

**Harper College**  
**Results of 2009-2012 Transfer Graduate Survey**

*Prepared by the Office of Institutional Research  
Teaming to serve research needs of the College  
September 25, 2013*

## Executive Summary

Background: Every year the Office of Institutional Research administers the Transfer Graduate Survey to graduates from the previous year who were awarded the Associate in Arts, Associate of Arts in Teaching, Associate in Science, Associate in Engineering Science, and Associate in Fine Arts degrees. Questions in the survey and the responses to those questions reported in this report include aspects regarding employment, current educational status as well as aspects regarding graduates' satisfaction with their experience at Harper (e.g., student services, instruction, etc.).

Response Rate: In fiscal year 2012 (Summer 2011-Spring 2012), Harper College produced a total of 3,822 graduates. Of those graduates, 1,300 were identified as graduates who earned a transfer degree. The data presented in this report is from the 553 transfer graduates who responded in the late fall of 2012 and winter of 2013. The response rate to the survey was 43 percent. The responses collected from the 2012 class equaled the number of responses from the 2011 class (553) and continued a trend of a higher number of transfer graduates responding to the survey.

Educational Objective: The objective most frequently selected for attending Harper College was to take coursework to transfer to another college (87%). Given the sample of this survey (those awarded transfer degrees), this finding is not surprising. A small number of respondents reported their objective to obtain skills needed for entry into employment, though this is lower than in previous years (from 11% in 2010 to 6% in 2012). In 2012, an overwhelming majority of respondents indicated that their objective was achieved with 94 percent selecting either “*Very Successful*” or “*Successful*”, which is consistent with success in achieving objective in the previous three years (from 95% in 2009 to 97% in 2011).

Instruction: Overall, all the ratings of all aspects of instruction at Harper have improved from 2009 to 2012. The highest rated aspect of instruction was class size, improving to 70 percent in 2012 in the “*Excellent*” category, compared to 63 percent in 2009. Quality of instruction at 50 percent received the lowest “*Excellent*” rating in 2012, which was the lowest level of satisfaction for that aspect in the past four years.

Student Services: With regard to satisfaction with student services, there was fluctuation with satisfaction of these services, with student activities receiving considerable satisfaction increases (from 25% in 2011 to 42% in 2012) and access for the disabled on campus receiving decreases in satisfaction (from 77% in 2011 to 69% in 2012). The service with the lowest levels of satisfaction across the four year time period is career planning, which did not surpass 50 percent of respondents selecting “*Very Satisfied*”, whereas all other services received at least 50 percent “*Very Satisfied*”.

Educational Status: The 2012 respondents were consistently enrolled full-time (58%) compared to the previous three years. Another 12 percent of 2012 respondents indicated they were enrolled part-time. Of those not enrolled in higher education, 22 percent have plans to enroll later while less than 10 percent had no plans to enroll. The trends of these two categories appear to mirror each other over the past four years. For example, in 2010, those not enrolled but planning to enroll dipped down to 17 percent while in that same year those not enrolled without any plans to

enroll peaked at 11 percent. The results from 2012 show an increase in those planning to enroll (22%).

Transferring Credits: Since 2009, the percentage of respondents indicating that not all of their credits transferred has increased, from 18 percent in 2009 to 27 percent in 2012. Of those who were unable to transfer all of their credits, almost half (44% in 2012) stated that some of their Harper credits transferred only as electives.

Employment Status: The category with the most responses regarding employment was part-time, with 40 percent of the 2012 respondents selecting this option. During this four year time period, roughly 30 percent of respondents were employed full time. Those who were unemployed and seeking employment increased to 13 percent in 2012. Of those who are unemployed and not seeking employment, a clear majority in 2012 (81%) indicated they were full-time students although this is a decrease from 92 percent in 2011.

Recommending & Returning to Harper: A resounding percentage of respondents would **recommend Harper College to friends and family**. Only 2 percent of respondents answered with a “No” or “Definitely No”. This result has not fluctuated much since 2009, with 98 percent of 2012 respondents indicated “Yes” or “Definitely Yes”. When asked whether they would **return to Harper for courses in the future**, a similar pattern was observed. While the overall percentage of respondents selecting “No” or “Definitely No” has not significantly increased, the proportion selecting “Definitely Yes” has fluctuated from 34 percent in 2011 to 51 percent in 2012.

Comparison between Career Graduates and Transfer Graduates: Each year Harper also conducts a separate survey of students who complete its career Associate of Applied Science degree and certificate programs. Some categories and questions were offered to both Career graduates and Transfer graduates. Notable comparisons of responses between those two surveys of 2012 graduates include:

- **Instruction:** The transfer graduates responded more positively regarding class size (70% for transfer vs. 65% for career) while career graduates responded more positively to all other aspects of instruction at Harper, especially faculty concern for students (63% for career vs. 52% for transfer).
- **Student services:** Transfer graduates responded more positively with respect to college transfer planning (52% for transfer vs. 43% for career) and tutoring (60% for transfer vs. 54% for career) while career graduates responded more positively to student activities (53% for career vs. 47% for transfer) and library/audio visual services (72% for career vs. 66% for transfer).
- **Appreciation for cultural diversity:** Both groups responded positively to this question, but over time, 21 percent of career graduates responded with a “No” or “Definitely No” whereas 14 percent of transfer graduates offered that negative rating.
- **Recommending Harper to others and return to Harper in the future:** Responses from both groups have been overwhelmingly positive, with “Definitely Yes” increasing considerably from 2011 to 2012; for recommending Harper, transfer graduates have consistently been

more positive (76% for transfer vs. 64% for career), whereas for returning to Harper career graduates were more positive in 2012 (60% for career vs. 51% for transfer).

*September 25, 2013*

## Introduction

The Harper College Transfer Graduate Survey was administered, with the assistance of Comiskey Research who administered phone surveying, to Harper alumni who graduated in 2012 with transfer degrees (Associate in Arts, Associate of Arts in Teaching, Associate in Science, Associate in Engineering Science, and Associate in Fine Arts degrees). In fall 2012, graduates were initially surveyed via an e-mailed questionnaire. Those who did not respond to that electronic survey were then contacted by telephone. There was one final follow-up mailing of paper surveys to remaining non-respondents in spring 2013. The Appendix contains the actual survey instrument.

What is most noticeable when viewing this historical data is the extent to which the responses from 2010 differ from those in 2009, 2011, and, in most cases, 2012. Therefore, many of the subsequent comparisons to previous years in this report do not include 2010 when citing trends over time.

## Results and Discussion

### Demographics

Tables 1 and 2, show two sets of demographic breakouts of all graduates of Harper College from 2009 to 2012. Generally, the demographics of Harper College graduates have remained fairly static with little difference between the career and transfer graduates from the overall graduate population or from the overall respondents to the graduate surveys and the overall graduate population. Graduates were predominantly 19-24 year old white females. Somewhat more than one-third of the graduates were in the 25-40 age group over this period.

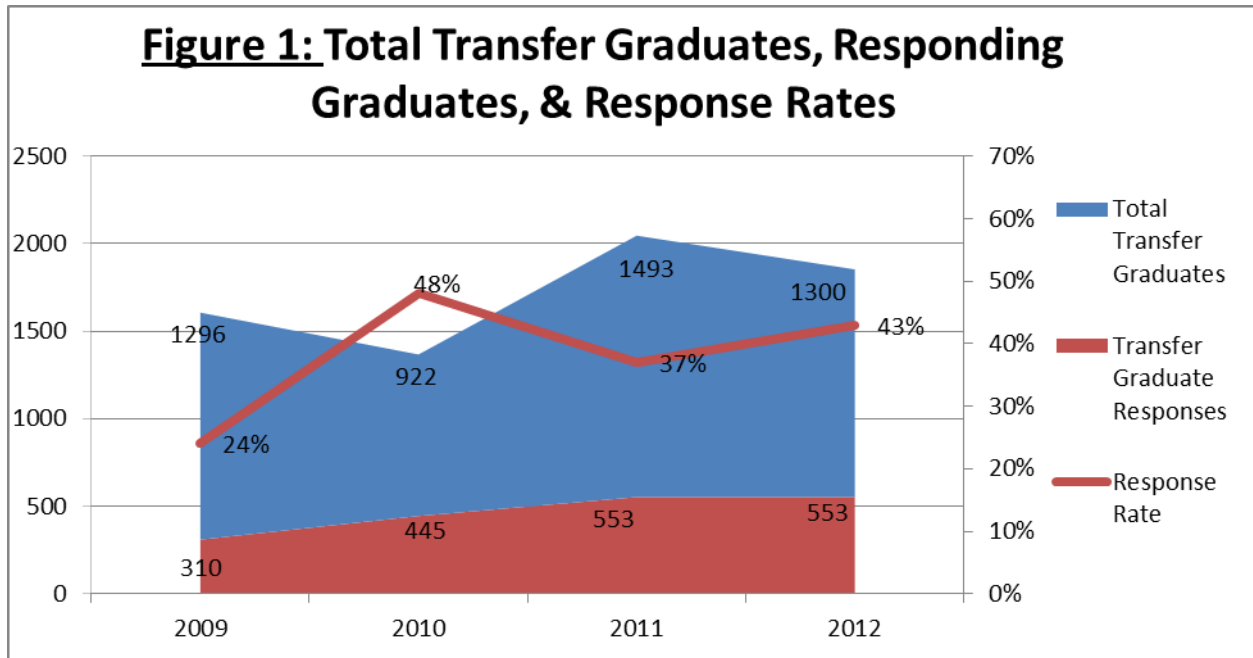
<b>Table 1: Racial/Ethnic Group of Transfer Survey Graduates</b>							<b>Gender</b>	
	Asian/ Pacific Islander*	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	African American	Hispanic	White	Other/ Unknown	Male	Female
2009	9%	1%	3%	9%	69%	9%	36%	64%
2010	10%	<1%	4%	11%	66%	9%	35%	65%
2011	9%	<1%	4%	11%	69%	8%	39%	61%
2012	10%	<1%	4%	13%	66%	8%	39%	61%

\*For 2011 data, the responses, "Asian or Pacific Islander" was combined with "Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander"

<b>Table 2: Age Group of Transfer Survey Graduates</b>				
	18 & Under	19-24	25-40	Over 40
2009	1%	45%	38%	16%
2010	2%	47%	31%	19%
2011	2%	42%	38%	18%
2012	3%	44%	36%	17%

### Response rate

The 1,300 transfer graduates in 2012 were 34 percent of the total 3,822 Harper graduates for 2012. The 553 (43%) of the transfer graduates who responded to the Transfer Graduate Survey accounted for 14.5 percent of the 2012 Harper graduating class. This is a sufficiently large enough sample from which to generalize conclusions about the overall 2012 Harper transfer graduates. Figure 1 and Table 3 below provide the response rates from 2009-2012.



	Response Rate	Responses	Total Transfer Graduates
2009	24%	310	1296
2010	48%	445	922
2011	37%	553	1493
2012	43%	553	1300

### Student objective

Table 4 presents the responses to the first question of the survey, which asks respondents “*What was your main objective in attending Harper College?*” As to be expected with graduates completing a transfer degree, almost 90 percent of respondents indicated that their main objective was to take coursework to transfer to another college or university. The 2012 data reflects similar results as 2011 and 2009, but not 2010. The responses from 2010 show a spike in the objective of obtaining skills needed for entry into a new or different job or to improve skills needed in present job (15%) compared to 7 percent in 2012, 5 percent in 2011, and 8 percent in 2009. Those indicating their intent was to improve skills needed in a present job has fluctuated between 1 and 4 percent over the period analyzed. Those enrolled for personal interest or self-improvement have ranged from 3 to 5 percent over the years.

<b>Table 4: What was your main objective in attending Harper College?</b>						
	N	Obtain skills needed for entry into new or different job	Improve skills needed in present job	Explore courses to decide on a career	Take coursework for transfer to another college	Personal interest or self-improvement
2009	310	7%	1%	2%	87%	3%
2010	439	11%	4%	2%	79%	5%
2011	551	4%	1%	1%	89%	5%
2012	551	6%	1%	2%	87%	4%

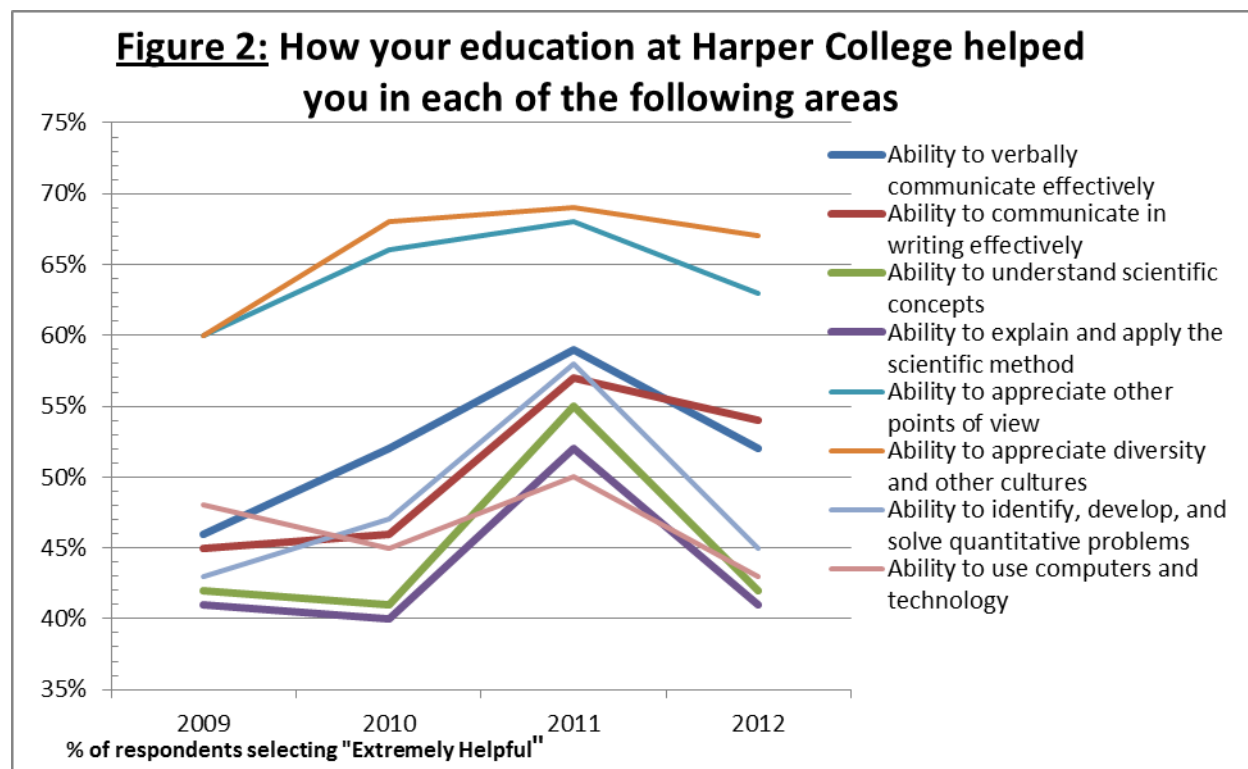
### Achievement of objective

Table 5 shows the extent to which respondents were successful in achieving their objective by attending Harper College. A very high proportion (94%) selected either “*Very Successful*” or “*Successful*” while only 5 percent selected “*Somewhat Unsuccessful*”. This highly positive response has been consistent over time.

<b>Table 5: To what extent were you successful in achieving your educational objective?</b>					
	N	Very successful	Successful	Somewhat successful	Not at all successful
2009	310	82%	13%	5%	1%
2010	441	75%	21%	3%	1%
2011	551	77%	20%	3%	0%
2012	545	73%	21%	5%	1%

### Benefits from attending Harper

Figure 2 and Table 6 present how respondents believe they benefitted from their experiences at Harper. In 2012, respondents expressed the highest level of satisfaction for the ability to appreciate diversity and other cultures (67% “*Extremely Helpful*”) and the ability to appreciate other points of view (63% “*Extremely Helpful*”). Both of these areas increased from a low of 60 percent in 2009. The area with the least positive responses was the ability to explain the scientific method (41% “*Extremely Helpful*”). Two aspects saw a sharp decrease in 2012 over the 2011 results: Ability to understand scientific concepts (-13%) and the ability to identify, develop, and solve quantitative problems (-13%).



**Table 6: Please rate how your education at Harper College helped you in each of the following areas.**

	N	Extremely helpful	Helpful	Not very helpful	Not helpful at all
<b>Ability to verbally communicate effectively</b>					
2009	299	46%	46%	7%	1%
2010	440	52%	42%	6%	1%
2011	546	59%	34%	6%	2%
2012	550	52%	41%	1%	6%
<b>Ability to communicate in writing effectively</b>					
2009	300	45%	48%	6%	1%
2010	440	46%	46%	8%	1%
2011	548	57%	32%	10%	2%
2012	549	54%	37%	2%	7%



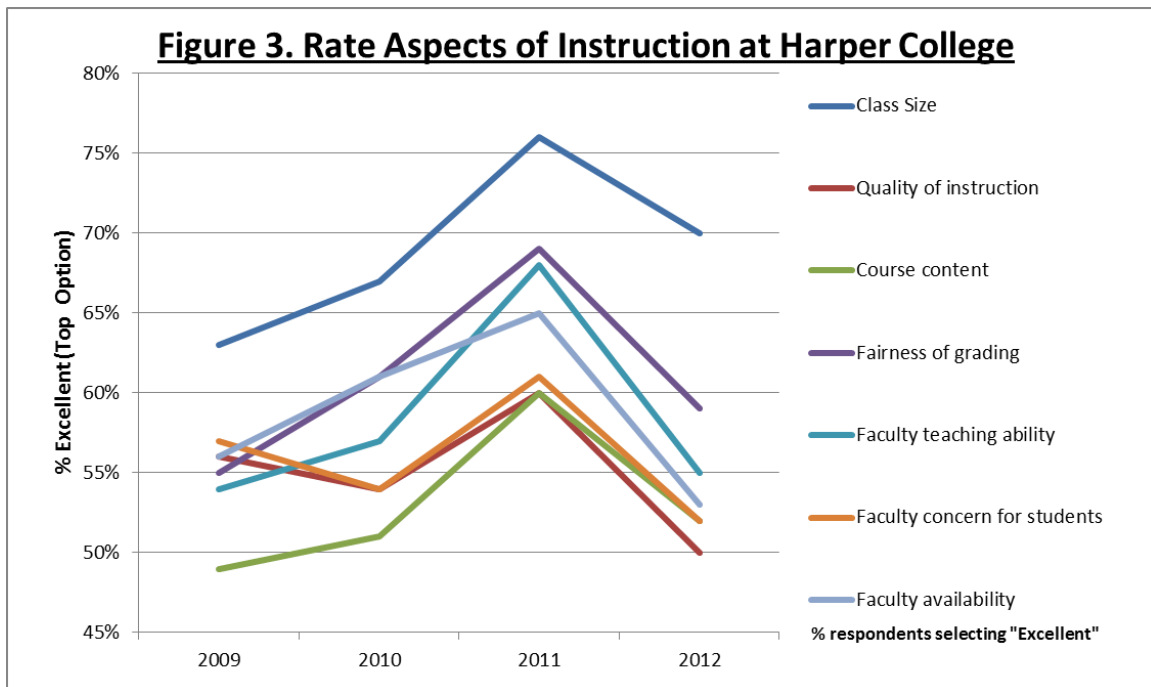
**Table 6 (continued): Please rate how your education at Harper College helped you in each of the following areas.**

<b>Ability to understand scientific concepts</b>						
	2009	273	42%	50%	7%	2%
	2010	432	41%	45%	13%	2%
	2011	529	55%	33%	10%	2%
	2012	541	42%	42%	5%	11%
<b>Ability to explain and apply the scientific method</b>						
	2009	275	41%	47%	9%	3%
	2010	432	40%	42%	13%	0%
	2011	528	52%	35%	10%	0%
	2012	541	41%	40%	5%	14%
<b>Ability to appreciate other points of view</b>						
	2009	304	60%	35%	4%	1%
	2010	440	66%	28%	6%	1%
	2011	547	68%	27%	4%	1%
	2012	549	63%	30%	1%	6%
<b>Ability to appreciate diversity and other cultures</b>						
	2009	301	60%	32%	7%	1%
	2010	437	68%	26%	5%	2%
	2011	547	69%	24%	5%	2%
	2012	548	67%	26%	1%	6%
<b>Ability to identify, develop, and solve quantitative problems</b>						
	2009	302	43%	46%	10%	2%
	2010	437	47%	43%	10%	1%
	2011	544	58%	33%	9%	2%
	2012	544	45%	40%	4%	11%
<b>Ability to use computers and technology</b>						
	2009	287	48%	36%	11%	5%
	2010	430	45%	37%	14%	5%
	2011	532	50%	31%	14%	5%
	2012	527	43%	36%	7%	14%

Satisfaction with instruction

Figure 3 and Table 7 display the responses related to questions about instruction at Harper College. A very clear trend emerges when looking at the results going back to 2009: respondents were positive (over 85% “Excellent” and “Good” ratings) about all aspects of instruction over time, though “Excellent” ratings decreased from 2011 to 2012. For **faculty teaching ability** “Excellent” ratings decreased by 13 percent, whereas for **faculty availability** “Excellent” ratings decreased by 12 percent and by 10 percent for **fairness of grading** and **quality instruction** from 2011 to 2012. The smallest decrease in “Excellent” ratings was 6 percent for **class size**.

Comparison to Respondents to the Career Graduates Survey: The transfer graduates responded more positively regarding class size while career graduates responded more positively to all other aspects of instruction at Harper.



<b>Table 7: Rate Aspects of Instruction at Harper College.</b>						
	N	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	
<b>Class Size</b>						
2009	309	63%	32%	5%	0%	
2010	440	67%	29%	3%	0%	
2011	549	76%	22%	2%	0%	
2012	553	70%	27%	3%	0%	
<b>Quality of instruction</b>						
2009	310	56%	38%	6%	0%	
2010	440	54%	41%	5%	1%	
2011	549	60%	35%	5%	0%	
2012	553	50%	43%	7%	0%	

**Table 7 (continued): Rate Aspects of Instruction at Harper College.**

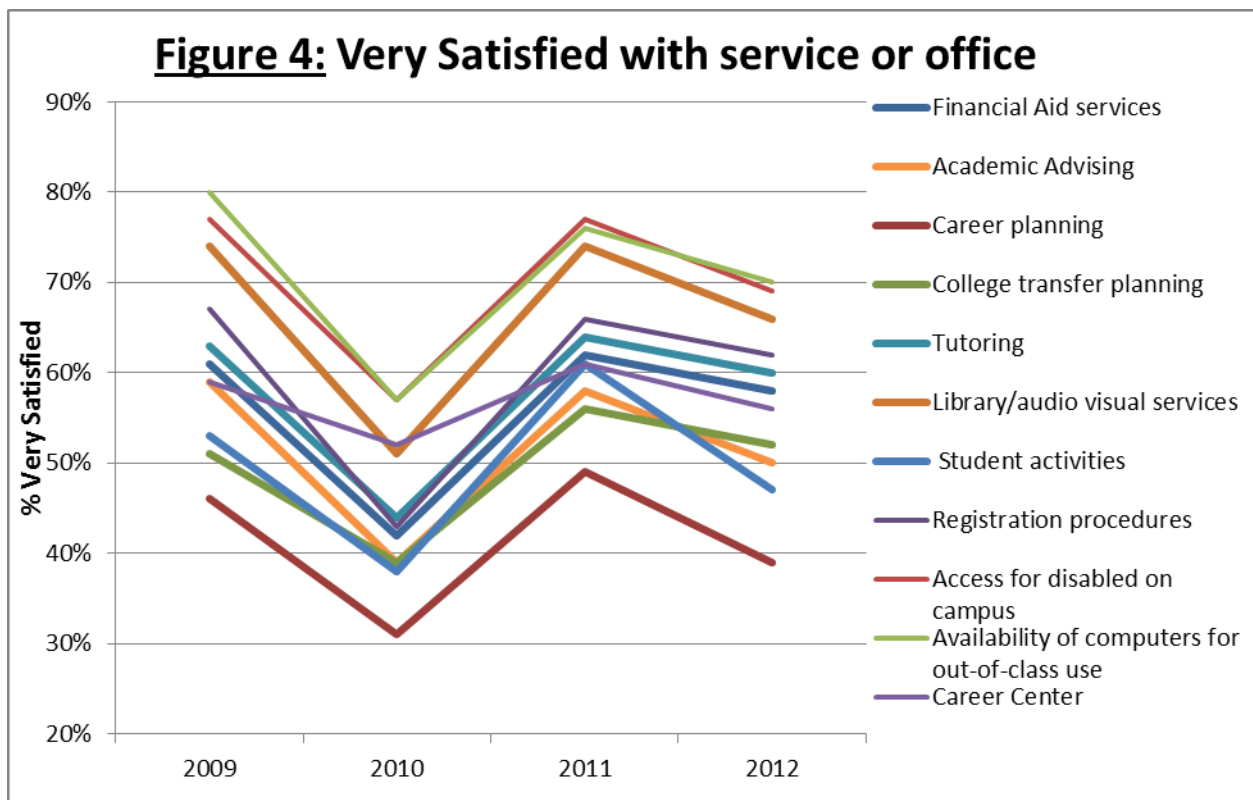
<b>Course content</b>						
	2009	310	49%	45%	6%	0%
	2010	440	51%	44%	5%	0%
	2011	549	60%	36%	4%	1%
	2012	552	52%	42%	5%	1%
<b>Fairness of grading</b>						
	2009	310	55%	41%	5%	0%
	2010	441	61%	35%	4%	1%
	2011	550	69%	26%	5%	0%
	2012	553	59%	34%	7%	0%
<b>Faculty teaching ability</b>						
	2009	310	54%	38%	7%	1%
	2010	441	57%	32%	9%	1%
	2011	549	68%	29%	5%	1%
	2012	550	55%	36%	9%	0%
<b>Faculty concern for students</b>						
	2009	310	57%	36%	7%	1%
	2010	436	54%	38%	7%	1%
	2011	546	61%	31%	5%	2%
	2012	553	52%	34%	11%	3%
<b>Faculty availability</b>						
	2009	306	56%	34%	8%	1%
	2010	432	61%	28%	9%	1%
	2011	544	65%	29%	5%	1%
	2012	552	53%	38%	7%	2%

### Satisfaction with student services

Figure 4 and Table 8 displays how respondents rated their satisfaction with each student service offered by Harper College. The first noticeable trend is that 2010 respondents expressed less satisfaction with each service compared to respondents from all other years. Since 2010 appears to be an outlier overall, that year is not included in the comparisons that follow in the next paragraph.

Generally across all services, the respondents from 2009 and 2011 had the highest proportion of “*Very Satisfied*”, but there was a downward trend from 2011 to 2012. Student activities had the largest decrease from the previous year: down 14 percent from 2011 to 2012. Career planning received the fewest “*Very satisfied*” ratings from 2012 graduates (39%). Availability of computers for out-of-class use received the most “*Very Satisfied*” ratings (70%) followed by access for the disabled on campus (69%).

By comparison to respondents to the Career Graduates Survey, transfer graduates responded more positively to tutoring (60% vs. 54%) as well as career (49% vs. 37%) and college transfer planning (52% vs. 43%) than career graduates.



<b>Table 8: Rate your satisfaction with each office or service listed below.</b>						
	N	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	
<b>Financial Aid services</b>						
2009	113	61%	20%	8%	11%	
2010	181	42%	25%	17%	16%	
2011	238	62%	23%	11%	4%	
2012	242	58%	25%	12%	5%	
<b>Academic advising</b>						
2009	266	59%	29%	8%	5%	
2010	383	39%	32%	18%	10%	
2011	473	58%	27%	10%	5%	
2012	479	50%	30%	13%	7%	
<b>Career planning</b>						
2009	159	46%	31%	18%	5%	
2010	226	31%	38%	24%	7%	
2011	278	49%	32%	13%	6%	
2012	257	39%	38%	16%	7%	
<b>College transfer planning</b>						
2009	184	51%	34%	9%	7%	
2010	298	39%	36%	17%	9%	
2011	365	56%	30%	10%	4%	
2012	377	52%	31%	12%	5%	
<b>Tutoring</b>						
2009	130	63%	28%	5%	3%	
2010	200	44%	35%	14%	8%	
2011	258	64%	23%	10%	3%	
2012	284	60%	27%	10%	3%	
<b>Library/audio visual services</b>						
2009	237	74%	23%	3%	0%	
2010	347	51%	38%	9%	1%	
2011	445	74%	22%	2%	1%	
2012	418	66%	29%	4%	1%	
<b>Student activities</b>						
2009	98	53%	38%	8%	1%	
2010	166	38%	36%	20%	7%	
2011	228	61%	25%	11%	3%	
2012	226	47%	42%	8%	3%	
<b>Registration procedures</b>						
2009	307	67%	24%	7%	2%	
2010	432	43%	37%	15%	5%	
2011	543	66%	28%	4%	1%	
2012	541	62%	29%	7%	2%	

<b>Table 8 (continued): Rate your satisfaction with each office or service listed below.</b>					
	N	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
<b>Access for disabled on campus</b>					
2009	99	77%	21%	2%	0%
2010	117	57%	27%	12%	3%
2011	105	77%	17%	5%	1%
2012	106	69%	23%	5%	3%
<b>Availability of computers for out-of-class use</b>					
2009	256	80%	15%	5%	0%
2010	358	57%	29%	11%	2%
2011	463	76%	18%	4%	1%
2012	464	70%	22%	7%	1%
<b>Career Center</b>					
2009	129	59%	29%	10%	2%
2010	182	52%	30%	14%	4%
2011	245	61%	30%	6%	2%
2012	234	56%	31%	11%	2%

### Location

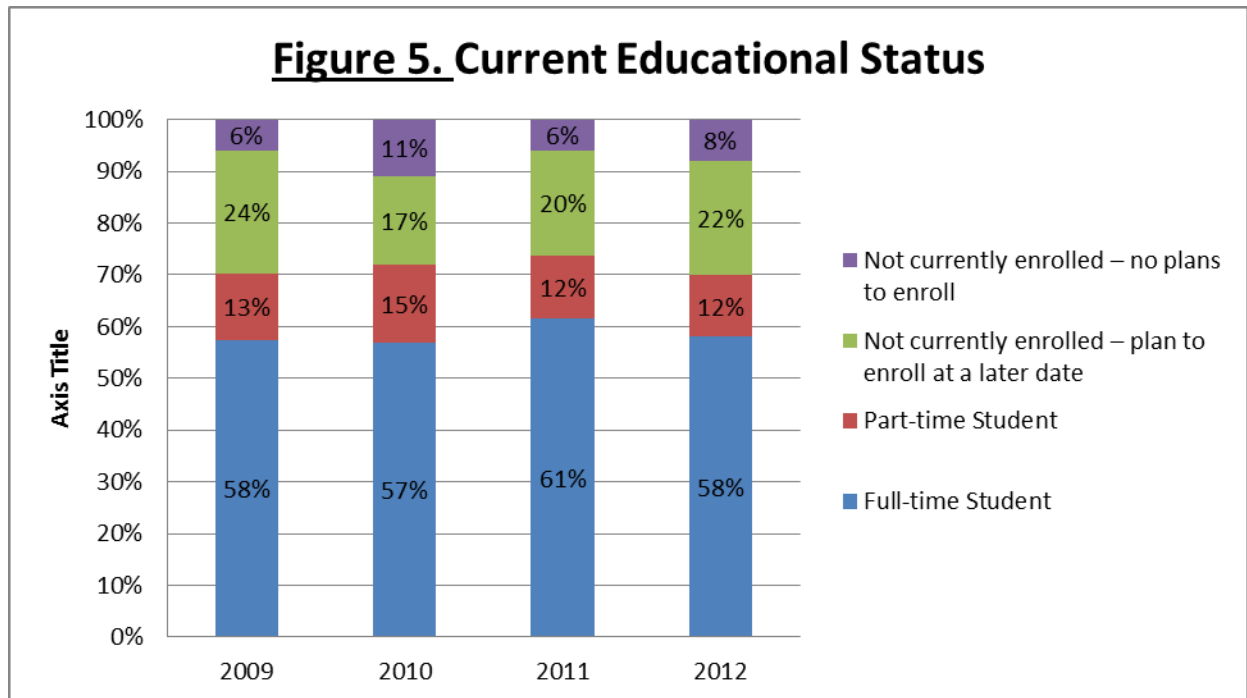
The main campus in Palatine received the most responses and was rated as the most convenient (75%), though this was a decrease of 9 percent from previous years. The Harper Professional Center in Schaumburg was rated as the second most convenient location (70% rated as “Very Convenient”), which is down from a high in 2011 of 76 percent. Internet-based courses were the third most rated location (66%) in 2012. When looking at the Northeast Center in Wheeling, there was a sharp decrease in “*very convenient*”, from 65% in 2011 to 51% 2012. Table 9 displays the results across all of Harper’s locations.

<b>Table 9: Rate the convenience of the courses taken in terms of their location.</b>				
Harper main campus – Palatine	N	Very convenient	Convenient	Not convenient
2009	309	83%	16%	1%
2010	438	84%	15%	1%
2011	544	84%	16%	0%
2012	550	75%	23%	2%
<b>Northeast Center – Wheeling</b>				
2009	52	63%	29%	8%
2010	91	53%	27%	20%
2011	57	65%	25%	11%
2012	81	51%	32%	17%

<b>Table 9 (continued): Rate the convenience of the courses taken in terms of their location.</b>					
<b>WEB or Internet based – from home or office</b>					
	2009	156	75%	20%	5%
	2010	238	84%	12%	4%
	2011	151	68%	26%	7%
	2012	251	66%	24%	10%
<b>Harper Professional Center – Schaumburg</b>					
	2009	11	55%	27%	18%
	2010	36	61%	19%	19%
	2011	29	76%	17%	7%
	2012	37	70%	27%	3%
<b>Other</b>					
	2009	6	67%	33%	0%
	2010	7	43%	29%	29%
	2011	7	43%	57%	0%
	2012	10	30%	30%	40%

Current educational status

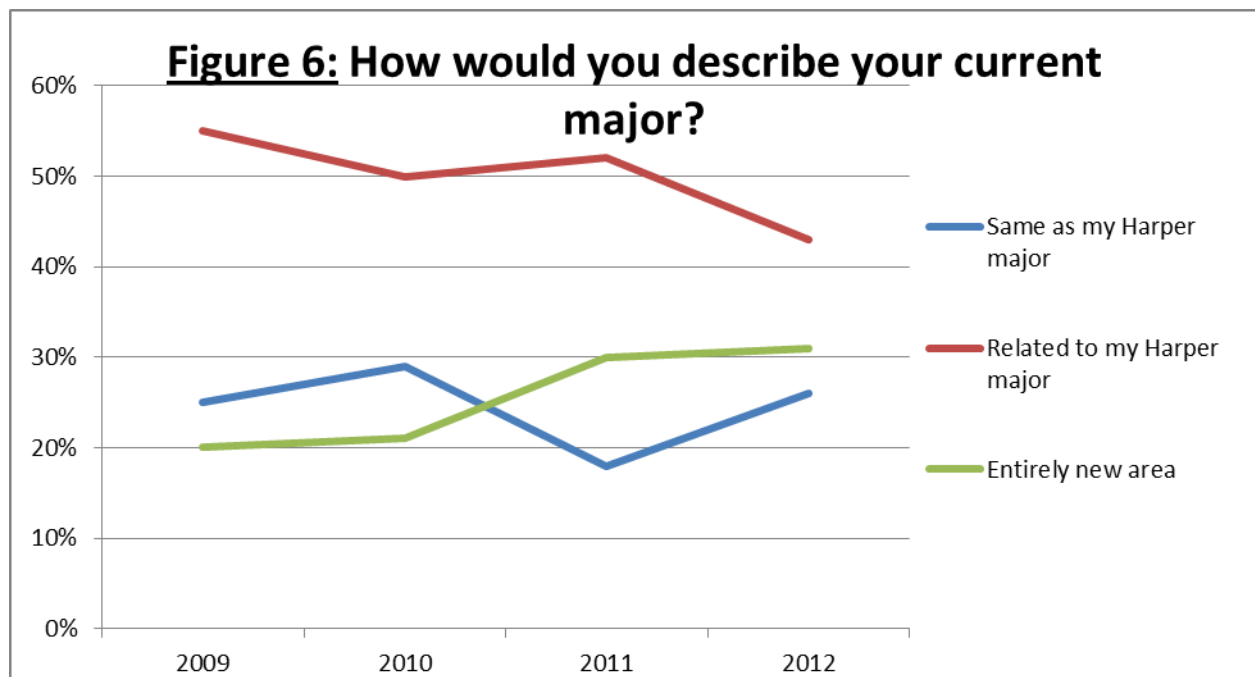
Figure 5 and Table 10 indicate that 58 percent of survey respondents from 2012 were currently full time students and an additional 12 percent were enrolled part-time. That total of 70 percent who were enrolled in other educational institutions is a slight decrease from 73 percent in 2011. Only 8 percent of the 2012 respondents indicated they were not enrolled and had no plans to enroll in further education, which is a slight increase from 2011 (6%).



**Table 10: Which of the following best describes your current educational status?**

	N	Full-time student	Part-time student	Not currently enrolled – plan to enroll at a later date	Not currently enrolled – no plans to enroll
2009	308	58%	13%	24%	6%
2010	440	57%	15%	17%	11%
2011	545	61%	12%	20%	6%
2012	552	58%	12%	22%	8%

Referring to Figure 6 and table 11, note that for those respondents who indicated they were enrolled in further education, 43 percent described their current major as related to their major at Harper College, while 26 percent described their current major as the same as their Harper major. This indicates a shift toward Harper graduates staying within their exact program of study at Harper after moving onto a new institution.



**Table 11: How would you describe your current major?**

	N	Same as my Harper major	Related to my Harper major	Entirely new area
2009	207	25%	55%	20%
2010	317	29%	50%	21%
2011	404	18%	52%	30%
2012	382	26%	43%	31%



Table 12 displays those institutions to which Transfer Graduate Survey respondents indicated they had transferred after leaving Harper. The most frequent transfer destinations include Northeastern Illinois University (10-13%) and Northern Illinois University (10-14%). Note that Roosevelt is the only private institution that has consistently been a top transfer destination. Also of note, the percentage over time of “Other” institutions that Harper transfer graduates attend ranges from one-quarter to one-third of respondents.

<b>Table 12: Which institution do you currently attend?</b>				
	2009 (N=216)	2010 (N=320)	2011 (N=405)	2012 (N=390)
Columbia College	2%	2%	2%	2%
DePaul University	4%	5%	6%	5%
Devry University	1%	--	--	--
Illinois State University	5%	6%	8%	6%
Northeastern Illinois University	10%	13%	13%	11%
Northern Illinois University	14%	14%	12%	10%
Roosevelt University	12%	8%	8%	8%
Eastern Illinois University	1%	--	--	--
University of Illinois – Chicago (UIC)	5%	3%	9%	9%
Harper College	19%	11%	10%	10%
Elmhurst College	--	3%	3%	4%
University of Ill at Urbana Champaign	--	4%	4%	3%
Other	24%	31%	26%	34%

With regard to transferring credits to another institution, 73 percent of respondents in 2012 stated all of their credits did transfer. Transferring of all credits peaked at 82 percent in 2009. Note that since 2009 the percentage of respondents indicating that not all of their credits transferred has been increasing and stood at 29 percent for both 2010 and 2011. Of those who were unable to transfer all of their credits, almost half (44% in 2012 and 45% in 2011) stated that some of their Harper credits transferred only as electives. A proportion of those who said some of their Harper credits transferred only as electives had increased significantly from 24 percent in 2009.

<b>Table 13: Did all of your Harper College credits transfer to your current institution?</b>			
	N	Yes	No
2009	186	82%	18%
2010	313	71%	29%
2011	389	71%	29%
2012	376	73%	27%

<b>Table 14: What was the main reason why some credits did not transfer?</b>					
		Some credits would transfer as elective only	Entirely new field of study at transfer institution	Grades were not high enough to earn transfer credits	Other
	N				
2009	34	24%	6%	0%	71%
2010	98	46%	9%	6%	39%
2011	117	45%	7%	2%	46%
2012	104	44%	14%	2%	40%

Almost half of the 2012 survey respondents plan to earn a bachelor's degree (43%), a pattern similar to that of the 2009 and 2011 respondents as well but dramatically different from the 27 percent who planned to do so in 2010. The proportion of respondents intending to pursue a master's degree has been between 40 and 55 percent over the period analyzed. That a much higher proportion (55%) of the 2010 respondents intended to earn a master's degree than a bachelor's (27%) would seem to indicate possible higher educational aspirations on the part of those 2010 respondents than was the case with their counterparts in earlier or subsequent years.

<b>Table 15: What is the highest degree you plan to earn?</b>					
	N	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	Doctorate Degree	Professional Degree
2009	280	51%	40%	5%	4%
2010	292	27%	55%	15%	3%
2011	499	46%	42%	8%	4%
2012	495	43%	46%	8%	3%

Table 16 shows that about one in five of respondents took additional courses at Harper since graduating. Table 17 shows that between 79 and 89 percent of those who did enroll in Harper courses after graduating took credit courses. Between 11 and 21 percent of these respondents enrolled in continuing education courses over the years.

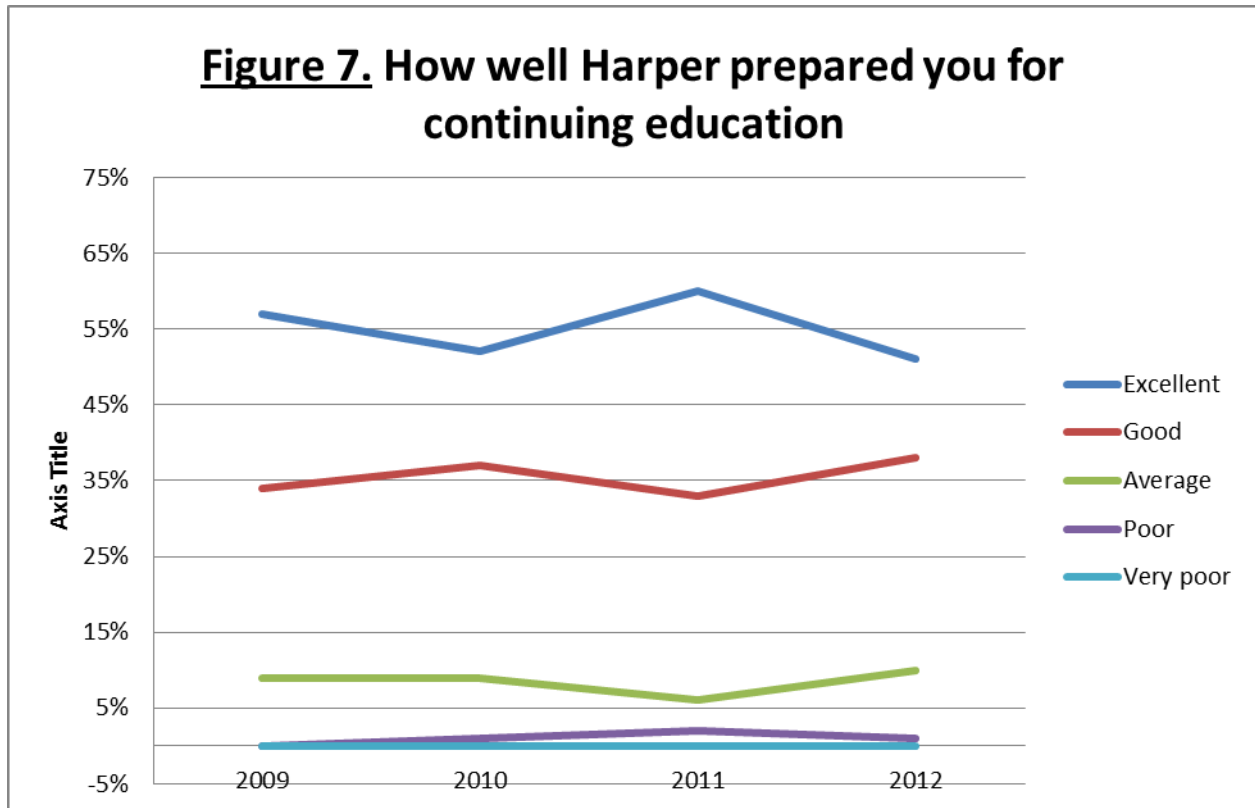
<b>Table 16: Have you taken additional courses at Harper since receiving your degree or certificate?</b>				
	N	Yes	No	
2009	310	22%	78%	
2010	439	23%	77%	
2011	530	22%	78%	
2012	553	19%	81%	

<b>Table 17: What type of courses have you taken at Harper?</b>				
	N	Credit courses	Continuing Education courses	
2009	66	88%	12%	
2010	103	89%	11%	
2011	134	79%	21%	
2012	121	86%	14%	

### Preparation for further education

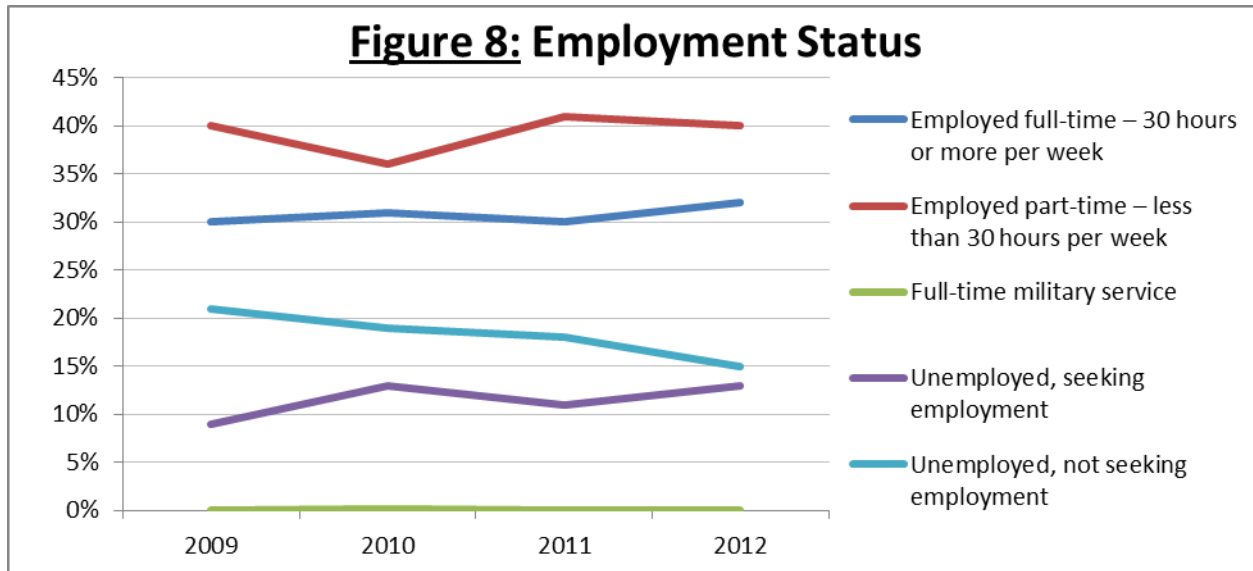
As seen in Table 18 and Figure 7, among the 2012 respondents there was a slight decrease in their rating of preparation for continuing their education. Just over half (51%) of 2012 respondents selected “*Excellent*” compared to the previous high in 2011 at 60 percent. The respondents from 2011 offered the most “*Excellent*” and “*Good*” ratings totaling 93 percent, which is higher than the 89 percent from 2010 and 2012 and 91 percent from 2009.

<b>Table 18: How would you rate your Harper education in terms of how well it prepared you for continuing your education?</b>						
		Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
2009	306	57%	34%	9%	0%	0%
2010	441	52%	37%	9%	1%	0%
2011	534	60%	33%	6%	2%	0%
2012	548	51%	38%	10%	1%	0%



### Employment status

Figure 8 and Table 19 show that of those respondents who reported themselves as working, most were employed part-time during the four years analyzed. Slightly less than a third during this time period were employed full-time. Those who were unemployed and seeking employment fluctuated between 9 and 13 percent. Those who were unemployed and not seeking employment ranged from a high of 21 percent in 2009 to a low of 15 percent in 2012. For those unemployed and not seeking employment, by far most were full-time students (Table 20).



**Table 19: What is your present employment status?**

	N	Employed full-time – 30 hours or more per week	Employed part-time – less than 30 hours per week	Full-time military service	Unemployed, seeking employment	Unemployed, not seeking employment
2009	309	30%	40%	0%	9%	21%
2010	440	31%	36%	0%	13%	19%
2011	543	30%	41%	0%	11%	18%
2012	551	32%	40%	0%	13%	15%

**Table 20: Of those unemployed and not seeking employment:**

	N	Full-time student	Full-time homemaker	Health disability	Family responsibilities	Other
2009	51	86%	6%	2%	4%	2%
2010	91	72%	9%	2%	7%	11%
2011	111	92%	3%	0%	2%	4%
2012	89	81%	9%	1%	3%	6%

### Appreciation for Cultural Diversity

Table 21 shows results regarding respondents' appreciation for diversity and different cultures as a result of their experiences at Harper College. A sharp increase is noticeable regarding the degree of appreciation for diversity as a result of experiences here. The proportion of graduates selecting "*Definitely Yes*" trended up from 18 percent in 2011 to 42 percent in 2012. Conversely, the proportion selecting "*No*" and "*Definitely No*" has increased in 2012 to 14 percent compared to 8 percent in 2011.

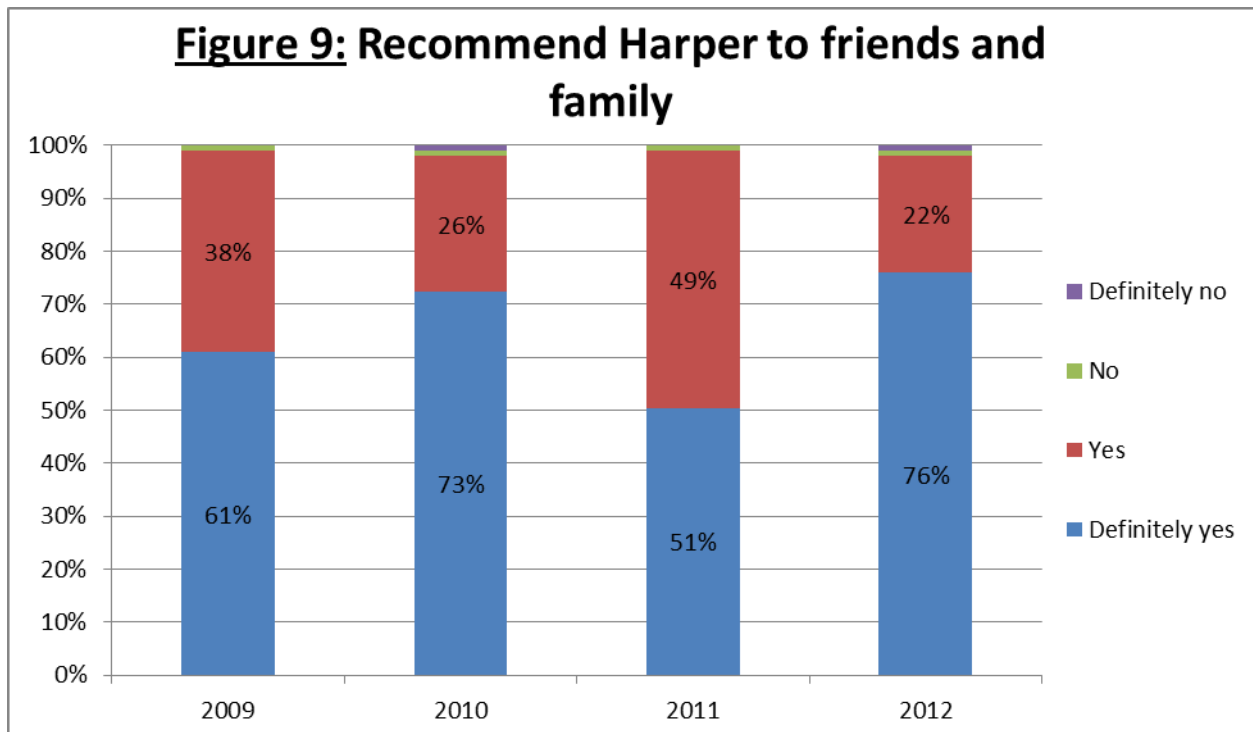
Comparison to Respondents to the Career Graduates Survey: Both groups responded positively to this question, but over time, roughly 16 to 19 percent of career graduates responded with a "No" or "Definitely No" whereas 8 to 14 percent of transfer graduates responded with negative ratings.

	N	Definitely Yes	Yes	No	Definitely No
2009	307	37%	57%	6%	0%
2010	440	44%	46%	10%	1%
2011	546	18%	74%	7%	1%
2012	552	42%	44%	13%	1%

### Recommending and Returning to Harper

Similar to the results regarding appreciation of diversity, there is a noticeable shift toward the “*Definitely Yes*” responses to questions about recommending Harper to others and returning to Harper in the future. Figures 8 and Table 22 show that the proportion of respondents selecting “*No*” or “*Definitely no*” with respect to recommending Harper has remained quite small since 2009. Meanwhile the proportion selecting “*Definitely yes*” has increased 25 percent from 2011 to 2012. The results regarding recommending Harper to friends and family approach the levels in 2010.

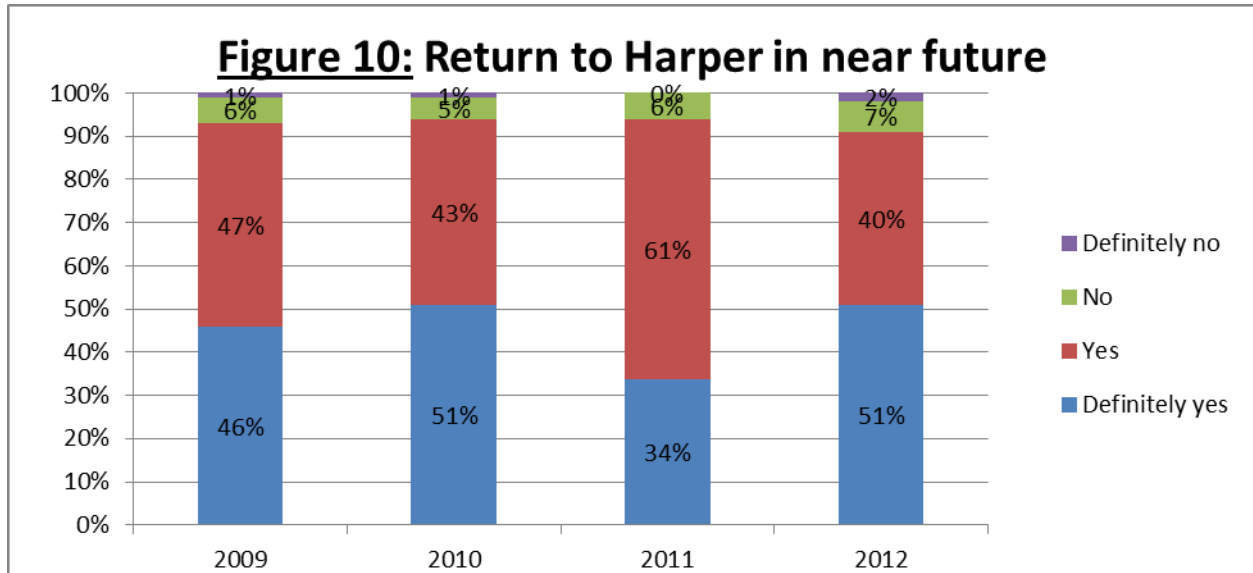
Compared to respondents to the Career Graduates Survey, responses from both groups have been overwhelmingly positive, yet the graduates who respond “*Definitely Yes*” has fluctuated in the last few years.



	N	Definitely Yes	Yes	No	Definitely No
2009	310	61%	38%	1%	0%
2010	439	73%	26%	1%	1%
2011	548	51%	49%	1%	0%
2012	551	76%	22%	1%	1%

Figure 10 and Table 23 reflect a similar pattern of responses with regard to returning to Harper in the future. The proportion of “*Definitely yes*” increased from 34 percent in 2011 to 51 percent in 2012. Note that the proportion of “*Definitely no*” and “*No*” fluctuated very little during this same time period. So again, while the responses are preponderantly positive, there has been a “leveling” in the amount of enthusiasm expressed.

Compared to respondents to the Career Graduates Survey, responses from both groups have been overwhelmingly positive, yet the graduates who respond “*Definitely Yes*” has fluctuated in the last few years.



<b>Table 23: Would you return to Harper for educational or personal enrichment courses in the near future?</b>					
	N	Definitely Yes	Yes	No	Definitely No
2009	310	46%	47%	6%	1%
2010	442	51%	43%	5%	1%
2011	549	34%	61%	6%	0%
2012	550	51%	40%	7%	2%

## Conclusion

Results from the 2012 Harper College Transfer Graduate Survey represent the opinions of 553 graduates (43%) of the 1,300 Harper graduates who earned Associate in Arts, Associate of Arts in Teaching, Associate in Science, Associate in Engineering Science, and Associate in Fine Arts degrees in fiscal year 2012. Comparisons were made from graduates for 2009, 2010, and 2011 in order to indicate trends.

The respondents' main objective in attending Harper was to take coursework in order to transfer to another college or university (87%), which is similar to respondents in 2011. Nearly three quarters (73%) of respondents state that they were "*Very Successful*" in achieving their objective, which is slightly lower than in 2008 and 2009. The proportion of respondents selecting "*Somewhat successful*" or "*Not at all successful*" in 2012 is 6 percent compared to 3 percent in 2011.

Respondents were most satisfied with their ability to appreciate other points of view and to appreciate diversity. For both of these aspects, over 63 percent indicated their education was "*Extremely Helpful*". They were also the two highest rated aspects in 2011, but decreased from 2011 to 2012. The lowest rated aspects of graduates' education were ability to use computers and technology, and ability to explain and apply the scientific method along with understanding scientific concepts. From 2009 to 2012 the ability to apply the scientific method and ability to understand scientific concepts were the lowest rated aspects and decreased sharply from 2011 to 2012.

Similar results were found with regard to aspects of instruction. There were decreases with all aspects of instruction from 2011 to 2012. The highest rated aspect of instruction was class size (70% "*Excellent*") and the lowest rated aspect was quality of instruction (50% "*Excellent*"). Satisfaction with faculty teaching ability ("*Excellent*") decreased from 68 percent in 2011 to 55 percent in 2012.

Beyond the classroom aspects, graduates rated student services favorably. For example, the majority of 2012 graduates selected "*Very satisfied*" for the availability of computers for out-of-class use, access for the disabled on-campus, and library and audio visual services. The service with the least "*Very satisfied*" responses was Career planning (39%).

Just below 60 percent of respondents indicated that they were currently enrolled as full-time students at other institutions of higher education, which is roughly the same as the previous three years. For those not currently enrolled, more respondents in 2012 indicated they had plans to enroll at a later date. Almost half of the graduates (46%) plan to earn a master's degree, whereas 43 percent plan to earn a bachelor's degree. When asked how well Harper prepared graduates for continuing your education, 89 percent responded with either "*Excellent*" or "*Good*," which is consistent with the previous three years.

When asked about whether graduates would recommend Harper or return to Harper, a shift occurred in the 2012 graduates. While an overwhelming majority responded with either "*Definitely Yes*" or "*Yes*" (91% for returning in the near future), a noticeable shift from "*Yes*" (from 61% to 40%) to "*Definitely Yes*" (from 34% to 51%) occurred between 2011 and 2012.



Going forward it is recommended that Harper continue to document the trend in levels of “*Very Satisfied*” responses expressed by its transfer graduates to determine if the shifts that appeared among the more recent groups are indicative of a long-term issue or a short-lived phenomenon. Such would appear to be the case with all aspects of instruction, especially with class size and faculty teaching ability. Though logistically challenging, focus groups of Harper transfer graduates might add further insight into these issues that would be possible to gain from survey results. Over the years Harper has experienced high levels of satisfaction from its graduates and should seek to maintain those levels even as conditions influencing those responses change.