



**Community Assessment 2007**

**Survey of Residents in the Harper College District**

**Prepared for:**

**Harper College**

**May, 2007**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I.</b>	<b>BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH APPROACH</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>KEY FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PLANNING</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>DETAILED FINDINGS</b> .....	<b>10</b>
	A. Characteristics of the Sample .....	10
	B. Views on Higher Education.....	16
	C. Educational Experiences and Aspirations.....	22
	D. Awareness and Impressions of Harper College.....	40
	E. Preferences for Taking Classes at Harper .....	51
	F. Communication and Outreach .....	55

## APPENDIX

## I. BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH APPROACH

Harper College is continuing its process of development and growth. As the only community college serving Community College District 512, Harper College has opportunities to develop its programs to satisfy its many constituencies while fulfilling its mission to *“provide excellent education at an affordable price, promoting personal growth, enriching the local community and meeting the challenges of a global society.”*

As part of its commitment to ongoing community assessment to understand current and emerging needs, the College conducts survey research every three years. This year, the decision was made to engage The Melior Group, a marketing research firm specializing in education, to design and manage the research process, as well as analyze and report on results. The resulting efforts provide a *“lay of the land”* with regard to the community’s interest in education, as well as understanding what Harper should be planning for the future in terms of educational programming and outreach.

This year, the research was designed to incorporate the needs and interests of both residents and employers within Harper’s district. Reported here are the detailed findings from the recent community survey (results of the business survey are reported separately), which was designed to

- ◆ explore professional, academic, and personal interests of community residents;
- ◆ understand expectations of community colleges generally, and of Harper College specifically;
- ◆ measure aided and unaided awareness of Harper College, and the extent to which it is the “go to” institution for residents seeking further education;
- ◆ learn impressions of Harper College; how well it is perceived to currently meet community needs, and how well residents feel it is positioned to do so in the future;
- ◆ explore how information about higher education, and about Harper College, is currently sought, and what are preferences for future communications from Harper; and
- ◆ elicit reactions to new initiatives from Harper, including academic degrees and programs, as well as course presentations that seek to be responsive to constituent needs.

A questionnaire was developed by The Melior Group, with input and approval from Harper College administration. A total of 694 telephone interviews were conducted late February, early March, 2007, each lasting an average of 14 minutes. All respondents reside in Harper's district. Calls were made using age-targeted lists and the Random Digit Dial (RDD) methodology, which allows for contacting unlisted telephone numbers. Age quotas were established to ensure adequate representation of younger (16-24) residents. It is important to note that Harper College was not initially identified as the sponsor of the research, though toward the end of the survey, where questions focused on impressions of Harper, its sponsorship became clear. These results are statistically significant with a margin of error of +/- 3.8% at the 95% confidence interval.

What follows are key findings and implications for future planning, as well as detailed findings from the community survey. Where meaningful for decision-making, results have been segmented by key subgroups. The results from the employer survey will be provided separately.

## II. KEY FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PLANNING

Harper College is a visible, respected, and valued institution within the district.

Questions about higher education in general, asked prior to identifying Harper as the sponsor of the research; illustrate the importance Harper District residents' place on higher education.

- ◆ Higher education – for the purposes of earning a degree or other reasons – is extremely important to residents in Harper's district. District residents are extremely well-educated, and/or aspire to higher levels of education; half (51%) already possess at least a 4-year degree, and 19% have completed a graduate degree. Over nine in ten residents (95%) report that they will consider taking some sort of class in the future. Among the younger residents (ages 16–19), fully 96% will consider earning a 4-year degree in the next 5 years; the same percentage also think they will take courses for a graduate degree.

Higher education is also highly valued because people see it as a key – perhaps ***the key*** – to ensuring future professional success. When asked to complete the sentence, *“the purpose of higher education that is, education after high school, is...”* the top three answers all center on professional prospects (*to help people get jobs, to provide people with job-related skills, and to allow people the chance to earn more money*). As well, 86% of participants agree (rated “5” or “4” on a 5-point scale where 5 = “agree strongly” and 1 = “disagree strongly”) that *these days you need more than a high school diploma in order to succeed.*

Education is highly valued for enrichment and personal reasons. Of those participants who have taken a class in the past 5 years (n=258), 49% have taken classes for personal enrichment. In the future, 84% of the participants would consider a personal enrichment class, and 84% of the participants would consider a class for professional development.

- ◆ Residents see community colleges playing a distinct role, quite apart from that played by other colleges and universities. Expectations of community colleges are fairly specific, and appear to center around two main objectives: 1) preparing students to enter 4-year colleges and universities, and 2) truly living up to their “community” name by being accessible in terms of affordability, providing education to the community, and as an educational resource for students at all ages and stages, including retirees, people seeking professional training, etc.

While community colleges may not be viewed as the “go to” place for seeking a degree by some, 37% of the participants agree that *“If I wanted to earn a degree, the first place I would look is my local community college.”*

- ◆ Though participants express interest in a wide range of academic and other subjects for study in the future, education, business, and computer science are the “big three,” particularly among participants in the 25–55 year old age range. This is not surprising given the perceived value of higher education, that is, to help prepare people for professional success; many “good” jobs are in those fields.
  - High school students would be interested in taking classes in a wider variety of purely academic subjects, including math, biology, and English, and it appears that many of them have taken college level courses in those subjects.
  - Among participants age 55+, there is more interest in some of the enrichment types of classes such as cooking (8% of consumers in this age group who will consider taking a class in the next 5 years are interested in this subject), and art (11% who have taken a class have taken an art class).

### **Community residents value Harper College’s role in providing higher education to residents.**

- ◆ Harper College’s formal *mission “...to be a comprehensive community college dedicated to providing excellent education at an affordable cost, promoting personal growth, enriching the local community and meeting the challenges of a global society”* is consistent with district residents’ expectations of what the College should be doing; 82% of the participants believe that the mission is “appropriate” (rated “5” or “4” on a 5-point scale where 5 = “very appropriate” and 1 = “not at all appropriate”).

There were no significant differences in perceived appropriateness of the mission by age category or by experience with Harper.

- ◆ Harper College is extremely well-known and visible within the district. Without prompting, 32% of participants mention it as a college or university that they are aware of...exceeding all other institutions in the area (closest is Northwestern University, with 24% of unaided mentions). And, when prompted with the Harper name, 96% of area respondents have heard of it.

- ◆ Harper is, by far, the college of choice for district residents. One-third of participants who have taken a course in the past 5 years have taken it at Harper (n=85), however, two-thirds have taken courses elsewhere. The closest competitors generate fewer than 5% of mentions. As well, nearly half of all participants (43%) who say they might possibly take a course in the next 5 years will consider going to Harper.
- ◆ Harper is highly regarded by district residents. Eighty-five percent (85%) of participants agree (rated “5” or “4” on a 5-point scale where 5 = “agree strongly” and 1 = “disagree strongly”) that Harper *has a good reputation*. And, 80% and 78% of participants, respectively, agree that *Harper offers classes and programs that are affordable to most residents of the area*, and that it *does a good job of meeting the educational needs of the community*.

Additionally, approximately three-quarters of respondents give Harper an “A” or “B” grade for *offering programs for people who want to complete a degree, offering enrichment classes which promote personal growth, and offering classes at times convenient for working adults*.

- ◆ Harper has a solid recommendation rate among residents; 66% of the participants “agree” (40% rated “5,” 26% rated “4”) that *if I had a friend or relative considering colleges, I would recommend Harper*.

**Residents express a variety of preferences for specific course offerings, methods of communication, course locations and times, and types of instruction.**

- ◆ There is extremely strong community support for Harper going forward with offering Bachelor’s degrees *in targeted areas with high workforce need*. Over three-quarters of participants (76%) “agree strongly” with this initiative and another 13% “agree” (rated “4” on previously referenced scale); only 6% of participants “disagree” (rated “2” or “1”). And, there seems to be genuine interest in actually enrolling in these programs – a proclivity that seems realistic given that 36% of participants indicate that they would *strongly consider changing the type of work they do within the next 5 years*, and 29% *don’t know if they would consider a change* (only 35% say they would *never consider making a change*).
- 44% of participants would be likely (rated “5” or “4” on a 5-point scale where 5 = “very likely,” and 1 = “not at all likely”) to consider enrolling in an education program;

- 34% would consider the technology management program;
  - 31% would consider a Bachelor's in nursing; and
  - 22% would consider a Bachelor's in homeland security.
- ◆ A continuous challenge for Harper is to effectively communicate about itself to residents, so that they know about and understand its richness as a community educational resource. Despite familiarity with the Harper name, there are some gaps in knowledge about what the College is known for and what it offers. For example, when asked what it is best known for, 17% of the participants responded “quality education,” but 28% responded “don’t know.” And, when asked to grade Harper on specific dimensions, there are also many “don’t know” responses; at least 10% of participants cannot rate Harper on any given characteristic.
- Though participants were able to rate Harper on several key dimensions (such as “*offering programs for people who want to complete a degree*” or “*offering programs for people who want to change professions*”), there are aspects of the College that people simply don’t know about. Roughly one in five participants “don’t know” how to rate Harper in terms of *offering new classes in response to societal need/trends, offering individualized attention to students, and meeting educational needs of retirees.*
- ◆ The Internet has truly arrived as ***the source*** for consumers who are “shopping around” for institutions and classes. Half of all participants look for information about higher education on the Internet; most go directly to college web sites. However, fewer than 10% of the participants in any age group indicated that they used the college web site to learn about course offerings or about events (athletic or cultural).

To communicate its course offerings or information about events (athletic or cultural), direct mail is overwhelmingly preferred by adults 25 or older. Younger participants indicated a preference for email as well as direct mail.

- ◆ In addition to support for new programs offered by Harper, there is also strong support for providing constituents with a variety of options in course delivery.
- ***Course Location:*** Overall, when asked to rank currently existing locations, participants would prefer to take classes at the main Palatine campus (54%). There is significantly less interest in the Harper Professional Center in Schaumburg (14%) and in the Northeast Center in Prospect Heights (10%), though the percentages of people who



prefer these locations is not trivial and should be considered in facilities planning.

- **Time of Day:** Preferences for course times indicate that Harper College should continue its policy of offering multiple options for people interested in taking classes. Evening hours are crucial for people who work full-time (71% prefer them). Among participants preferring evening classes, 48% preferred 6:00 PM and 26% preferred 7:00 PM start times. Morning hours were preferred by part-time workers, students, and retirees.
- **Days of the Week:** Participants express strong interest in classes that meet on weekdays only, and in classes that meet on both weekdays and weekends. Full-time employees would prefer the latter (54% would like weekends and weekdays), though part-time employees and retirees would prefer weekday classes by a 2 to 1 margin.

Current students are overwhelmingly against any involvement of their weekends for class time; 82% want to meet only on weekdays.

- **Length of Courses:** Harper College is considering the addition of courses that require the same amount of “seat time” but compress it into fewer than 16 weeks. Residents find this option extremely appealing; two-thirds (65%) would prefer a shortened duration (with greater intensity).

Teens, however, feel exactly the opposite: two-thirds of them (66%) would prefer the standard timing.

- The median preference for course length is 8 weeks; the mean is 7.7 weeks.

- **Distance Learning vs. Campus Time:** Like all colleges and universities, Harper is offering distance learning as a course delivery option. It is important to note that each of the presented models generates some interest; at least one-third of all participants rate each one as “appealing” (rated “5” or “4”).
  - Teens want to be on campus; three-quarters (74%) rate *courses which meet only in classrooms on campus* as “appealing.”
  - Participants in the middle age groups (25–54) are most likely to be working. As such, it is not surprising that they are most enthusiastic about courses that involve some, or no campus time.

- Older consumers (55+) are more attracted to campus classes than the middle age group, yet less so than teens; similarly, they are less enthusiastic about options that involve no campus time.
- **Fast Track Options:** Participants who would consider (“strongly” or “possibly”) earning an Associate’s or 4-year degree within the next 5 years were asked for their reaction to “fast track” programs, *“which allow faster completion of degrees and require more self-learning outside of class. For example, a student attending class just one night a week for 4 hours could still complete an Associate’s degree in 2 years.”*

There is significant interest in this option, particularly among consumers age 20+; in these age groups, between half and two-thirds of the participants would be interested (rated “5” or “4”). Not surprisingly, teens are less enthusiastic, yet still 37% find “fast track” options of interest.

**Specific findings and implications, as reported above, lead to recommendations in three areas.**

- ◆ To enhance its communications to District Residents, Harper College should
  - Continue to communicate the mission of the College, as well as its accessibility (affordability and educational resource for students of all ages).
  - Focus marketing and public relations on a strategic message. The message should be consistent over time to allow for interim measurements.
  - Assure that the web site is properly resourced and regularly evaluated by potential students for ease of use and accessibility. This is critical since the Internet has been identified as the primary source for consumers who are “shopping around” for institutions and classes.
  - Recognize that adults over age 24 prefer direct mail, while traditional-age students prefer a mix of direct mail and email.

- ◆ To best serve the needs of traditional age residents (under 25 years), Harper College should
  - Reinforce the message that Harper College can be a great place to begin a college education.
  - Enhance campus life so that these students – particularly those under age 20 – can truly experience college.
  - Develop its accelerated and fast track course options; this is particularly true for respondents in the 20–24 age group.
  
- ◆ To serve the adult residents of its district, Harper College should
  - Continue its effort to offer Bachelor's degrees in targeted areas with high workforce need;
  - Expand “distance learning” course offerings, including online degrees and certificates, where very little or no campus time is required;
  - Offer options for locations, times of day and days of the week that courses are offered;
  - Provide fast track programs in business, education, and computer science;
  - Start most evening classes between 6 PM and 7 PM; and
  - Make available courses with a shortened duration from the regular 16-week semester; 8 weeks is particularly desirable.

### III. DETAILED FINDINGS

#### A. Characteristics of the Sample

Because the mission of Harper College is to meet the needs of its local community, the research findings are predicated on understanding of the local area. As such, this first section focuses on demographic and other household information that can help describe the community, can put data throughout this report into the appropriate context, and provide a “check” that the participants in the survey reflect the region in which the telephone questionnaire was administered.

**Gender:** As is typical of survey research, the majority of participants are female (61%).

**Age:** Age quotas were imposed to ensure adequate representation of younger participants (16-24) which comprise about 12% of the District population, but 59% of the current students (Fact Book 2006).

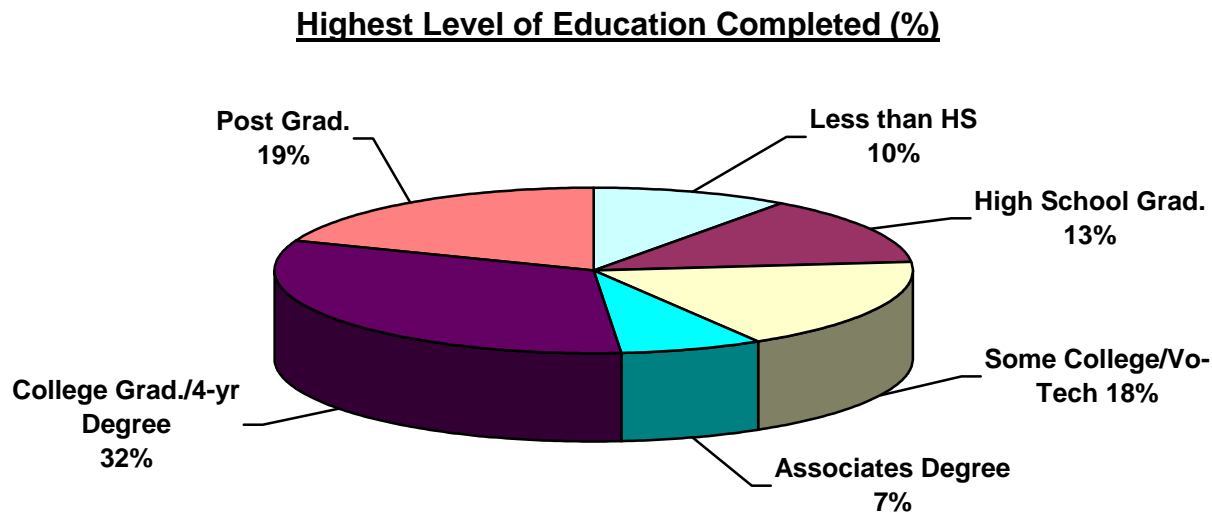
#### Age (%)

	Sample
16 - 19	n=101; 15%
20 - 24	n= 85; 12%
25 - 34	n=125; 18%
35 - 44	n=125; 18%
45 - 54	n=126; 18%
55+	n=125; 18%
Age not specified	n= 7; 1%

**Household:** Over one-third of participants (38%) report that they have children in their household under the age of 16. Of those with children (n=264), 13% report that their child has participated in a program at Harper College: specifically the Summer Camp, a performing arts event, or the Music Academy.

**Education:** Residents in Harper’s district are extremely well educated, with over half (51%) having graduated from a 4-year college, and 19% in possession of a graduate degree.

- ◆ Of the 11% (n=73) of high school students in the sample, 32 are juniors, and 41 are seniors; one of those seniors classified him/herself as a high school graduate.



**Employment:** The majority of participants are employed (69%). The rate of unemployment, at 5%, is consistent with national averages.

- ◆ Interestingly, nearly half (45%) of all participants in the 16-19 age range are employed at least part-time, suggesting that they are working while being enrolled as students.
- ◆ Rates of employment are highest among 25-54 year olds; in each age category over three-quarters of participants work at least part-time (and most full-time).
- ◆ One-third (35%) of the participants age 55+ are retired.

**Employment Status (%)**

	n=	Total (694)	Age					
			16-19 (101)	20-24 (85)	25-34 (125)	35-44 (125)	45-54 (126)	55+ (125)
<b>Employed</b>		69	45	60	79	79	85	57
Full time (35+ hours/week)		48	5	35	72	63	59	41
Part time		21	40	25	7	16	25	16
<b>Not Employed</b>		31	55	40	21	21	15	43
Student		10	47	25	1	1	1	--
Homemaker		9	1	6	14	18	10	3
Retired		7	--	1	--	--	2	35
Not currently working		5	7	8	6	2	2	5

**Changing Jobs/Careers:** Harper’s district has many constituents who are not 100% satisfied with their current line of work, and the majority might consider changing it within the next 5 years. Even among people who are employed full-time, 25% would *strongly consider something new*, and 29% *don’t know if they will change*. These percentages are significantly higher among people who are employed part-time, are homemakers, or who are “retired” (for the time being). In sum, these findings suggest real openness to new career paths.

**“How likely is it that you will change the type of work you do or career you are in within the next 5 years?” (%)**

	Total	Age						Employment Status			
		16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Full-Time	Part-Time	Home-maker	Retired
n=	(694)	(101)	(85)	(125)	(125)	(126)	(125)	(334)	(142)	(62)	(49)
Would strongly consider something new	36	64	42	35	33	28	19	26	44	51	31
Don’t know if I will change	29	23	20	26	35	31	32	29	33	21	31
Would never consider making a change	35	12	38	38	33	41	48	45	23	28	38

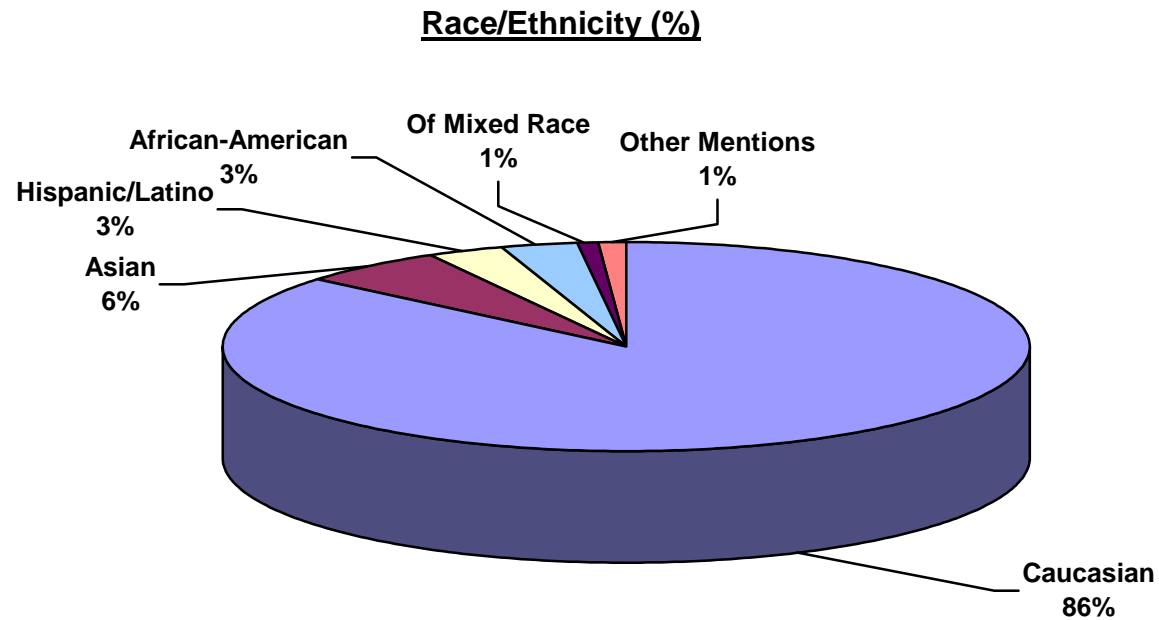
**Town of Residence:** To qualify for the survey, participants were required to live in, or live close to, the following towns within the Harper College district.

**Town of Residence (%)**

	%
Arlington Heights	16
Palatine	14
Schaumburg	13
Des Plaines	7
Mount Prospect	7
Buffalo Grove	7
Barrington	5
Wheeling	5
Elk Grove Village	4
Carpentersville	3
Hanover Park	3
Rolling Meadows	3
Hoffman Estates	2
Prospect Heights	2
Roselle	2
Barrington Hills	1
Deer Park	1
Fox River Grove	1
Lake Barrington	1
Inverness	<1
South Barrington	<1
Tower Lakes	<1



**Race/Ethnicity:** The vast majority of community respondents describe themselves as Caucasian (86%). Asians (6%) are the largest minority ethnic group. The sample may under-represent Hispanic/Latino (10.9% in the District) and over-represent white (76.5% in the District) based on Census 2000 data as reported in Harper's Fact Book 2006.



## B. Views on Higher Education

To truly understand the community whose mission it is to serve, Harper College periodically explores general attitudes toward higher education. Is it perceived as important, and why? How are residents inclined to view community colleges and their offerings?

***Importance of Post-High School Education:*** To elicit views on the role of higher education and its importance, participants were asked to complete the following sentence: “*The purpose of higher education, that is, educational options after high school, is...*” The responses reveal the belief that the primary role of higher education is to prepare for the future, specifically one’s professional prospects. The top three answers given, *to help people get jobs, provide people with job-related skills, and to allow people the chance to earn more money*, all have to do with professional success.

- ◆ Interestingly, younger people take a slightly more pragmatic approach to education; 43% of respondents ages 16-19 and 36% of respondents 20-24, report that the purpose of higher education is to *help people get jobs*, versus 23% of consumers age 55 and older.
- ◆ Similarly, people with less education (not 2-year or 4-year college graduates) are more likely to view education as a means to achieving professional success; 35% report that the primary purpose of higher education is to *help people get jobs*, versus 27% and 29% of Associate’s-degree holders and college graduates, respectively.

**Sentence Completion: “The purpose of higher education, that is, educational options after high school, is...” (%)**

Responses mentioned by at least 3% of participants

Multiple Responses Accepted

	Total	Age						Education			
		16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	<HS	Some college/ Vo-Tech	Assoc. Degree	College Grad+
n=	(694)	(101)	(85)	(125)	(125)	(126)	(125)	(165)	(126)	(48)	(354)
To help people get jobs	31	43	36	27	30	30	23	35	35	27	29
To provide people with job-related skills	17	11	16	21	24	16	14	13	14	21	19
To allow people the chance to earn more money	12	10	10	16	8	12	13	12	12	10	12
To continue to learn and expand knowledge base	12	15	10	8	10	12	17	15	9	13	12
Personal enrichment	9	3	3	8	10	14	13	5	8	15	11
To enhance job security	7	6	9	9	6	5	6	8	7	4	6

Residents' focus on the future – and the role of education in securing success in the future – is further reinforced by widespread agreement with the statement, *“These days you need more than a high school diploma in order to succeed.”* At least three-quarters of participants within each segment agree with this statement (rated “5” or “4” on a 5-point scale, where 5 = “agree strongly” and 1 = “disagree strongly.”)

In sum, many more participants agreed (86%) than disagreed (4%) that *“These days you need more than a high school diploma in order to succeed.”*

**Agreement with the Statement: “These days you need more than a high school diploma in order to succeed.” (%)**

	Total	Age						Education			
		16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	<HS	Some college/ Vo-Tech	Assoc. Degree	College Grad+
n=	(694)	(101)	(85)	(125)	(125)	(126)	(125)	(165)	(126)	(48)	(354)
5 = “Agree Strongly”	70	61	54	66	68	77	85	59	70	54	77
4	16	23	26	17	14	13	8	21	11	29	13
3	10	12	12	12	12	7	6	12	14	11	7
2	2	3	3	--	3	2	1	4	3	4	<1
1 = “Disagree Strongly”	2	1	5	5	3	1	--	4	2	2	2

***Role of Community College:*** Participants were also asked to provide their views on community colleges. Participants see community colleges as playing a distinct role, quite apart from that played by other colleges and universities. First and foremost, community colleges are viewed as an intermediate step...to prepare for transfer to 4-year institutions (37%), and/or *for people who need an alternative to 4-year degrees* (4%), and/or *for people who are trying to decide what they want to do in the future* (3%).

Additionally, participants perceive that community colleges must live up to their name, and be accessible to consumers in terms of affordability (26% say that is a priority), providing education to the community (11%), and as an educational resource (10%).

Other expectations for community colleges are that they help people address existing academic challenges (4%), and that they provide technical/vocational training (3%).

- ◆ College-age participants (20-24) are even more likely than others to believe that the primary role of a community college is to *prepare students for transfer*; 58% feel this way.

**Sentence Completion: “The role of a community college is...” (%)**

Responses mentioned by at least 3% of participants

Multiple Responses Accepted

	Total	Age						Education			
		16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	<HS	Some college/ Vo-Tech	Assoc. Degree	College Grad+
<b>n=</b>	<b>(694)</b>	<b>(101)</b>	<b>(85)</b>	<b>(125)</b>	<b>(125)</b>	<b>(126)</b>	<b>(125)</b>	<b>(165)</b>	<b>(126)</b>	<b>(48)</b>	<b>(354)</b>
To prepare for transfer to upper division college or university	37	36	58	29	35	41	28	33	35	39	39
To provide affordable education	26	29	21	30	20	25	26	27	29	25	24
To educate community members	11	11	4	14	13	9	12	13	11	5	10
To be an educational resource for the community	10	8	9	12	12	9	11	11	8	14	10
To provide an alternative to other colleges/universities	4	7	3	3	3	6	5	5	4	5	4
To help address existing academic challenges	4	2	1	4	5	1	8	2	4	2	5
To help people decide what they want to do	3	2	1	2	6	1	4	3	3	2	3
To prepare/train, (technically, vocationally) individuals for the workforce	3	1	--	3	4	2	4	1	2	5	3

Community colleges are seen, by the majority of consumers in this area, as an excellent resource for professional development. Two-thirds of participants (66%) report that they would research their community college, first, for professional development courses.

- ◆ Older participants (55+) would be most likely to look to their community college for this (53% say they “agree strongly” with the statement, versus 40% of participants overall).
- ◆ Although the majority of graduates of 4-year colleges (56%) agreed they would research their community college first for professional development courses, more disagreed with the statement (21%) than participants with less higher education (7%-10%).

**Agreement with the Statement:**  
**“If my employer suggested taking a course for professional development, the first place I would look is my local community college.” (%)**

	Total	Age						Education			
		16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	<HS	Some college/ Vo-Tech	Assoc. Degree	College Grad+
<b>n=</b>	<b>(694)</b>	<b>(101)</b>	<b>(85)</b>	<b>(125)</b>	<b>(125)</b>	<b>(126)</b>	<b>(125)</b>	<b>(165)</b>	<b>(126)</b>	<b>(48)</b>	<b>(354)</b>
5 = “Agree Strongly”	40	31	41	29	38	45	53	47	54	50	30
4	26	32	29	26	33	19	19	21	27	34	26
3	20	28	15	25	17	18	16	22	12	8	23
2	8	5	10	13	8	9	6	5	4	6	13
1 = “Disagree Strongly”	6	4	5	7	4	9	6	5	3	2	8

The portion of residents who would turn to their local community college for a degree is smaller, though there is significant variation by segment.

- ◆ Teens not yet in college (16-19) appear somewhat disinterested in the community college option; 24% say they agree with the statement, and 38% disagree. The story is different among participants who are college age; 44% would turn to their community college for a degree.
- ◆ Though there are likely fewer degree seekers in this age category, participants 55+ are more likely than not to turn to their local community college; 53% agree that they would turn there first.
- ◆ Only 26% of 4-year college graduates say they would turn to their local community college for another degree. Explanations for this attitude could include...greater ability to afford other options, as well as interest in earning types of degrees (BA/BS and higher) that community colleges generally – and Harper, specifically – do not often offer.

**Agreement with the Statement:**

**“If I wanted to earn a degree, the first place I would look is my local community college” (%)**

	Total	Age						Education			
		16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	<HS	Some college/ Vo-Tech	Assoc. Degree	College Grad+
n=	(694)	(101)	(85)	(125)	(125)	(126)	(125)	(165)	(126)	(48)	(354)
5 = “Agree Strongly”	21	11	25	19	22	17	34	25	37	25	13
4	16	13	19	10	21	13	19	18	18	21	13
3	28	38	22	30	22	32	23	28	27	27	29
2	21	32	23	19	23	19	12	21	10	19	25
1 = “Disagree Strongly”	14	6	11	22	12	19	12	8	8	8	20



**C. Educational Experiences and Aspirations**

After gaining a bit of insight into the perceived value of higher education, participants were asked about their past educational experiences as well as their likelihood to consider courses at some point in the future. Such information can provide guidance to Harper in planning course offerings, as well as timing and course configurations.

***Recent Educational Experiences:*** Within the past 5 years, slightly more than one-third of community residents have taken a post-high school class. Not surprising, this proportion is highest among 20-24 year olds...72% of whom have taken at least one post-high school class.

The results also reveal a general level of interest in and willingness to continue one’s education. Even among participants in the 55+ segment, one in every five has sought some sort of class.

***“Within the past 5 years, have you taken any courses at any school other than high school?” (%)***

		Age						
		Total	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
n=		(694)	(101)	(85)	(125)	(125)	(126)	(125)
Yes	37	32	72	44	33	30	22	
No	63	68	28	56	67	70	78	

Participants were asked what kind of courses they have taken in the last 5 years. The results reveal that residents of Harper’s district take courses for all kinds of reasons, to achieve a variety of ends; the findings also point to the fact that people probably articulate the reasons for taking classes in different ways; for example, a high school student taking a college-level math course could be doing it for personal enrichment, as well as for credit towards a 4-year degree.

- ◆ Participants in the 16-19 age range are most likely to be taking courses for personal enrichment (59%) and to earn a 4-year degree (50%).
- ◆ In the 20-24 age range, to earn a four-year degree is the goal for most (68%) who have pursued education.
- ◆ In the 25-34 year old group, the majority of participants are taking courses for graduate degree (59%), to earn a 4-year degree (52%) or for professional development (46%).
- ◆ Beyond age 35, there are fewer people interested in earning degrees. The majority of participants in these age ranges are looking for personal enrichment, professional development, or to earn a certificate.

**Type of Courses Taken (%)**

Among participants who have taken a course in the past 5 years  
Multiple Responses Accepted

	Age						
	Total	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
n=	<b>(258)</b>	<b>(32)</b>	<b>(61)</b>	<b>(55)</b>	<b>(41)</b>	<b>(38)</b>	<b>(28)</b>
Courses for personal enrichment	49	59	40	35	56	57	64
Courses for professional development (not part of a degree)	47	44	28	46	54	62	64
Courses to earn a 4-year Degree	42	50	68	52	22	19	21
Courses to earn a Certificate	39	34	30	24	54	51	50
Courses to earn a Graduate Level Degree	37	28	35	59	27	35	25
Courses to earn an Associate’s Degree	27	44	33	15	34	22	14

Education and computer science are the two most popular subjects to study, with 15% and 12% of participants, respectively, reporting that they have taken a course in those areas. The next tier of popularity includes all of the other subjects listed – none mentioned by more than 7% of participants.

- ◆ The youngest participants – most of whom are currently in high school – are most likely to be engaged in academic subjects including math (21%), biology (17%), psychology and English (each 10%).
- ◆ Participants in the 20-24 age range are most likely to be pursuing education (12%); business and psychology (each 10%).
- ◆ Participants in the 25-44 age groups are beginning to look a bit more career directed with their course choices; education, computer science, accounting, and nursing are most popular.
- ◆ Among participants 45+, education and computer science are the most likely choices.

It is also interesting to note some of the differences in course selection between participants with different educational backgrounds.

- ◆ Among participants with associate's degrees or 4-year degrees, education is by far the top choice (25% and 21%, respectively).

### Course Subjects (%)

Among participants who have taken a course in the past 5 years

Responses mentioned by at least 3% of participants

Multiple Responses Accepted

	Total	Age						Education			
		16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	<HS	Some college/ Vo-Tech	Assoc. Degree	College Grad+
<b>n=</b>	<b>(258)</b>	<b>(32)</b>	<b>(61)</b>	<b>(55)</b>	<b>(41)</b>	<b>(38)</b>	<b>(28)</b>	<b>(37)</b>	<b>(65)</b>	<b>(20)</b>	<b>(136)</b>
Education	15	7	12	14	23	16	22	6	5	25	21
Computer Science	12	7	3	16	17	13	15	11	7	30	11
Accounting	7	--	8	8	13	5	7	9	8	5	7
Business	7	7	10	6	3	11	7	3	8	10	8
Math	7	21	5	4	10	3	4	14	10	5	4
Psychology	7	10	10	4	5	5	4	14	3	15	5
Biology	6	17	7	8	3	3	--	9	10	10	3
English	5	10	7	6	3	--	7	6	8	5	3
Nursing	5	3	5	--	13	8	--	3	7	5	5
Engineering	4	--	3	10	3	3	--	--	7	--	5
Healthcare	4	--	3	6	--	8	4	6	3	--	4
Art	3	7	--	2	3	--	11	--	7	5	2

Harper is, by far, the college of choice for district residents. One-third of participants who have taken a course in the past 5 years have taken it at Harper; the closest competitors generate fewer than 5% mentions. Among people who have taken courses to earn an Associate’s degree, over half (57%) have attended Harper, and among people who have taken courses for a certificate, 45% have gone to Harper.

**Schools Attended in Past 5 Years (%)**

Among participants who have taken a course in the past 5 years  
 Responses mentioned by at least 3% of participants  
 Multiple Responses Accepted

	Course(s) Taken for... <sup>1</sup>						
	Total	Assoc. Degree	4-year Degree	Certificate	Graduate Level Degree	Enrichment	Professional Development
n=	(258)	(68)	(107)	(99)	(94)	(126)	(121)
<b>Harper College</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>32</b>
Depaul University	4	--	6	3	7	5	2
Roosevelt University	4	3	4	3	6	3	3
University of Illinois - Chicago	4	1	6	5	2	4	4
Northeastern Illinois University	4	1	3	5	3	4	7
College of DuPage	4	3	2	6	5	6	6
Saint Xavier University	3	--	--	--	3	4	6
Elgin Community College	3	6	3	5	--	4	4

<sup>1</sup> After participants reported whether they had taken any classes in the past 5 years, they were asked a general follow-on question – rather than a question specifically relating to each type of course – about what schools they had attended. So, this analysis does not show, for example, that 57% of people who took courses to earn an Associate’s Degree did so, definitively, at Harper. Rather, it states that of those who took courses to earn an Associate’s Degree, 57% took at least one course, not necessarily directly related to that degree, at Harper.

***Educational Possibilities for the Future:*** After asking participants about their previous post-high school course experiences, they were asked about their future educational plans. First, it is important to reinforce that residents of Harper’s district are extremely enthusiastic about education; 95% of participants say they would “consider” (strongly and possibly) taking at least one kind of course within the next five years, and 62% would “strongly consider” it. The appetite for learning is strong.

There are significant variations in likelihood to take courses when the results are analyzed by age. The youngest participants are quite “*gung-ho*”: they think they’ll (want to, and be able to afford to) go to school forever. Realism starts to set in by age 20, and then, until they reach their 50s, residents are more likely to be focused on taking courses to further their professional prospects.

- ◆ Teenagers are highly interested in continuing their educations. Nearly all (96%) will consider courses for 4-year degrees and/or graduate degrees; 84% say they will “strongly consider” a 4-year degree.
- ◆ Many of the participants in the 20-24 age range have already attained, or are in the process of earning, a 4-year degree or an Associate’s degree. As such, they report that they are more likely to consider courses for professional development (82%), a graduate degree (79%), personal enrichment (78%), or for a certificate (75%).
- ◆ Participants in the 25-54 age categories are most interested in courses for personal enrichment, professional development, and for certificates. Approximately half of the participants in each age group (25-34; 35-44; and 45-54) would consider courses for a graduate degree (64%, 57%, and 51%, respectively); though interest is lower in taking courses for a 4-year or Associate’s degree.
- ◆ Consideration of courses wanes in the 55+ age group; degree or certificate programs would be of interest to fewer than half of all people in this age category. However, 82% would consider courses for personal enrichment, and 62% would consider courses for professional development.

**Consideration of Courses in the Next 5 Years (%)**

	n=	Age					
		Total	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54
<b>Consider Courses for Personal Enrichment</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>82</b>
Strongly Consider	35	40	27	28	33	38	43
Possibly Consider	49	48	51	56	50	50	39
Never	16	12	22	16	17	12	18
<b>Consider Courses for Professional Development</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>62</b>
Strongly Consider	40	40	36	40	46	41	31
Possibly Consider	44	47	46	51	46	47	31
Never	16	13	18	9	8	12	38
<b>Consider Courses for Certificate</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>40</b>
Strongly Consider	23	51	21	17	28	13	12
Possibly Consider	44	36	54	55	45	51	28
Never	33	13	25	28	27	36	60
<b>Consider Courses for Graduate Degree</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>29</b>
Strongly Consider	28	69	47	27	18	15	9
Possibly Consider	32	27	32	37	39	36	20
Never	40	4	21	36	43	49	71
<b>Consider Courses for 4-Year Degree</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>20</b>
Strongly Consider	21	84	36	15	7	6	7
Possibly Consider	18	12	23	14	29	15	13
Never	61	4	41	71	64	79	80
<b>Consider Courses for Associate's Degree</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>22</b>
Strongly Consider	13	39	17	9	12	7	7
Possibly Consider	21	41	12	15	24	21	15
Never	65	20	71	77	65	72	78

Participants who express interest in taking courses were asked what subjects they would be interested in pursuing. Residents have wide-ranging interests and aspirations; though business (16%), education (14%), and computer science (11%) are the “big three,” over half of all participants mention other subjects (none more than 5%).

- ◆ Education and computer science are of significantly greater interest to people who already have earned either an Associate’s degree and/or who have graduated from a 4-year college.
- ◆ For participants with an Associate’s degree, business, healthcare, and psychology were tied for the third “top three” subjects.
- ◆ Business, education, and mathematics were the top three choices for participants with no higher education experience.



### Course Subjects (%)

Among participants who report that they will consider taking courses in the next 5 years

Responses mentioned by at least 3% of participants

Multiple Responses Accepted

	Age							Education			
	Total	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	<HS	Some college/ Vo-Tech	Assoc. Degree	College Grad+
n=	(656)	(99)	(79)	(123)	(120)	(121)	(107)	(153)	(117)	(45)	(340)
Business	16	16	7	21	16	19	12	17	15	7	17
Education	14	13	8	19	13	18	11	9	9	12	18
Computer Science	11	--	4	14	15	13	13	2	10	14	14
Accounting	5	2	10	5	6	3	5	4	5	2	5
Math	5	13	7	1	4	5	2	10	3	5	3
Healthcare	5	3	8	4	1	7	5	5	6	7	4
Art	4	6	4	3	4	1	8	6	1	--	6
Engineering	4	6	5	3	1	4	4	6	2	5	4
Psychology	4	3	10	4	3	1	4	5	5	7	3
English	3	4	4	3	5	2	4	4	5	2	3
Financial Services	3	1	3	3	6	5	3	1	5	5	4
Nursing	3	3	5	3	4	4	1	2	7	2	2
Cooking	3	2	3	1	1	2	8	4	3	--	2
Criminal Justice/Law	3	4	1	5	1	2	1	4	3	5	1
History	3	4	4	2	1	1	6	4	2	5	3
Foreign Language	3	2	4	3	1	3	3	4	--	--	3

Participants were also asked what schools they would plan to attend if they do take a class in the next 5 years. Comparing these answers to where consumers have taken courses in the past 5 years is revealing: it shows that many more residents are interested in taking a course at Harper (43%) than have taken one there in the past (33%). This may suggest that Harper is gaining visibility and prestige in the community.

**Comparison of Institutions Participants Will Possibly Attend in the Next 5 Years, to Institutions Attended in the Past 5 Years (%)**

	Future Plans for Taking Courses	Courses Taken in the Past 5 Years
n=	(656)	(258)
<b>Harper College</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>33</b>
University of Illinois - Chicago	7	4
Oakton Community College	7	2
Northwestern University	5	2
Roosevelt University	4	4
DePaul University	3	4
College of DuPage	3	4
Elgin Community College	3	3
College of Lake County	3	2
University of Chicago	3	<1
Northeastern Illinois University	2	4
Saint Xavier University	<1	3

Consideration of schools was also analyzed by the type of courses that participants would consider taking. The results show that people who are considering Harper are also thinking about going on for further education; for example, 39% of participants who are considering taking courses to earn a graduate degree are also planning to take at least one class at Harper.

**Schools Participants would Consider Attending (%)**

Among participants who report that they will consider taking courses in the next 5 years  
 Responses mentioned by at least 3% of participants  
 Multiple Responses Accepted

		Will Consider Taking Courses for... <sup>2</sup>						
		Total	Assoc. Degree	4-yr Degree	Certificate	Grad-Level Degree	Enrichment	Prof. Development
n=		(656)	(215)	(229)	(390)	(350)	(576)	(577)
	<b>Harper College</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>43</b>
	University of Illinois – Chicago	7	8	11	8	9	7	8
	Oakton Community College	7	9	6	6	6	6	6
	Northwestern University	5	5	4	6	5	5	5
	Roosevelt University	4	3	4	3	4	4	4
	College of DuPage	3	6	4	4	3	3	3
	DePaul University	3	2	2	3	3	3	3
	Elgin Community College	3	3	5	3	2	3	3
	University of Chicago	3	3	2	3	4	3	3
	College of Lake County	3	2	3	2	2	3	2

<sup>2</sup> After participants reported their consideration of taking classes, they were asked a general follow-on question – rather than a question specifically relating to each degree – about where they would go to take classes. So, this analysis does not show that 39% of people who want to take courses to earn a 4-year degree will do so at Harper. Rather, it states that of those who plan to take courses to earn a 4-year degree, 39% think they will take at least one course – not necessarily directly related to the 4-year degree – at Harper College.

**Course Preferences:** To provide direction for Harper as it plans and refines its educational delivery model, participants who indicated that they would “strongly or “possibly” consider any type of course for the future were asked about how they would prefer to take their courses.

- ◆ **Time of Day:** Preferences for course times indicate that Harper College should continue its policy of offering multiple evening options for workers/students. Morning hours are also critical: young people (ages 16-19), retirees, homemakers, part-time workers and students all prefer them. Afternoon classes are least popular overall, though 30% of 16-19 year olds would prefer them.

Participants who prefer evening classes want them to start after working hours, with 6-7 PM being the median preferred start time:

- 4 – 5 PM: 8% prefer
- 5 – 6 PM: 15% prefer
- 6 – 7 PM: 48% prefer
- 7 – 8 PM 26% prefer

**Preferred Time of Day for Taking Classes (%)**

Among participants who would consider taking a class in the next 5 years

	Age							Employment Status				
	Total	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Full-Time	Part-Time	Retired	Home-maker	Student
<b>n=</b>	<b>(659)</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(79)</b>	<b>(123)</b>	<b>(121)</b>	<b>(121)</b>	<b>(108)</b>	<b>(320)</b>	<b>(138)</b>	<b>(36)</b>	<b>(60)</b>	<b>(71)</b>
In the morning, prior to 11:30 AM	21	38	20	6	17	20	28	8	34	45	27	39
In the afternoon, 11:30 AM – 4:30 PM	10	30	10	1	7	4	14	4	16	19	7	23
In the evening, from 4:00 PM on	44	5	43	67	49	55	37	71	21	11	15	15
Combination of times	25	27	27	26	27	21	21	17	29	25	51	23

- ◆ Days of Week: Participants express strong interest in classes that meet on weekdays only and in classes that meet on both weekdays and weekends. Full-time employees would prefer the latter (55% would like a combination of weekends and weekdays), though part-time employees and retirees would prefer weekday classes only by a 2 to 1 margin.

Only current students – who overlap heavily with 16-19 year olds – are overwhelmingly against any involvement of their weekends for class time; 82% want to meet only on weekdays.

**Preferred Days of the Week for Classes (%)**

Among participants who would consider taking a class in the next 5 years

	Total	Age						Employment Status				
		16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Full-Time	Part-Time	Retired	Home-maker	Student
<b>n=</b>	<b>(659)</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(79)</b>	<b>(123)</b>	<b>(121)</b>	<b>(121)</b>	<b>(108)</b>	<b>(320)</b>	<b>(138)</b>	<b>(36)</b>	<b>(60)</b>	<b>(71)</b>
Weekday Classes	53	80	58	37	43	48	57	38	67	67	55	82
Weekend Classes	4	1	6	7	4	2	6	7	--	3	2	3
Combination of Weekday and Weekend	43	19	36	56	53	50	37	55	33	30	43	15

Length of Courses: Harper College offers accelerated courses, that is, courses that require the same amount of “seat time” but compress it into fewer than 16 weeks. Clearly, consumers find this option extremely appealing. Two-thirds (65%) prefer a shortened duration (with greater intensity).

- ◆ Residents over 19 prefer courses of shorter duration.
- ◆ Teens feel exactly the opposite: two-thirds of them (66%) would prefer the standard, lengthier timing.
- ◆ The median preference for course length is 8 weeks; the mean is 7.7 weeks.

**Standard vs. Fast-Track (%)**

Among participants who would consider taking a class in the next 5 years

		Age						
		Total	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
n=		(659)	(100)	(79)	(123)	(121)	(121)	(108)
Taking a traditional 16-week course		35	66	44	27	24	29	30
Taking a course that requires comparable seat time (in class or online) but can run 2–14 weeks)		65	34	56	73	76	71	70

Course Format Preferences: Like all colleges and universities, Harper is offering distance learning as a course delivery option. As such, participants who have any interest in taking a class in the next 5 years were asked to rate the appeal of several course delivery models.

It is important to note that each model generates some interest; at least one-third of all participants rate each one as “appealing” (rated “5” or “4”).

**Course Format Preferences (%)**

Among participants who would consider taking a class in the next 5 years

	<b>5 = “Very Appealing”</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1 = “Not at all Appealing”</b>
Internet courses that meet online where students can work on them at a time of their choosing	31	19	21	13	16
Courses that meet only in classrooms on campus	25	26	33	10	6
Courses that incorporate campus classroom time, Internet classes, and pre-made materials	22	32	31	10	5
Internet course that meet online at specific times and require little or no campus time	21	20	19	20	20
Courses that incorporate pre-made materials such as DVDs and CDs and require little or no campus time	19	20	26	18	17

- ◆ There are significant differences in course format preferences when the results are analyzed by age.
  - Teens want to be on campus. Three-quarters (74%) rate *courses which meet only in classrooms on campus* as “appealing”; all other options are less appealing.
  - Participants in the middle age groups (25–54) are most likely to be working. As such, it is not surprising that they are most enthusiastic about courses that involve only some or no campus time.
  - Older consumers (55+) fall somewhere in the middle. They are more attracted to campus classes than are younger adults, yet less so than teens; similarly, they are less enthusiastic about options that involve no campus time.

**Course Format Preferences (%)**

Among participants who would consider taking a class in the next 5 years  
Top-Two Box Scores<sup>3</sup>

	n=	Age						
		Total	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
		(659)	(100)	(79)	(123)	(121)	(121)	(108)
Internet courses that meet online where students can work on them at a time of their choosing	50	35	47	56	58	53	45	
Courses that meet only in classrooms on campus	51	74	59	43	43	39	51	
Courses that incorporate campus classroom time, Internet classes, and pre-made materials	54	53	42	66	59	55	43	
Internet courses that meet online at specific times and require little or no campus time	41	21	38	52	45	43	37	
Courses that incorporate pre-made materials, e.g., DVDs and CDs and require little or no campus time	39	20	31	47	52	43	37	

<sup>3</sup> Participants rated “5” or “4” on a 5-point scale where 5 = “very appealing” and 1 = “not at all appealing.”



- ◆ **Fast Track Options:** Participants who would consider (strongly or possibly) earning an Associate’s or 4-year degree within the next 5 years were asked for their reaction to “fast track” programs, “*which allow faster completion of degrees and require more self-learning outside of class. For example, a student attending class just one night a week for 4 hours could still complete an Associate’s Degree in 2 years.*”

There is significant interest in this option, particularly among consumers age 20+; in all of these age groups, between half and two-thirds of participants would be interested (rated “5” or “4”). Not surprising, teens are less enthusiastic; 37% find this of interest.

Subjects of interest for fast-track study reflect themes seen previously in the data; business (18%), education (11%) and computer science (6%) are the top three, followed by

- Nursing 5%
- Psychology 5%
- English 4%
- Healthcare 4%
- Communications 3%

**Interest in Fast Track Options (%)**

Among participants who would consider taking a class to earn a 4-year or Associate’s degree in the next 5 years

		Age						
		Total	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
n=		(291)	(84)	(29)	(43)	(52)	(44)	(36)
5 = “Very Interested”		29	12	41	39	31	32	42
4		22	25	14	21	25	25	19
3		23	32	24	19	23	20	6
2		16	24	17	19	8	11	8
1 = “Not at all Interested”		10	7	3	2	13	11	25

#### D. Awareness and Impressions of Harper College

To position Harper for the future, it is critical to understand the extent to which the College is known, and how it is regarded, within the communities that it serves. Such feedback can provide input for program development, as well as communications strategy.

Some of these measures, if taken at a later date, can be particularly helpful for tracking the success of marketing efforts.

***Top-of-Mind Colleges and Universities:*** Participants were asked to name up to three colleges and universities in the area which come to mind first. This information is important to measure, as it conveys a sense of which institutions are most present – through outreach, word-of-mouth, excellence in programming, etc. – in residents' minds. As well, there is a strong correlation between top-of-mind awareness and willingness to consider for one's own use, and/or willingness to recommend to others.

Of all the colleges and universities in the area, Harper is “top-of-mind” for the highest percentage of participants: 32% mention it, unaided. All of the other schools which receive mention by more than 5% of participants are 4-year institutions, and Oakton Community College is the second-most mentioned community college with 5% of mentions.

- ◆ It is interesting to note that the public institutions, Harper and University of Illinois-Chicago, are far more likely to receive mention from 16-24 year olds than is Northwestern University. The latter is only mentioned by 7% and 8% of 16-19 and 20-24 year olds, respectively. These younger participants are most likely to be in college and/or have college on their minds...and Harper is at the forefront.

**Unaided Recall of Area Colleges and Universities (%)**

Responses mentioned by at least 3% of participants

Multiple Responses Accepted

	n=	Age Category						
		Total	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
		<b>(694)</b>	<b>(101)</b>	<b>(85)</b>	<b>(125)</b>	<b>(125)</b>	<b>(126)</b>	<b>(125)</b>
<b>Harper College</b>		<b>32</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>
Northwestern University		24	7	8	26	24	36	33
University of Illinois – Chicago		22	22	22	23	18	25	22
Roosevelt University		10	2	12	8	10	14	12
DePaul University		9	7	11	9	9	11	11
University of Chicago		9	6	14	8	9	11	8
Loyola University Chicago		6	7	3	9	4	4	7
Northeastern Illinois University		5	5	3	6	9	5	3
Oakton Community College		5	7	9	6	4	1	3
College of DuPage		3	1	3	5	3	1	5
Elgin Community College		3	3	2	4	2	2	3

**Aided Awareness:** When prompted with names of selected schools, Harper College still emerges as the best known community college; familiar to all but 4% of area residents. College of DuPage is a close second, with 90% recall, followed by Oakton Community College (79%), Elgin Community College (63%), College of Lake County (61%), and McHenry Community College (38%).

**Total Recall of Selected Colleges and Universities (Aided and Unaided %)**

	n=	Age						
		Total	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
		<b>(694)</b>	<b>(101)</b>	<b>(85)</b>	<b>(125)</b>	<b>(125)</b>	<b>(126)</b>	<b>(125)</b>
<b>Harper College</b>		<b>96</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>98</b>
College of DuPage		90	82	91	89	93	91	91
Oakton Community College		79	62	74	71	86	89	85
Elgin Community College		63	51	62	52	69	69	72
College of Lake County		61	47	65	53	70	67	67
McHenry Community College		38	27	45	34	38	44	41

***Impressions of Harper College:*** Participants were told – well into the survey, after views on higher education and awareness of area institutions was established – that Harper College was sponsoring the research. When participants were asked their opinion of what Harper is best known for, quality education and variety of programs/class hours were mentioned most often (17% and 15%, respectively). Availability of Associate’s degrees, prep for 4-year college, and the nursing program were each mentioned by between 5%–10% of respondents; nursing was the only specific program mentioned, suggesting that it has visibility in the community.

It is also important to note the prevalence of “don’t know” responses; one in four participants cannot say what Harper is best known for...suggesting they don’t know a lot about the College.

- ◆ Participants who have taken a course at Harper College, versus those who have not, are significantly more likely to say that Harper is known for providing *quality education* (23% vs. 14%, respectively), and are significantly less likely to say they “don’t know” what Harper offers (21% vs. 31%).

**“What is Harper College best known for?” (%)**  
 Responses mentioned by at least 3% of participants  
 Multiple Responses Accepted

	n=	Age						Taken a Harper Class in Past 5 Years		
		Total	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Yes	No
		(694)	(101)	(85)	(125)	(125)	(126)	(125)	(258)	(436)
Quality education		17	23	18	13	18	14	18	23	14
Variety of programs/flexible class hrs.		15	14	14	17	12	13	18	17	13
Offering 2-year/Associate’s Degrees		10	5	9	11	10	13	11	12	9
Prep for 4-year colleges		8	8	6	6	7	12	8	7	9
Nursing program		8	6	7	2	10	13	10	8	8
Low cost/affordability		5	4	8	6	4	3	3	5	4
Convenience		4	5	6	6	3	1	3	4	4
Continuing education		3	4	3	5	2	3	3	3	4
Status as “local community college”		3	3	3	3	4	4	1	2	3
Don/t Know/No Answer		28	29	20	34	32	23	26	21	31

***Appropriateness of Harper's Mission:*** Participants were told that “*Harper College’s mission is to be a comprehensive community college dedicated to providing excellent education at an affordable cost, promoting personal growth, enriching the local community and meeting the challenges of a global society.*” They were asked to rate the “appropriateness” of that stated mission.

The results convey that Harper College’s formal mission is consistent with area consumers’ expectations of what the College should be doing; 82% of participants believe that the mission is “appropriate” (rated “5” or “4” on a 5-point scale where 5 = “very appropriate” and 1 = “not at all appropriate”). This high level of approval is not surprising given that the characteristics of affordability, promoting personal growth, and enriching the local community were all mentioned as intrinsic to the role of community colleges.

- ◆ There are no significant differences in perceived appropriateness of the mission when analyzed by age, or by experience with Harper.

Participants who rated this mission as “not appropriate” (“2” or “1” on the same scale) were asked why they felt that way. Keeping in mind the small cell size (n=34), the largest single response had to do with “*had bad experiences at Harper.*”

Other criticisms included

- ◆ Don’t know much about Harper;
- ◆ Harper is “*not a global resource*”;
- ◆ Belief that this mission is “*too lofty*”, and
- ◆ Concerns about Harper’s accessibility (cost and distance).

**Appropriateness of Harper College's Mission (%)**

		Age						Taken a Harper Class in Past 5 Years		
		Total	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Yes	No
n=		(694)	(101)	(85)	(125)	(125)	(126)	(125)	(258)	(436)
5 = "Very Appropriate"		48	45	47	42	50	52	49	48	47
4		34	39	33	37	37	28	32	36	33
3		14	14	12	17	9	15	14	12	14
2		2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2
1 = "Not at all Appropriate"		3	1	6	3	3	3	2	2	3

***Impressions of Harper College:*** General impressions of Harper College are very positive. Roughly eight in ten participants “agree” (rated “5” or “4” on a 5-point scale where 5 = “agree strongly” and 1 = “disagree strongly”) that *Harper College has a good reputation, that it offers classes and programs that are affordable to most residents of this area, and that it does a good job of meeting the educational needs of this community.*

However, participants are somewhat mixed on their overall willingness to recommend Harper; less than half (40%) agree “strongly” that they would, and 26% agree “somewhat.” Despite real respect for Harper, the possibility remains that some people with a 4-year degree might not feel comfortable recommending a community college, and most residents of this district have (or aspire to earn) a 4-year degree.

**Impressions of Harper College (%)**

	<b>5 = “Agree Strongly”</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1 = “Disagree Strongly”</b>	<b>Don’t Know</b>
Harper College has a good reputation	58	27	9	2	1	3
Harper College offers classes and programs that are affordable to most residents of this area	51	29	11	2	1	7
Harper College does a good job of meeting the educational needs of this community	43	35	13	2	1	6
If I had a relative or friend considering colleges, I would recommend Harper	40	26	20	5	6	3



When impressions of Harper are analyzed by key subgroups, a few findings emerge.

- ◆ Likelihood to recommend Harper is lowest among teens (16-19)...suggesting that teens may be more focused on 4-year colleges.
- ◆ Residents who have taken a class at Harper are significantly more likely to feel that it is *affordable to most residents of the area* (86% agree, vs. 76% of consumers who have not taken a class at Harper recently).

**Impressions of Harper College (%)**

Top-Two Box Scores<sup>4</sup>

	Age						Taken a Harper Class in Past 5 Years	
	16-19 (101)	20-24 (85)	25-34 (125)	35-44 (125)	45-54 (126)	55+ (125)	Yes (258)	No (436)
Harper College has a good reputation	85	81	78	90	88	90	86	85
Harper College offers classes and programs which are affordable to most residents of this area	94	82	73	76	77	82	86	76
Harper College does a good job of meeting the educational needs of this community	86	77	67	82	76	81	80	76
If I had a relative or friend considering colleges, I would recommend Harper	61	66	58	73	64	72	67	65

<sup>4</sup> Participants rated “5” or “4” on a 5-point scale where 5 = “agree strongly” and 1 = “disagree strongly.”

**Assessing Harper’s Performance:** Using a familiar scale, participants were asked to rate Harper on several key dimensions. Harper does quite well; on most dimensions, between two-thirds and three-quarters of participants grant Harper an “A” or “B” grade. The exceptions to this are aspects of the College that people simply don’t know about; 29% “don’t know” how to grade it on *meeting the needs of retirees*, 22% “don’t know” whether it *offers individual attention to students*, and 18% can’t comment on its ability to *offer new classes in response to societal needs and trends*.

**Harper College’s Report Card (%)**

	<b>A = Excellent</b>	<b>B = Good</b>	<b>C = Fair</b>	<b>D = Poor</b>	<b>F = Failure</b>	<b>Don’t Know</b>
Offering programs for people who want to complete a degree	45	30	10	2	1	12
Offering enrichment classes which promote personal growth	42	34	12	2	1	10
Offering classes at times convenient for working adults	41	36	9	1	1	13
Offering programs for people who want to change their professions	39	32	12	2	1	13
Offering classes which would be helpful to you professionally	35	32	15	3	2	11
Offering individualized attention to students	24	32	19	2	2	22
Offering new classes in response to societal needs/trends	25	39	14	2	2	18
Meeting the educational needs of retirees	18	31	18	3	1	29

- ◆ When analysis of "A" grades is performed by age groups, an interesting pattern emerges: teens (16-19) are most likely to regard Harper highly, while those in the middle age groups (25-54) are least likely to give Harper high marks. Older participants are more likely to rate Harper's performance highly.
- ◆ Somewhat disappointing is the fact that people who have recently taken a course at Harper are no more likely to give it "A" grades than are people who have not.

**Harper College's Report Card (%)**  
"A" Grades Only

	Age						Taken a Harper Class in Past 5 Years	
	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	Yes	No
n=	(101)	(85)	(125)	(125)	(126)	(125)	(258)	(436)
Offering programs for people who want to complete a degree	60	53	35	43	34	48	45	45
Offering enrichment classes that promote personal growth	55	37	32	38	44	46	39	43
Offering classes at times convenient for working adults	51	52	27	43	36	41	44	38
Offering programs for people who want to change their professions	57	47	28	36	41	34	42	38
Offering classes that would be helpful to you professionally	58	34	25	34	29	37	33	37
Offering individualized attention to students	42	28	17	21	19	24	24	24
Offering new classes in response to societal needs/trends	38	29	16	23	18	30	26	24
Meeting the educational needs of retirees	32	15	10	17	14	23	17	19

On most aspects of its performance, current students (not necessarily at Harper) are the most complimentary of Harper. Participants who work full-time are least likely to grade it highly; only 33% give Harper an “A” for *offering classes at times that are convenient for working adults*, and only 29% provide an “A” for *offering classes which would be helpful to you professionally*.

**Harper College’s Report Card (%)**  
 “A” Grades Only

	Employment Status				
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Retired	Homemaker	Student
n=	(334)	(142)	(49)	(62)	(72)
Offering programs for people who want to complete a degree	39	50	55	37	57
Offering enrichment classes that promote personal growth	37	49	47	45	39
Offering classes at times convenient for working adults	33	47	45	40	56
Offering programs for people who want to change their professions	34	51	37	31	51
Offering classes that would be helpful to you professionally	29	39	41	31	51
Offering individualized attention to students	18	32	25	19	37
Offering new classes in response to societal needs/trends	21	27	27	24	32
Meeting the educational needs of retirees	14	23	22	19	21

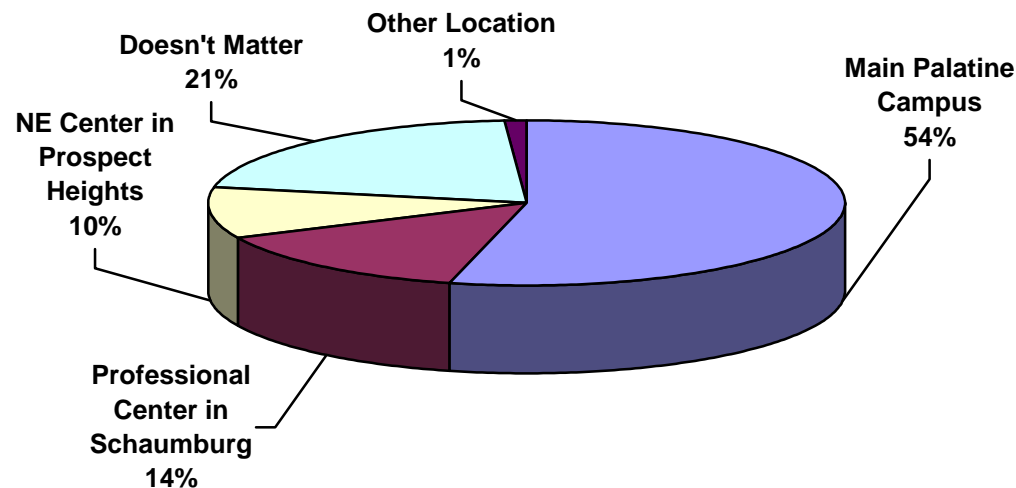
### E. Preferences for Taking Classes at Harper

At this point in the survey, participants were aware that the research was being sponsored by Harper. As such, they were asked to indicate their level of interest in some new programs that Harper is considering offering; the results can be helpful to Harper in seeking State accreditation and approval, and in program planning.

***Preferred Location for Classes:*** Participants were asked where they would prefer to meet if they were taking classes at Harper. Overall, participants would prefer to take classes at the main Palatine campus (54%). There is significantly less interest in the Harper Professional Center in Schaumburg (14%) and in the Northeast Center in Prospect Heights (10%), though the percentages of people who prefer these locations is not trivial and can be considered in facilities planning.

There are no significant differences in location preferences between segments.

**Preferred Meeting Locations for Harper Classes (%)**

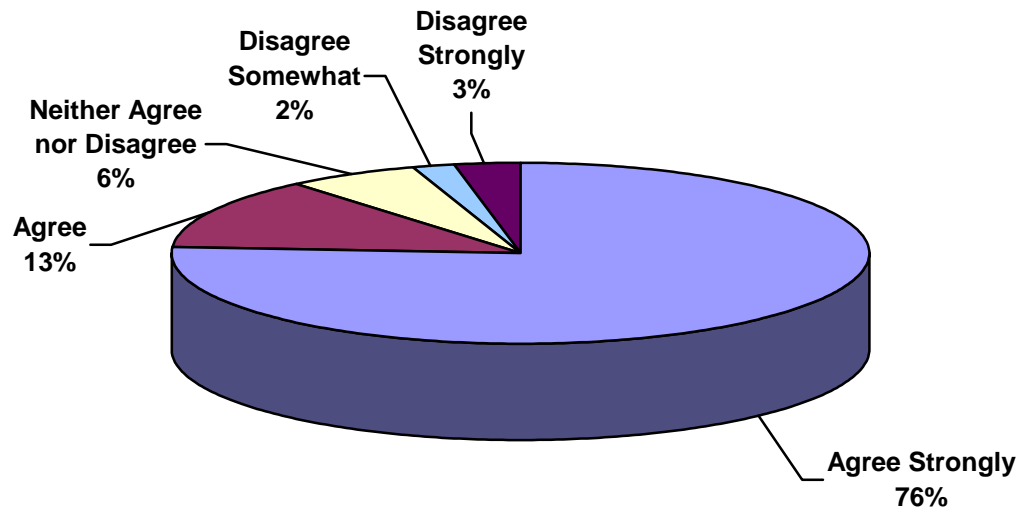


**Interest in Bachelor's Degree Programs from Harper:** Harper College is in the process of exploring the possibility of offering selected Bachelor's degree programs in areas of high workforce need. To gain support for this initiative, particularly from the State of Illinois, participants were asked to rate their approval of this expansion using a 5-point scale where 5 = "strongly agree" with Harper's consideration of this and 1 = "strongly disagree."

The results show that there is a great deal of community support for Harper offering Bachelor's degrees. Over three-quarters of respondents report that they "agree strongly" (rated "5") on this initiative and only 5% of participants disagree with it (rated "2" or "1"). High levels of support come from across the board regardless of age, education, current employment status, interest in taking classes in the future, etc.

**"Do you think Harper should offer Bachelor's degrees in targeted areas with high workforce need?" (%)**

On a 5-point scale where 5 = "agree strongly," and 1 = "disagree strongly"



**Likelihood to Consider Bachelor’s Degrees from Harper College:** Harper has identified, based on employer needs and consumer interest, four possible Bachelor’s degree programs: Homeland Security, Nursing, Technology Management, and Education.

Clearly Harper is on the right track, as far as residents’ desires are concerned, with its selection of each of these programs. More than four in ten (44%) participants say they would consider (rated “5” or “4”) a Bachelor’s in Education; 34% and 31%, respectively, would consider Technology Management and Nursing. Consideration of Homeland Security is lower...but nearly one-quarter of participants say they would consider it (22%).

**Likelihood to Consider Bachelor’s Degree Programs (%)**

Among participants who rate their support of Harper offering Bachelor’s as “5,” “4” or “3.”

	5 = “Very Likely”	4	3	2	1 = “Not at all Likely”
Bachelor’s in Education	27	17	16	8	32
Bachelor’s in Technology Management, that is, information technology, manufacturing and electronics	19	15	17	10	40
Bachelor’s in Nursing	19	12	10	9	50
Bachelor’s in Homeland Security, that is, criminal justice, fire science and emergency management	13	9	14	9	55

There are some distinct differences in likelihood to consider Bachelor's programs depending on consumers' age and life stage.

- ◆ Teens are most likely to consider all of the programs, followed by residents in their early twenties. Education is most popular with both age groups; 58% of 16-19 year olds would be likely to consider a Bachelor's in that subject, and 50% of 20-24 year olds.

**Likelihood to Consider Bachelor's Degree Programs (%)**

Among participants who rated their support of Harper offering Bachelor's as "5," "4" or "3."

		Age					
		16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
n=		(99)	(75)	(122)	(122)	(115)	(117)
Bachelor's in Education		58	50	37	40	43	40
Bachelor's in Technology Management, that is, information technology, manufacturing and electronics		40	41	26	32	32	35
Bachelor's in Nursing		35	39	25	24	31	34
Bachelor's in Homeland Security, that is, criminal justice, fire science and emergency management		33	28	16	17	20	21



## F. Communication and Outreach

Part of Harper's challenge is to get the word out about all that it has to offer community residents. As such, it is critical to gain understanding of how people prefer to learn about the educational options that are available to them generally, and from Harper College specifically.

**Sources used to learn about higher education:** Clearly, the Internet has truly arrived as the source for information about higher education (and, for that matter, information about most other subjects). Certainly some of the other sources (e.g., guidance counselor, mailings to the home, etc.) can be used in conjunction with the Internet, and/or as an introduction to an institution of higher learning; an example might be a mailer which prompts the recipient to look on the Internet for more information.

Specific Internet sites and search engines that users (n=339) look to for information about higher education include (mentioned by at least 2% of participants)

◆ Web sites of specific institutions	55%
◆ Google	21%
◆ Unspecified search engines	9%
◆ College Board web site	6%
◆ Yahoo	5%
◆ College View	2%
◆ AOL	2%
◆ Princeton Review	2%

There are a few variations by age:

- ◆ Residents 55+ are less likely to use the Internet than are younger people (36% use it, versus 55% of 16-19 year olds), but it is important to note that it still is the leading source in this age group.
- ◆ Not surprisingly, younger participants (those still in high school, just graduated, or in college) are more likely to turn to their guidance counselors for advice than are other age groups.

**Sources of Information to Learn About Higher Education (%)**

Responses mentioned by at least 3% of respondents

Multiple Responses Accepted

	n=	Age						
		Total	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
		(694)	(101)	(85)	(125)	(125)	(126)	(125)
Internet		49	55	53	58	50	45	36
Guidance counselors		17	32	22	14	11	17	13
Word-of-mouth		16	18	19	18	14	17	14
Mailings to home		16	7	14	13	18	23	17
School catalogues		8	8	8	6	4	9	11
School guidebooks		4	6	1	4	3	5	3
Newspapers		4	--	--	1	3	5	11

**Reaching Residents with Information about Harper College:** Direct mail and e-mails are the top two sources preferred for learning about course availability at Harper College. Among younger participants (16-19, and 20-24) preferences are roughly equivalent; however, in the older age groups, the preference for direct mail is overwhelming (61% of participants 55+ want mail vs. 18% who want e-mails).

**Single Preferred Source of Information to Learn about Courses at Harper College (%)**

Responses mentioned by at least 3% of respondents

	n=	Age						
		Total	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
		<b>(694)</b>	<b>(101)</b>	<b>(85)</b>	<b>(125)</b>	<b>(125)</b>	<b>(126)</b>	<b>(125)</b>
Mailings to your home		60	33	45	59	74	76	61
E-mails to home or business		22	37	36	23	13	12	18
Telephone contact		7	14	6	6	7	3	6
Harper College web site		5	6	7	5	3	5	4
Inserts in local paper		3	2	1	2	2	2	6

For events, home mailings and e-mails remain the top two preferred sources of information. Teens (16-19) are split down the middle in terms of their preference; however, in the older age groups mailings are definitely preferred over e-mail.

**Single Preferred Source of Information to Learn about Events at Harper College, such as Cultural and Sporting Events (%)**

Responses mentioned by at least 3% of respondents

	n=	Age						
		Total	16-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
		<b>(694)</b>	<b>(101)</b>	<b>(85)</b>	<b>(125)</b>	<b>(125)</b>	<b>(126)</b>	<b>(125)</b>
Mailings to your home		57	38	49	56	67	67	58
E-mails to home or business		22	35	33	27	17	11	15
Inserts in local newspaper		8	3	6	3	5	13	14
Telephone contact		4	12	2	3	5	1	2
Harper College web site		4	7	4	5	3	3	3

## APPENDIX



The Melior Group  
 2002 Ludlow Street  
 Philadelphia, PA 19103  
 (215) 545-0054

**Education  
 Community Needs Assessment  
 Draft 1/29/07**

**QUOTAS:  
 100 16-19 y.o.  
 150 20-24 y.o.  
 125 25-34 y.o.  
 125 35-44 y.o.  
 125 45-54 y.o.  
 125 55+ y.o.**

Hello, I am \_\_\_\_\_, calling from \_\_\_\_\_, a marketing research company. We are calling to talk with you about higher education, that is, post high school. Your phone number was selected at random. We're just interested in hearing your opinions.

Please be assured that this is for marketing research purposes only: your answers are completely confidential, and we are not selling anything. The survey will take no more than 15 minutes.

Before we go ahead with the survey, I have a few questions to ask you to make sure that you qualify. May I begin?

A. What is the name of the town that you live in, or is closest to you? [READ IF NECESSARY. TERMINATE IF NOT ON LIST]

Arlington Heights	Lake Barrington
Barrington	Mount Prospect
Barrington Hills	North Barrington
Buffalo Grove	Palatine
Carpentersville	Prospect Heights
Deer Park	Rolling Meadows
Des Plaines	Roselle
Elk Grove Village	Schaumburg
Fox River Grove	South Barrington
Hanover Park	Tower Lakes
Hoffman Estates	Wheeling
Inverness	Other → TERMINATE

B. What is your age? [DO NOT READ]

- <16---TERMINATE, CAN GET REFERRAL TO SOMEONE ELSE IN HOUSEHOLD
- 16 – 19 QUOTA 100→ B1. Are you currently in high school?
  - Yes → B2. What grade are you in? [DO NOT READ]
    - 9 (Freshman)→ TERMINATE, GET REFERRAL
    - 10 (Sophomore)→ TERMINATE, GET REFERRAL
    - 11 (Junior)
    - 12 (Senior)
  - No
- 20 – 24 QUOTA 150
- 25 – 34 QUOTA 125
- 35 – 44 QUOTA 125
- 45 – 54 QUOTA 125
- 55 – 64 QUOTA 125 FOR PEOPLE OVER 55
- 64+

C. Do you or does anyone in your household work for a marketing research firm, advertising or public relations firm?

- Yes →TERMINATE
- No

D. What is the highest level of education you have completed so far? [READ]

- Less than high school
- High school graduate
- Some college/vocational or technical school
- Associate's degree
- College graduate/4 year degree
- Post graduate
- [DO NOT READ] Refused/Don't Know

E. [DO NOT READ] Record Gender:

- Male
- Female

1. When you think of colleges and universities in your area, which come to mind first? [DO NOT READ. ACCEPT UP TO 3]

- |                                      |                                      |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Argosy University/Chicago         | 21. National-Louis University        |
| 2. Chicago State University          | 22. North Park University            |
| 3. Christian Life College            | 23. Northeastern Illinois University |
| 4. College of DuPage (COD)           | 24. Northwestern University          |
| 5. College of Lake County (CLC)      | 25. Oakton Community College         |
| 6. Depaul University                 | 26. Olympia College                  |
| 7. DeVry University                  | 27. Prairie State College            |
| 8. East-West University              | 28. Robert Morris College            |
| 9. Elgin Community College           | 29. Roosevelt University             |
| 10. Harper College                   | 30. Rush University                  |
| 11. Illinois College Of Optometry    | 31. Saint Xavier University          |
| 12. Illinois Institute of Technology | 32. Spertus College                  |
| 13. John Marshall Law School, The    | 33. St. Augustine College            |
| 14. Kendall College                  | 34. The Soma Institute               |
| 15. Lewis University                 | 35. University of Chicago            |
| 16. Lexington College                | 36. University of Illinois - Chicago |
| 17. Loyola University Chicago        | 37. Westwood College                 |
| 18. MacCormac College                | 38. Other (specify)_____             |
| 19. McHenry Community College (MCC)  | 39. Other (specify)_____             |
| 20. NAES College                     | 40. Other (specify)_____             |

2. [FOR THOSE NOT MENTIONED IN Q1] Please tell me whether you are familiar with the colleges I'll name. [READ. RECORD IF YES]

- College of DuPage
- College of Lake County
- Elgin Community College (pronounced L-GIN)
- Harper College
- McHenry Community College
- Oakton Community College



3. What sources of information do you use to learn about educational options after high school? [DO NOT READ. ACCEPT UP TO 3 ANSWERS]

Internet/websites → 3A. Which websites do you use? [DO NOT READ]

College View

College Board

Websites of specific colleges

Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Guidance Counselor

School Catalogues

School Viewbooks

School Guidebooks

Word of Mouth

Mailings to your home

Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Please complete the following sentences for me:**

4. The purpose of higher education, that is, educational options after high school, is...[DO NOT READ. ACCEPT ONE ANSWER]

To help people get jobs

To provide a liberal arts background

To provide people with job-related skills

To allow people the chance to earn more money

To enhance job security

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

5. The role of a community college is...[DO NOT READ, ACCEPT ONE ANSWER]

To educate community members

To provide affordable education

To be an educational resource for the community

To help businesses train employees

To prepare for transfer to upper division college or university

To help address existing academic challenges (such as did poorly in high school)

Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

6. Using a scale of 5 to 1, where 5 = “agree strongly,” and 1 = “disagree strongly,” please let me know your agreement with each of the following statements. Remember, you can use any number between 5 and 1. [CAN ACCEPT “DON’T KNOW”]

These days you need more than a high school diploma in order to succeed

If I wanted to earn a degree, the first place I would look is my local community college

If my employer suggested taking a course for professional development, the first place I would look is my local community college

7. Within the past 5 years, have you taken any courses at any school other than a high school?

Yes

No → SKIP TO Q9

8. Did you take... [READ EACH, CHECK IF YES FOR EACH ONE. *NOTE TO PROGRAMMER*: OPTIONS SHOULD BE “YES” “NO” “DON’T KNOW”]

- Taking courses to earn an Associate’s degree
- Taking courses to earn a 4-year degree
- Taking courses to earn a Certificate
- Taking courses to earn a graduate level degree
- Taking courses for personal enrichment, not as part of a
- Taking courses for professional development, not as part of a degree

(IF YES TO ANY, ASK 8a and 8b)

8a. In what subject(s)? [DO NOT READ]

Accounting	Emergency Medical Services (EMS)	Nursing
Anthropology	English	Paralegal Studies
Art	ESL (English as Second Language)	Pharmacy
Astronomy	Financial Services	Physical Education
Biology	Engineering	Physics
Business	Graphic Arts	Political Science
Chemistry	Healthcare	Psychology
Communications	Hospitality Management	Public Safety/Homeland Security
Computer Science	Journalism	Real Estate
Cooking	Linguistics	Sociology
Criminal Justice/Law	Literature	Information Technology
Dental Hygiene	Maintenance	Other (specify)_____
Economics	Management	Don't Know
Education	Marketing	
	Mathematics	

8b. What school(s) did you attend for this?

[DO NOT READ -- INSERT LIST FROM Q1; OK TO ACCEPT MORE THAN ONE]

9. Which one of the following best describes your current employment situation?  
Are you.... [READ]:

- employed full-time, that is, 35 hours a week or more
- employed part-time
- retired
- a homemaker
- a student
- not currently employed

10. How likely is it that you will change the type of work you do or career you are in within the next 5 years? Would you say you ...[READ. ACCEPT ONE]

- Would strongly consider something new,
- Don't know if you would change, OR
- Would never consider making a change
- [DO NOT READ] I'm retired/Not applicable

11. Not counting any courses you are currently taking, in the next 5 years, how likely are you to do each of the following? Please tell me whether you would “STRONGLY CONSIDER,” “POSSIBLY CONSIDER,” or “NEVER CONSIDER”...[READ. PROGRAMMER: INCLUDE “DON’T KNOW” AS A DO NOT READ OPTION]

- [DO NOT ASK IF YES IN Q8] Taking courses to earn an Associate’s degree [If STRONGLY or POSSIBLY CONSIDER, ask 11a, 11b]
- [DO NOT ASK IF YES IN Q8] Taking courses to earn a 4-year degree [If STRONGLY or POSSIBLY CONSIDER, ask 11a, 11b]
- [DO NOT ASK IF YES IN Q8] Taking courses to earn a Certificate [If STRONGLY or POSSIBLY CONSIDER, ask 11a, 11b]
- [DO NOT ASK IF YES IN Q8] Taking courses to earn a graduate level degree
- Taking courses for personal enrichment, not as part of a degree [If STRONGLY or POSSIBLY CONSIDER, ask 11a, 11b]
- Taking courses for professional development, not as part of a degree [If STRONGLY or POSSIBLY CONSIDER, ask 11a, 11b]

11a. What subject(s) are you most likely to pursue?

[DO NOT READ – INSERT SUBJECT CODE LIST from 8a]

11b. At what school are you most likely to go to do that?

[DO NOT READ. INSERT LIST FROM Q1]

Q12 - 16 ARE ONLY FOR RESPONDENTS WHO RESPONDED “STRONGLY CONSIDER” OR “POSSIBLY CONSIDER” TO ANY OPTIONS IN Q11. ALL OTHERS SKIP TO Q17.

**You indicated that you might take a course within the next 5 years. My next questions are about your preferences for how to take those courses.**

12. Would you prefer to take classes...[READ. SELECT ONE]

- in the morning, that is, prior to 11:30 AM
- in the afternoon, that is, from 11:30 AM to 4 PM
- in the evening, that is, from 4PM on, OR
- some combination of times

12a. [IF CHOSE “in the evening”, ASK] What would be your preferred start time? \_\_\_\_\_

13. Would you prefer...[READ. SELECT ONE]

- weekday classes
- weekend classes, OR
- some combination of both

14. Which of the following sounds more appealing to you: [READ. SELECT ONE]

- A. Taking a course that goes on for the traditional 16 weeks, OR
- B. Taking a course that requires the same amount of seat time (that is, time spent in class or on-line) but can last anywhere from 2 – 14 weeks.

14a. [IF PREFER B, ASK] What would be your preference? [DO NOT READ, SELECT ONE]

- 2 weeks
- 3 weeks
- 4 weeks
- 5 weeks
- 6 weeks
- 7 weeks
- 8 weeks
- 9 weeks
- 10 weeks
- 11 weeks
- 12 weeks
- 13 weeks
- 14 weeks
- No preference

15. For each item that I read, please rate how appealing it would be to you. Use a scale of 5 to 1, where 5 means “very appealing” and 1 means “not at all appealing”. You can use any number from 5 to 1. [CAN ACCEPT DON’T KNOW]
- courses which only meet in classrooms on campus
  - internet courses which meet online at specific times and require little or no campus time;
  - internet courses which meet online where students can work on them at a time of their choosing
  - courses which incorporate pre-made materials such as DVDs and CDs and require little or no campus time;
  - courses which incorporate campus classroom time, internet classes, and pre-made materials

16. [FOR RESPONDENTS WHO WOULD “STRONGLY CONSIDER” OR “POSSIBLY CONSIDER” ASSOCIATE’S DEGREES AND/OR 4-YEAR DEGREES IN Q11 ONLY] Fast Track programs allow faster completion of degrees and require more self-learning outside of class. **For example, a student attending class just one night a week for 4 hours could still complete an associate’s degree in 2 years.** Using a scale of 5 to 1, where 5 = “very interested,” and 1 = “not at all interested,” how interested would you be in a Fast Track degree option?

- 5 – “Very interested”
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1 – “Not at all interested”

[FOR THOSE ANSWERING 4 OR 5 IN Q16, ASK]

16a. In what subject would you be interested in pursuing a fast track program?

[DO NOT READ. INSERT SUBJECT LIST from 8a]

17. My client is Harper College, a local community college located in Palatine. In your opinion, what is Harper College best known for? [DO NOT READ]

- Quality education
- Associate's/2-Year degrees
- Prep for 4-year colleges
- Low cost/Affordability
- Variety of programs/Flexible hours
- Convenience
- Continuing education
- Nursing program
- Kids summer camps/Community involvement
- Trying to become a 4-year school
- Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_Don't Know

18. If you were to take a class at Harper College, would you most prefer to meet at...[READ. SELECT ONE OPTION]

- Main Palatine campus, OR
- Northeast Center in Prospect Heights, OR
- Harper Professional Center in Schaumburg, OR
- Other non-Harper location (specify)\_\_\_\_\_ OR
- Doesn't matter

19. Harper College's mission is to be a "comprehensive community college dedicated to providing excellent education at an affordable cost, promoting personal growth, enriching the local community and meeting the challenges of a global society." Using a scale of 5 to 1 where "5 = Very Appropriate" and "1 = Not at all appropriate", to what extent is this mission statement appropriate for Harper College? [INTERVIEWER: RE-READ MISSION STATEMENT IF NECESSARY]

- 5 – "Very appropriate"
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1 – "Not at all appropriate"

19a. [IF ANSWER 2 OR 1, ASK] Why do you give that answer? \_\_\_\_\_

20. For each characteristic that I read, please grade Harper College. You don't need to have had direct experience with Harper College; your answers can be based on your impressions. Please use a standard grading scale where A= Excellent, B = Good, C = Fair, D = Poor, and F = Failure. [CAN ACCEPT "DON'T KNOW"]

- Offering classes at times convenient for working adults
- Offering programs which would be helpful to you professionally
- Offering enrichment classes which promote personal growth
- Offering individualized attention to students
- Offering new classes in response to societal needs/trends
- Meeting the educational needs of retirees
- Offering programs for people who want to change their professions
- Offering programs for people who want to complete a degree

21. Using a scale of 5 to 1, where 5 = "agree strongly," and 1 = "disagree strongly," please let me know your agreement with each of the following statements. Remember, you can use any number between 5 and 1. (CAN ACCEPT "DON'T KNOW")

- Harper College has a good reputation.
- If I had a relative or friend considering colleges, I'd recommend Harper
- Harper College does a good job of meeting the educational needs of the community
- Harper College offers classes and programs which are affordable to most residents of this area

22. What would be the single best way to reach you with information about courses at Harper College? [DO NOT READ. ACCEPT ONE ANSWER ONLY]

- Mailings to your home
- Inserts in your local newspaper
- Harper College website
- Emails to your home or business
- TV/radio
- Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_



23. What would be the single best way to reach you with information about events at Harper College, such as cultural and sporting events? [DO NOT READ. ACCEPT ONE ANSWER ONLY]

- mailings to your home
- Inserts in your local newspaper
- Harper College website
- Emails to your home or business
- TV/Radio
- Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_

24. As you may have heard, Harper College is investigating the possibility of offering selected Bachelor’s Degree programs in targeted areas with high workforce need, such as nursing, education, etc. Using a 5-point scale where 5 is “strongly agree” and 1 is “strongly disagree”, do you think Harper should offer bachelor degrees in targeted areas with high workforce need?

- 5 “Strongly agree”
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1 “Strongly Disagree”

25. [ASK ONLY OF PEOPLE WHO RESPOND 5, 4, OR 3 IN Q25] If Harper College were approved by the state to offer workplace based bachelor degree programs, how likely would you be to consider each of the following? Please use a scale from 5 to 1 where 5 = “very likely” and 1 = “not at all likely”

Bachelors degree in Homeland Security [READ IF NECESSARY: that is, criminal justice, fire science and emergency management]

Bachelors degree in nursing

Bachelors degree in technology management [READ IF NECESSARY: that is, information technology, manufacturing, and electronics]

Bachelors degree in education

The following questions are for classification purposes only.

26. How would you describe your race or ethnicity? [DO NOT READ]

- White/Caucasian
- Black/African-American
- Hispanic/Latina
- Asian
- Of mixed race
- Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_

27. Do you have children under the age of 16 living in your home?

- Yes → 28a. What children's programs, if any, have they attended at Harper College within the last 5 years? [DO NOT READ. MULTIPLE ANSWERS ALLOWED]
  - Summer Camp/InZone Camp
  - Music Academy
  - Preschool
  - Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_
  - None
- No

28. Would you like to receive more information about Harper College?

Yes → 29a. Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address (including city and zip code)\_\_\_\_\_

No

**Thank you for your time!**