



Community Needs Survey
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Consultants

Andrew Mellman Background Statement

- Educational background
 - JD, Loyola University School of Law, Chicago IL. Member, Illinois Bar.
 - MBA, University of Chicago. Statistics, Marketing.
 - AB *cum laude*, Harvard College. Statistics.

- Experience
 - Managing Director, Scientific Verdicts. 13 years.
 - Group Director Market Research, Brown & Williamson. 35 person staff with \$14M research budget.
 - Director, New Products & Corporate Planning, Scholl Division of Schering-Plough.

- Teaching/writing related to statistical procedures and research methodologies
 - University of Chicago School of Business
 - DePaul University School of Commerce
 - British American Tobacco, seminars world-wide
 - Legal journals in US and Canada

Sigmund Saltz Background Statement



- Educational background
 - BA, Marketing, Southern Illinois University – Carbondale
 - Wright City College – Chicago, 2 years

- Experience
 - President, Comiskey Research Inc. 18 years.
 - Senior marketing positions at:
 - Booth Seafood Corporation
 - Land-O-Frost
 - Swift-Armour-Eckrich

- Teaching/professional activities
 - Southern Illinois University/Carbondale – Marketing Department Advisory Board
 - Oakton Community College – Marketing Research Adjunct Faculty
 - Columbia College – Chicago – Marketing Research Lecturer
 - Past president, Chicago chapter of Marketing Research Association

Research Clients Include:

- Anheuser-Busch
- Arby's
- Ashland University
- Baxter Healthcare
- Bridgestone/Firestone
- Brown & Williamson
- Brown-Forman
- City Colleges of Chicago
- College of DuPage
- College of Lake County
- Columbia/HCA
- Elgin Community College
- FMC Corporation
- GE (Appliance, Finance, Lighting Divisions)
- Frost Brown Todd
- General Motors (Cadillac Division)
- Harper College
- Ingersoll-Rand
- Kraft/General Foods
- Kimberly-Clark
- McDonald's
- McHenry County College
- Moraine Valley College
- Motorola
- Neal Gerber & Eisenberg
- Oakton Community College
- Quaker Oats
- Renault/Mack Truck
- Sanwa/Overhead Door
- Schering-Plough
- Schiff Hardin & Waite
- Seagate Technology
- Student Loan Association
- Swift & Company
- S. C. Johnson
- Waubensee Community College
- Welsh and Katz
- Wm. Wrigley Company

Objectives & Methodology

Objectives



- The interrelated objectives in performing this research were to utilize the research form and format found successful in prior Community Needs studies to
 - Determine the current awareness, attitudes, and needs of district taxpayers and other significant Harper communities; while
 - Concurrently receiving feedback on strategic planning goals.

Methodology



- A quantitative study was conducted at the end of the Spring Semester among 534 respondents composed of
 - 250 district residents;
 - 50 parents of high school students within the Harper district;
 - 50 high school juniors;
 - 109 current students; and
 - 75 recent alumni (50 transfer and 25 career).

Findings



- Awareness
- Attribute Ratings by Group, Most to Least Important
- Attributes Related to Expanded Offerings (Weekends, Fridays)
- Strategic Partnerships and Programs

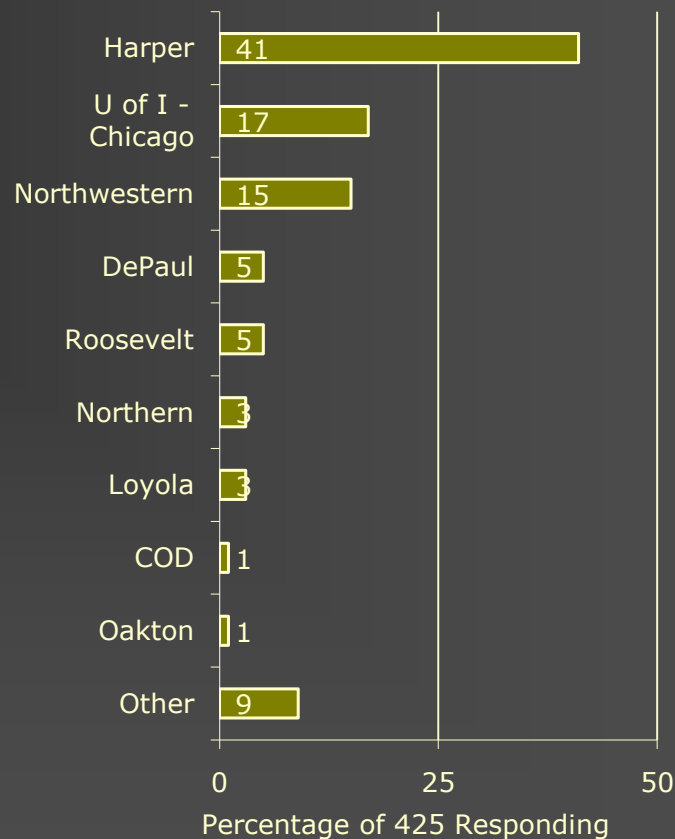
Awareness



Unaided Awareness – First Mention

- Overall (including all unaided mentions) Harper was the most frequently mentioned area college, community college, or university.
- A total of 34 schools were mentioned; those mentioned by five or more respondents are included in the chart.

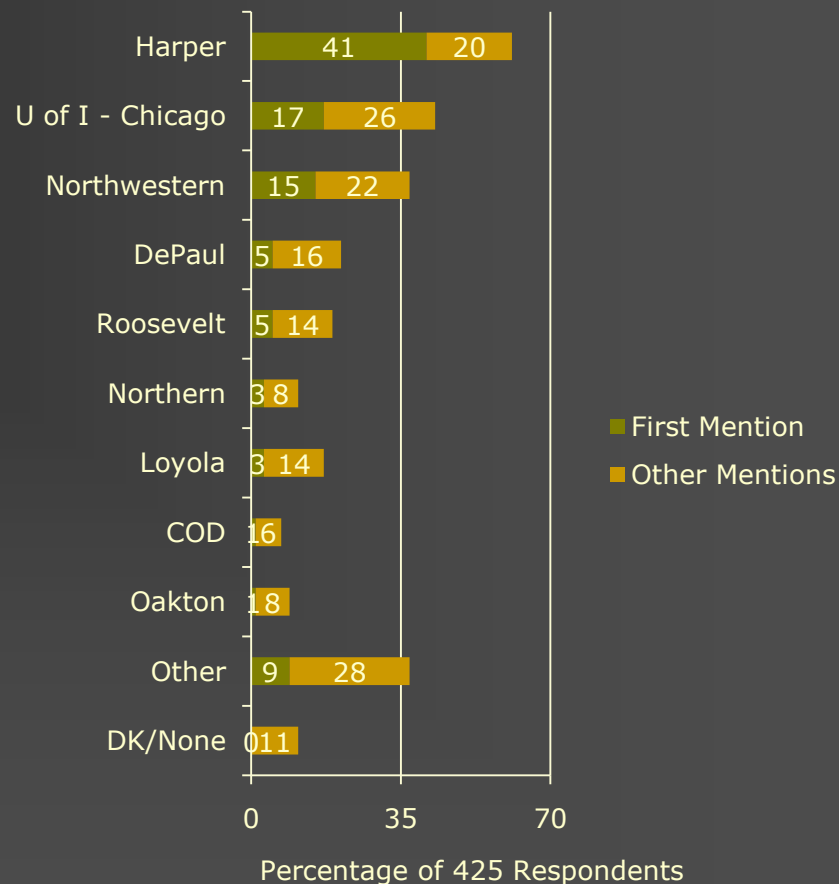
Q1: When you think of colleges & universities in your area, what comes to mind?



Unaided Awareness – Total Mentions

- Harper remained the most frequently recalled area college or University
- A total of 49 schools were mentioned. Only schools listed were mentioned by more than 4% of respondents.

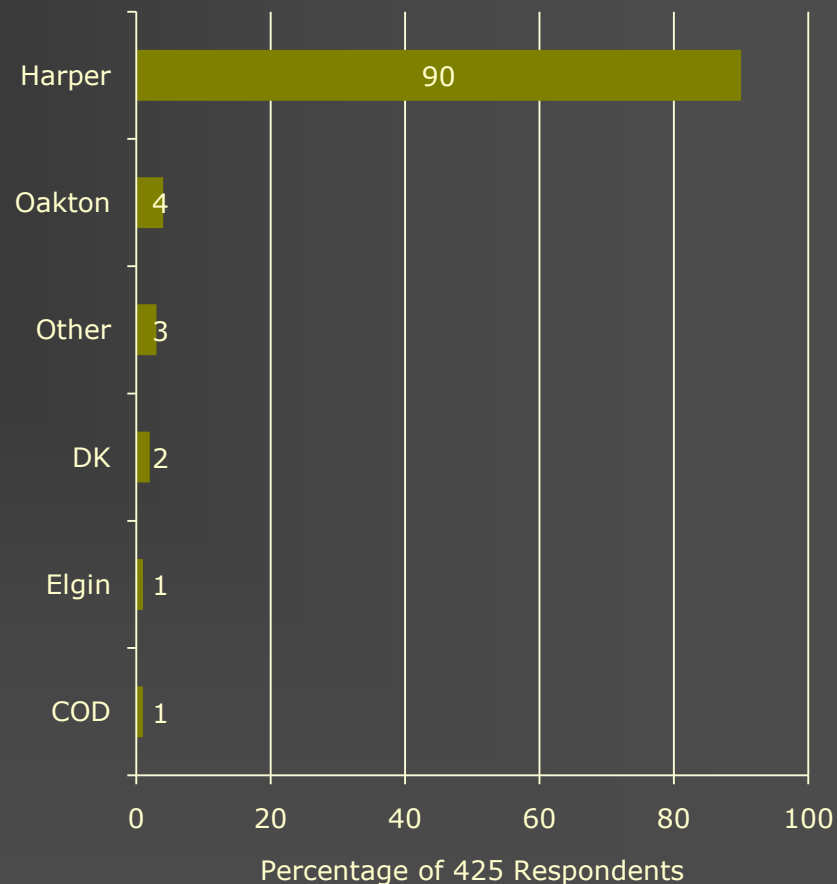
Q1: When you think of colleges & universities in your area, what comes to mind?



What Is Your Community College?

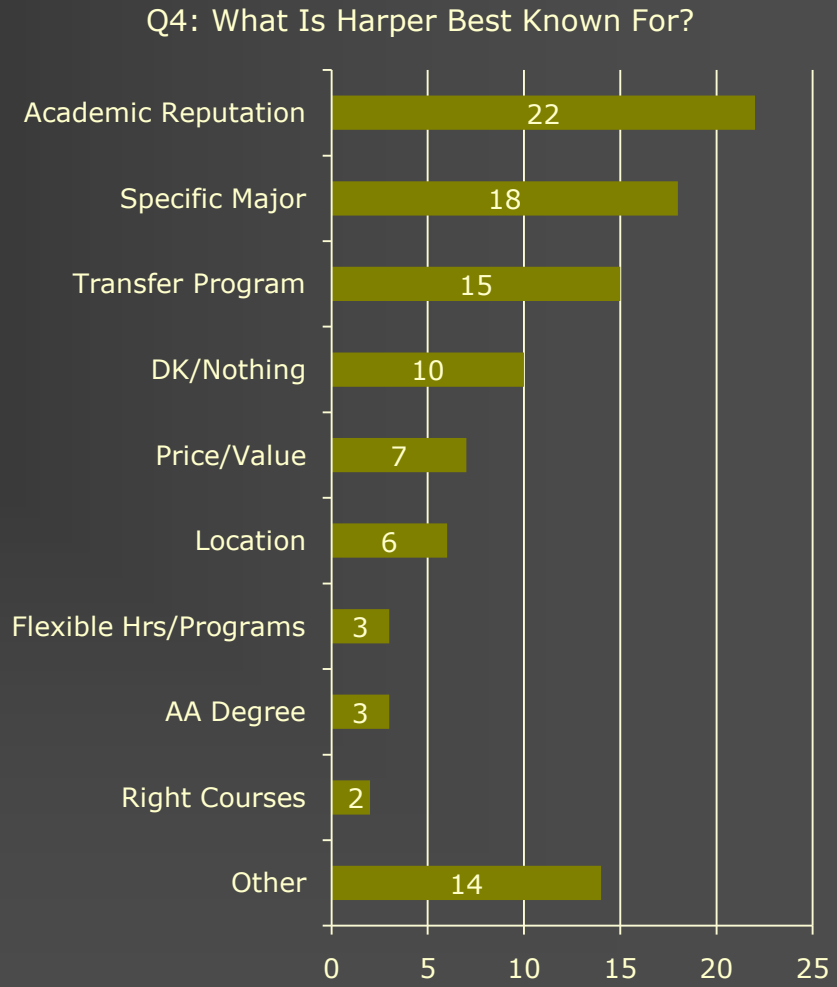
- Nine of ten respondents knew that Harper was their local community college.
- Note that for those district residents living in their home for fewer than five years,
 - This number drops in half (to 44%),
 - With an equal percentage believing they live in the Oakton district and
 - With the remainder (one in ten) not knowing their local community college.

Q2: Which Community College serves your area?



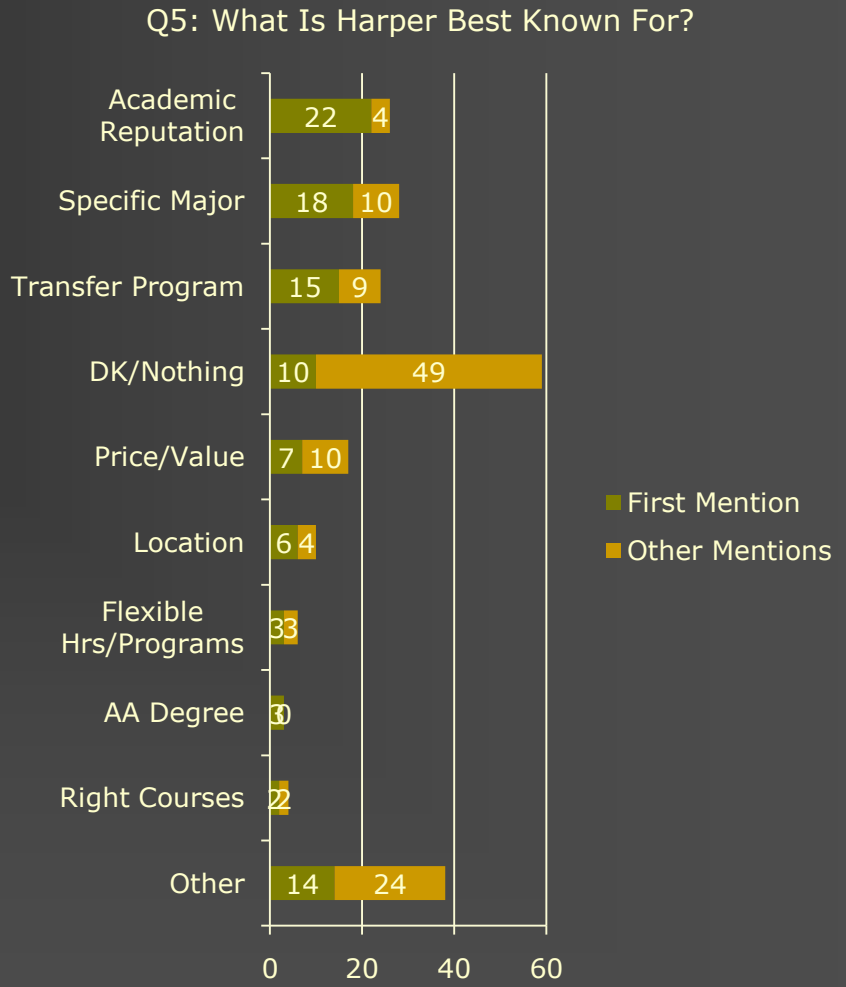
What Is Harper Best Known For? – First Response

- Harper has maintained its high academic reputation, as once more this is the most frequently mentioned attribute (by 22% of the respondents).
- Specific academic programs (academic majors and transfer programs) are mentioned more frequently than price or location, and more frequently than “nothing” (in past years as high as 1/3 of respondents in the first response).
- A total of 38 attributes were mentioned. All those mentioned by more than 10 respondents are included in the chart.



What Is Harper Best Known For? – All Responses

- When additional attributes are probed, almost half cannot think of anything else.
 - This is similar to what has been seen in prior years.
- Academic responses (academic reputation, majors, and transfer programs) still are mentioned more frequently than price or location.
- A total of 33 attributes were mentioned in this probe for additional attributes.



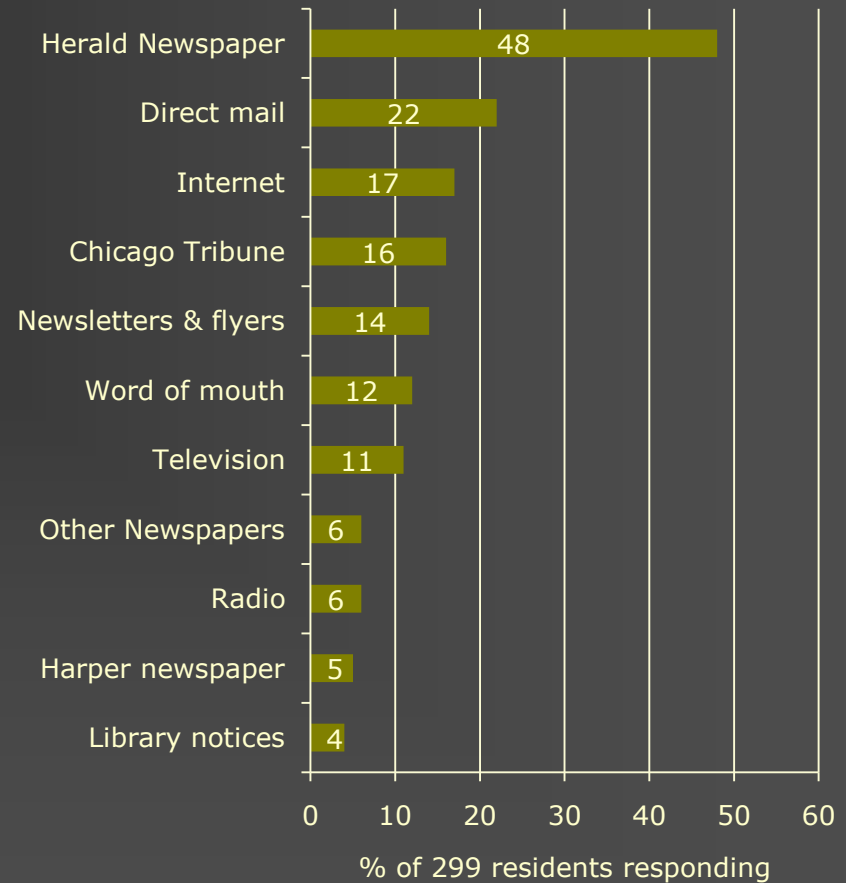
Visited the Campus

- 87% of respondents have visited the campus. This breaks down to
 - 87% of district residents
 - 90% of parents of high school juniors
 - 68% of high school juniors
- Harper must use every opportunity to promote the school! If such promoting were accomplishing its mission, we would not see 90% of parents visiting, yet an average of half of parents responding “don’t know” when asked about Harper performance in various areas (see following section).
- Those district residents with a high school degree or less were significantly less likely to have visited the campus (69% visited, versus 96% with at least some college through graduate degrees).

How Get Information – Local Events

- Twenty sources of information were given; those mentioned by more than ten people are included in the chart.
- High school students were more likely to mention direct mail, word of mouth from family members, and notices at libraries and community locations than residents.

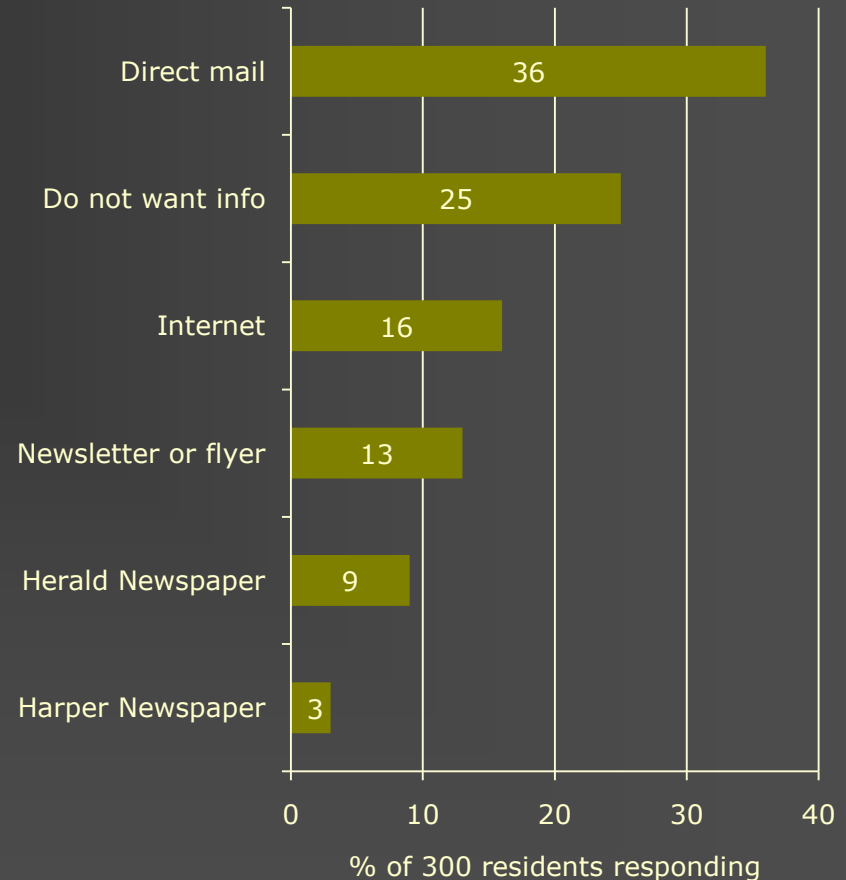
Q21: Where do you get your information about local events?



How Like to Get Information – Harper

- Nineteen sources of information were given; those mentioned by ten people or more are included in the chart.
- There were no meaningful or significant differences between residents and other groups.
- As we know that the majority of residents have visited the campus, Harper should undertake additional educational and promotional activities when parents might be present.

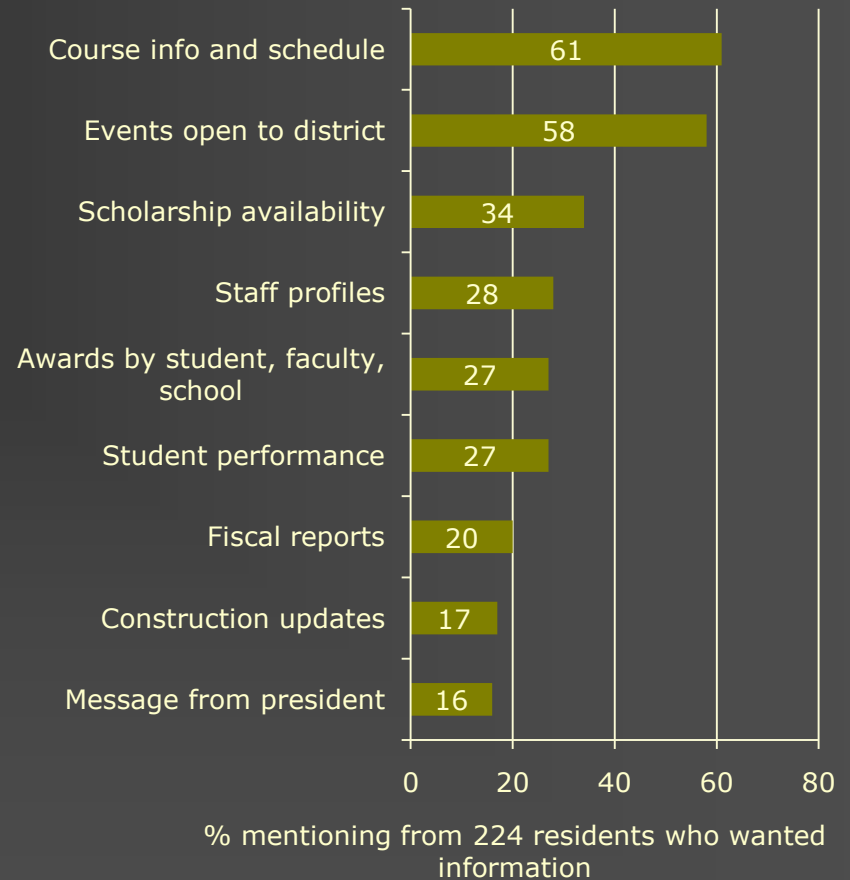
Q22: How would you like to receive information about Harper College?



If Want Information about Harper, What Type?

- District residents primarily want the standard, the course information and catalogue, and a schedule of events open to the community.

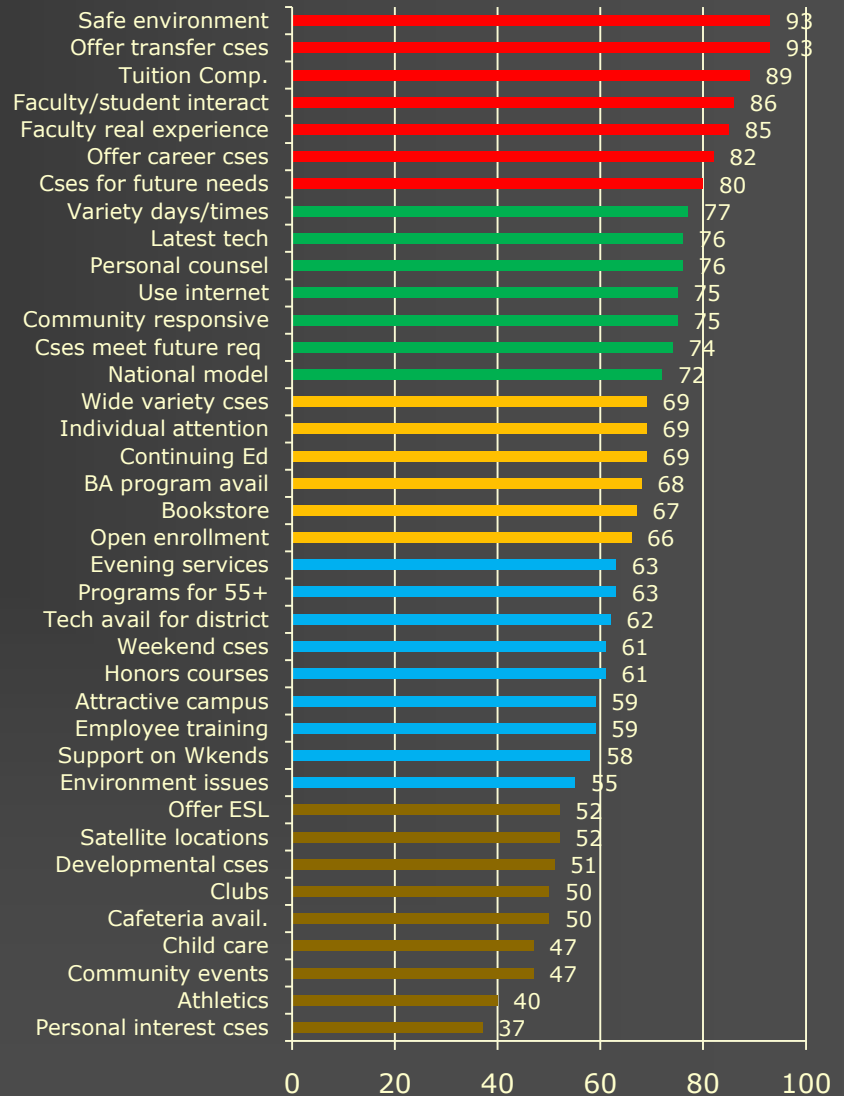
Q24: What type of information would you like to receive?



Attribute Ratings

How Important Is It for Harper to Offer

- The 38 attributes in the chart representing Q8 have been ordered by the top two box scores of 300 district residents (250 residents plus 50 parents).
 - Results would not have been significantly different if the entire sample had been used
- Attributes have been divided into five groups:
 - Most important (red)
 - Important (green)
 - Middle (orange)
 - Less important (blue)
 - Least important (dark yellow)
- Note that this division is based on data breaks rather than statistical segmentation.



Most Important Group

- The **most important** group contains 7 attributes:
 - Provide a safe environment for students & community members (93% top two box)
 - Offer courses and Associate Degrees which transfer directly to 4-year schools (93)
 - Maintain tuition at competitive levels (89)
 - Have a faculty that interacts directly with students (86)
 - Utilize faculty with real-world experience (85)
 - Offer career technical programs designed to meet current and future community needs (82)
 - Examine and designs courses for future needs in the rapidly changing economy (80)

Important Group

- The **important** group contains 7 attributes:
 - Courses available on a variety of days and times from Monday morning through Friday afternoon year-round (77% top-2-box rating).
 - Have the latest technology available for students (76%).
 - Demonstrate personal attention for counseling, advising, and financial aid assistance (76%).
 - Classes utilize the Internet for instruction or background materials where appropriate (75%).
 - Responsive to community needs (75%).
 - Offer courses to prepare graduates by meeting current and future requirements of local employers (74%)
 - Stands as a model for community colleges nationwide (72%).

Middle Group

- The **middle** group contains 7 attributes:
 - Have a wide variety of classes, programs, and opportunities for diverse populations (69% of respondents gave this a top-2-box rating).
 - Feature individualized student attention (69%).
 - Offer classes for professional development, such as leadership, communication skills, or continuing education (69%).
 - Offer one or more Bachelor degree programs on campus (68%).
 - Provide a comprehensive bookstore (67%).
 - Admit all residents who want to enroll (66%).

Less Important Group

- The **less important** group contains 9 attributes:
 - Offer student support services after 4:30 Monday through Thursday (63% of respondents gave this a top-2-box rating).
 - Offer programs for adults over the age of 55 (63%)
 - Offer residents access to technology and other campus resources (62%)
 - Offer courses on weekends (61%)
 - Offer honors level courses (61%)
 - Accomplishes all goals from an attractive campus environment (59%)
 - Offer employee training for local businesses (59%)
 - Offer student support services on Friday and Weekends (58%)
 - Take a leadership role in addressing environmental issues and concerns through courses and actions (55%)

Least Important Group

- The **least important** group contains 9 attributes:
 - Offer English as a Second Language (52% of respondents gave this a top-2-box rating).
 - Offer classes at community locations in addition to the main campus (52%)
 - Offer remedial reading, writing, and math classes at high school or lower than high school levels (51%)
 - Offer clubs and organizations for students (50%)
 - Provide cafeteria food service (50%)
 - Offer child-care for students with children (47%)
 - Offer activities and special events for the community (47%)
 - Provide athletic programs for students (40%)
 - Offer personal interest classes, such as cooking or similar classes (37%)

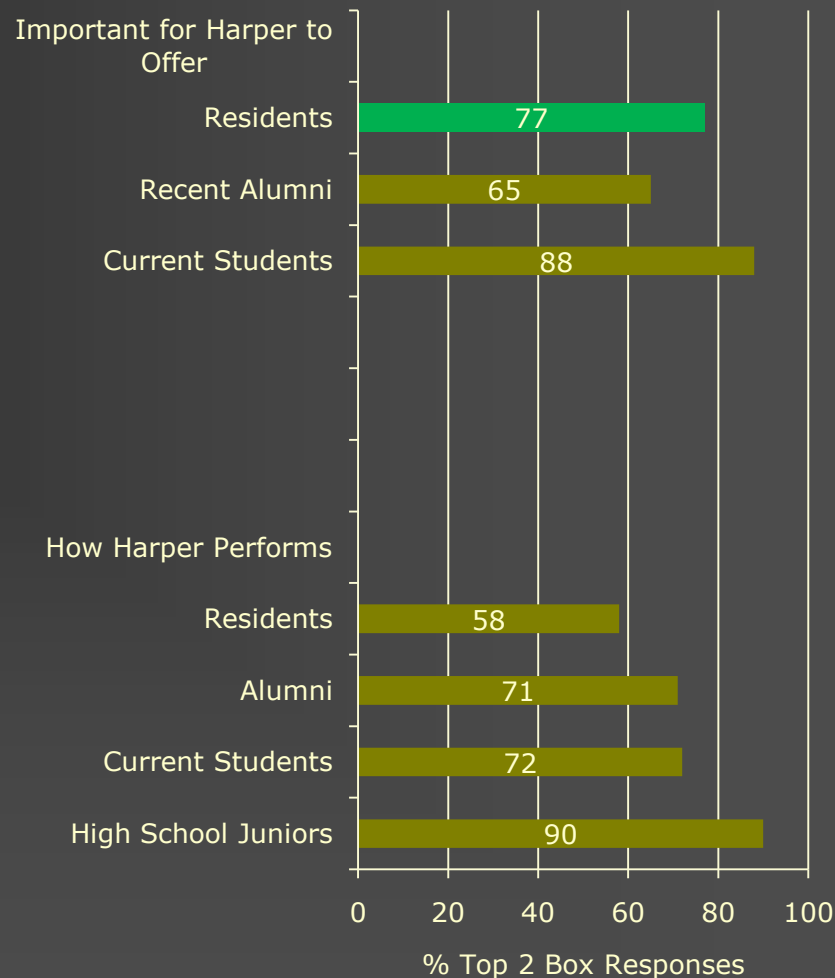
Note on Sample Sizes

- When asked how Harper performs in each area, the responses dropped, as about one-quarter of respondents – even when prompted and probed – refused to answer one or more questions due to lack of specific knowledge.
- This is not unusual, and has been seen in the past.
- In this case, however, those most likely to not answer were those making college decisions in a year.

Attributes Related to Expanded Offerings

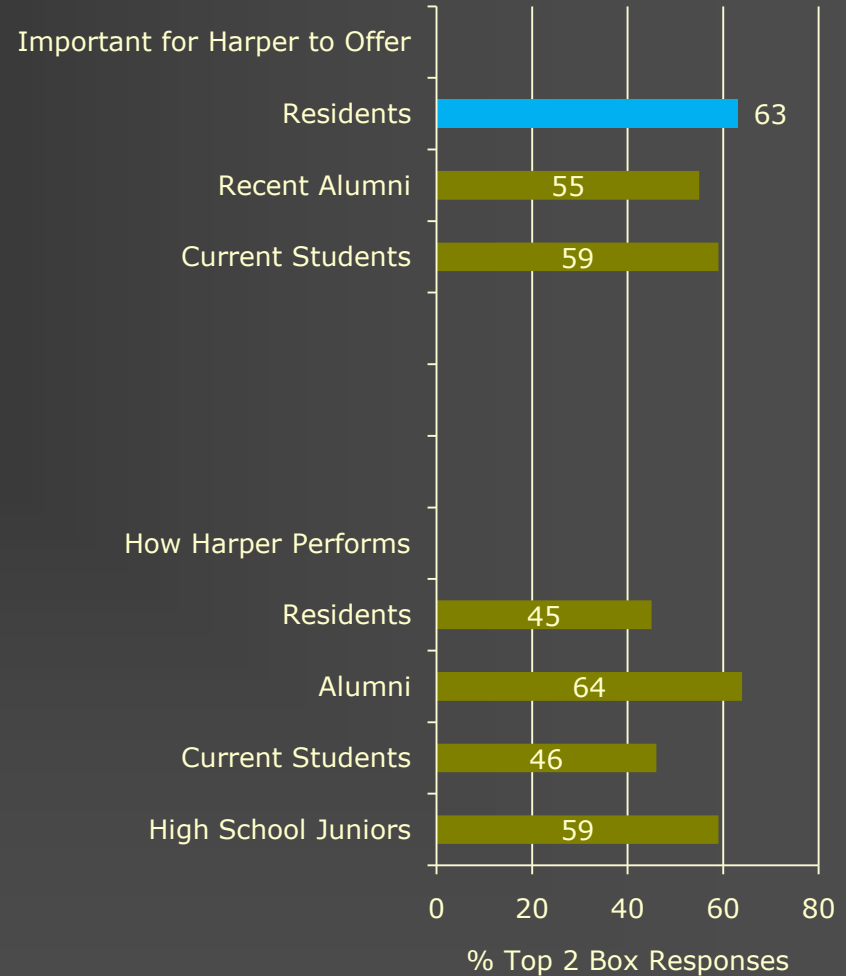
Courses on a Variety of Days and Times

- This is the first item in the “important” (or second) group of options.
- About three in four parents responded “don’t know” when asked about Harper’s performance for this attribute.
- While nearly half of high school students didn’t know about Harper performance, those who were aware gave Harper an extremely strong rating.
- Residents gave Harper the lowest performance ratings.



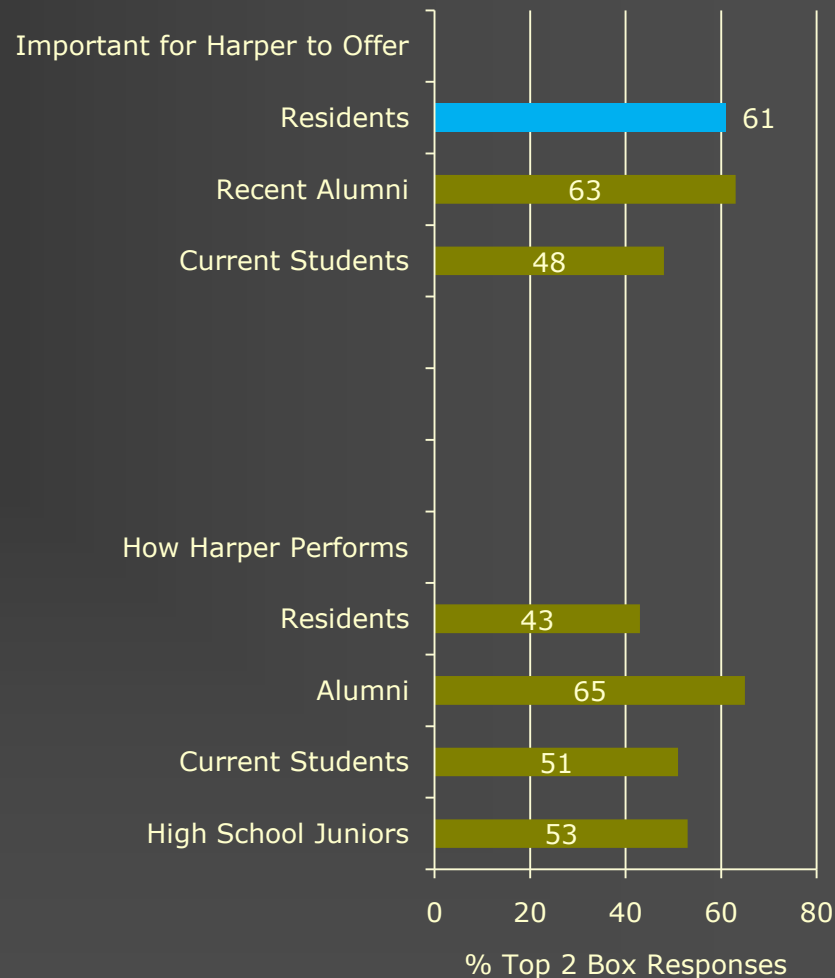
Evening Student Support Services

- This is the first item in the “less important” group of options.
- Parents (70%) and high school juniors (66%) most frequently responded “don’t know” to the question of Harper’s performance.
- Harper graduate studies have shown possible impediments making it difficult for Harper students to receive timely support services, which are reflected in the current student ratings (but not in the alumni ratings).



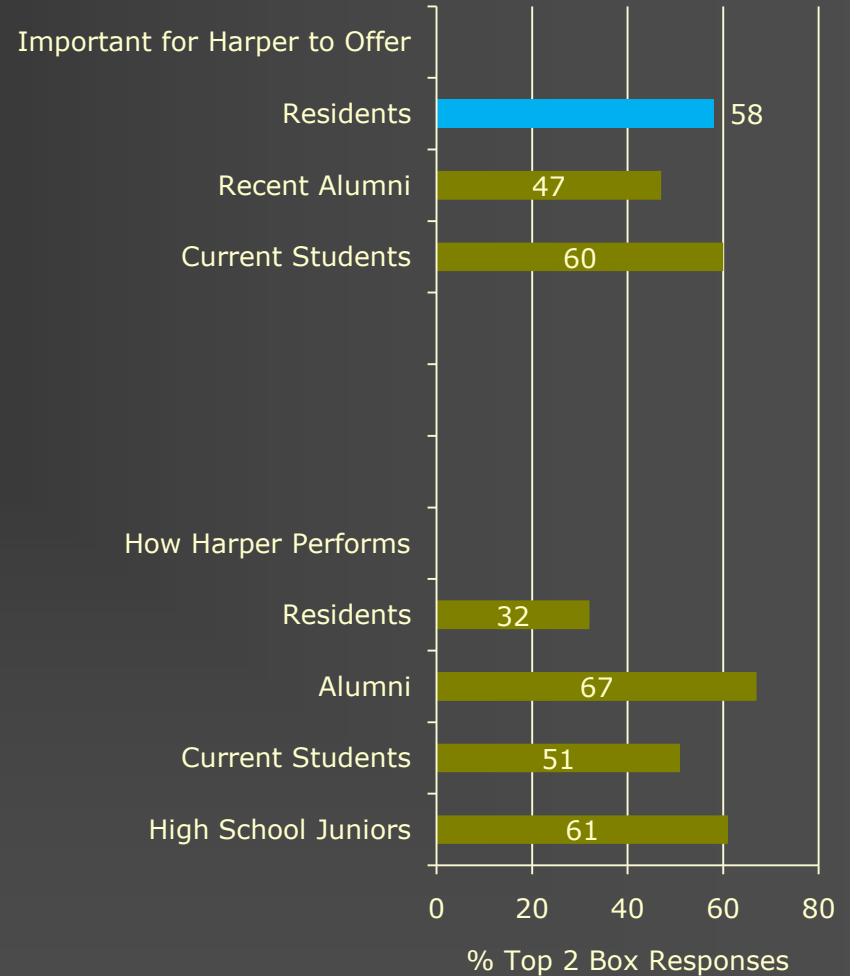
Offer Courses on Weekends

- 82% of parents and 52% of high school juniors responded “don’t know” regarding Harper performance in this area.



Student Support on Fridays and Weekends

- 86% of parents “don’t know” about Harper performance in offering weekend student support services.
- Current students continue to have somewhat lower opinions of Harper performance in this area.



Strategic Partnerships and Programs

Overview of Partnerships and Programs

A wide variety of partnerships and programs were examined for importance.

- Those deemed most important tended to deal with traditional goals of
 - Assuring transfers
 - Offering college credit for high school courses
 - Identifying emerging careers
 - Encouraging life-long learning
 - Coordinating K-12 to ensure success
 - Provide tutoring for all in need
- Those deemed least important tended to deal with faculty and staff, with at-risk or adult students, or with corporations
 - Provide more remedial courses
 - Provide incentives for faculty and staff to improve student learning
 - Train employees of large businesses
 - Focus on adult education / training underemployed adults

Implications & Recommendations

Implications & Recommendations - Awareness

- 58% of district residents were interested in learning about events open to the public; Harper must do more promoting of such events.
- Harper should increase and focus communications with parents during their child's junior year in high school.
 - We know that parents are the prime influences on children's college selection (along with friends), and this appears a prime time to reach them
 - While parents (and residents) say they want to hear by direct mail, this media should be supplemented by articles placed in the Herald, the most read local newspaper (by parents and residents)
 - Harper needs to do something, as (depending on the question) from 50% to 86% of parents are not aware of Harper's performance on important issues, attributes, partnerships, and programs
- Virtually all parents have visited the campus, yet they are unaware of Harper performance.
 - This is an obvious place for additional promotional activity to occur
 - Harper should examine community activities (such as sporting events, concerts, job fairs) for using Harper alums (who are generally highly positive about the school) to hand out literature/flyers/letters/whatever promoting a different aspect about the school

Implications & Recommendations - Attributes

- While safety has always been a key attribute for parents in determining the best schools for their children, we are now seeing it ranked first among all attributes tested.
 - Harper cannot afford to downplay or ignore safety in advertising or promotional activities.
- Showcasing the faculty (both in terms of student interaction and real world experience) would appear to be viewed favorably by district residents.
 - Faculty real world experience also goes along with a knowledge of future needs, and the identification of emerging careers that would allow students to focus on said careers with an increased chance for success in the workplace.
 - This also goes with the tested strategies of identifying emerging careers.
- Both the faculty and Harper itself should be portrayed as working with K-12, four-year colleges, and students to ensure life-long success and/by encouraging life-long learning.