwood.**

Continuing Education

Credit

GED/adult high school

Program graduates reported satisfaction with their overall education received at Kirkwood. Ninety-eight percent of GED/adult diploma graduates, 96% of continuing education completers, and 98% of credit graduates responded they were satisfied with their Kirkwood education. A total of 1,531 responses were received for this question.

Further analysis of data shows that 98% of first year and 98% of third year GED/adult diploma graduates stated they were satisfied with their Kirkwood education. Ninety-six percent of first year and 97% of third year continuing education completers stated they were satisfied with their Kirkwood education. Ninety-eight percent of first year and 98% of third year credit graduates stated they were satisfied with their Kirkwood education.

**9. Students** **who graduated from Kirkwood are satisfied with their educational experience.**

Credit

Continuing Education

GED/adult high school

Program graduates are also satisfied with their overall educational experience. Ninety-eight percent of GED/adult diploma graduates, 96% of continuing education completers, and 98% of credit graduates expressed they were satisfied with their Kirkwood experience. A total of 1,531 responses were received for this question.

Further analysis of data shows that 98% of first year and 98% of third year GED/adult diploma graduates stated they were satisfied with their Kirkwood education experience. Ninety-four percent of first year and 99% of third year continuing education completers stated they were satisfied with their Kirkwood education experience. Ninety-eight percent of first year and 98% of third year credit graduates stated they were satisfied with their Kirkwood education experience.

**Recommendations**

This tactic team recommends that this survey replace the annual graduate follow-up survey conducted by Institutional Research, as these surveys gather very similar data. This survey would become the responsibility of Institutional Research.

Additionally, annually conducting this survey will provide valuable trend data on a variety of topics. As the Learner Success Agenda continues, this survey can help identify if LSA tactics are having an impact. We also recommend that this survey continue to be conducted annually, each spring, by RuffaloCODY™, and that the costs of the survey are included in the annual budget. To reduce the annual costs, we recommend that GED/Adult High School graduates be surveyed using internal resources instead of RuffaloCODY™, or that the survey pool for this group be enlarged, as the small response rate for this group calls into question the usefulness of the data collected.

Prior to future graduate surveys, the team has identified changes and revisions to provide more complete information.

**Conclusions**

The data tells us that for many graduates, Kirkwood was the primary choice for furthering education. If we work with students and they work with us, our students upon graduation will likely remain in the area and become productive members of our community with a sense of satisfaction of their Kirkwood experience. We believe the next challenge for the college will be to increase similar opportunities for more students.