Faces of the Future is a national survey designed to assess the status of the student populations and explore the role community colleges play in the lives of students. Faces of the Future was created out a partnership between ACT and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). Developed in 1998 and piloted in 1999, the first annual survey occurred in the fall 2000 semester. Atlantic Cape Community College (ACCC) was one of the 245 community colleges participating in this inaugural survey. The most recent administration (Fall 2003) marks the fourth anniversary of Faces of the Future and represents responses from the ACCC student body as well as 157 community colleges across the nation.¹

The questionnaire provides us with a portrait of our student body in the following areas:

- **Student Background.** Includes demographics, socioeconomic status indicators, life style characteristics, and personal goals.
- **College Experience.** Includes educational goals and factors contributing to enrollment such as financial support. Also assesses opinions relating to minority issues.
- **Satisfaction.** Includes impressions of programmatic quality, administration, and facilities and services. Also assesses sense of safety/security.

ACT reports annual survey results, with trends, by academic intent (credit vs. continuing education) at both the national and institutional level. The Office of Research also examines cross-campus differences (Mays Landing, Cape May, and Atlantic City). Survey results provide indicators of the ACCC student body comparable both across sites and to other community colleges participating in the Faces of the Future survey. The following are highlights of the 2003 Faces of the Future survey across the three major themes – student background, college experience, and satisfaction.

¹ More information on the background and methodology of the survey is available via the AACC website at http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/ResourceCenter/Projects_Partnerships/Current/FacesoftheFuture/Backround_Information.htm
Faces of the Future, 2003

Student Background

- Educational Background
  - Approximately one quarter (24.4%) of credit respondents reported between 13 and 30 earned credits (Figure 1.)
  - 54.8% of non-credit respondents reported between 1 and 3 earned credits. (Figure 2.)

- Top 5 Goals of Respondents

  **Non-Credit / Continuing Education**
  1. To have a steady, secure job
  2. To be self-reliant
  3. Time for personal/family Interests
  4. To help others in need
  5. To make a lot of money

  **Credit**
  1. To have a steady, secure job
  2. Time for personal/family Interests
  3. To be self-reliant
  4. To help others in need
  5. To make a lot of money
Student Background

- The majority of ACCC credit student respondents are 20 years of age or younger (44.4%); 67.4% percent are female; 62.5% are white. (Figure 3)

- 59% of the ACCC continuing education respondents are 40 years of age or older; 20.9% are female; 50% are white. (Figure 3)

- Over one-third (36.6%) of credit respondents reported a total annual income of less than $10,000. Approximately one-third (34.9%) reported working 35 or more hours per week. (Figure 4)

- 11.6% of non-credit respondents reported a total income of at least $40,000. 35% reported working 35 or more hours per week; 10% work over 50 hours per week. (Figure 4)
College Experience

- 15.7% of credit respondents reported having email addresses through school. The national average is 29.6%. (Figure 5). 88.5% of respondents report having internet access at home.

- Top 5 Reasons For Taking Courses at ACCC of credit respondents
  1. Occupation Requirements
  2. Personal Development
  3. Increase Earning Power
  4. Study New Topics/Subjects
  5. Career Change

- For credit respondents, Top 2 financial barriers encountered while taking classes include
  - cost of tuition/books & related materials
  - personal financial problems
  (Figure 6)

- For credit respondents, Top 5 Factors Contributing To Respondents Decision to Attend ACCC
  1. Cost
  2. Distance from Residence
  3. Particular Program of Study
  4. Variety of Course Offerings
  5. Academic Reputation of the College
Satisfaction

- Five items that respondents reported the **highest** level of agreement or satisfaction (4.05 or higher):
  1. Instructors treat students within my gender with respect
  2. Instructors treat students within my racial/ethnic group with respect
  3. Administrators/non-teaching staff treat students in my racial/ethnic group with respect
  4. I feel a general sense of safety/security while on campus
  5. Students in my racial/ethnic group are treated with respect by students in other racial/ethnic groups

- The five items that respondents reported the **lowest** level of agreement or satisfaction (between 3.71 and 3.35):
  1. Academic advising is of high quality
  2. I could not attend this college without financial aid
  3. I received all the help I needed from the Financial Aid Office to make my application(s) for financial aid
  4. Overall, my program of study at this college has been sufficiently challenging
  5. Concern is shown for students as individuals
Satisfaction

- Non-credit respondents consistently report levels of satisfaction within the national average; reporting that they are “satisfied” to “very satisfied” in 2003. (4.36 on a five-point scale) (Figure 10)

- Since 2002, credit respondents consistently report levels of satisfaction less than the national average. However, the overall satisfaction level in 2003 was 4.07 on a 5 point-scale; the national average was 4.11. (Figure 10)

- 29.7% of credit respondents reported they were very satisfied (5 on a five-point scale) compared to 46.2% of non-credit respondents.

- Respondents generally agree that they would recommend ACCC to Friends and Relatives (Figure 11).