Orange County Community Colleges
CAREER EDUCATION

FUTURE | BUILT

College Alumni Online Survey
Presentation of Results

August 2022

Presented by:

Cheryl Broom

Chief Executive Officer

GRADUATE COMMUNICATIONS

Contents

- Study Overview
- Past Orange County Community College Program Information
- Current Situation & Impact of Orange County Community College Program
- Sample Characteristics
- Implications & Opportunities

Study Overview

Methodology

- An online survey was created by Graduate Communications using the Question Pro platform (English only).
- Fieldwork occurred from late May through mid-July of 2022 with a survey link sent via email to alumni who completed a certificate or degree program at one (or more) of the Orange County Community Colleges.
- A total of 889 surveys were initiated with 717 fully completed (81% completion rate). The survey consisted of 18 questions and took an average of 6 minutes to complete.

Sample Characteristics

- Alumni respondents are well distributed among those age 25 to 34 (34%), 35 to 44 (28%) and 45 and older (25%), with a smaller group who are younger than 25 (13%).
- The sample is primarily Non-Hispanic White (42%) and Hispanic (24%), with some Asian/Pacific Islander (12%) and multiple race (9%) respondents, and only minimal Black (2%) or Indigenous (1%) representation.
- Most alumni have either a bachelor's (43%) or an associate degree (35%), followed by those with an advanced degree (17%) and very few who only graduated/attended high school (5%).
- Roughly one-third of respondents (34%) were the first in their family to take college-level classes.

Past Orange County Community College Program Information

Past Program Completion

- One-third of respondents completed their Orange County Community College program within the past 3 years (33%).

- One-in-five alumni completed their program 3 to 5 years ago (20%).

- Slightly less than half the sample completed their program more than 5 years ago (46%).

## When completed Orange County Community College program
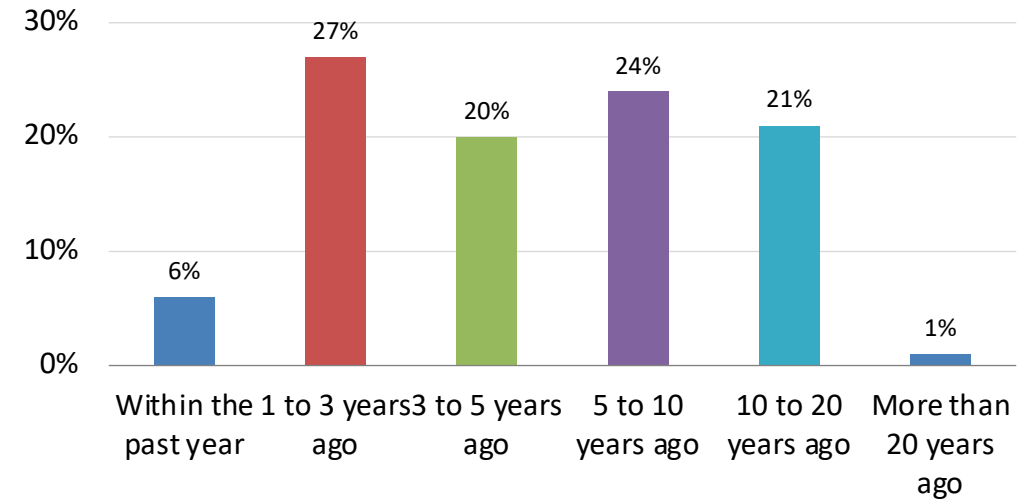
Past Program College

The sample is heavily skewed to two specific Orange County colleges:

- Two-thirds of respondents are alumni of Fullerton College (66%).
- Roughly one-third of alumni attended Saddleback College (31%).
- Cypress College (13%) also had decent representation in the sample.
- Most other Orange County Community Colleges had minimal participation in the study.

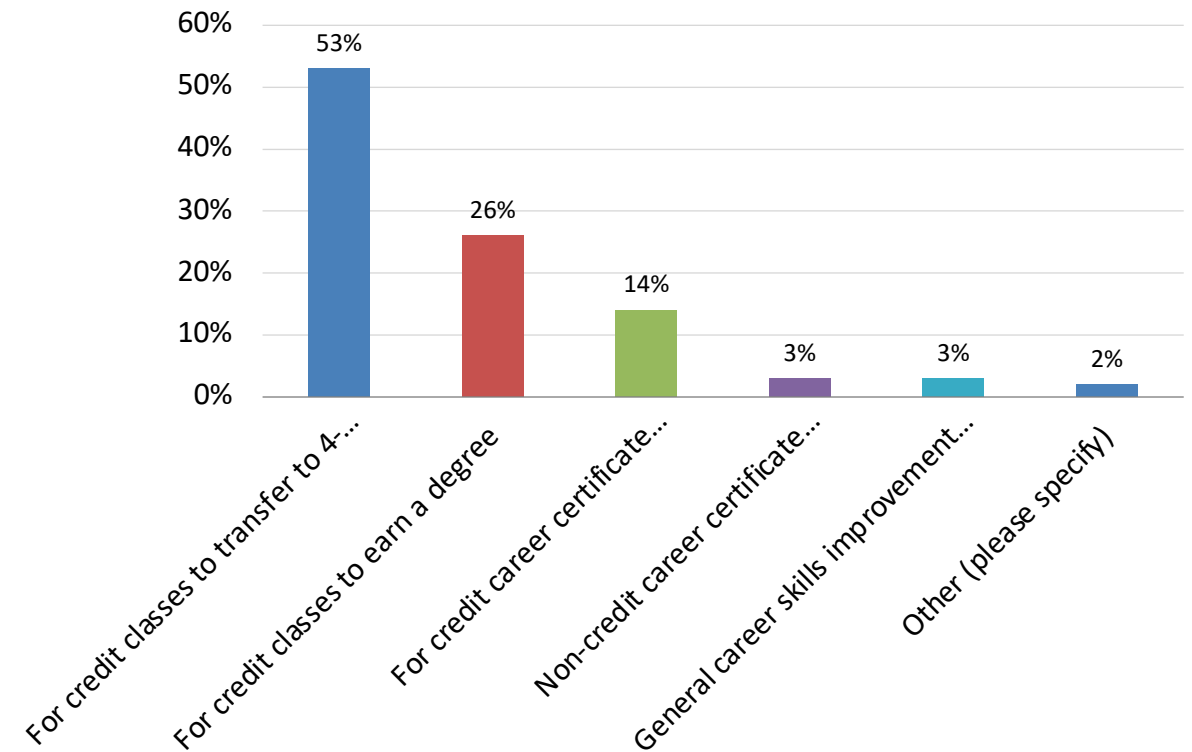**Where previously enrolled in Orange County Community College program**
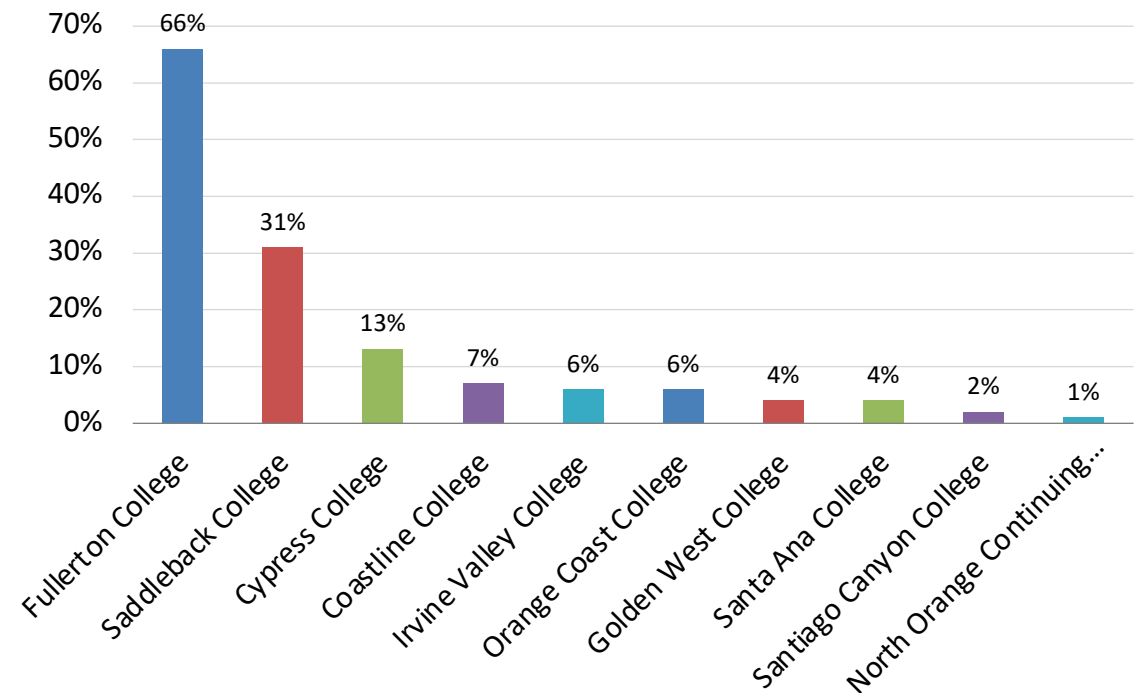
Adds to more than 100% because some students indicate being enrolled at more than one college.

Past Program Type

Nearly all alumni were enrolled in a credit program:

- More than half of the sample took credit classes to transfer to a 4-year college (53%).

- Roughly one-fourth of alumni took for credit classes to earn a degree (26%).

- The next most common area of study was a for credit career certification program (14%).

Type of program completed at Orange County Community College

Bar chart:
- For credit classes to transfer to 4-...: 53%
- For credit classes to earn a degree: 26%
- For credit career certificate...: 14%
- Non-credit career certificate...: 3%
- General career skills improvement...: 3%
- Other (please specify): 2%

Satisfaction with Past Program

Alumni satisfaction with their past Orange County Community College program (while a student) is very strong:

- Nearly two-thirds of the sample (65%) is classified as "promoters" (top 2 box ratings) with almost half of alumni giving the highest possible rating of "10."

- 28% of respondents are described as "passive" with scores of "7" or "8."

- Only 7% of the sample are considered "detractors," with ratings of "6" or lower.

Net Promoter Score : 58.13
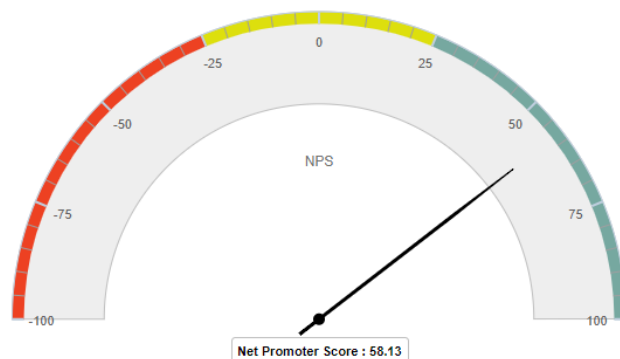
Satisfaction with past Orange County Community College program
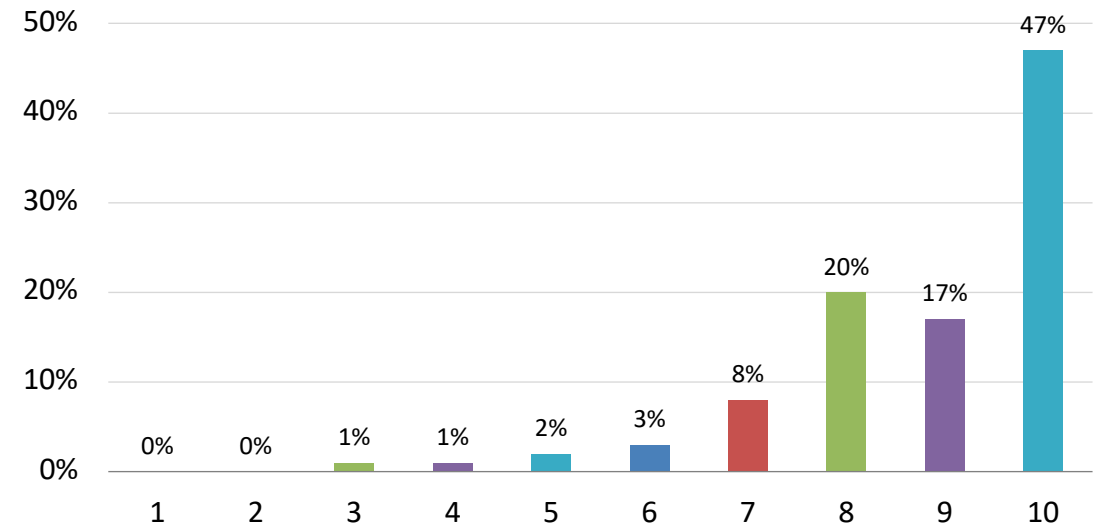
Current Situation & Impact of Orange County Community College Program

Current Situation

- Nearly half of alumni are employed in an area related to their Orange County Community College program (41%).

- Another quarter of respondents (24%) have a job or career that is *not* related to their program.

- The third most common situation is to continue their studies in an area related to their Orange County Community College program (18%).

Current life circumstances
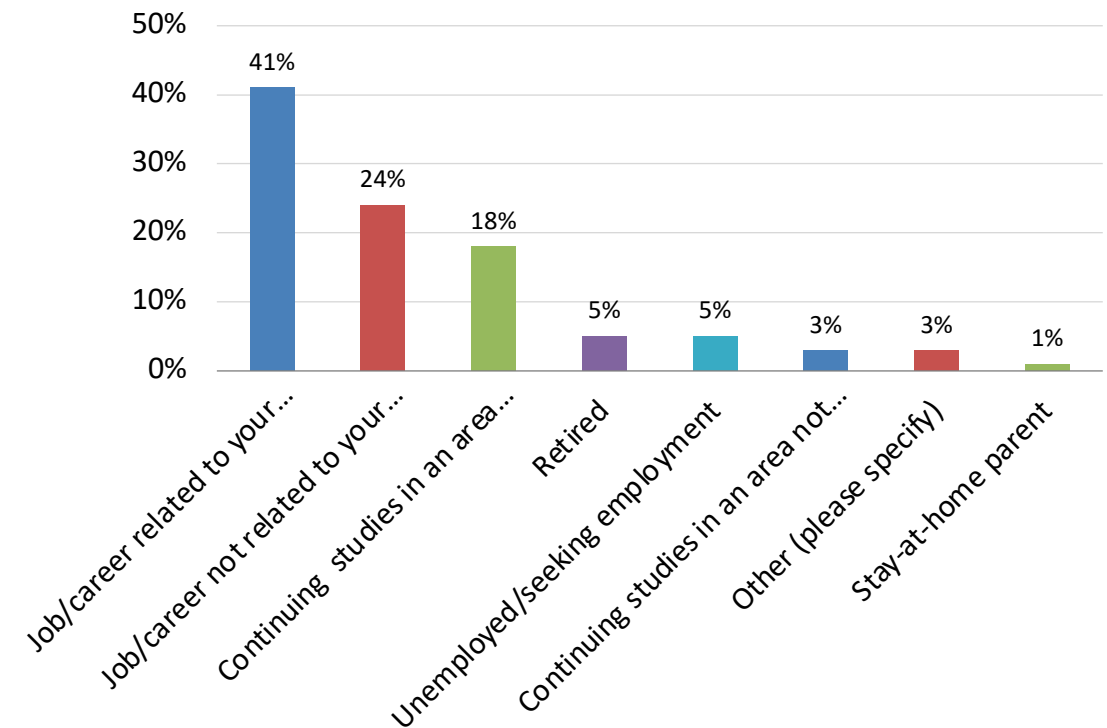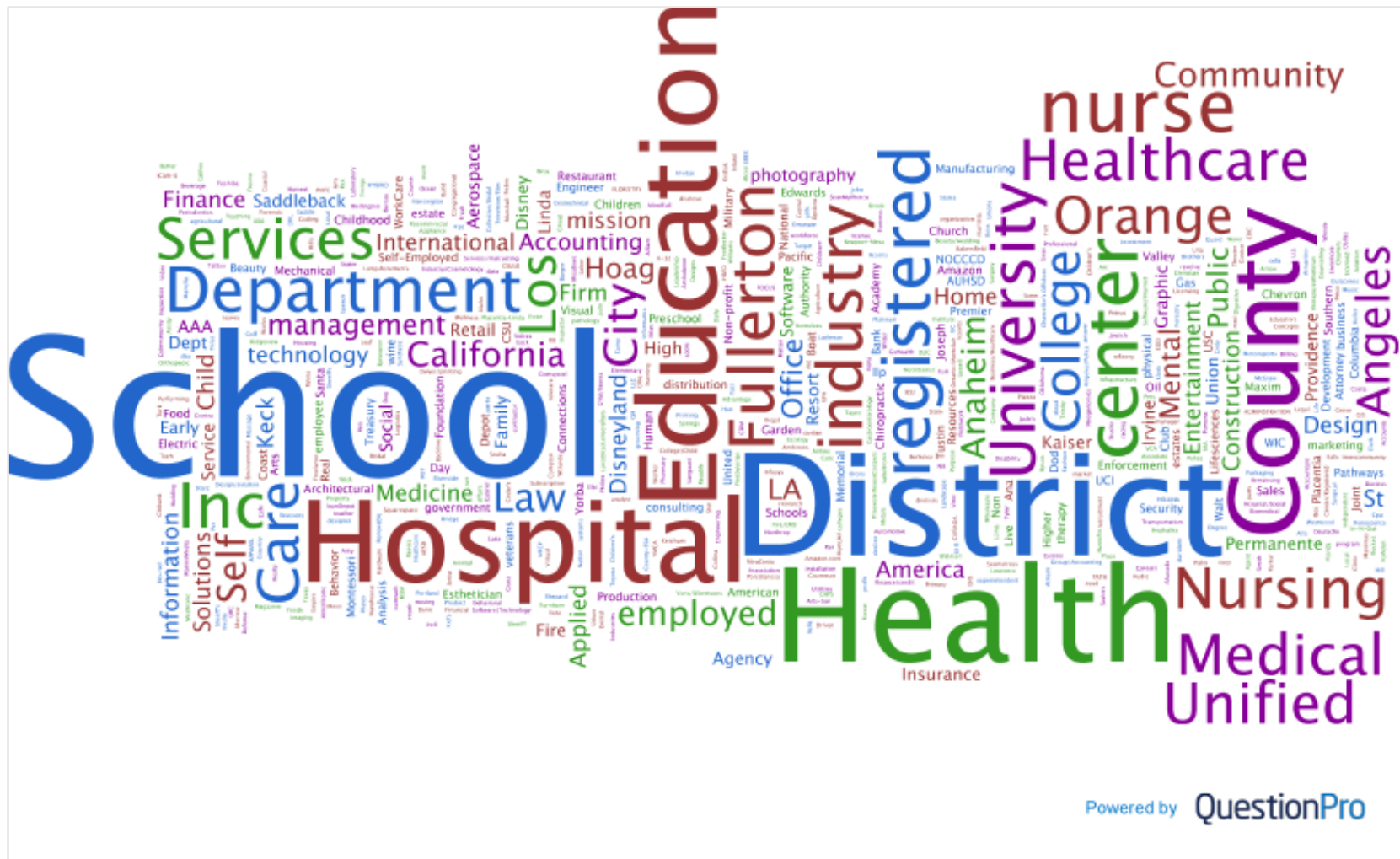
Current Employer/Academic Program

Alumni's place or type of employment range broadly across industries, including:

- Aerospace
- Business & Finance
- Construction
- Education
- Government
- Healthcare
- Hospitality
- Law enforcement
- Military
- Retail
- Sales
- Social services
- Software & IT

Cal State Fullerton is the most common place of study for alumni followed by other schools in the Cal State and UC systems. Academic programs are also broadly varied, including:

- Accounting/Business
- Biology
- Communications
- Computer Science
- Counseling/HR
- Criminal Justice
- Engineering
- Liberal Arts
- Medical/Dental/Nursing
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Teaching

Current Employer/Industry Word Cloud

Current Academic Program Word Cloud
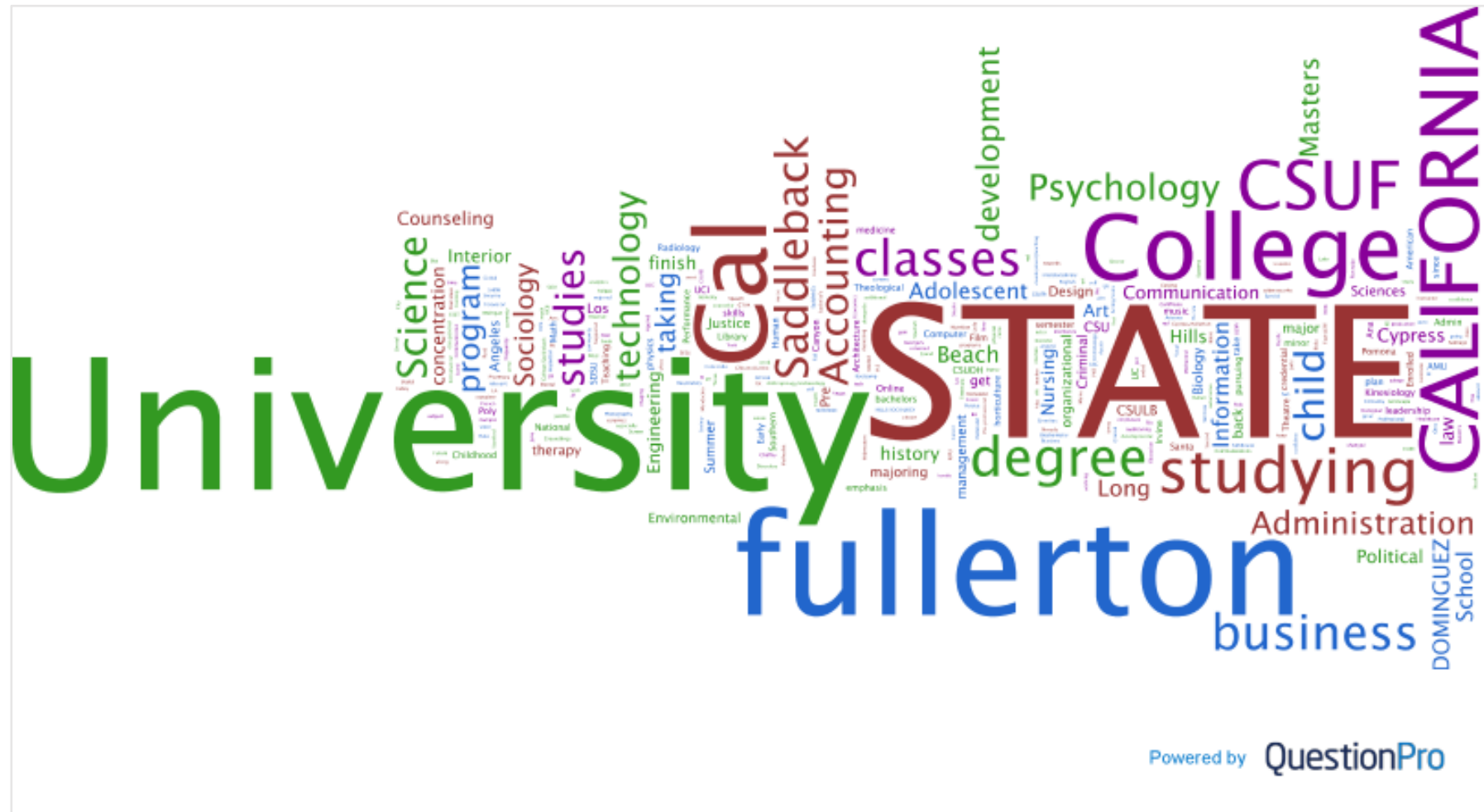
Impact of Orange County Community College Program

Most alumni indicate that their Orange County Community College program had at least some impact on their subsequent career or academic choices:

- 42% are classified as "promoters" (top 2 box ratings) with nearly a third giving the highest possible rating of "10."

- 29% of respondents are described as "passive" with scores of "7" or "8."

- A quarter of the sample (28%) are labeled "detractors," with ratings of "6" or lower.
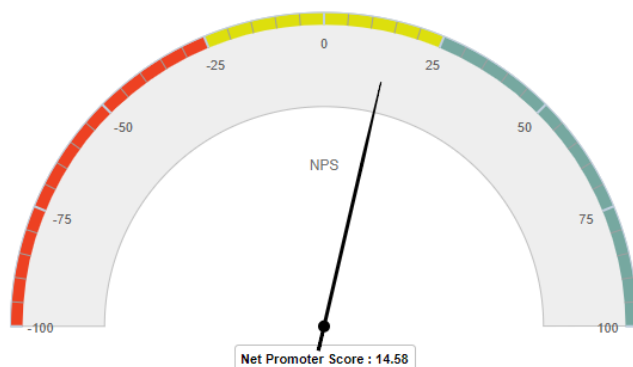
Role of Orange County Community College program on professional or educational decisions
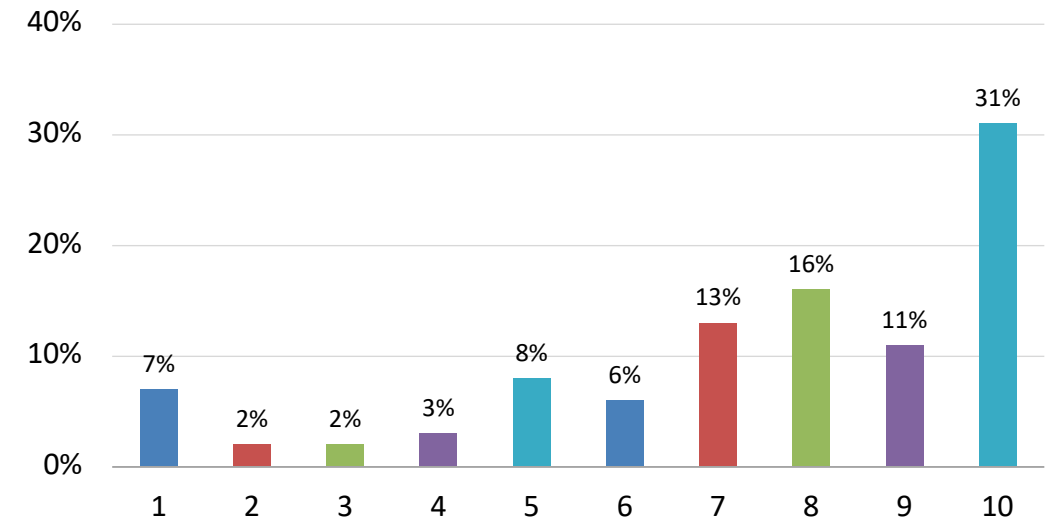
Most Helpful Resources (Fullerton)

Alumni praise Fullerton College for many reasons, including the caring and encouraging faculty/staff, the breadth of student resources offered, as well as the genuine interest in helping students to succeed.

"Helpful faculty members willing to help and answer questions outside of class settings."

"Instructors and equipment are top of the line."

"The transfer center was great, and I was a part of many clubs on campus that helped me succeed while I was there, including AGS."

"The transfer center and the TAP program."

"Counseling Department and Student Support Services."

"The career counselors. I was trying different majors, and the counselors had the most influence in helping me find a major related to my strengths."

"Fullerton College's machine shop and manufacturing program has a culture of openness and fostering curiosity which allowed me to go above and beyond in every class."

"I had a lot of support from my teachers, the library had a lot of resources, and I really enjoyed my time there."

Most Helpful Resources (Saddleback)

Alumni praise Saddleback College for many reasons, particularly the caring and encouraging faculty/staff, as well as the breadth of student resources offered and the genuine interest in helping students to succeed.

"Ample online course options."

"All the instructors I had were very generous with their time, enjoyed teaching as they were attentive during class and responsive to emails."

"The counseling was good to help keep me on track."

"The instructors were dedicated and genuinely wanted to help."

"The service learning and study abroad opportunities I had."

"Having the equipment available to do hands-on skills."

"All of the nursing program instructors have helped me excel in my career and I am forever grateful for their valuable guidance!"

"Scholarship opportunities, able to transfer to RN to BSN program."

Most Helpful Resources (Cypress)

Alumni praise Cypress College for many reasons, particularly the caring and encouraging faculty, staff, and counselors, as well as the breadth of student resources offered.

"Helpful staff; teachers and counselors."

"Meeting with the career counselor to discuss degree qualifications and mapping out classes."

"Career center and guidance counselor!"

"The classes in early childhood development were really helpful."

"I had an amazing English professor that was inspiring and rigorous to make us better. The majority of my professors in community college truly cared about what they were teaching and not all professors are that way."

"EOPS and academic counseling, tutoring center, math lab and the library."

"Having the necessary classes available when needed."

"Free tutoring, financial aid workshops."

Most Helpful Resources (Coastline)

Alumni praise Coastline College for many reasons, including the caring and encouraging faculty/staff, the availability and value of classes offered, as well as the genuine interest in helping students to succeed.

"Great, encouraging instructors, teaching topical, career applicable classes."

"Many of my professors have been extremely knowledgeable about their fields and helpful when networking."

"Real world examples of topics during instruction."

"I think the ease of getting to speak to a counselor and discuss career and educational goals helped."

"Very supportive professors, always willing to help active-duty military when schedule conflicts arose."

"Application process, signing up to courses and online courses was easy process. The staff at Coastline are amazing and very helpful."

"Having the necessary classes available when needed."

"The class quality was great. Lining up courses with specific IT certs is a good way to do business."

Specific Barriers/Challenges (Fullerton)

Many alumni cite barriers unrelated to their program itself, particularly the consequences of COVID-19. More common issues with the college included the availability and relevance of classes, inconsistent quality of instructors, lack of financial support, etc.

"The Covid-19 pandemic."

"Can be difficult to retain and absorb information in online lectures, did a lot of learning independently."

"Not qualifying for financial aid."

"Classes don't do much that's related to what goes on in the real world."

"Some of the instructors were no longer effective and needed to retire. It was clear who was there to collect hours and go home vs instructors that were engaging and ensured materials were understood."

"Gas prices, parking tickets on campus when parking machine was broken."

"Class availability."
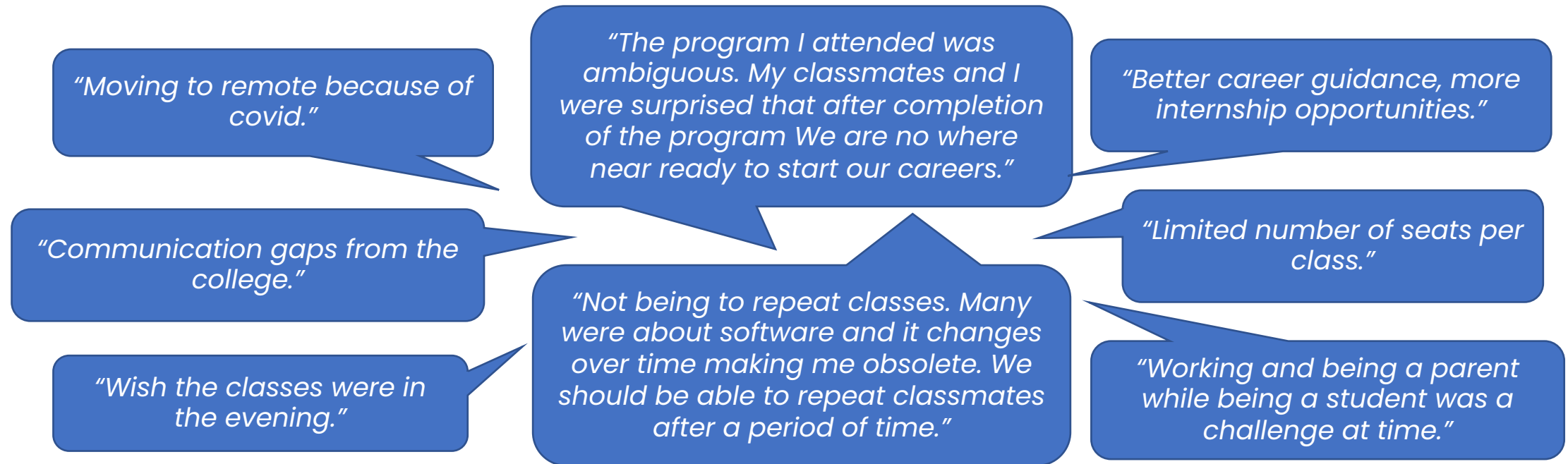
"Four kids, a husband and a job."

Specific Barriers/Challenges (Saddleback)

Many alumni cite barriers unrelated to their program itself, particularly the consequences of COVID-19. More common issues with the college included the availability and relevance of classes, inconsistent quality of instructors, need for better career guidance, etc.

"Moving to remote because of covid."

"The program I attended was ambiguous. My classmates and I were surprised that after completion of the program We are no where near ready to start our careers."

"Better career guidance, more internship opportunities."

"Communication gaps from the college."

"Limited number of seats per class."

"Wish the classes were in the evening."

"Not being to repeat classes. Many were about software and it changes over time making me obsolete. We should be able to repeat classmates after a period of time."

"Working and being a parent while being a student was a challenge at time."

Specific Barriers/Challenges (Cypress)

Many alumni cite barriers unrelated to their program itself, particularly the consequences of COVID-19. More common issues with the college included class availability and schedules, inconsistent quality of instructors, financial costs, etc.

"The Covid-19 pandemic."

"Required classes start at 8:00am and I have to drop off my son at school. It's tough to make certain classes for parents with school aged children."

"Hard to get the classes I needed when I needed them."

"Working while going to school. Also, the increase amount from $9 per credit to $46 per credit. Ridiculous."

"Limited number of open classes for enrollment. The parking lot and Its bizarre policy."

"More night classes would have helped out."

"Classes that I needed were often full, which threw me off my timeline/ planned exit strategy for transfer. Some professors were not very helpful. Seemed as if they were more invested in being gatekeepers rather than student success."

"Cost of living/working full time as a student. Night courses & summer courses helped a lot."

Specific Barriers/Challenges (Coastline)

Many alumni cite personal barriers or changes unrelated to their program itself. More common issues with the college included class availability and schedules, inconsistent quality of instructors, financial costs, etc.

"Outside influences not pertaining to education."

"Some courses are not available every term. In this case you may have to wait 1-2 terms for the course to come back to the offered curriculum."

"Gas prices, parking tickets on campus when parking machine was broken."

"Paying for my classes while working full time."

"Some instructors were not willing to provide recommendation letters even though I was a top student in their classes. They seemed not to think it was not within their job responsibilities. Others were willing and ironically it was the adjuncts that were generally the most willing to help."

"Being deployed overseas while taking classes."

"Difficulty getting classes."

"It was hard balancing work and school."

GRADUATE COMMUNICATIONS

General Thoughts/Suggestions (Fullerton)

Some alumni offered additional ideas for improving the Fullerton College experience, often related to offering more students resources and better preparing them for whatever comes next.

"More evening and weekend classes."

"Host more events / workshops for students. I found these very helpful while at CSU, but never heard / knew of CCs having these. (i.e., how to get involved, career panels, internship fairs, etc.)."

"Parking is probably still too expensive :)."

"Create more online classes to accommodate students who can't go in person."

"Help students in need. Everything is so expensive Education should be free for all who want to become a better human."

"Transfers need more attention and preparation because once they get to university, they are not well prepared for the rigor. They are academically prepared, but no warnings are given regarding other aspects of life at a university, therefore the transition is very difficult."

"I absolutely love community colleges. It was a wonderful formative experience that prepared me for a UC."

"I truly enjoyed my experience at community college more than my 4-year university."

General Thoughts/Suggestions (Saddleback)

Some alumni offered additional ideas for improving the Saddleback College experience, often related to offering more students resources and better preparing them to excel during their program.

"Advising could use some work."

"Mandatory counseling for first time students, I didn't see my counselor until my second year. Didn't realize how important seeing one would be for me to help me complete the correct classes."

"Allow for us to retake some classes that we took long ago, as a refresher."

"Saddleback College should consider offering an ADN to BSN :)."

"Helping students gain hours of teaching practice."

"Thanks for getting me on the path to a career I love!"

"Would like to see more mentoring help. Even if it is just someone to help teach better study habits. E.g. note cards, etc."

"Alumni networks are great if you had one, I would join."

General Thoughts/Suggestions (Cypress)

Some alumni offered additional ideas for improving the Cypress College experience, often related to offering more students resources and better preparing them for whatever comes next.

"Have as many field-related resources (tools, software, etc.) available to students."

"Cypress was a new community college when I attended and this was also a unique experience as we new students were creating a pathway for following students."

"More evening and weekend classes."

"More counselors to help with class choices."

"For art students, a class on portfolio preparation would be nice as well as how to write a CV."

"I highly encourage others who are in financial situations similar to mine or are undecided/unsure of future endeavors to start off at a community college then transition to a 4 year."

"Zoom classes have been very convenient and I hope they continue."

"I need the Visa card thank you ☺."

General Thoughts/Suggestions (Coastline)

Alumni offered very few ideas for improving the programs at Coastline College and were genuinely appreciative of their experience there.

"Get Future Built! With Coastline and Orange County Community Colleges...I did!"

"Great college. Wish Coastline was a university so I can keep attending."

"Free parking."

"For RN programs, grades should not be the main consideration in choosing student applicants."

"The quality of classes from CCC was better then the classes I am taking for my BS. Thanks!"

"Thank you Coastline College for my success."

Alumni Activities/Areas of Interest

Nearly two-thirds of alumni are interested in some type of future participation with their alma mater. Of the options presented, mentoring current students, joining a college alumni association or sharing their personal story for a college newsletter or marketing materials are most popular.

Interest in possible Orange County Community College activities or events in the future
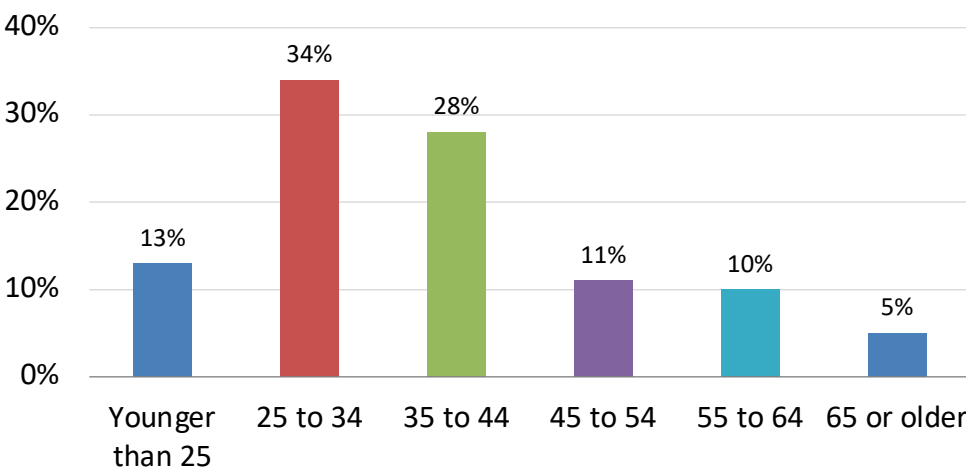

Activity	%
Mentor or advise current students	28%
Join a college alumni association	20%
Share "your story" for a college...	19%
Speak at a college (either in-...	17%
Attend alumni social, networking...	16%
Attend an athletic or...	16%
Represent your industry on a...	14%
Subscribe to a college electronic...	14%
Offer internships or ...	7%
Donate to a college scholarship...	7%
Donate equipment or resources	7%
Establish a scholarship for students	5%
I have no interest in any of these...	39%

Multiple responses allowed, does not add to 100%.

GRADUATE COMMUNICATIONS

Sample Characteristics

Age & Ethnicity

Age composition

Age	%
Younger than 25	13%
25 to 34	34%
35 to 44	28%
45 to 54	11%
55 to 64	10%
65 or older	5%

Ethnicity composition

Ethnicity	%
Non-Hispanic White/Anglo	42%
Hispanic	34%
Asian/Pacific Islander	12%
Multiple races (two or more...	9%
Black	2%
Indigenous/Native American	1%
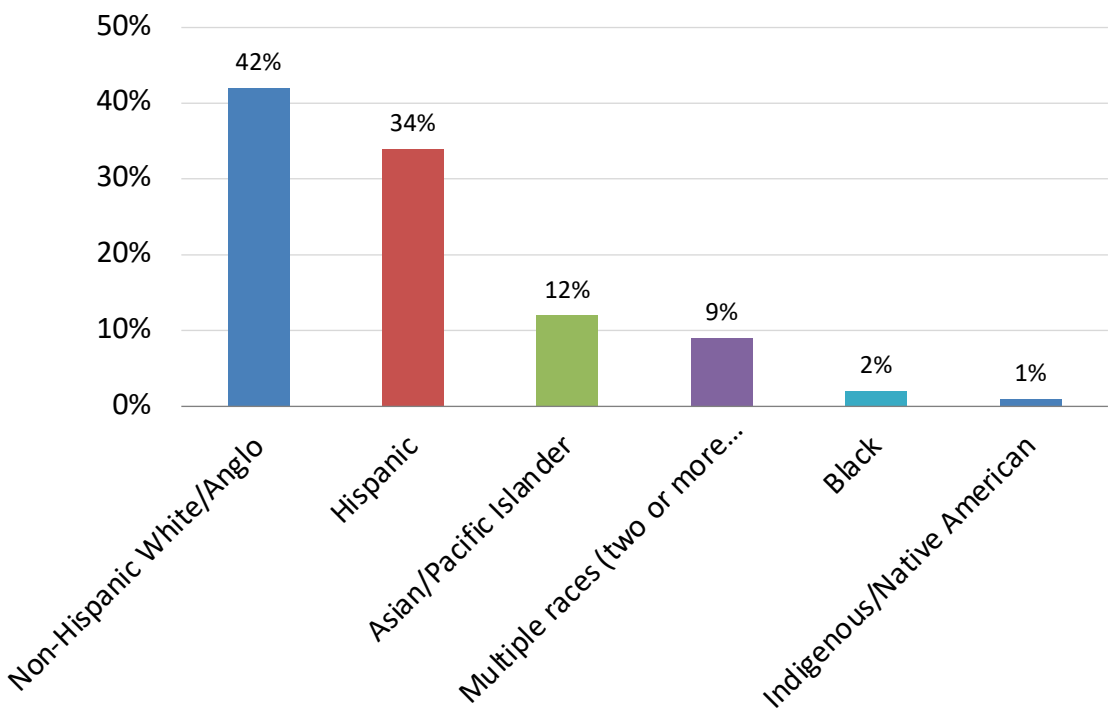
Education & Scholastic History

Highest level of education

Attended high school, but didn't graduate	0%
Graduated high school	5%
Associate degree	35%
Bachelor's degree	43%
Advanced degree (Master's, Ph.D., or Ed.D.)	17%
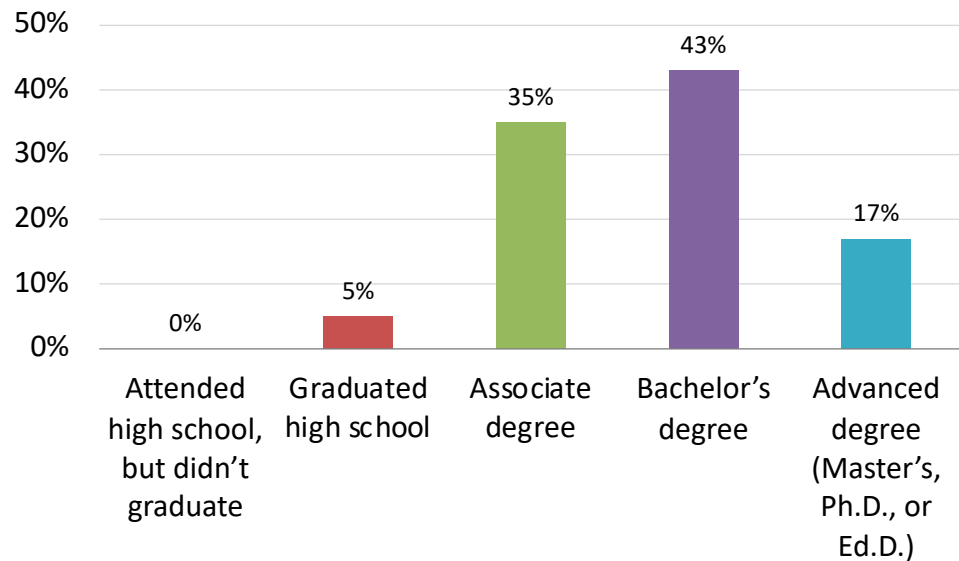
First in family to take college-level classes

Yes	34%
No	66%

Implications & Opportunities

GRADUATE
COMMUNICATIONS
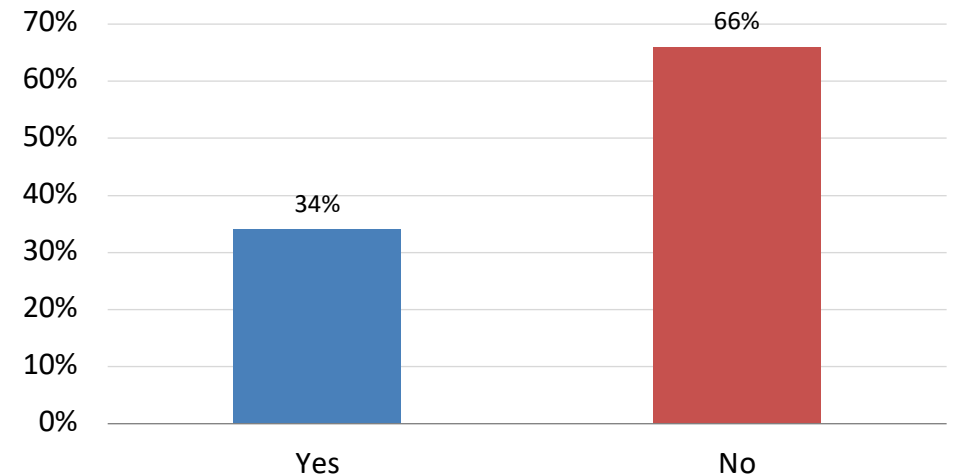
Implications & Opportunities

Alumni study participants are overwhelming pleased with and grateful for their Orange County Community College academic experience.

- These alumni indicate high satisfaction with their past program(s) across all participating colleges.
- In general, their Orange County Community College education played a meaningful role in subsequent career/academic decisions with many alumni now working or studying in a related area.
- Verbatim comments describe the overall quality and accessibility of their program (both logistically and financially), as well as genuine appreciation for the valuable role it has played in their lives.

Nevertheless, alumni offer valuable firsthand feedback and ideas for how Orange County Community Colleges can continue to enhance the student experience, such as:

- Improve course availability, provide greater scheduling flexibility and offer both in-person and remote instruction options when possible.
- Upgrade the overall quality and consistency of instructors, guidance counselors and college staff.
- Ensure that course topics and materials are fully up-to-date and relevant, and expand value-added student learning opportunities (i.e., mentoring, workshops, etc.).
- Maintain reasonable course fees, reduce parking costs/headaches and offer additional financial aid.

Implications & Opportunities

College alumni represent a valuable, currently untapped resource to advocate for and contribute to the value of an Orange County Community College education.

- There is strong interest in actual "hands-on" involvement with their college such mentoring or speaking to current students, joining an alumni association, or having "their story" featured.

- Others seem more interested in reconnecting with fellow alumni or their school more generally through on-campus activities and networking events, as well as receiving electronic newsletters.

- Regardless of their specific areas of interest, willing study participants should receive personalized and timely follow-up to take advantage of their expressed enthusiasm.