Riverside City College Guided Pathways – What do the students think? Spring 2020 Update

Survey Administration

Riverside City College asked students to complete a survey designed to provide the college information about what students know about Guided Pathways as well as to identify teaching and learning strategies for improving the overall success of students. Over five hundred students completed the survey in December 2019. The survey was administered via a SurveyMonkey link and was introduced with a short video about Guided Pathways and the purpose of the RCC college redesign.

The questions administered on the survey were provided by RCC faculty during Fall 2019 Flex. The questions were developed to help RCC faculty and staff better understand why students are attending RCC including what is working and what practices could be improved to aid in their success.

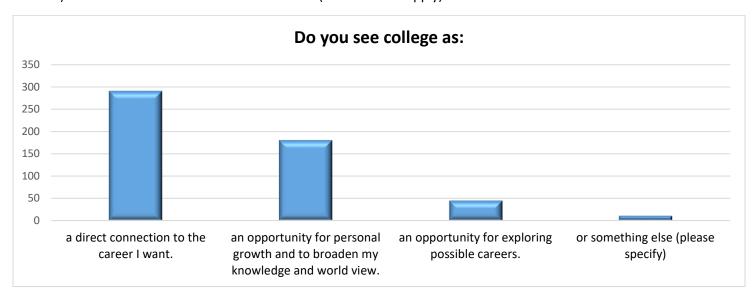
Why are you here?

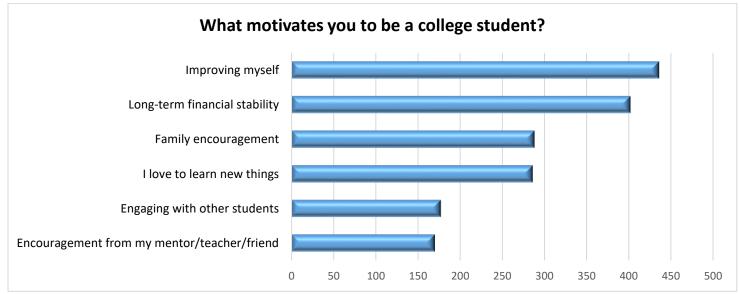
The first survey question asked students to provide their Dream Career. The graphic below shows the wide variety of responses. While community colleges are often seen as primarily general education institutions, the college plays an important role in helping students reach these dream careers.



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Along with telling us their dream careers, students were asked what they see college as (only one response allowed) and what motivates them to be a student (select all that apply).





While the responses to the first question seem to clearly show that students are motivated by career goals, the responses to the second question show that students value learning. They do not see college as merely a transactional exercise.

What lessons have you learned?

The survey also asked students about lessons learned and motivation. The response to the question "What student skill have you learned that has impacted your success the most?" was overwhelming time management. As the college continues to improve integrated academic support, helping students improve their time management ability can continue to be a focus of engagement centers, workshops, and other co-curricular learning opportunities.

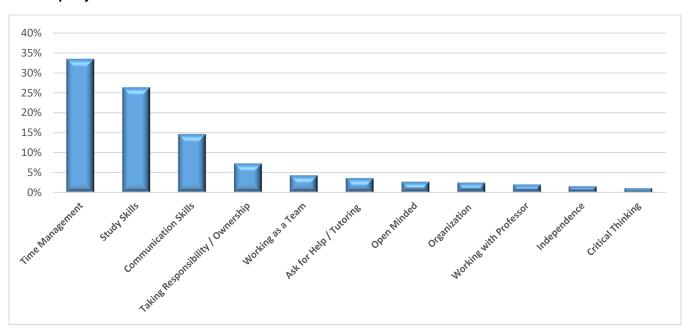
Students were also asked how professors make them feel valued, welcome and confident and how professors best connect and engagement them. For the responses to the first question, many students mentioned that the professors knowing their name and acknowledging them during class had an impact. Encouraging students was also a theme of these responses. The responses for how best to engage students were similar – acknowledging students was a theme. Many responses centered around faculty being passionate about teaching, enjoying the classroom experience, and being excited about the subjects also had a positive impact on engaging students.

Voice of the Student

In addition to multiple choice questions, students were given the ability to responded to several open-ended prompts. The students' responses to these questions give RCC additional insight.

The first one-ended question was "What student skill have you learned that has impacted your success the most? How did your learn this skill?" Students' responses are below. The typical college-going skills of time management, study skills, and communication skills represented 75% of the students' responses.

Most Impactful Skills

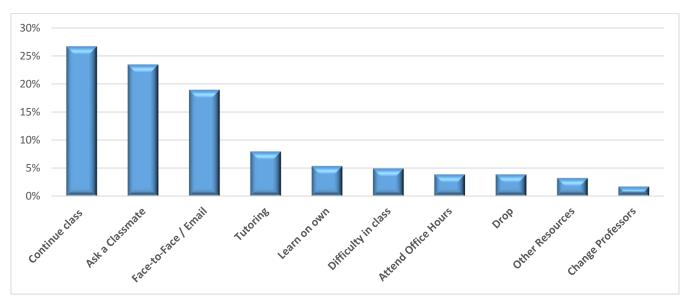


Responses to the second, companion question, "Are there any particular skills that you wish you would have learned? Or still want to learn?" showed very close alignment with the first question – study skills, time management, and communication were three of the four responses.

The next few open-ended questions asked students about student / professor interaction. For the Fall 2019 Guided Pathways survey question, "What do you do when you don't connect with a professor?" many students (27%) replied that they just continued going to class. While these replies might have been catagorized or summaried slighly differently, the response reflects the fact that students are willing to continue in a class even if they don't feel a personnal connection and don't necessarily try to do anything about it. The good news is that

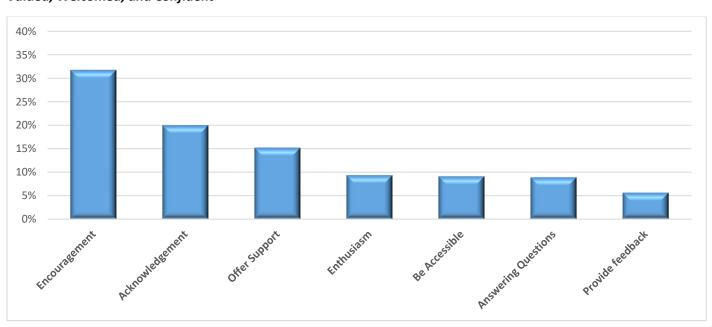
there are a combinatino of other responses which show that students do try to reach out to faculty in a variety of ways via email, office hours, or talking directly with the students.

Connect with Professor



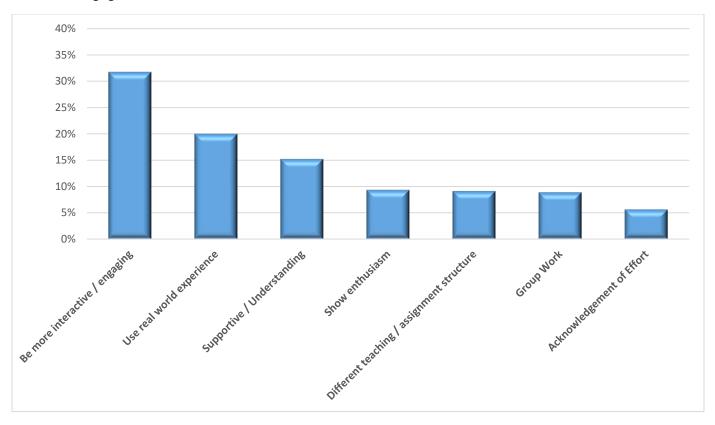
In addition to being asked about their actions to try to connect with a professor, students were asked questions about how a professor makes them feel and engages them in the classroom. One person who worked extensively with the individual student responses remarked that students' replies to these questions can be summed up by the response, "be human." But more specifically, students were asked three questions including "How can teachers make you feel valued, welcomed and confident?"

Valued, Welcomed, and Confident



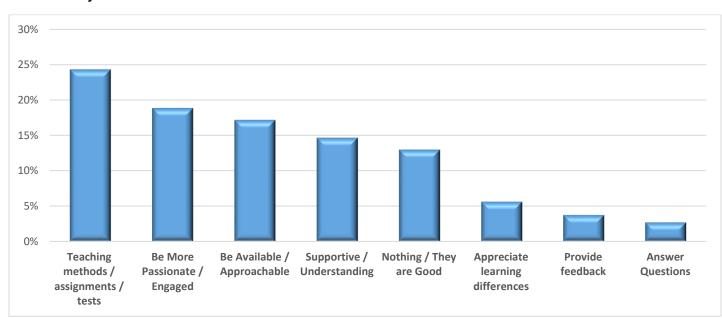
"What can instructors do to keep you excited about college and engaged in the classroom?"

Classroom Engagement



"What advice would you give your teachers? Where can they improve the most?"

Advice to Professors

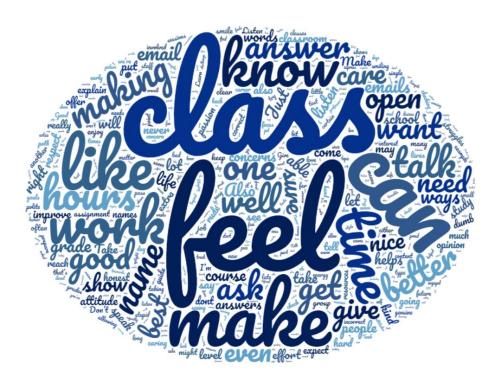


All of these responses align with best teaching practices and Guided Pathways Pillar 4 – Ensuring Learning. Students respond better to faculty who are passionate, engaged, and value students. As RCC continues to focus on Guided Pathways, faculty development efforts continue to help faculty share ways that they can successfully engage students making the learning environment more enjoyable for both students and faculty but also increases student success.

Final Thoughts

In late March and early April 2020, RCCD administered a survey asking students about their experiences transitioning to a fully online environment and what the college could do to continue supporting their success. As with the responses to the Fall 2019 Guided Pathways survey, "be human" seemed to come through loud and clear. As RCC continues to adapt to the changing times, the important work of intentionally sharing best practices, strategies, and working to Ensure Learning with each student is going to become even more important.

Finally, in the Fall 2019 Guided Pathways survey, students were asked if there was "Anything Else" they wanted us to know. The word cloud below shares some of this feedback.



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Many of these responses were very positive – "RCC is great!" Many also offered suggestions. The word cloud shows that while learning is academic, the most frequent word in this opened ended responses was FEEL.