

Faculty Senate Task Force on University Status

Survey of Alumni – April 2013

ALUMNI SURVEY: Summary of Findings

The Faculty Senate Task Force on University Status asked the Office of Alumni Relations to distribute an internet survey about the possibility of the college transitioning to university status. Alumni Relations circulated the survey during the last week in March and received 660 responses. Nearly all respondents (96.8 per cent) had received a Bachelor's degree from Stockton; an additional 6 per cent had a Master's degree, and .8 per cent had a Doctoral degree (in Physical Therapy). The division between matriculated and transfer students was nearly even; 53 per cent of survey takers had completed their full degree at Stockton, and the remaining 47 per cent were transfer students.

The first half of the survey included questions on institutional reputation, student recruitment, future employability, and tuition. It asked for answers on a five- point Likert-type scale with 1 = very negative, 2 = somewhat negative, 3 = no difference, 4 = somewhat positive, and 5 = very positive. Respondents were also able to answer "don't know" to these questions. That response was coded as an "8," but was counted as a missing value when the modes, means and standard deviations were calculated.

Stockton's reputation

Alumni's reactions to a potential transition to university status were, like those of current students, quite favorable. Over 80 per cent thought such a decision would have a "very positive" (60.6 per cent) or "somewhat positive" impact (23.4 per cent) on Stockton's overall reputation, as well as on the value of a degree from the institution. An additional 11.2 per cent thought there would be no impact, while only 3.8 per cent thought the results would be either "somewhat negative" or "very negative."

Reactions were slightly more mixed on the question of student employability after graduation, but remained predominantly optimistic. Over 70 per cent thought the impact on student employment prospects would be "very positive" (45.2 per cent) or "somewhat positive" (27.5 per cent). An additional 22.3 per cent thought the value of a Stockton degree would remain unchanged, while 3.1 per cent believed perception might be "somewhat negatively" or "very negatively" affected. A final 2 per cent were uncertain.

Student recruitment

Alumni were also asked their thoughts on student recruitment at the undergraduate, graduate and international student levels. These responses were likewise quite high; 85 per cent believed that a transition to university status would enhance Stockton's ability to attract qualified undergraduate students (60.6 were "very positive," and 24.4 per cent were "somewhat positive"). Perceptions about graduate student recruitment were higher still (65.1 per cent were "very positive" while 24.2 per cent were "somewhat positive"). While responses about international student recruitment were slightly lower, they remained robust; 50.1 per cent were "very positive" and 27.5 per cent were "somewhat positive." There was a slightly higher rate of respondents who were unsure about the impact on international student recruitment (5.1 per cent, more than double that for undergraduate or graduate student recruitment).

The college's mission

When asked if a transition to university status was consistent with the college's commitment to liberal arts and general studies, the majority of alumni believed that such a decision would have a positive

impact on these ideals (36.9 per cent were “very positive” and 18.6 per cent were “somewhat positive”). An additional 27.8 per cent thought that becoming a comprehensive university would have no impact on Stockton’s current pedagogical commitments. There was, however, more uncertainty in this question than about reputation or recruitment; 9.2 per cent thought such a move would “somewhat negatively” affect Stockton’s commitment to liberal arts and general studies, while another 4.3 per cent thought it would “very negatively” impact these aspects of the institution.

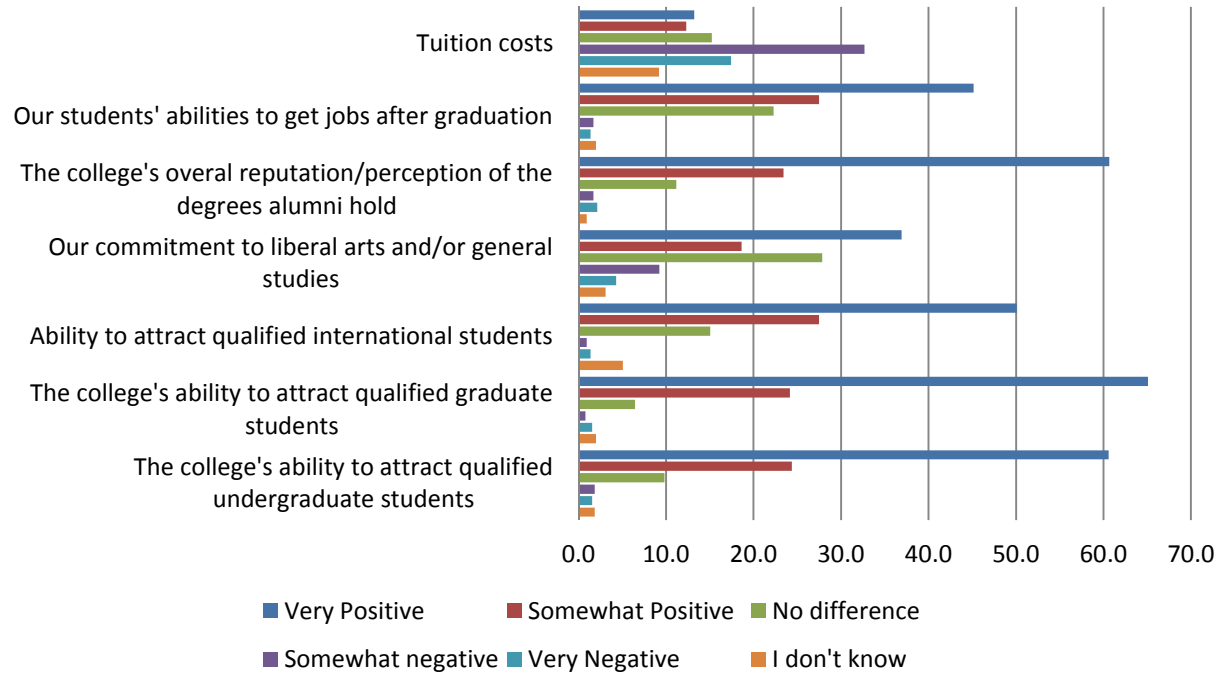
Tuition

Alumni were concerned that a change from college to comprehensive university status might negatively impact tuition costs. Less than half, 40.2 per cent, believed tuition rates would be positively affected or remain unchanged. Just over half, 50.1 per cent, thought tuition would be “somewhat negatively” or “very negatively” affected, while 9.2 per cent remained unsure. This was a concern in the Student Survey as well; if discussion about this transition continues into the 2013/14 academic year, impact on tuition should be directly addressed.

Overall support

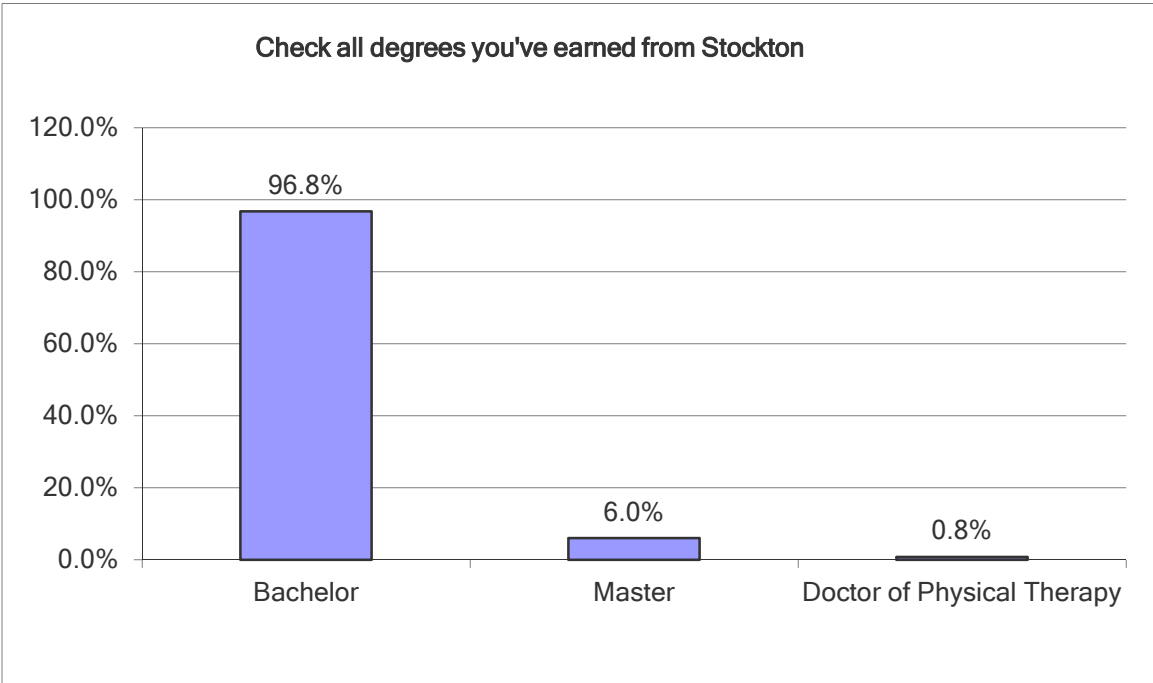
Alumni were asked to rate their opinion about transitioning to a university status on a 1 = completely against it to a 10 = completely for it scale. The mean response was a 7.99, with a mode of 10. But while this question appears to indicate support, another question certainly indicates significant institutional loyalty or nostalgia. When alumni were asked whether they would request a new diploma in the event of a name change, 39.4 per cent indicated they would keep the degree they already possess, 36.7 per cent would order a new diploma (at minimal cost) and 36 per cent indicated they would order a new diploma if there was no associated cost.

Alumni Perceptions

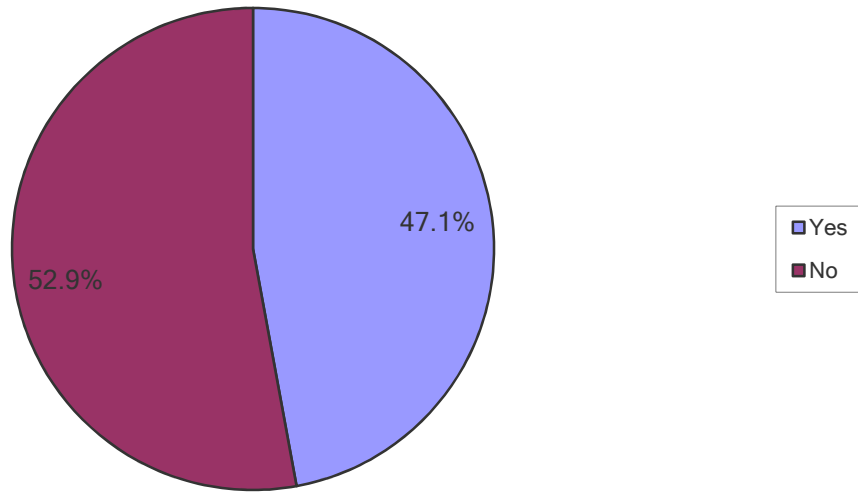


Alumni perceptions - percentages

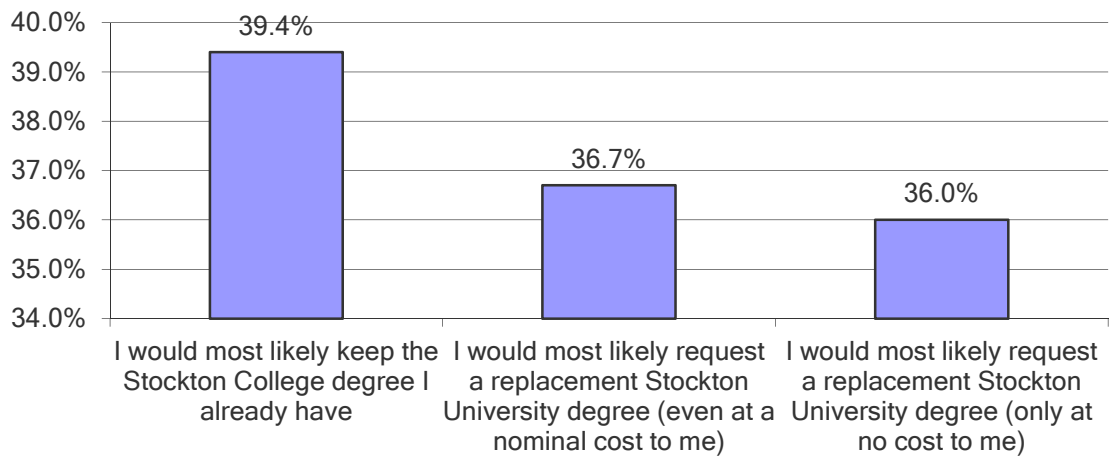
	Very Positive	Somewhat Positive	No difference	Somewhat negative	Very Negative	I don't know
The college's ability to attract qualified undergraduate students	60.6	24.4	9.8	1.8	1.5	1.8
The college's ability to attract qualified graduate students	65.1	24.2	6.5	0.8	1.5	2.0
Ability to attract qualified international students	50.1	27.5	15.1	0.9	1.4	5.1
Our commitment to liberal arts and/or general studies	36.9	18.6	27.8	9.2	4.3	3.1
The college's overall reputation/perception of the degrees alumni hold	60.6	23.4	11.2	1.7	2.1	0.9
Our students' abilities to get jobs after graduation	45.2	27.5	22.3	1.7	1.4	2.0
Tuition costs	13.2	12.3	15.2	32.7	17.4	9.2



Were you a transfer student?



If the College were to pursue University status over the next two years, please indicate your most likely response(s) regarding your diploma if our status change is granted:



On a scale of 1 (completely against it) to 10 (completely for it), what is your opinion about transitioning to university status?

Mode	Mean	SD
10	7.99	2.69