

Spring 2010 Transfer Student Survey

*Office of Institutional Research
July 2010*



HIGHLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Background

One of the concerns of many community college students is that the four year institution to which they transfer to complete their baccalaureate degree will not give them credit for the courses they take at the community college. What has been the experience of the transfer students that have attended Highland Community College (HCC)? This report provides the results for the transfer student survey that was developed and administered for the first time in the spring 2010 semester. Historically the College had annually administered an alumni survey to all previous year graduates and the data from this survey was analyzed separately for those alumni whose goal it was to transfer to a four-year institution. However, this data was viewed as somewhat limited; the College wanted more detailed information about transfer students' course transfer experience, satisfaction with transfer resources, and satisfaction with educational preparation that the alumni survey could not provide.

The transfer student survey developed was modeled after a similar survey instrument administered as part of Iowa's Teacher Quality Enhancement (TQE) grant initiative (http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1150&Itemid=2303). While the focus of the Iowa TQE survey was focused more narrowly on teacher education students transferring from community colleges to four year institutions in Iowa, the overall content of the survey was very much applicable to transfer students in general. Modifications to the survey were made in collaboration with the College's Transfer Coordinator and Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences and input from select faculty was sought and incorporated. Highland Community College's Transfer Student Survey is in Appendix A.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

Identification of Graduates to Survey

The students targeted for the survey were those who graduated from the College with an Associate's degree sometime during the 2008 or 2009 academic year, who transferred to a four-year institution, and were currently enrolled in the spring 2010 semester.

To identify these students, the names of the 539 students who graduated from the College with an Associate's degree sometime during the 2008 or 2009 academic year were submitted to the National Student Clearinghouse, an organization that maintains a registry of student records to provide a number of services to its members relating to the verification of degrees and student enrollment at institutions of higher education.

Analysis of the return file from the Clearinghouse revealed that the service found enrollment information for 96 percent (N = 517) of the students submitted. Utilizing the data in the file, 44 percent of these students (115 of the 2008 graduates and 114 of the 2009 graduates) had transferred to a four-year institution and were currently enrolled in the spring 2010 semester.

Identifying Transfer Student Contact Information

According to the Clearinghouse return file, the 229 graduates identified for inclusion in the study transferred to one of 48 different four-year institutions. Table 3 lists these four-year institutions and provides the number of graduates who were enrolled at each in the spring 2010 semester. As

shown in this table, the top five institutions of transfer for this population of students were: Northern Illinois University, University of Wisconsin – Platteville, Columbia College, Illinois State University, and Rockford College.

Table 3. Transfer Institution and Number of Students Enrolled

Institution Name	Number Enrolled
Northern Illinois University	52
University of Wisconsin – Platteville	43
Columbia College	33
Illinois State University	23
Rockford College	9
Western Illinois University	7
Ashford University	5
University of Wisconsin – Madison	5
Southern Illinois University – Carbondale	4
University of Dubuque	3
University of Illinois at Chicago	3
Drake University	2
Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville	2
St. Ambrose University	2
University of Illinois at Urbana	2
University of Wisconsin - Whitewater	2
Argosy University – Schaumburg	1
Boston University	1
Bradley University	1
California State University - Sacramento	1
Carthage College	1
Edgewood College	1
Evangel University	1
Ferris State University	1
Florida Gulf Coast University	1
George Washington University	1
Grand Canyon University	1
Huntington University	1
Indiana University Purdue University	1
Jackson State University	1
Kendall College	1
Kent State University	1
Lewis University	1
Medical College of Georgia	1
North Central College	1
Northeastern Illinois University	1
Northland College	1
Palmer College of Chiropractic	1

Robert Morris University	1
Roosevelt University	1
University of Alaska – Anchorage	1
University of Detroit Mercy	1
University of Illinois at Springfield	1
University of Iowa	1
University of Massachusetts at Amherst	1
University of Wisconsin – River Falls	1
University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee	1
Wheaton College	1

Each of 48 institutions were sent an email to an appropriate contact (i.e. Registrar’s office staffer) which requested directory information for each Highland Community College 2008 or 2009 graduate identified by the Clearinghouse as attending their institution this past spring. Appendix B contains the template request that was made to each institution.

A large majority of student addresses were provided by the 29 institutions that responded to the directory information request and the one other institution whose student directory information was available on their web site. However, in effort to try and reach every graduate, the most recent permanent address of record in the College’s student information system, was pulled for the remaining students. If it seemed reasonable that the student may still be reached at that address, a survey was mailed to that address. Utilizing these resources, 209 students were mailed surveys that were delivered successfully via the United States Postal Service (USPS).

Survey Administration

The invitations to complete the surveys were mailed to the students as directory information from the transfer institutions was received. A reminder letter and a reminder email were delivered approximately two and four weeks later, respectively, as appropriate. The invitations and reminders to complete the surveys are in Appendix C. The deadline for completing the survey, a statement of confidentiality, how responses would be analyzed and reported, and the purpose of the survey was included in the correspondence. In addition, students were given an incentive to complete the survey – those who completed the survey were given the opportunity to enter a drawing for one of two \$100 Visa gift cards.

Representativeness of Sample

Response Rate

Of the 209 students who were mailed a transfer student survey, 99 completed and returned it, for an overall response rate of 47 percent. Table 4 provides the individual response rates for the top five transfer institutions identified above.

Table 4 also provides the confidence intervals at a 95 percent confidence level for both the overall response rate and the response rate by institution. Confidence intervals and levels essentially provide a way of indicating whether the response rate for a given population size is acceptable. As shown in this table, the confidence interval for the entire survey is 7.2. This means that we can be 95 percent sure that the percentage of students who picked a response

option in this survey is within roughly 7 percentage points of what the (*true*) percentage would have been had all 209 students completed the survey.

While it can be argued that the confidence interval for overall response rate is acceptable, the confidence levels for the response rates for each of the individual transfer institutions are rather large. Smaller confidence levels would be pretty difficult to obtain due to the small numbers of students transferring to these institutions. Because the small numbers make it difficult to obtain an acceptable confidence interval in which to interpret the results and increase the risk of violating the confidentiality of individual responses, the results are, for the most part, presented in the aggregate (for all institutions) only. Where responses are disaggregated by transfer institution (the responses to the open-ended items), the disaggregation was done only in order to facilitate the understanding of the challenges students may have experienced in transferring their courses to specific institutions.

Table 4. Response Rates and Confidence Intervals

	Surveyed*	Responded	Response Rate	Confidence Interval**
All transfer institutions	209	99	47.4%	7.2
Northern Illinois University	48	21	43.8%	16.2
University of Wisconsin – Platteville	38	19	50.0%	16.1
Columbia College	32	16	50.0%	17.6
Illinois State University	22	8	36.4%	28.3
Rockford College	9	6	66.7%	24.5

*The number surveyed reflects the number of students whose surveys were delivered successfully via USPS.

**At a 95% confidence level

Respondent Demographics

Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4 provide the demographic breakdowns of the survey respondents (N = 99) for gender, age, ethnicity, and HCC degree earned. These figures also compare the demographic breakdowns of the survey respondents to that of the total population of 2008 and 2009 graduates that were enrolled at a four-year institution in the spring 2010 semester (N = 229). As shown in these figures, the proportion of females who completed the survey was greater than the proportion in the graduation population, but the proportions of survey respondents by ethnicity, age, and type of HCC degree earned were, for the most part, very similar.

Figure 1. Gender

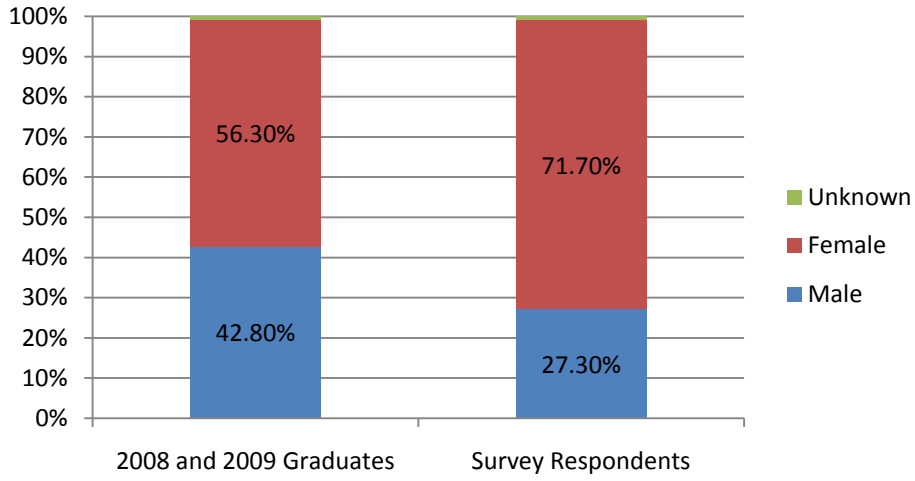


Figure 2. Ethnicity

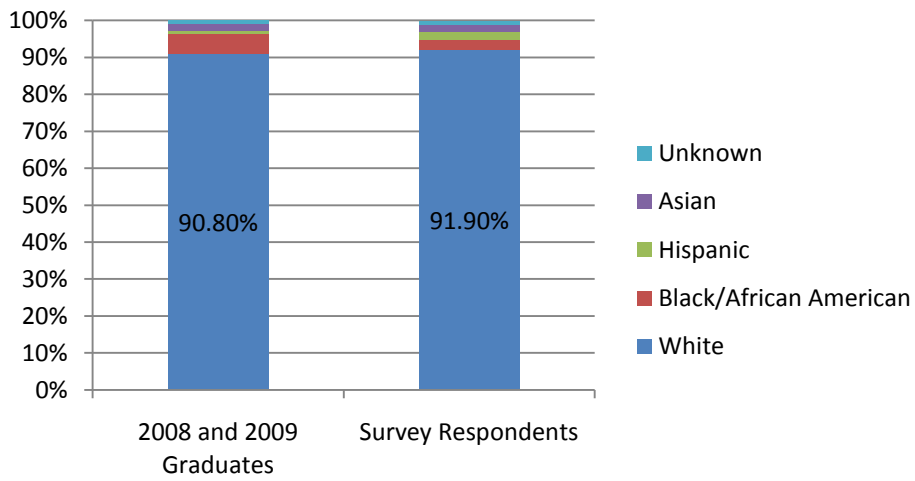


Figure 3. Age

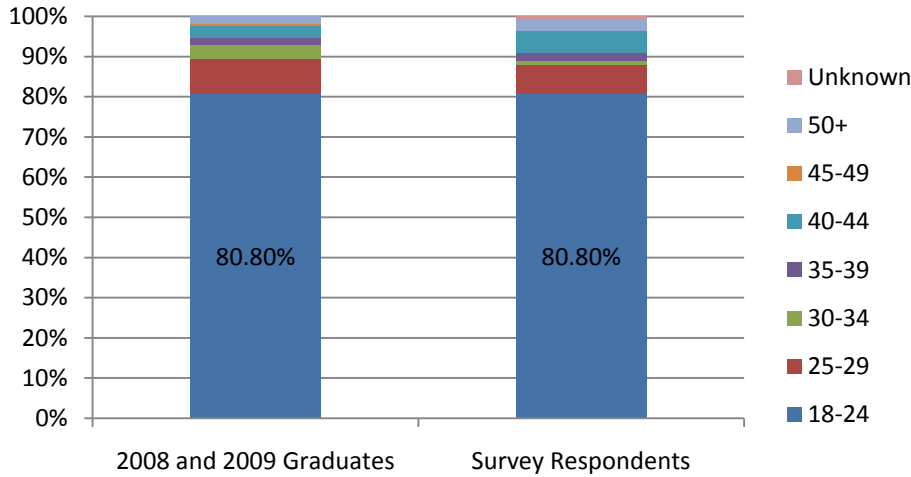
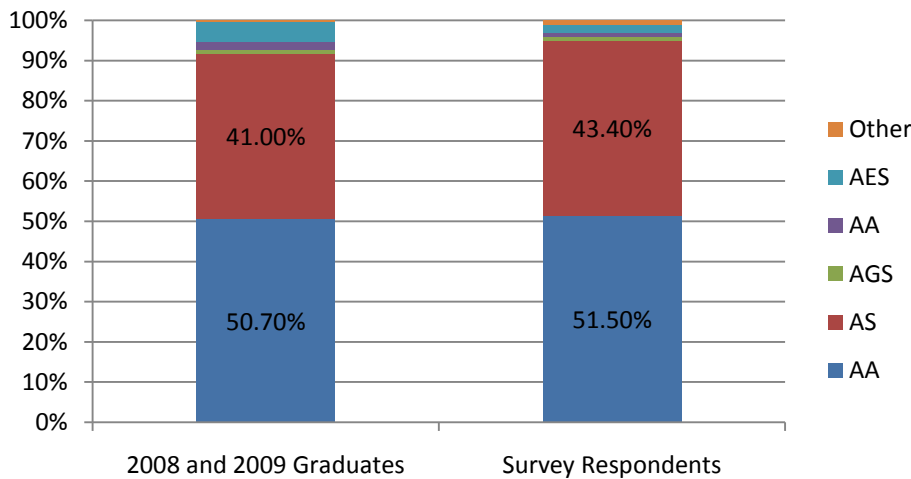


Figure 4. HCC Degree Earned



Results

The presentation of the transfer student survey results generally follows the order in which the items were presented on the survey itself. The following represent the major sections of the survey and thus, this report:

- Transfer Student Education History and Status
- Extent of Transfer Planning
- Experience with Transferring General Education and Elective Courses:
- Utilization and Usefulness of Transfer and Admissions Resources

Relative to the important distinction made between general education courses and elective courses for the students completing the survey, comparisons are made between the transfer of

general education courses and the transfer of elective courses in presenting the results in this report. Where it was relevant, a comparison was also made between the two sets of graduates.

Transfer Student Education History and Status

This section of the report provides the survey results related to the education history and current status of the transfer student respondents.

Anticipated Major at Highland Community College

Table 5 categorizes the open-ended responses provided by the transfer students regarding what their anticipated major was while enrolled at HCC. As shown in this table, the largest proportion of the transfer students responding to this survey reported a major related to Business, Accounting, or Marketing (24.2%).

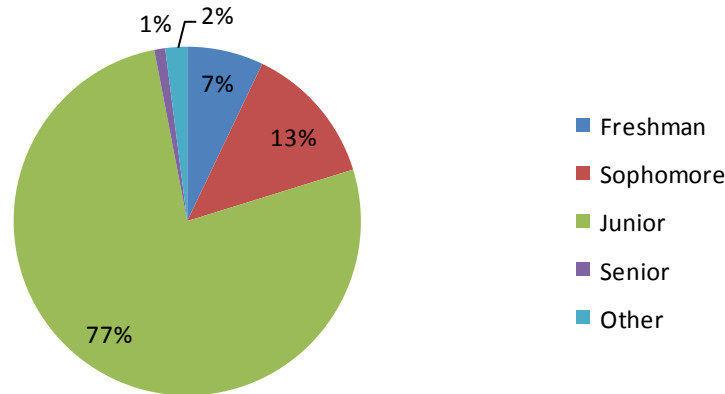
Table 5. Anticipated major while at HCC

	Freq	%
Business/Accounting/Marketing	24	24.2
General/Undecided	13	13.1
Education	11	11.1
Healthcare/Medical	9	9.1
History/Political Science/Criminal Justice	9	9.1
Sciences	7	7.1
Art/Graphic Design	5	5.1
Human Services	5	5.4
No response	5	5.1
Agriculture	3	3.0
Engineering	3	3.0
Psychology	3	3.0
Other	2	1.0

Class standing at time of transfer

As shown in Figure 5, seventy-seven percent of the survey respondents indicated that they transferred in as a junior. Another 13 percent indicated that they transferred in as a sophomore.

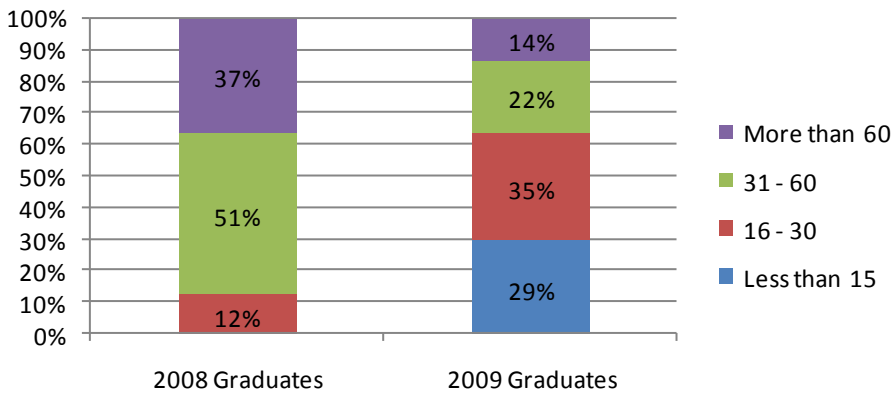
Figure 5. Class standing at time of transfer



Credits earned at transfer institution as of last semester completed

Figure 6 contains the credits each cohort of graduates had earned at their transfer institution as of their last semester completed. As would be expected, 2008 graduates reported overall having earned more credits than the more recent 2009 graduates.

Figure 6. Course credits earned as of last semester completed



Participation in Dual Admissions programs

Only seven percent of the transfer students who completed the survey indicated that they participated in a dual admissions program. The remainder indicated that they did not participate (67.7%) or were not sure if they participated (25.3%).

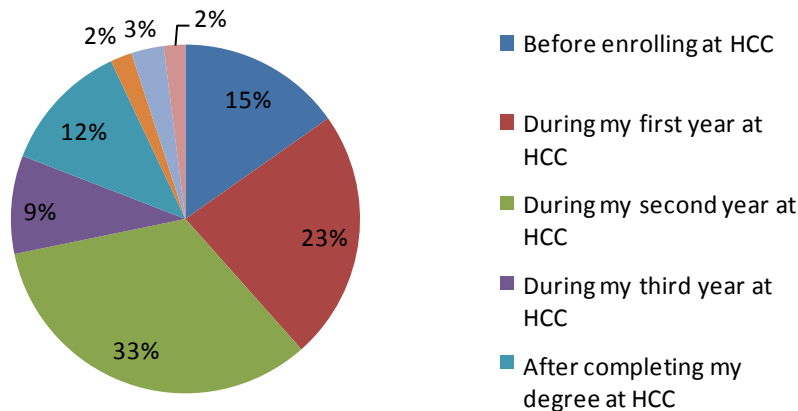
Other community colleges attended prior to admittance at transfer institution

Only six percent of the transfer students who completed the survey indicated that they attended another community college prior to being admitted at their current institution.

Extent of Transfer Planning

Students were asked when they initially sought information about transferring from HCC to their current four-year institution. As shown in Figure 7, a little over half indicated that they initially began seeking information about transferring in either their first year (23%) or second year (33%) at HCC.

Figure 7. Time began seeking transfer information



Experience with Transferring General Education and Elective Courses

After being provided a definition of general education courses and elective courses and how they were different from one another, students were asked a series of questions regarding their experience in transferring general education courses, followed by a series of similar questions about their experience in transferring elective courses.

The first set of questions in each series asked the students whether they enrolled in courses at Highland that they thought would meet the general education requirements and course requirements for their major/minor program(s) at their current institution, whether they attempted to transfer any of those courses, and whether their current institution counted any of these courses and their Highland Community College degree.

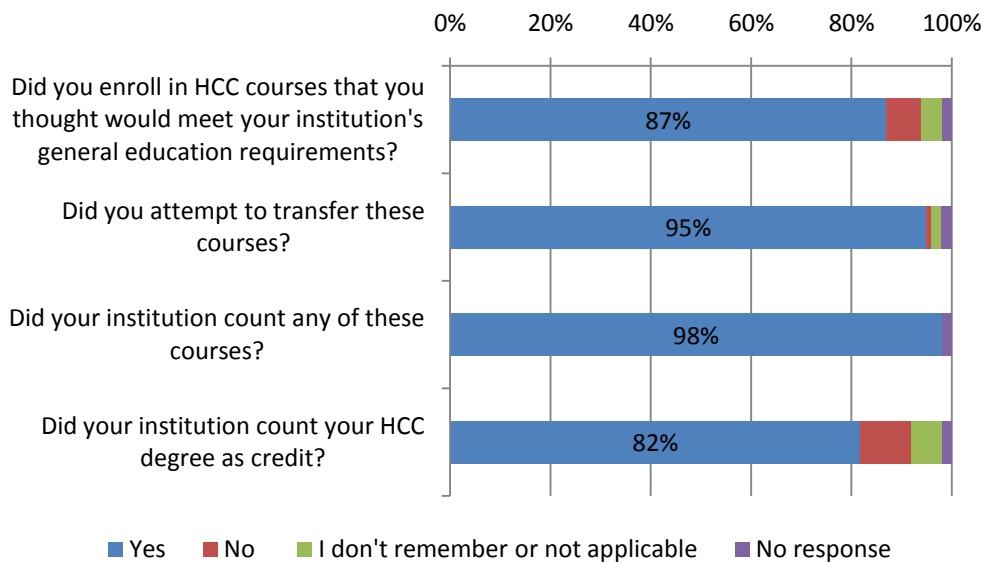
Students were then asked about the ease in which their general education and elective courses transferred, the extent to which their expectations were met in regard to the number of courses that transferred, and how helpful the courses they took at HCC were in providing them with the knowledge and skills they needed to be successful in the coursework they are taking at their current institution.

Finally, the students were asked about specific issues they may have encountered in transferring both their general education and elective courses and were given the opportunity to describe any other challenges they may have experienced.

Meeting General Education Requirements and Course Requirements for Major/Minor Program at Transfer Institution

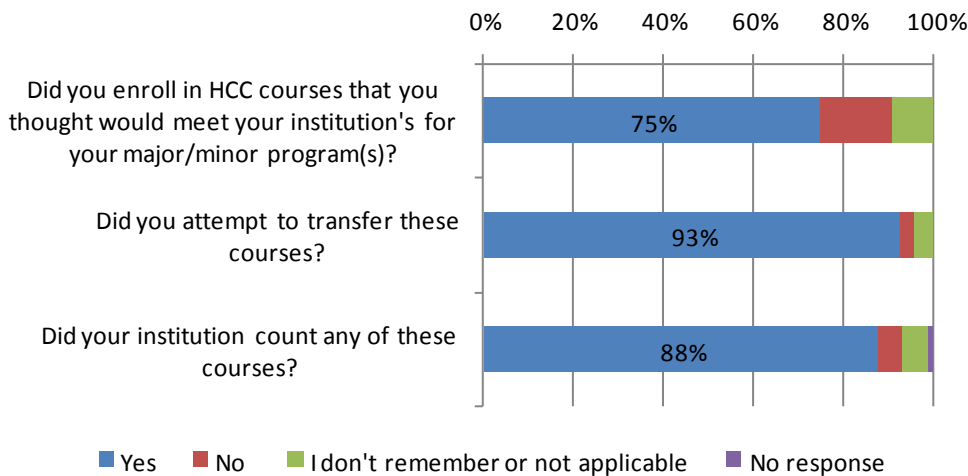
As shown in Figure 8, nearly 90 percent of students indicated that they enrolled in courses at HCC that they thought would meet their institution's general education requirements and well over 90 percent indicated that they attempted to transfer these courses and that their current institution counted them toward its general education course requirements. Eighty-two percent of the transfer students who completed the survey indicated that their transfer institution counted their HCC degree as credit toward its general education course requirements.

Figure 8. Meeting general education course requirements



As shown in Figure 9, seventy-five percent of students indicated that they enrolled in elective courses that they thought would meet their institution's major/minor program(s) and roughly 90 percent indicated that they attempted to transfer these courses and that their current institution counted them toward the requirements for their major/minor program(s).

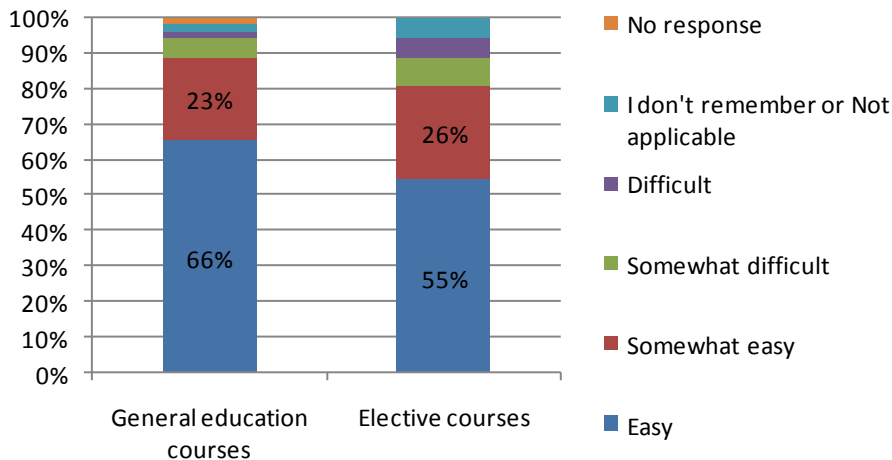
Figure 9. Meeting course requirements for major/minor program at current institution



Perceived ease of transferring courses

As shown in Figure 10, nearly 90 percent of students indicated that the process of transferring HCC courses to meet the general education course requirements at their current institution was with *easy* (66%) or *somewhat easy* (23%). The reported ease in transferring HCC elective courses to meet major/minor program requirements was slightly less, with 55 percent having responded, *easy* and 26 percent having responded, *somewhat easy*.

Figure 10. Perceived ease in transferring courses

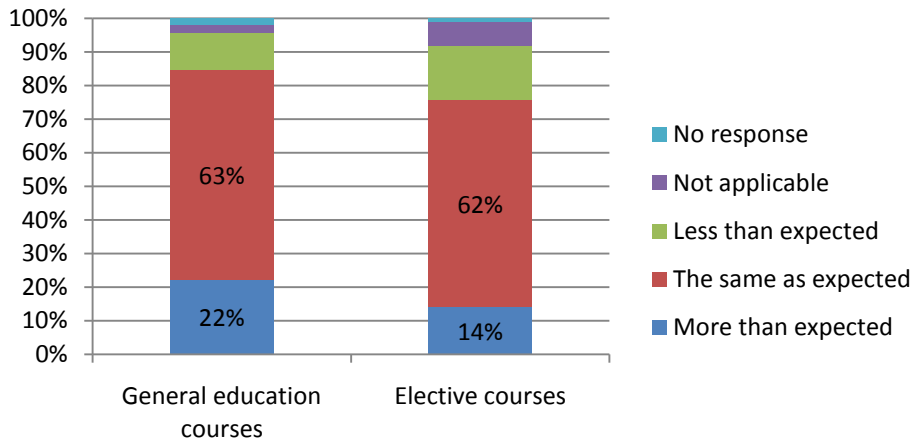


Meeting expectations regarding the number courses accepted at transfer institution

As shown in Figure 11, eighty-five percent of students indicated that the number of HCC courses that their current institution accepted for its general education course requirements was either *the same as expected* (63%), or *more than expected* (22%). For elective courses, the percentage of students whose expectations were met was slightly less - 76 percent indicated that the number of

HCC elective courses that their current institution accepted for major/minor program requirements was either *same as expected* (62%), or *more than expected* (14%).

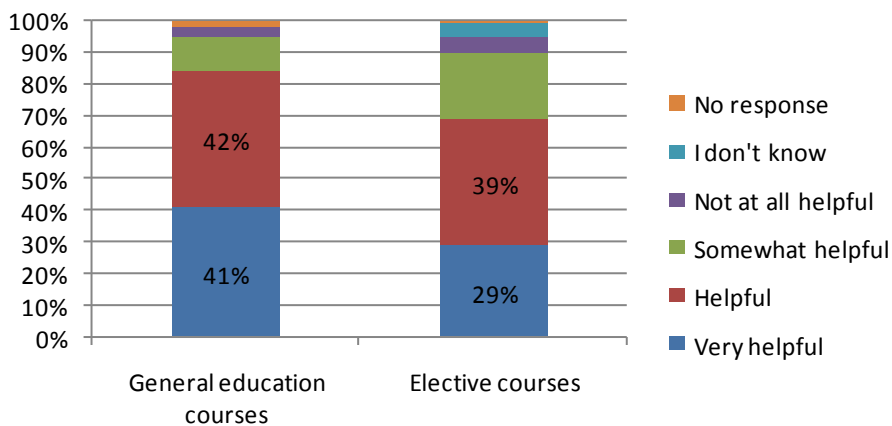
Figure 11. Extent to which expectations were met regarding number of courses accepted



Perceived helpfulness of courses in providing preparation needed for success

As shown in Figure 12, eighty-three percent of the students indicated that they felt that the general education courses they took at HCC were either *very helpful* (41%) or *helpful* (42%) in providing them with the knowledge and skills that they need to be successful in the coursework at their current institution.

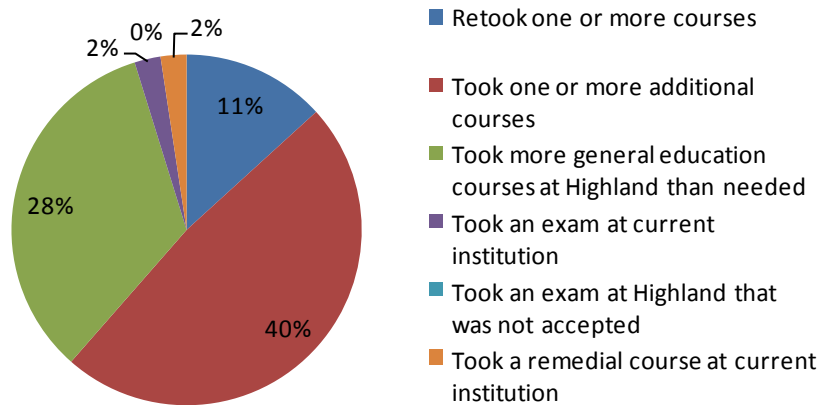
Figure 12. Perceived helpfulness of courses in preparation



Specific issues and other challenges faced in transferring courses

As shown in Figure 13, having to take one or more courses that they did not take at HCC (40%) and having taken more courses at HCC than needed (28%) were two issues that a large percentage of students reported that they encountered in transferring general education courses. Only 11 percent indicated that they needed to retake one or more courses that they took at HCC.

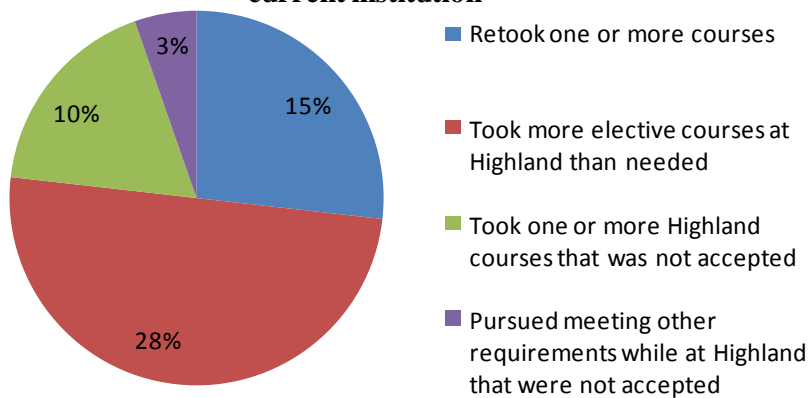
Figure 13. Issues encountered when transferring general education courses to current institution



*Percentages do not equal 100 percent as respondents were instructed to select all that apply.

As shown in Figure 14, taking more elective courses at HCC than needed to meet course requirements for their major/minor program(s) at their current institution was an issue encountered by 28 percent of students in transferring their elective courses. Having to retake elective courses, having taken one or more HCC elective courses that were not accepted, and the current institution not accepting other program requirements fulfilled at HCC (i.e. field experience) was reported by less than roughly 15 percent of the students.

Figure 14. Issues encountered when transferring elective courses to meet major/minor program requirements at current institution



*Percentages do not equal 100 percent as respondents were instructed to select all that apply.

Sixteen students provided responses to the open-ended question asking students describe any other challenges they faced in transferring the *general education* courses they took at HCC to meet course requirements their current institution and 20 students provided responses to the open-ended question asking students to describe any other challenges they faced in transferring the *elective* courses they took at HCC to meet course requirement for their major/minor program(s). As most of these responses were specific to the institution of transfer (and no real

common theme seemed to surface), these responses were categorized by the institution of transfer and can be found in Appendix D.

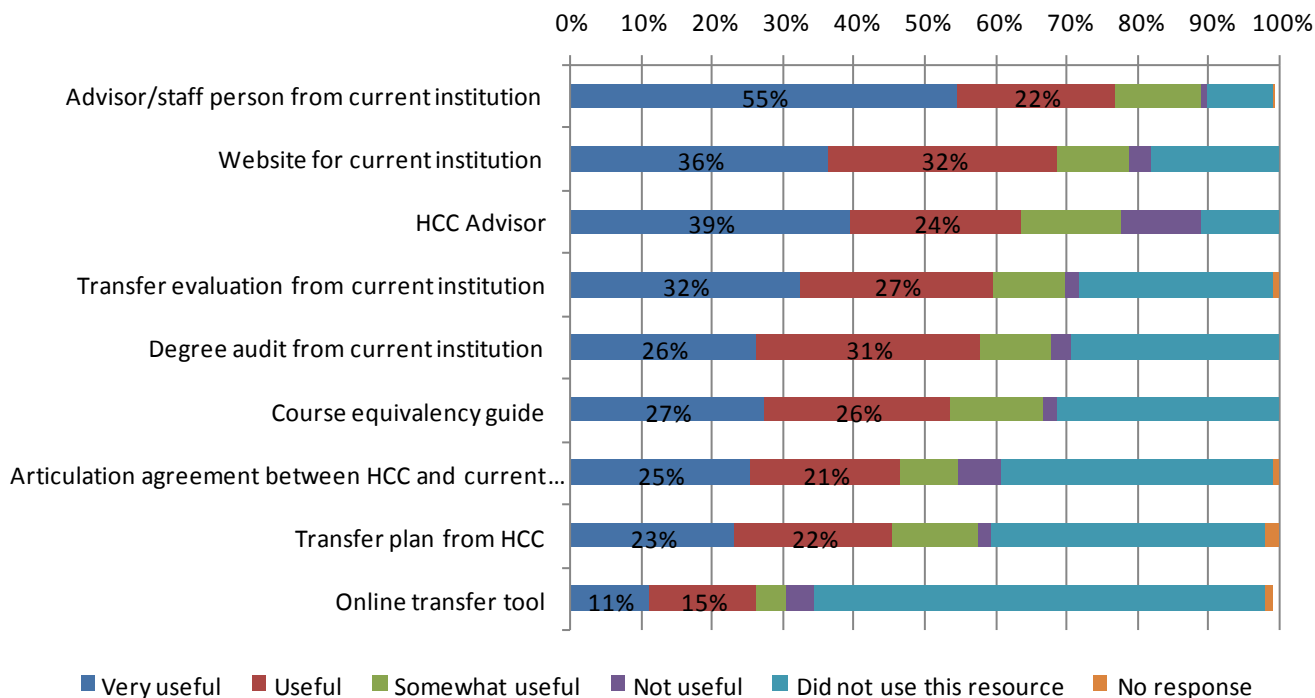
Utilization and Usefulness of Transfer and Admission Resources

The last section of the survey asked students to rate the usefulness of a set of resources that they may have used in transferring HCC courses to their current institution and the usefulness of the resources they may have used to help with the admissions process at their current institution.

Transfer Resources

As shown in Figure 15, the transfer resource rated useful by the most students was an advisor or staff person from their current institution. Nearly 80% rated this resource as either *very useful* (55%) or *useful* (22%). Their current institution’s web site was rated the next most useful with nearly 70 percent of students rating this resource as very useful (36%) or useful (32%). The students’ HCC advisor, the transfer evaluation from their current institution and the degree audit from their current institution were rated as very useful or useful by nearly 60 percent of students.

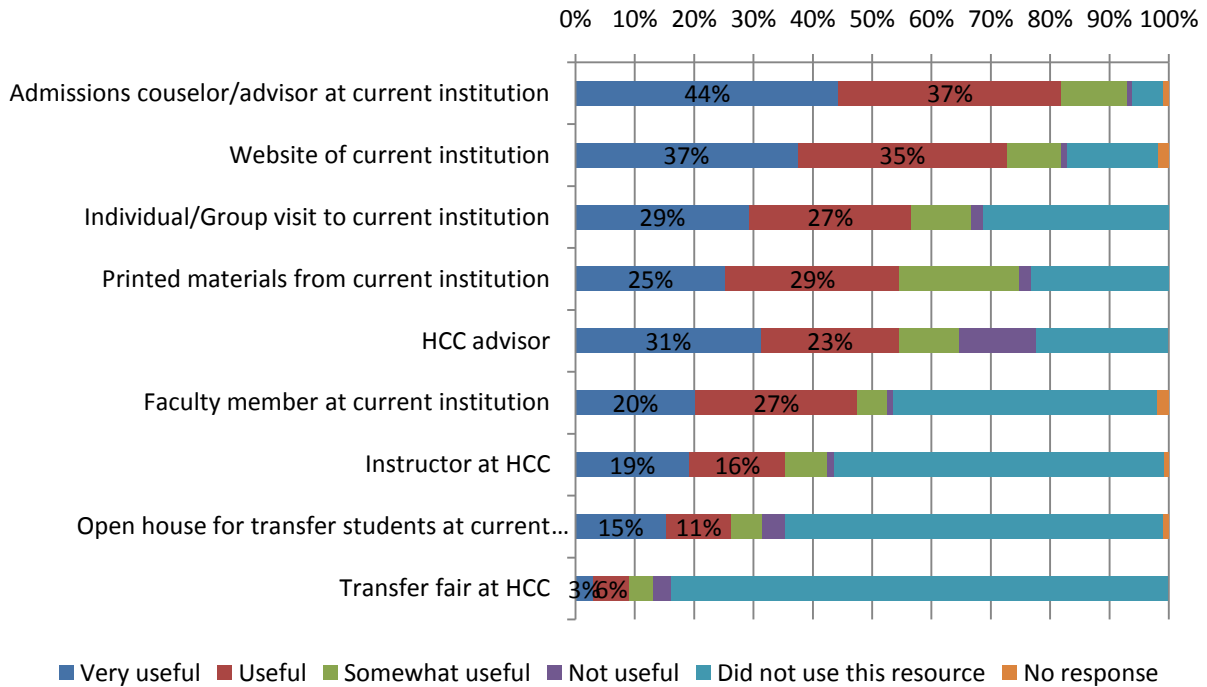
Figure 15. Usefulness of Transfer Resources



Admissions Resources

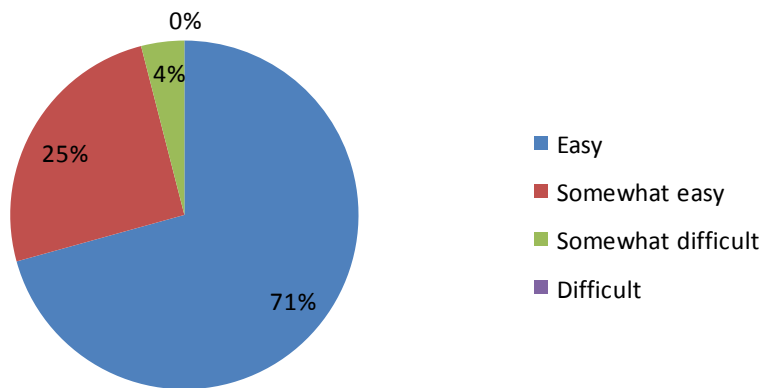
As shown in Figure 16, the admissions resource rated useful by the most students was an admissions counselor or advisor from their current institution. Slightly more than 80 percent rated this resource as *very useful* (44%) or *useful* (37%). Their current institution’s website was rated the next most useful with 72 percent of students rating this resource as *very useful* (37%) or *useful* (35%). An individual or group visit to their current institution and their HCC advisor was rated useful by over 50 percent of the transfer students.

Figure 16. Usefulness of Admissions Resources



Students were also asked to rate the ease of the admissions process at their current institution. As shown in Figure 17, ninety-six percent of the students indicated that the process was either *easy* (71%) or *somewhat easy* (25%).

Figure 17. Ease of Admissions Process



Conclusions

Overall, the College is pleased with the survey results. HCC places a high priority on helping students navigate the transfer process. It is believed that these data support that most students are satisfied with the College’s efforts. At the same time, it should be noted that in certain cases,

not everyone expresses complete satisfaction with the transfer process. While this is to be expected, we make every effort to address these issues when they arise on a timely basis.

Because of the variability of courses, curriculum, and programs at HCC and the transfer institutions to which our students apply, in certain, isolated cases, not all courses transfer seamlessly. Some of the reasons for this include the fact that our dual credit courses, elective courses, and other, HCC-specific courses are not intended to transfer without some consideration by the transferring college or university. The review of the comments made by the few transfer students who responded to the open-ended item asking them to describe the challenges they faced in transferring the courses, support this notion. For example, there were dual-credit courses mentioned that will not transfer as general education course *electives* if they coincide with the students major.

As we continue to monitor transfer data each year, we plan to focus attention on the exceptions of transferability noted by the respondents of this survey and find ways to address these when and if possible. In the end, it is incumbent on HCC and each student to thoroughly chart a course as soon as possible. Using the expertise of HCC advisors, website information, and other counsel is required of all students who wish to transfer. We will continue to encourage and actively promote this approach.

Appendix A
Transfer Student Survey

Transfer Survey

Education Status

1. Indicate the degree(s) you received at Highland Community College. *Select all that apply.*
 - Associate of Arts (AA)
 - Associate of Science (AS)
 - Associate of General Studies (AGS)
 - Associate of Applied Science (AAS)
 - Other. Please specify: _____

2. What was your primary area of concentration (anticipated major/minor) at Highland Community College?

3. What was your status when you first transferred from Highland Community College to your current four-year institution?
 - Freshman
 - Sophomore
 - Junior
 - Senior
 - Other. Please specify: _____

4. As of the last semester you completed, how many course credits have you earned at your current four-year institution?
 - Less than 15 credit hours
 - 16 – 30 credit hours
 - 31 – 60 credit hours
 - More than 60 credit hours

5. Did you participate in a dual admissions (or 2-plus-2) program at your institution? (These are programs between Highland Community College and your current institution.)
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not sure
 - Other. Please specify: _____

6. What other community college(s) beside Highland Community College did you attend prior to being admitted at your current institution?
 - I did not attend any other community college(s)
 - Rock Valley College
 - Sauk Valley College
 - Kishwaukee College
 - Other. Please specify _____

Transfer Planning

7. When did you initially seek information about transferring from Highland Community College to your *current* four-year institution?
- Before enrolling at Highland Community College
 - During my first year at Highland Community College
 - During my second year at Highland Community College
 - During my third year or later year at Highland Community College
 - After completing my degree at Highland Community College
 - After enrolling at my four-year institution
 - Other. Please specify: _____

Transferring Courses

The following questions focus on your experience in transferring two types of community college courses: those that met *general education course requirements* and those that were considered *elective courses*.

General education courses are the set of courses that were required for your Associate's degree. You were required to take a minimum number of specific courses from several different disciplines (i.e., Humanities and Fine Arts, Mathematics, Physical and Life Sciences, and Social and Behavioral Sciences).

Elective courses are the set of courses that were required for your Associate's degree above and beyond your general education courses. While these courses needed to be on an approved list, these courses were from the discipline(s) of your choosing. Typically, students choose elective courses related to their anticipated major/minor area(s) of interest.

For the first set of questions, provide your experience with transferring general education courses.
For the second set of questions, provide your experience with transferring elective courses.

Transferring General Education Courses

For this set of questions, think about your experience with transferring **general education courses**.

8. While attending Highland Community College, did you enroll in courses that you thought would meet the **general education** course requirements at your current institution?
- Yes
 - No
 - I don't remember or Not applicable
9. Did you *attempt to transfer* any of the Highland Community College courses to meet the **general education** course requirements at your current institution?
- Yes
 - No
 - I don't remember or Not applicable

10. Did your current institution *count* any of your Highland Community College courses toward its **general education** course requirements?
- Yes
 - No
 - I don't remember
11. How would you describe the process of transferring Highland Community College courses to meet the **general education** course requirements at your current institution?
- Easy
 - Somewhat easy
 - Somewhat difficult
 - Difficult
 - I don't remember or Not applicable
12. Did your current institution count your Highland Community College *degree* as credit toward its **general education** course requirements?
- Yes
 - No
 - I don't remember or Not applicable
13. Was the number of Highland Community College courses that your current institution accepted for its **general education** course requirements:
- More than you expected
 - The same as you expected
 - Less than you expected
 - Not applicable
14. Did you experience any of the following situations in meeting **general education** requirements at your current institution? *Select all that apply.*
- I retook one or more courses that I took at Highland Community College to meet a general education requirement at my current institution.
 - I needed to take one or more courses that I did *not* take at Highland Community College to meet a general education requirement at my current institution.
 - I took more general education courses at Highland Community College than I needed to meet a general education requirement at my current institution.
 - I took an exam (e.g., CLEP, AP, or departmental) at my current institution to meet a general education course requirement.
 - I took and passed an exam (e.g., CLEP, AP, or departmental) at HCC that did not meet a general education course requirement at my current institution.
 - I needed to take a remediation class at my current institution to meet a general education requirement.

15. Describe any other challenges you faced in transferring the **general education** courses you took at Highland Community College to meet course requirements at your current institution. Also, if there were specific **general education** courses that you had difficulty transferring, please cite those courses.

16. Overall, how helpful do you feel the **general education** courses you took at Highland Community College were in providing you with the knowledge and skills that you need to be successful in the coursework at your current institution?

- Very helpful
- Helpful
- Somewhat helpful
- Not at all helpful
- I don't know

Transferring *Elective* Courses

For this set of questions, think about your experience with transferring *elective* courses.

Again, *elective* courses are those that were required for your Associate's degree above and beyond your general education courses, were from the discipline of your choosing, and were most likely related to your anticipated major/minor area(s) of interest.

17. While attending Highland Community College, did you enroll in **elective** courses that you thought would meet the course requirements for your major/minor program(s) at your current institution?

- Yes
- No
- I don't remember or Not applicable

18. Did you *attempt to transfer* any of the **elective** courses you took at Highland Community College to meet the course requirements for your major/minor program(s) at your current institution?

- Yes
- No
- I don't remember or Not applicable

19. Did any of the **elective** courses you took at Highland Community College *count* toward the course requirements for your major/minor program(s) at your current institution?

- Yes
- No
- I don't remember or Not applicable

20. How would you describe the process of transferring the **elective** courses you took at Highland Community College to meet the course requirements for your major/minor program(s) at your current institution?

- Easy
- Somewhat easy
- Somewhat difficult
- Difficult
- I don't remember or Not applicable

21. Was the number of **elective** courses you took at Highland Community College and that your current institution accepted for the course requirements for your major/minor program(s):

- More than you expected
- The same as you expected
- Less than you expected
- Not applicable

22. Did you experience any of the following situations in meeting the course requirements for your major/minor program(s)? *Select all that apply.*

- I retook one or more **elective** courses that I took at Highland Community College to meet a course requirement for my major/minor program(s) at my current institution.
- I took more **elective** courses at Highland Community College than I needed to meet course requirements for my major/minor program(s) at my current institution.
- I took one or more Highland Community College courses to meet a course requirement for my major/minor program(s), but my current institution did *not* accept the course.
- I pursued meeting other requirements (i.e. field experience) for my major/minor program(s) at Highland Community College that did *not* transfer to my current institution.

23. Describe any other challenges you faced in transferring the **elective** courses you took at Highland Community College to meet course requirements at your current institution. Also, if there were specific **elective** courses that you had difficulty transferring, please cite those courses.

24. Overall, how helpful do you feel the **elective** courses you took at Highland Community College were in providing you with the knowledge and skills that you need to be successful in your major/minor program(s) at your current institution?

- Very helpful
- Helpful
- Somewhat helpful
- Not at all helpful
- I don't know

Resources

25. The following is a list of resources you may have used in transferring Highland Community College courses to your current institution. Indicate the degree to which these resources were useful in helping you transfer your Highland Community College courses.

	Very Useful	Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not Useful	Did not use this resource
Highland Community College advisor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transfer plan from Highland Community College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transfer evaluation from your current university	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advisor or staff person from your current university	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Course equivalency guide	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Online transfer tool	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Degree audit from your current university	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Articulation agreement between Highland Community College and your current institution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Website for your current institution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

26. Describe any other resources you used in transferring Highland Community College courses to your current institution.

Admissions Process

We are also interested in understanding your experience with the admissions process for your current four-year institution.

27. How would you describe the admissions process for your current four-year institution?

- Easy
- Somewhat easy
- Somewhat difficult
- Difficult

28. The following is a list of resources you may have used to help with the admissions process at your current institution. Indicate the degree to which these resources were useful in helping with transferring the courses you took at Highland Community College.

	Very Useful	Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not Useful	Did not use this resource
Highland Community College advisor	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer fair at Highland Community College	0	0	0	0	0
Instructor or faculty member at Highland Community College	0	0	0	0	0
Admissions counselor or advisor at your current institution	0	0	0	0	0
Instructor or faculty member at your current institution	0	0	0	0	0
Website of your current institution	0	0	0	0	0
Brochures or printed materials from your current institution	0	0	0	0	0
Open house for community college transfer students at your current institution	0	0	0	0	0
Individual or group visit to your current institution	0	0	0	0	0

29. Describe any other resources you used to complete the admissions process for your current institution.

About you

30. Indicate your gender.

- Male
- Female

31. Indicate your ethnicity.

- White
- Black/African American
- Hispanic
- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- Other. Please specify. _____

32. Indicate your age.

- Younger than 18 years
- 18 – 24
- 25 – 29
- 30 – 34
- 35 – 39
- 40 – 44
- 45 – 49
- 50 years or older

Appendix B
Letter to Transfer Institutions Requesting Directory Information

Dear [Enter Contact Name]:

Highland Community College has developed a transfer survey to administer to our recent graduates who have transferred from Highland to other colleges and universities. The purpose of this survey is to gather information about their transfer experience. This information will help assist us in our continuous improvement efforts. Attached is a list of our recent graduates, who according to the National Student Clearinghouse are attending [Enter college/university name] this spring semester.

For the students listed in the attached, we are requesting your assistance in providing the following directory information under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act:

- First Name
- Last Name
- Major/Program
- Street Address
- City
- State
- Zip Code
- Email

We would prefer this information in an Excel spreadsheet if possible. The directory information for each student will be used to contact the student and invite them to complete the transfer survey.

Please E-mail this information to me at Misty.Thruman@highland.edu. I am requesting this information by [enter date]. Please do not hesitate to call if you need to clarify any part of this request. My phone number is (815) 599-3575.

Highland Community College appreciates your assistance in providing this information to us. Should you be interested in receiving the aggregate results of the survey for the students who have transferred to your institution, we will be happy to share them with you once they have been compiled.

Sincerely,

Michelle (Misty) Thruman, Ph.D.
Director of Institutional Research
Highland Community College
2998 West Pearl City Road
Freeport, IL 61032

Appendix C
Survey Invitation and Reminders

[Enter Date]

Dear [Enter student's first name]:

I am writing to invite you to complete a transfer survey developed by Highland Community College. As a recent graduate of Highland, we are interested in knowing about your transfer experience to [enter college/university name].

Your input is important. Sharing your experiences by completing the enclosed survey will help Highland Community College improve the transfer related services it provides to its students. Completing the survey will also allow you to **enter to win one of two \$100 Visa gift cards!**

The survey will take no more than ten minutes of your time. A postage paid envelope is also enclosed for your convenience. Please know that your responses are confidential. When your completed survey is returned, your name will be deleted from the mailing list and never connected to your answers in any way. Your responses to the survey will be released only as summaries in which no individual's answers can be identified. The contact information requested from you to enter to win one of the *\$100 Visa gift cards* will be used only to reach you should your name be drawn; it will not be tied to your responses to the survey items.

Please complete and return the survey to us by **May 3, 2010**.

If you have any questions or comments about the survey, we would be happy to speak with you. Please contact Dr. Michelle (Misty) Thrumán, Director of Institutional Research, at 815.599.3575 or at misty.thruman@highland.edu.

Thank you for your assistance and continuing support. We look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

Joe M. Kanosky, Ph.D.
President

JMK:tag

Dear [Enter student's first name]:

Last week you received an invitation from Joe Kanosky, President of Highland Community College, to complete a transfer survey for the purpose of gathering your input on your transfer experience to [enter college/university name].

If you have already completed this survey, please accept my sincere thanks. If not, please do so today. Those of us at Highland Community College are especially grateful for your help because it is only through your provided input that we can ensure that we are meeting the needs of our transfer students. Completing the survey will also allow you to **enter to win one of two \$100 Visa gift cards!**

If you did not receive a survey, or it was misplaced, please contact me at misty.thruman@highland.edu or 815.599.3575 and I will get another one in the mail to you today.

Thank you,

Michelle (Misty) Thruman, Ph.D.
Director of Institutional Research

Dear Highland Community College Graduate:

Earlier this month, you received an invitation via U.S. Postal mail to complete a survey developed by Highland Community College asking you about your transfer experiences. If to your knowledge you have not received this survey at your current residence, it may have been mailed to you at an alternate address.

If you have already completed the survey, thank you! If not, please do so today. The comments of others who have already responded have provided us with very helpful information and we believe the results are going to be especially useful. In addition, **completing the survey will also allow you to enter to win one of two \$100 Visa gift cards!**

Please understand the importance your input has for helping to get as much information as possible. Although we sent this request to other recent Highland Community College graduates who transferred to another college or university, it is only by hearing from everyone that we can be sure that the results are as accurate as possible.

Your responses to the survey items are completely confidential and will be released only as summaries in which no individual's answers can be identified. The contact information requested from you to win one of the two *\$100 Visa gift cards* will be used only to reach you should your name be drawn; it will not be tied to your responses to the survey items.

We hope you will complete and return the survey soon. If for any reason you prefer not to respond, please let me know by returning a note or a blank survey in the postage paid envelope.

Best regards,

Michelle (Misty) Thrumman, Ph.D.
Director of Institutional Research
Highland Community College
2998 West Pearl City Road
Freeport, IL 61032

P.S. If you have any questions or comments about the survey, or if you need another copy of the survey, please contact me at 815.599.3575 or at misty.thrumman@highland.edu.

Appendix D

Table 6. Responses by institution regarding challenges in transferring *general education* courses

Columbia	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because four of my gen ed courses were dual credit, I have to take four more courses for free elective credit. • I had enough gen eds to graduate, but had to go back to HCC to take 10 more credit hours of gen eds for Columbia. Didn't make any sense. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A (4) • No challenges. • None apply due to how long it took me to complete my degree over the years. • No problems with transfer courses/general education courses. • I had no issues at all in transferring my credits. My school accepted my AA and AS as fulfillment of gen eds. • No problem transferring.
Illinois State University	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Math for Elementary Teachers taught at HCC does not transfer as Math 201 at ISU. You are required to take the Math for Elementary Teachers at they teach at ISU. • Needed a world studies class that I didn't know about for ISU. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I had no problems. • None • I had no issues transferring because I got a degree from HCC. • I did not have any challenges transferring my credits. My advisor let me know what classes I needed to take before I signed up for classes at HCC so then I didn't worry about losing any
Northern Illinois University	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I really didn't have much of a problem transferring my classes. The only classes that didn't transfer were some computer lab elective classes. • I was told that I needed to take Intro to Information Systems to get into the NIU business program but that is untrue and it didn't even count as a general education class. • Transferring courses was very simple. It would have been nice to have known what I needed to take in order to meet my general education requirement as I took more courses as necessary. • I was specifically told that if I received my associate's degree from HCC that all of my courses would transfer to NIU, no questions asked. That did not happen, I had to retake Business Law before I was accepted into NIU's business school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None (5) • N/A (3) • I didn't have any problems really because my whole associate's degree was accepted.

University of Wisconsin - Platteville

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairly easy. Most courses transferred and my AS meant all my Gen Eds were satisfied. I only had a problem when I tried to drop some classes UW-P had already accepted but I wanted to take others over the summer. Problem resolved within 3 phone calls to the right administration. • Some gen eds counted as electives and missed them. • One issue was that Platteville now requires two classes, Unity and Diversity of Life for Biology Majors. I had to have the department chair wave my Gen. Bio and Zoology classes to take the place of these other two. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A (2) • Coming into UW Platteville with AA degree, all my gen ed classes wiped clean • None - went in with degree • All G.E. transferred • My associate degree transferred very well. • They didn't at first recognize two classes but I asked why they wouldn't transfer and my advisor got them taken care of! |
|---|---|

Other colleges and universities

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I took 60-62 credits at HCC and only 54 transferred and a lot of them didn't count for my degree at my new school • Ethics • Trouble transferring African History. Needed to take computer science, literature and a religion class as core requirements; not required at Highland • For some reason, a speech class and one history class did not transfer. I used transfer.org and they said they would, but did not. • My general education courses were not classified as upper level so I needed to retake many classes • [REDACTED] requires me to take communication part B (my speech class at HCC doesn't count). I also needed to take one ethnic studies (for gen. ed.) at [REDACTED] • I was told that some majors would not have me transferring in as a junior if I chose them, based on my classes from HCC. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A (2) • I had no problems transferring credits to [REDACTED]. • Had no challenges in transferring. • None, all courses transferred. I only needed to take one course to meet my general education requirements. • None • Process was easy. Needed only a few more generals at my 4-year institution. • They didn't at first recognize two classes but I asked why they wouldn't transfer and my advisor got them taken care of! |
|---|---|

Table 7. Responses by institution regarding challenges in transferring *elective* courses

Columbia	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not have any problems with transferring electives, except for needing one more Spanish course to fulfill my six credit hour requirement through Columbia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A (2) • No problems/None (3) • All credits transferred. All I need to fulfill is the upper level requirements for my program.
Illinois State University	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I took the class Fundamentals of Bookkeeping and my current institution said it was not transferrable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No problems/None (4) • Again, I had no trouble transferring these classes either.
Northern Illinois University	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not have enough credits to meet the requirements for my minor. Had to take a couple additional courses. • I switched my major when I transferred to my current university so the electives I took at Highland weren't needed anymore. • My CNA course did not transfer. • My computer lab classes didn't transfer as electives. • The general college chemistry courses were not equivalent. The credit transferred but I had to take the course again at NIU to fill the requirements of my major. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A (3) • None (5) • Not too many difficulties getting electives accepted, some weren't taken, and others I argued for and got them accepted. • I can't recall having difficulty passing the classes that I passed.
University of Wisconsin - Platteville	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Photography couldn't be accepted here because Highland has it as "art" class and here it is "comm tech" class. A lot of arguing with people to take my classes here to UWP and transfer correctly. • Linear Algebra did not transfer but I learned a lot from the HCC course regardless of having to retake the course. • Many courses toward the Professional Education degree did not transfer such as Ed. Observation, American Public Schools, and Intro to Early Child Education. • Some elective courses did not count at UW-Platteville. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A • None :) • Most electives transferred. • My major is criminal justice, and there was only online criminal justice at Highland, so I didn't take any classes as electives towards my major.

Other colleges and universities

- I think that Highland's Graphic Design courses should be titled more specifically so that they are more identifiable on transcripts (i.e., Graphic Design IV should be "internship" -- since that's what it is.)
- Took a lot of classes that didn't transfer as credit for my degree.
- The course I took at HCC through Sauk Valley Community College was difficult to obtain records for. Students need to know to send Sauk Valley transcripts if they take a distance learning course through them. I also had to have ██████ re-evaluate the Juvenile Delinquency and Topics in Criminal Justice because they did not accept them at first since they were offered through Sauk Valley and we had to find their course catalog to determine if they were acceptable.
- Many courses taken at HCC did not apply to my major. The reason was that I had so many credit hours and certain 300-400 level courses taken at Highland could just not be applied.
- A few lower level science courses weren't offered that I needed at Highland.
- Elective courses at HCC covered less material than the same course at University, had to retake it. Had to go back to HCC to retake the required courses for my major, which were only college level, not good prepared for university from HCC.
- The only issue I had was that my HCC courses were considered lower/elementary level -- which meant that they weren't equivalent to the elective courses I'd hope they'd match which were upper level.
- There was some dispute over a business stats class that would not transfer but after bringing the syllabus in it was resolved.
- Universities require a certain number of upper division electives; not much HCC can do for me there.
- Many electives transferred, more than I thought. Very happy both Econ courses did.
- Transferring these courses was very easy.
- Everything transferred fine. Didn't really have a problem.
- None.
- None. I had more credits than I needed.
- No problem transferring courses. However, Highland's Ecology class is the same as "Intro to Environmental Science" at my 4 year school. The ecology curriculum is very different
- It went fairly smooth.