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INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Volume 5, Issue 6

March 23, 2006

ASSESSMENT NEWS

Analysis of 2000-2003 Alumni Survey Data Part II

St. Norbert College's Contribution to Achieving General Education Outcomes

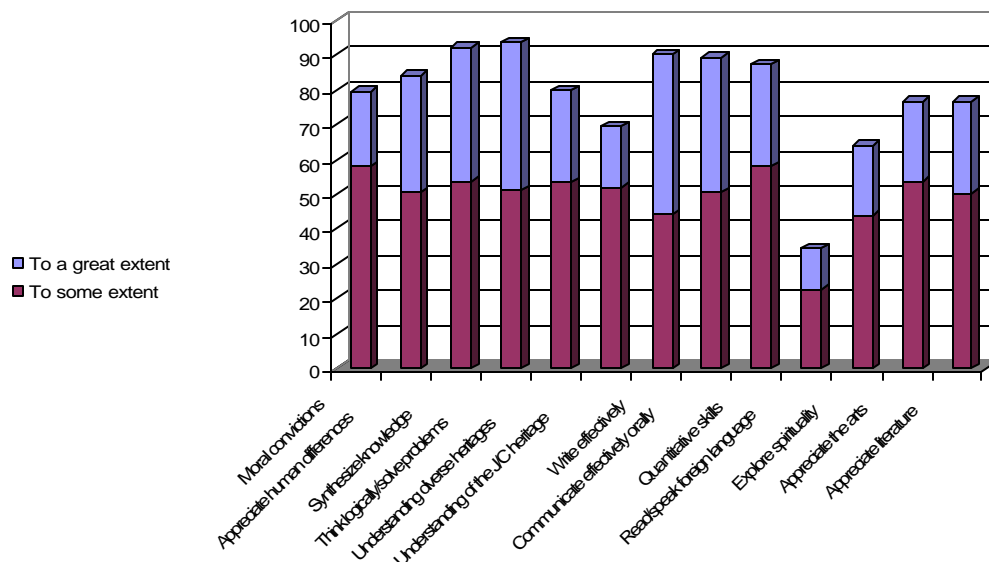
Alumni were asked to what extent St. Norbert College helped them achieve 13 general education program outcomes. Chart 3 shows that more than 75% of respondents indicate the College helped "to some extent" or "to a great extent" for 10 of the 13 areas. More than 60% said the College had helped "to some extent" or "a great extent" in understanding the Judeo-Christian heritage and exploring spirituality. Respondents' lowest ratings were for reading/speaking a foreign language, which probably reflects the absence of a foreign language requirement in the general studies program. Alumni more often responded "to a great extent" for the outcomes synthesize knowledge, think logically/solve problems, write effectively, and communicate orally.

On a related item, about 90% of 2000-2003 graduates believe St. Norbert College is equally supportive of men and women and of all racial or ethnic groups.

General Education Outcomes Compared with 1994-1999 Graduates

Alumni ratings of the extent to which the College helped them learn to think logically, write effectively, and communicate orally remained at a high level and relatively constant compared to the 1994-1999 sample. The percent of alumni responding that the College helped them "to some extent" or "to a great extent" increased for all other variables, including quantitative skills, understanding of diverse heritages, ability to read/speak a foreign language, understanding of the Judeo-Christian heritage, and appreciate the arts.

Chart 3: Percent of alumni responding that the college has helped them achieve goals consistent with the general studies program



Inside this issue:

St. Norbert College's Contribution to Achieving General Education Outcomes	1
General Education Outcomes Compared with 1994-1999 Graduates	1
The College's Contribution to Achieving Mission Outcomes	2
Do Student Perceptions of General Education & Mission Outcomes Remain Similar After Graduation?	3
Behavioral Indicators of Mission Outcomes	4-5
Preparation for Employment	5-6
Continued Affiliation with St. Norbert College	6-7
Summary and Comments	7
Tell Us What You Think	7
Current Position Titles for 2000-2003 SNC Graduates	8
SNC Will Host 5th Annual Workshop on Assessment of General Education Outcomes in Higher Education	8

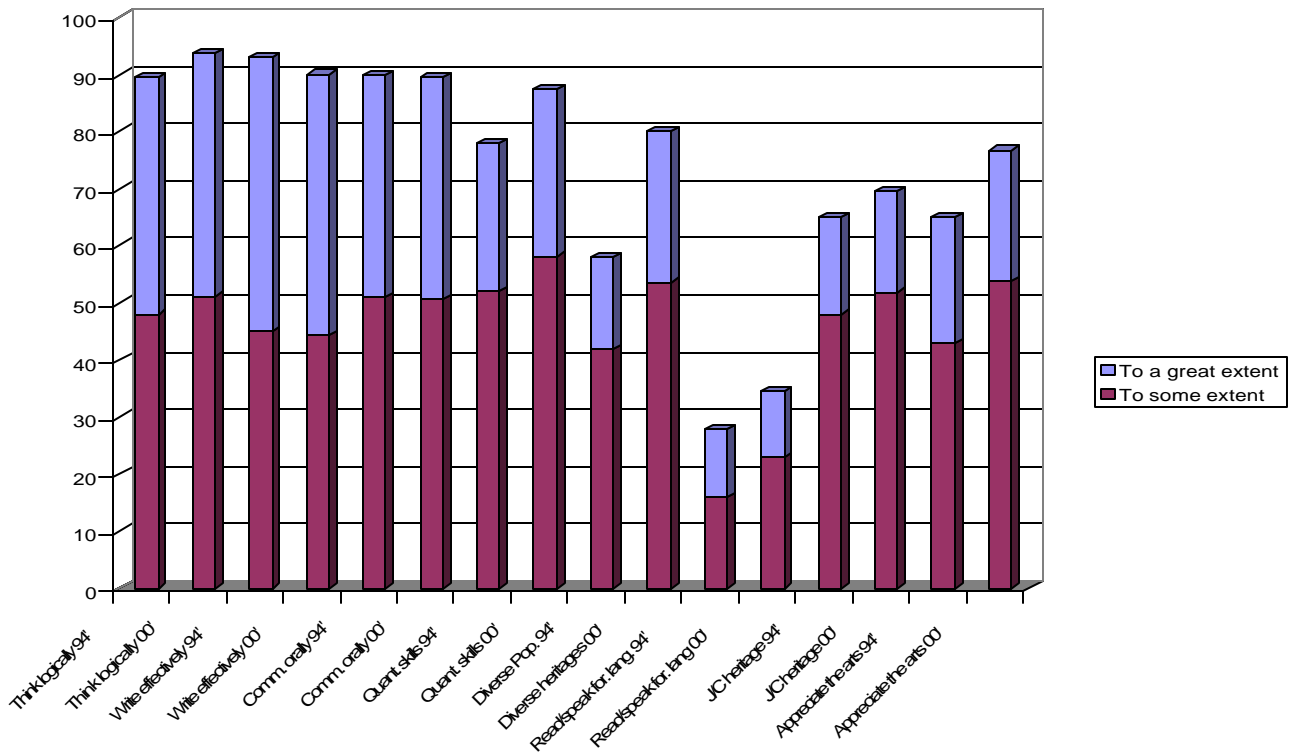
Assessment Conference Possibilities

Higher Learning Commission, The Future-Focused Organization: 2016—Ready or Not? March 31-April 4, 2006, Hyatt Regency, Chicago, IL.

AIR 2006 Forum: Effectiveness through Diversity, May 14-18, 2006, Sheraton Chicago Hotel, Chicago, IL.

6th Annual Greater Expectations Institute—Campus Leadership for Student Engagement, Inclusion, and Achievement. A Working Institute for Leadership Teams, June 21-25, 2006, Snowbird, Utah.

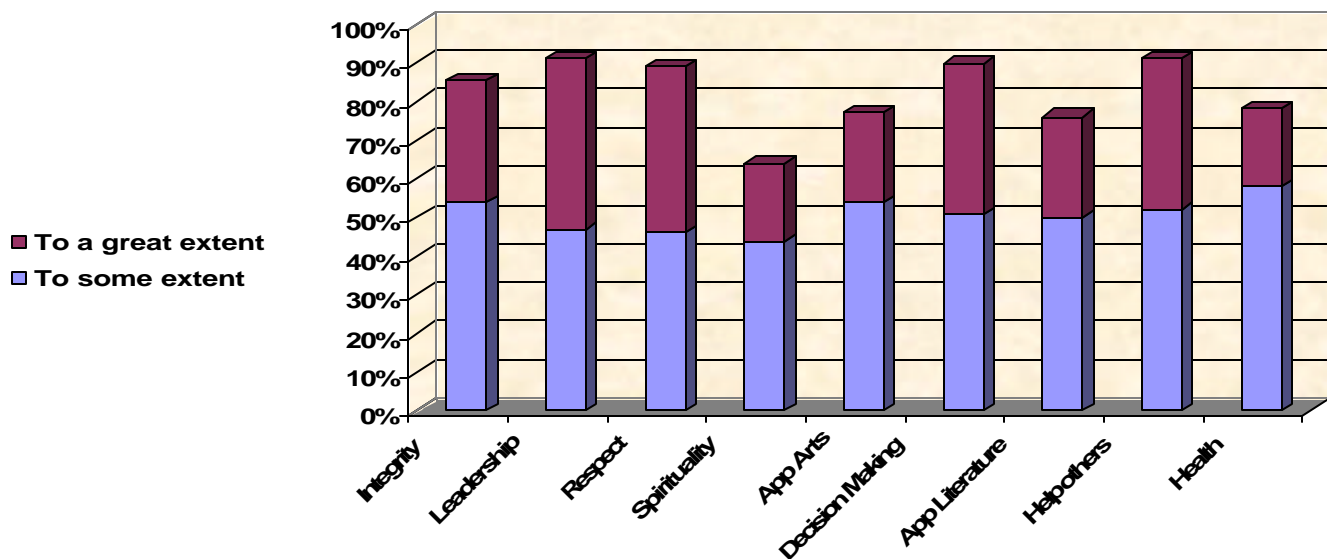
A comparison of alumni ratings for general education outcomes



The College's Contribution to Achieving Mission Outcomes

Alumni were asked similar questions for 9 mission outcomes. More than 80% of graduates believe the College has helped them “to some extent” or “to a great extent” in 5 of the 9 areas (personal integrity, leadership, respect, decision-making, helping others). More than 70% believe the College has helped them “to some extent” or “to a great extent” in 3 other areas (appreciate the arts, appreciate literature, personal health). More than 60% believe the College has helped them “to some extent” or “to a great extent” in spirituality. Alumni more often responded “to a great extent” for leadership, respect, decision-making, and helping others.

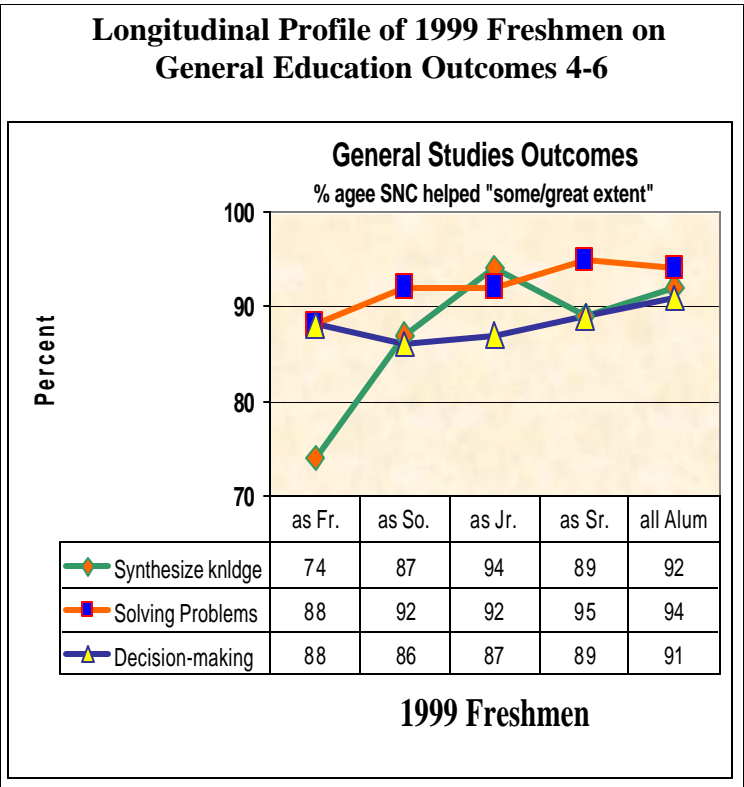
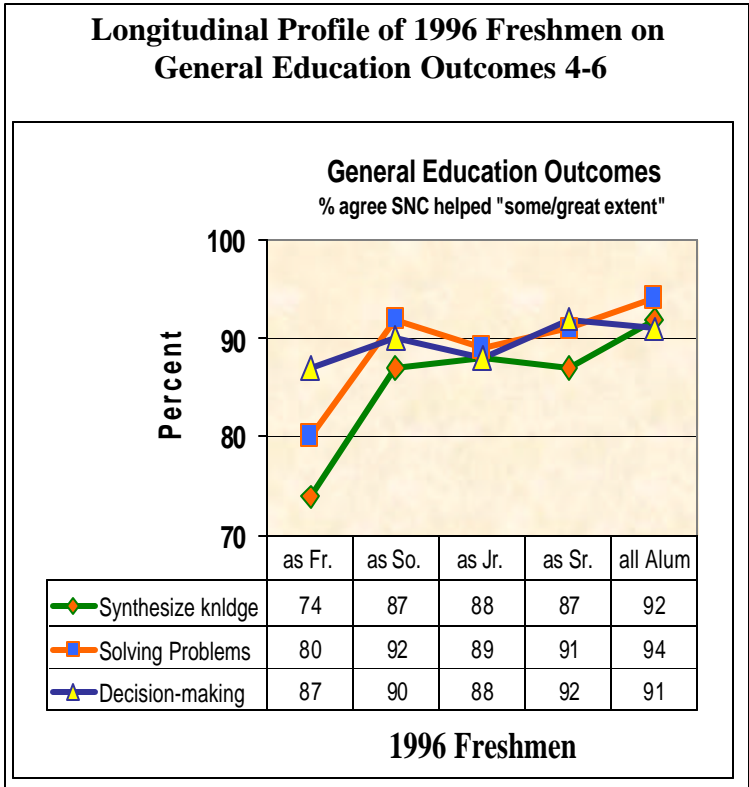
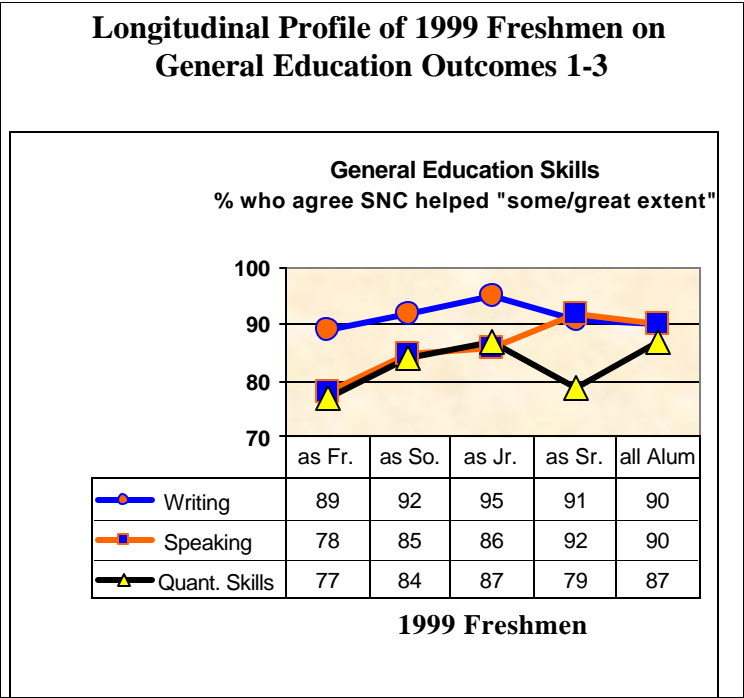
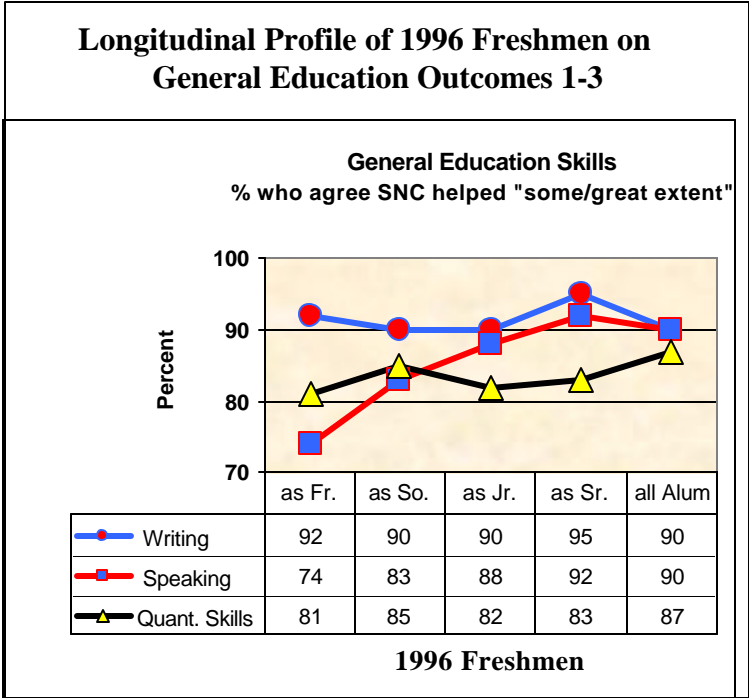
Percent of SNC alumni reporting that the College has helped them achieve goals consistent with the SNC mission statement*



*345 alumni respondents

Do Student Perceptions of General Education and Mission Outcomes
Remain Similar After Graduation?

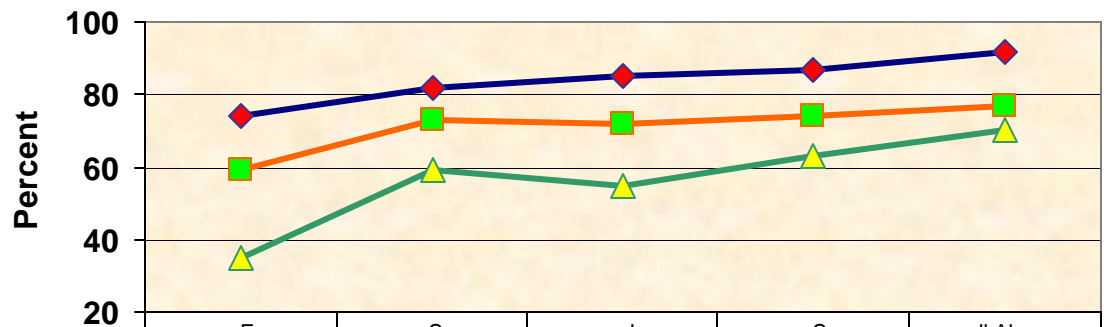
The combined SNC Current Student Survey and Alumni Survey provide an opportunity to track cohorts from their freshmen year through college and into their first years of post-graduate employment. Summarized below are data for students who matriculated in 1996 and 1999 for nine general education outcomes. For both cohorts, the percent of alumni who said SNC helped them “to some extent” or “to a great extent” increased after graduation for six of the nine general education outcomes. Writing and speaking effectively declined slightly for both cohorts. This suggests that, once contextualized by graduate study and employment, alumni assessments of the College’s contribution to their cognitive development remain fairly stable or even increase slightly.



Longitudinal Profile of 1996 Freshmen on General Education Outcomes 7-9

General Studies & Mission Outcomes

% agree SNC helped "some/great extent"

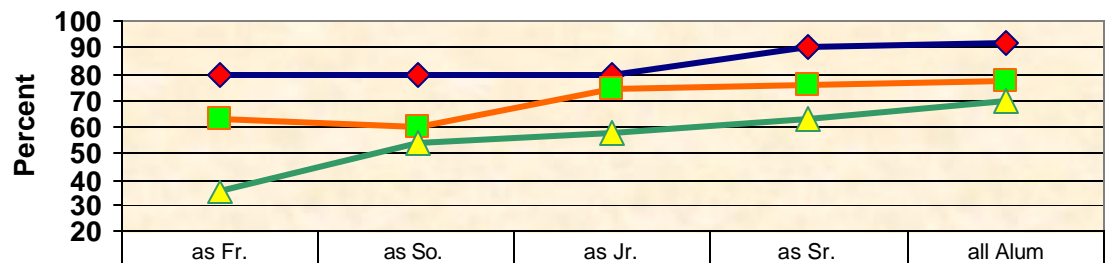


1996 Freshmen

Longitudinal Profile of 1999 Freshmen on General Education Outcomes 7-9

General Studies & Mission Outcomes

% agree SNC helped "some/great extent"



1999 Freshmen

Behavioral Indicators of Mission Outcomes

One might expect alumni who have successfully achieved St. Norbert College's general education and mission outcomes to manifest behaviors consistent with those outcomes. Table 4 shows that about half of respondents say they "frequently" read periodicals for information on world events, discuss world issues, and take care of themselves physically. More than two-thirds say they consider moral issues when making important decisions. More than three-quarters spend quality time with family.

On the other hand, 37% say they "seldom" or "never" volunteer, 50% say they "seldom" or "never" engage in meditation/spiritual reflection, 63% say they "seldom" or "never" advocate for social justice, and 69% say they "seldom" or "never" participate politically other than voting. 59% have "seldom" or "never" traveled outside the United States since leaving college.

(Continued on Page 5)

Table 4: Frequency of alumni participation in mission-related activities

	Frequently	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
Read periodicals for info on world events	48%	40%	9%	3%
Conversed with people of diverse ethnicity/culture	50%	40%	10%	0%
Visited museums, fine arts exhibitions or attended concerts	32%	51%	16%	1%
Volunteered	23%	40%	30%	7%
Attended formal religious services	33%	31%	28%	8%
Engaged in meditation/spiritual reflection.	18%	32%	36%	14%
Engaged in opportunities to learn new things unrelated to their career	30%	51%	18%	1%
Advocated for social justice	11%	26%	37%	26%
Participated politically in ways other than voting	10%	13%	31%	38%
Considered moral values when making important decisions	67%	28%	4%	1%
Empathized with the concerns of other Nations	44%	39%	14%	3%
Traveled outside the US	14%	27%	19%	40%
Discussed world issues with friends/families/colleagues	52%	39%	8%	1%
Taken the perspective of countries other than the US in discussions	39%	41%	18%	1%
Taken care of themselves physically	55%	40%	5%	0%
Spent time with family	77%	19%	4%	0%

*345 alumni respondents

Behavioral Indicators of Mission Outcomes

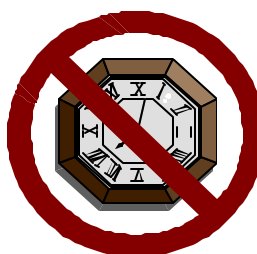
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We hypothesized that 28 paired general education values/alumni behaviors would produce statistically significant relationships. Twelve of the twenty-eight were statistically significant. We found that alumni who reported that the College helped them develop a deeper understanding of the Judeo-Christian heritage “to a great extent” attended formal religious services, engaged in meditation or spiritual reflection, and participated politically (in ways other than voting) more frequently than peers who did not rate the College’s help as highly. Respondents who said the College helped them explore the role of spirituality in their life “to a great extent” more frequently attended formal religious services and engaged in meditation or spiritual reflection. Those who said the College helped them understand and appreciate human differences “to a great extent” more frequently took moral values into account when making important decisions. Alumni who said the College increased their ability to help others “to a great extent” more frequently advocated for social justice. Finally, alumni who said the College helped them become self-educating “to a great extent” more frequently engaged in opportunities to learn things unrelated to their career.

Preparation for Employment

About 90% of graduates working full-time “agree” or “strongly agree” that their St. Norbert College education helped them achieve their goals. About 85% “agree” or “strongly agree” that their St. Norbert degree is respected by their employer. About two-thirds “agree” or “strongly agree” that the College equipped them to deal with multiple career changes and about 60% say their current job is closely related to their undergraduate major. As might be expected, graduates working part-time, but seeking full-time employment more often report being “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with their overall college experience.

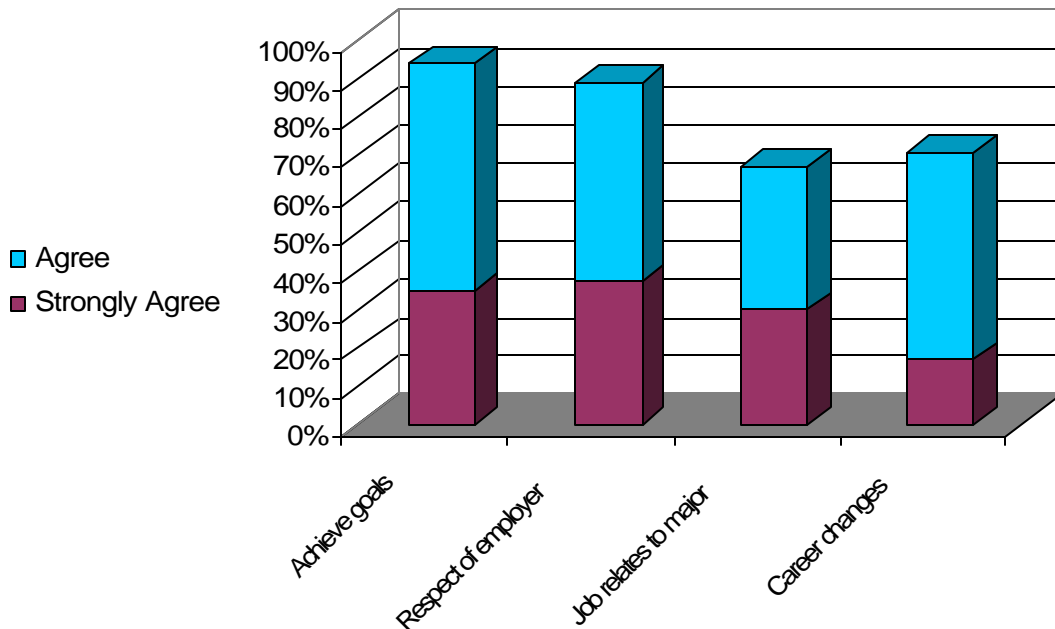
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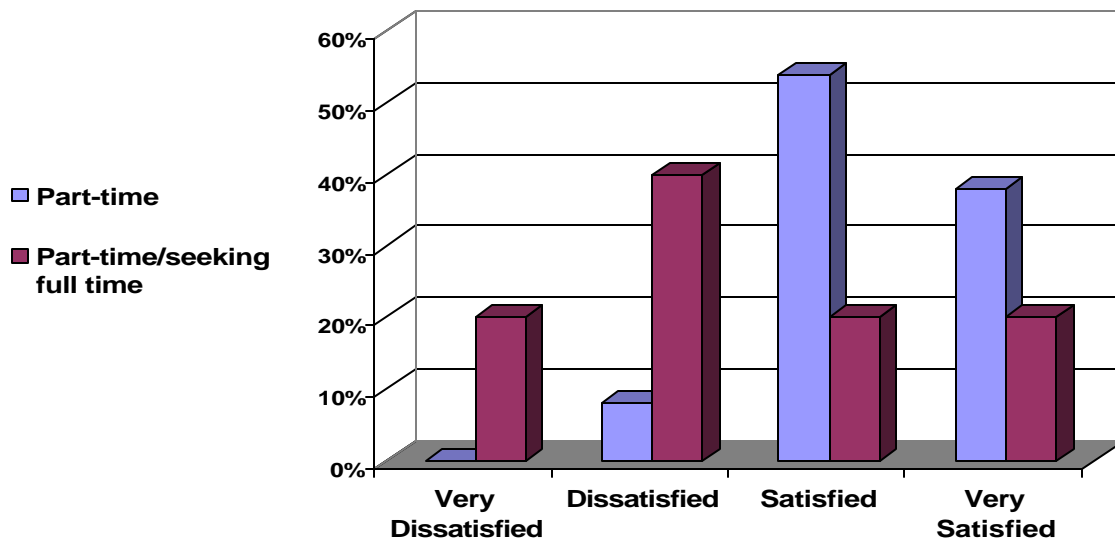
Assessment Resources

Office of Institutional Effectiveness
Main Hall, Room 219
(Phone: 403-3855)
FAX: 403-4096
Web site: www.snc.edu/oie/

Percent alumni working fulltime who agree, or strongly agree, that the College has helped them prepare for employment



Percent of SNC alumni working part-time who are satisfied with their overall College experience



Continued Affiliation with St. Norbert College

Almost 90% of 2000-2003 graduates have visited the College's web site. About one-third say they visit the web site "often" or "very often". About half have attended a class reunion or homecoming while more than 90% have talked with or met with other alumni. That they are relatively recent graduates and not yet fully established in their jobs or households may explain why about three-quarter report never having contributed money other than to the Annual Fund. The top reason for not contributing was "I have too many other financial obligations."

More than half have spoken to prospective students about St. Norbert College and about 40% have referred prospective students to the Admission's Office. About 80% read College publications, but less than 20% have returned to campus to use the library or attend a lecture or concert. About a third have returned to attend sporting events. 2000-2003 graduates identify "feeling connected to the College and wanting to support it" and "wanting to keep informed about what is happening at the College" as their primary reasons to attend alumni events. Alumni who report highest overall satisfaction with their (Continued on Page 7)

Continued Affiliation with St. Norbert College

(Continued from Page 6)

College experience more often talk with or meet with other alumni, visit the College web site, read campus publications, refer prospective students, speak to prospective students about St. Norbert College, and attend a reunion or homecoming.

Summary and Comments

In general, alumni satisfaction with their undergraduate major remains high. However, fewer than 20% of alumni are “very satisfied” with the range of courses offered. Alumni attending graduate school are more satisfied than their peers who moved immediately into employment. This may suggest different expectations about what the curriculum should do, e.g. provide a foundation for those attending graduate school, prepare them broadly for work and civic involvement for those moving into employment. The course system restricts the number of courses students take to 32. Perhaps the College could do more to help students understand SNC’s preference for depth rather than coverage. That the number of graduate school attending alumni who were “very satisfied” with their preparation for their current job and overall major program declined significantly compared to 1994-99 graduates is worth investigating further.

Most graduates appear to have found employment in fields related to our largest undergraduate majors. That science and technology ranks fourth is encouraging. Because alumni were also asked to indicate their first, second and third jobs after graduation, these data will permit some additional post hoc career path analysis. Although these data will provide a better sense of how graduates settle into employment after graduation, the number of alumni respondents in most majors will be too small to identify representative patterns.

Most alumni report that the College has helped them develop “to some extent” or “to a great extent” for almost all general studies outcomes. Compared to their cohort ratings as freshmen, sopho-

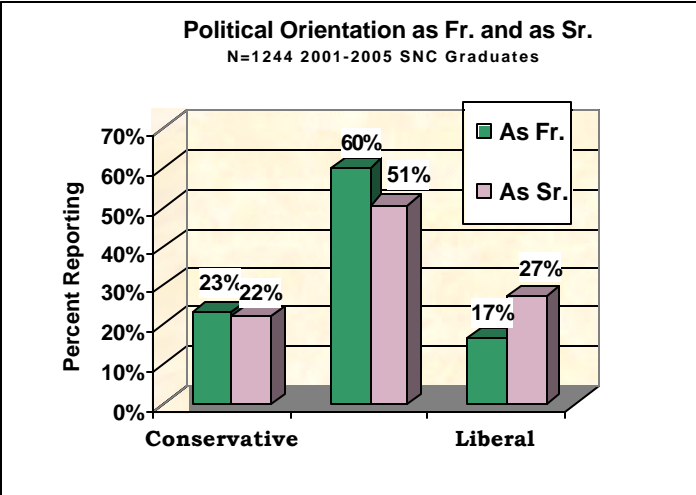
mores, juniors, and seniors, alumni perceptions appear stable, even when placed in the context of employment and/or graduate school expectations. With the exception of achieve a deeper understanding of the world’s diverse heritages (rated higher by more recent alumni, alumni ratings appear similar for 1994-1999 and 2000-2003). The fact that alumni ratings of the College’s contribution to general education and mission outcomes are often associated with more frequent participation in related behaviors is also very encouraging.

Finally, alumni report that the College has helped them achieve their goals and report that their SNC degree is respected by their employer. Graduates access the web site and read the SNC Magazine, but their sense of affiliation is highly dependent on continued contact with classmates. These young alumni indicate that they are not yet well enough established in their careers or personal lives to contribute financially.

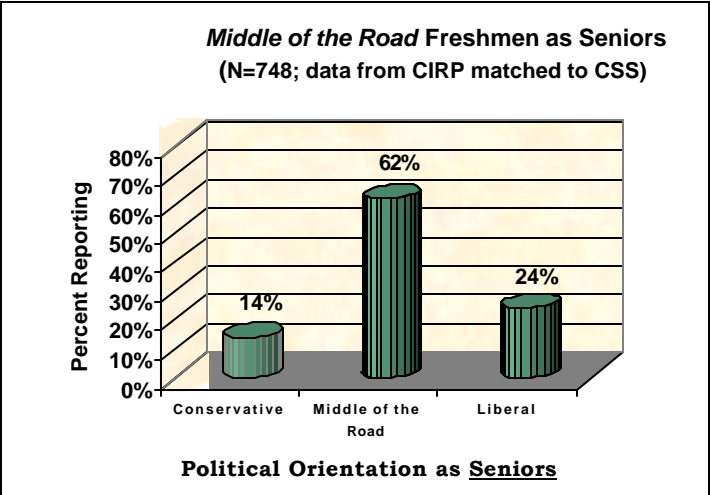
The Alumni Survey is a valuable source of information especially when combined with Current Student Survey Data or when compared to earlier administrations of the Alumni Survey. In the future, those parts of the Alumni Survey that deal with major satisfaction, general education and mission outcomes, and preparation for employment or graduate school will be administered annually to alumni two and seven years after graduation. This will allow the College to identify trends across many years, but more importantly, to track students developmentally. The combined Current Student Survey/Alumni Survey data will provide insight into students’ perceptions of the College’s impact at six different points in their association with the College (i.e. freshmen, sophomore, junior, senior, two years after graduation (first job or graduate school), and seven years after graduation (established in career, post-graduate school)).

These data will be shared with numerous campus offices. In concert with other data, the alumni survey can inform St. Norbert College’s efforts to offer its students the best possible programs, attract qualified students, and inspire continued support from graduates and others.

Tell Us What You Think



Five year freshmen/senior data suggest that graduates leave St. Norbert College more politically liberal than when they entered. What are your thoughts about this? What SNC experiences, if any, might account for this? Are there hypotheses you would like OIE to test?



Send your analysis to OIE@snc.edu. We will publish some of your thoughts as well as selected results from suggested follow-up analyses in our next issue.

Current Position Titles for 2000-2003 SNC Graduates

One of the concerns raised in the Noel-Levitz study of prospective applicants was that too little was known about the success of St. Norbert College's graduates. Listed below are current job titles for 2000-2003 graduates who responded to our recent Alumni Survey. It's important to note that these are positions held only 2-5 years after graduation.

Account Executive-Client Services
Accountant
Accounting Analyst
Actor
Actuary
Admissions Director
Assistant Editor
AmeriCorps Volunteer
Statistician
Archivist
Associate Executive Director
Attorney
Banking Center Manager
Billing and Enrollment Specialist
Branch Manager
Capacity and Materials Planner
Captain, U.S. Army
Caseworker
Catholic Social Services Center Director
Chemical Laboratory Technician
Commodities Broker
Community Counselor
Complaint Analyst
Compliance Officer
Conflicts Analyst
Coordinator of Religious Education
Creative Designer
Deacon
Demand Planner
Director of Information Technology

Director of Project Management
Editor
Engineer
Executive Casino Host
Family Therapist
Financial Analyst
Geologist
International Logistic Specialist
International Trade Specialist
Legislative Analyst
Marketing & Design Coordinator
Network Security Administrator
Occupational Therapist
Patient Care Coordinator
Peace Corps Volunteer
Pharmacist
Physician Assistant
Police Officer
Political Director
Pricing Analyst
Public Relations Coordinator
Real Estate/Finance Consultant
Registered Nurse
Research & Development Chemist
Restaurant Manager
School Psychologist
School Social Worker
Security Operations Specialist
Senior Account Executive
Software Analyst
Teacher
Technical Writer
Transportation Broker
Trust Administrator
Underwriter
Volunteer Coordinator
Youth Director
Youth Services Librarian

On-Campus Workshop Opportunity

St. Norbert College will host the 5th Annual Workshop on *Assessment of General Education Outcomes in Higher Education* on April 27-28, 2006 at the Bemis Conference Center

Through an active learning experience participants will be able to address and facilitate the assessment of student learning outcomes resulting from their own institution's general education programs. Specific objectives include: 1) Learn the mission-oriented context in which general education programs reside, and the need for assessing the learning outcomes resulting from student experiences. 2) Understand the types of learning outcomes that are commonly associated with general education programs and ways in which your institution can assess the level of success you have had in achieving these learning outcomes. 3) Examine processes that help to see how the results of assessment efforts are used to revise and improve your institution's general education programs.

The workshop will be facilitated by Dr. James Nichols, author of four widely used books on higher education assessment, and Dr. Eliot Elfner, Professor of Business Administration at St. Norbert College. The OIE will pay the registration fee for any SNC faculty or staff who wishes to attend this conference. Online registration and additional information is available at: <http://www.snc.edu/pce/assessment.htm>.