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 2006) marks the seventh anniversary of Faces of the Future and represents responses from the ACCC student body as well as 79 community colleges across the nation.1, 2

The Office of Institutional Research (IR) added ten supplemental questions to the standard Faces of the Future questionnaire. These additional questions assess student experiences specific to ACCC. The combined 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, adminstration, and facilities and services. Also assesses sense of safety/security.

Current year results, as well as annual trends, are reported by academic intent (credit vs. continuing education) at both the national and institutional level. IR also examined cross-campus differences. 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 2006 Faces of the Future survey across the three major themes – student background, college experience, and satisfaction.

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1 More information on the background and methodology of the survey is available via the AACC website at http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Content/NavigationViewMenu/ResourceCenter/Projects_Partnerships/Current/FacesoftheFuture/Backg round_Information.htm
2 The study sample (N=354) was randomly selected from the entire ACCC student body. 49.4% (n=175) reported they take courses only at Mays Landing, 9.3% (n=33) take course only at Atlantic City, 16.7% (n=59) report they only take courses in Cape May; 9.6% (n=34) reported taking courses at multiple sites; 15% did not respond (n=53). 86.2% of respondents were credit students; 13.8% were non-credit or continuing education.
Faces of the Future, 2006

Student Background

- Almost half (49.4%) of survey respondents reported that they took courses only at the Mays Landing Campus; 16.7% took courses only at the Cape May County Campus; 9.3% took courses only at the Atlantic City Campus.

- Approximately 9.6% of respondents reported taking courses at multiple campuses.

- One fifth (21.8%) of credit respondents reported between 13 and 30 earned credits (Figure 2.) Two fifths of non-credit respondents reported between 1 and 3 credit courses completed. (Figure 3.)

- Top 5 Goals of Respondents

  Non-Credit / Continuing Education
  1. To be self-reliant
  2. Time for personal/family interests
  3. To have a steady, secure job
  4. To help others in need
  5. To be a parent

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

- Over half of respondents live and work in Hammonton (22.6%/18.6%), Atlantic City/Pleasantville (11.0%/14.1%), or Absecon (19.5%, 15.0%)

- Just under two-thirds of respondents (58.2%) reported they intended to remain in the Atlantic-Cape region; 6.5% intend to relocate to the Philadelphia/New York area; 14.4% intend to leave the area entirely.

- Almost half (49.8%) of credit student respondents are 20 years of age or younger; 58.7% percent are female; 71.0% are white. (Figure 4)

- Over half of the continuing education student respondents are 40 years of age or older (53.9%); 74.5% are female; 70.2% are white. (Figure 4)

- Over one-third (36.3%) of credit respondents reported a total annual income of less than $10,000. Approximately one-third (36.5%) reported working 35 or more hours per week. (Figure 6)

- Approximately two-fifths (40.5%) of non-credit respondents reported a total income of at least $30,000. 57.1% reported working 35 or more hours per week; 12.5% work over 50 hours per week. (Figure 6)
College Experience

- One quarter of credit respondents reported their declared major as general studies (25%). The second highest major was nursing (18%) followed by business/accounting (17%).

- The majority (88%) of respondents reported using the internet at least several times per week. 16.4% of credit respondents reported having email addresses through school. The national average is 56.1%. (Figure 8).

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

- Financial barriers such as costs of tuition/books, and personal financial problems were the highest ranked problems encountered while taking classes. (Figure 9)

- Top 5 Factors Contributing To Respondents Decision to Attend ACCC
  1. Distance from Residence
  2. Cost
  3. Variety of Course Offerings
  4. Particular Program of Study
  5. Availability of Scholarships/Aid

![Figure 7. Percent within Declared Major](image1)

![Figure 8. Percent Reporting Email Address Through the College](image2)

![Figure 9. Top Five Problems Encountered While Taking Classes](image3)
Satisfaction

Five items that respondents reported the highest level of agreement or satisfaction (4.27 or higher):
1. Instructors treat students within my racial/ethnic group with respect
2. I received all the help I need from the Financial Aid Office personnel
3. Instructors and Administrators treat students within my gender with respect
4. Administrators and Non-Teaching Staff treat students in my racial/ethnic group with respect
5. Students in my racial/ethnic group are treated with respect from students in other racial/ethnic groups

The five items that respondents reported they lowest level of agreement or satisfaction (between 3.82 and 3.56):
1. Academic advising is of high quality
2. Overall, my program of study at this college has been sufficient
3. Courses are available at the times I can take them
4. Most instructors are available outside of class time
5. This college has a good reputation in the community
Satisfaction

- Non-credit respondents consistently report levels of satisfaction within the national average; reporting that they are “satisfied” to “very satisfied” in 2006. (4.21 on a five-point scale) (Figure 13)

- Since 2002, credit respondents consistently report levels of satisfaction less than the national average. However, the overall satisfaction level in 2006 was 3.97 on a 5 point-scale; the national average was 4.14. (Figure 13)

- 74.7% of credit respondents reported they were very satisfied/satisfied (5/4 on a five-point scale) compared to 89.8% of non-credit respondents.

- Respondents generally agree that they would recommend ACCC to Friends and Relatives (Figure 14).