



COSUMNES RIVER COLLEGE

OFFICE OF RESEARCH & EQUITY

2022-2023 CRC Graduate Exit Survey

Reported in Fall 2023

Author:

Katy Wilson, Faculty Researcher
Cosumnes River College



Executive Summary

Cosumnes River College's 2022-2023 Graduate Exit Survey was administered online between May 17 and June 13, 2023. Of the 1,586 students who earned an award (degree and/or certificate) in summer/fall 2022, or petitioned to graduate in spring 2023, 352 completed the survey – a response rate of 22%. The respondents to the 2022-2023 Graduate Exit Survey were representative of the graduating class in terms of race, first generation status, income level, and foster youth status, but despite targeted sampling, male graduates and younger graduates were underrepresented amongst respondents.

Of the 352 graduates responding to the survey, the most commonly reported programs of study were Business (N = 43), Computer Information Science (N = 28), Biology (N = 23), Early Childhood Education (N = 20). Respondents to the survey represented 55 of CRC's 74 distinct disciplines.

For more tables, charts, and disaggregations, see the [CRC Graduate Exit Survey Data Dashboard](#). If not on a campus network, users will be prompted to log in with their WID to access the dashboard.

Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment

For each of the six ILOs, the average rating for each skill/ability was greater than 4.0. An average rating of 4.0 or higher indicates that graduates feel they are able to demonstrate each ability/skill *Well* or *Very well*.

Ensuring Learning

Respondents generally *agreed or somewhat agreed* with statements related to the ease of picking a major, finding out what courses they needed to take, registering for courses, getting academic support, and completing their educational goals.

- The lowest average ratings for “In my first semester, I was able to easily find out what courses I needed to take in order to graduate” (average 3.0 out of 5).

On a ten-point scale, respondents gave ratings of 6.5 or higher to the quality, accessibility, affordability, and relevance to their careers of various aspects of their CRC education. Respondents were most satisfied with the quality of instruction (8.3 out of 10) and least satisfied with the affordability of textbooks (6.5 out of 10).

- There is a significant difference for the “availability of registration in required courses” by CAC, such that respondents with Science, Math, and Engineering majors were more likely to rate this item lower on the 10-point scale ($F(8, 291) = 2.68, p < 0.01$).

Campus Climate

Respondents generally *Agreed or Somewhat Agreed* (a score of 3 or 4 out of 4) with items under the campus climate section. Respondents were least in agreement with the statement “Generally, I feel safe at CRC” (13.7% of respondents *Disagree* or *Somewhat Disagree*).

Time to Completion

Graduates were asked to report on how long they expected it would take them to graduate when they began their studies at CRC, and how long it actually took them to graduate. Respondents report that they under-estimated the amount of time it would take them to graduate by .91 years on average.



Barriers to Completion

The most commonly reported internal barriers to completion for graduates were changing majors (40%) and wanting to take a lighter course load (33%). The most commonly reported external barriers to completion were difficulties outside of school (69%) and challenging financial situations (43%).

- Students age 25 and over were more likely to report having experienced financial hardship ($\Delta\chi^2(1) = 22.96, p < .001$)
- Students age 24 or younger were more likely to report feeling confused about which courses to take ($\Delta\chi^2(1) = 7.44, p < .01$)

Overall College Experience

The majority of respondents (70.2%) are *satisfied* with their experience at CRC, and 25.0% are *somewhat satisfied*. An additional 4.78% are *somewhat dissatisfied or dissatisfied* with their experience. When asked how CRC could improve, respondents mostly stated that they were happy with their experience at CRC. A total of 22 respondents said that they encountered issues accessing Counseling services or with the information received from Counseling. 19 graduates recommended increasing the availability of courses, including 11 who suggested expanding online course offerings. Another 11 graduates said they encountered difficulties navigating student services processes.

Respondents were asked how COVID-19 affected their learning at CRC, if at all. Respondents most often mentioned the shift to online learning. Some graduates said simply that all their courses were moved online (N=34), others said they were able to adapt to the shift to online learning (N=31), and others still said that they ended up preferring the online learning environment (N=17). Others mentioned that they felt it was harder to learn or concentrate in the online environment (N=14) or that they felt disconnected from faculty and/or peers (N=12).

To close, graduates were asked, “Do you have a favorite memory of CRC that you would like to share with us?” 23 graduates mentioned their relationships with and support received from instructors, and 13 respondents each mentioned the campus environment, the hands-on learning environment, and CRC events.

Background

At the end of the spring 2023 semester, the Research & Equity Office (REO) administered its annual graduate exit survey to students who had earned an award in summer or fall 2022 or petitioned to graduate in spring 2023. The survey instrument was originally developed in spring 2018, using an existing survey from Pima Community College as a template. Spring 2023 is the sixth iteration of CRC’s instrument. The instrument was modified in spring 2020 to glean more information about students’ holistic journeys at CRC. Spring 2023 is the fourth administration of the modified instrument; a few minor adjustments are made each year based on cross-functional feedback and question utility.

As the survey respondents graduated in the 2022-2023 academic year, it is likely that they began their studies prior to or during fall 2020. They represent not a cohort of students who began their studies together, but students who concluded their studies together. Thus, it is important to contextualize the survey results with the idea that survey respondents might have experienced vastly different versions of onboarding and other services while at CRC, particularly during terms impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic.



Method

The online survey was designed and administered through the Office of Research & Equity’s online survey vendor, *Qualtrics*. The Research used the Student Information System to compile a list of students who had petitioned to graduate in Spring 2023 or who earned an award in summer or fall 2022. The survey was active from May 17 to June 13, 2023, and regular email reminders with individualized survey links were sent out to the targeted students ($N = 1,586$). By the end of the collection period, 352 responses were collected – a response rate of 22%.

After the initial survey invitation and four subsequent reminders, the Research team determined that several student populations were underrepresented in the survey responses compared to the graduating class. Four subsequent reminders were sent to the underrepresented groups; while some underrepresentation closed as a result of the oversampling, students under age 25 and male students are ultimately underrepresented in the survey results compared to their proportion of the graduating class. These student groups are typically underrepresented in CRC survey results. Table 1 below compares the representation of the respondent population to that of the target population.

Table 1: Student Demographics – Respondent and Target Populations

Group	% Respondent Population	% Target Population	Difference
Gender			
Female	65.34%	60.09%	5.25%
Male	32.39%	38.08%	-5.69%
Non-binary	0.57%	0.25%	0.32
Unknown / Not reported	1.70%	1.58%	0.12
Race			
African American / Black	10.51%	7.12%	3.39%
Asian	28.13%	29.95%	-1.82%
Filipino	4.55%	5.80%	-1.25%
Hispanic / Latinx	25.85%	26.10%	-0.25%
Multi-Race	7.95%	7.00%	0.95%
Native American	0.00%	0.25%	-0.25%
Other Non-White	0.57%	0.25%	0.32%
Pacific Islander	1.42%	1.51%	-0.09%
Unknown	1.42%	1.58%	-0.16%
White	19.60%	20.43%	-0.83%
Age			
24 or Younger	46.02%	55.04%	-9.02%
25 or Older	53.98%	44.96%	9.02%
Generation			
First Generation	32.39%	28.94%	3.45%
Not First Generation	67.61%	71.00%	-3.39%
Unknown	0.00%	0.06%	-0.06%
Income			
Below Poverty	29.06%	28.31%	0.75%
Low	22.79%	23.77%	-0.98%
Middle and Above	35.04%	36.07%	-1.03%
Unable to Determine	13.11%	11.85%	1.26%



Group	% Respondent Population	% Target Population	Difference
Veteran	3.69%	2.33%	1.36%
Not Veteran	96.31%	97.67%	-1.36%
Foster Youth	0.85%	1.01%	-0.16%
Not Foster Youth	99.15%	98.99%	0.16%

Survey Analysis

Program of Study

Of the 352 graduates responding to the survey, the most commonly reported programs of study were Business (N = 43), Computer Information Science (N = 28), Biology (N = 23), Early Childhood Education (N = 20). Respondents to the survey represented 55 of CRC's 74 distinct disciplines.

Institutional Learning Outcomes

For each of the six ILOs, the average rating for each skill/ability was greater than 4.0. An average rating of 4.0 or higher indicates that graduates feel they are able to demonstrate each ability/skill Well or Very well. ILO skill 4.4 (the ability to *demonstrate empathy, civility, and equitable conflict resolution*) received the highest average rating, 4.5. ILO skill 1.3 (the ability to *apply mathematical skills, including algebra, to problem solve for both occupational and personal purposes*) received the lowest average rating, though still at 4.1.

Longitudinal ILO Assessment, 2018-2023

Graduates' average self-ratings for each ILO did not change significantly across the past five years of survey administration. However, when aggregating findings across those years, several statistically significant differences for various student demographic groups were found, as summarized below:

- Consistent with last year's evaluation, male graduates self-rated lower than their peers on items under ILO 2, *Effective Communication in Professional and Personal Situations*, ILO 4, *Cultural Understanding, Social Justice, and Equity*, and ILO 6, *Creativity*.
- There are several significant differences by student race/ethnicity on ILOs 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6:
 - Consistent with last year's evaluation, Black/African American graduates and graduates of an Unknown race self-rated lower on ILO 1.3, *Apply mathematical skills, including algebra, to problem solve for both occupational and personal purposes*.
 - Consistent with last year's evaluation, African American students and Hispanic/Latinx students self-rated higher than their peers on ILO 3.3, *Demonstrate ability to update skills to accommodate rapid change in society's technological landscape*, and ILO 4.2, *Participate in society with respect, empathy, and appreciation for human diversity*.
- There is a newly emergent significant difference by age for items under ILO 1, *Relevant Knowledge, Quantitative Reasoning, and Critical Habits of Mind*, and ILO 3, *Adaptability*, such that graduates age 25 and older self-rated higher than their peers.
- Consistent with prior evaluations, first generation graduates self-rated higher than graduates who were not first generation college students on items under ILO 1, 3, 5, and 6.



- Consistent with prior evaluations, graduates with an income below the poverty level and low-income graduates self-rated higher on items under ILO 3, *Adaptability*, ILO 5, *Competence in Social Responsibility and Sustainability*, and ILO 6, *Creativity*.

For a full report of the 2021-2022 Institutional Learning Outcomes findings and the 2018-2022 longitudinal findings, see the Institutional Learning Outcomes summary on the Research and Equity Office website.

Clarifying the Path

Respondents were asked to indicate where they found information to help them register for courses, select a program of study, understand the general education requirements, understand career options related to their program of study, find academic support services, and learn about student activities. For each item, they were offered the choices of *counseling, CRC website, one or more of my instructors, student access center, friends or family, Admissions & Records, other, or not applicable*.

When registering for courses, respondents were most likely to report getting information from the CRC website (N = 192) or Counseling (N = 181). This is similar for finding academic support services and selecting a program of study.

When understanding career options, respondents report finding information from Counseling (N = 93), the CRC website (N = 74) and instructors (N = 72). These responses are also reflected for understanding the general education requirements.

When finding information about student activities, respondents most often report finding information from the CRC website (N = 95) and instructors (N = 49). Respondents were also asked to list any other sources of information. In response, they cited EOP&S, DSPS, Mi Casa, TRIO SSS, Upward Bound, First Year Experience, the Veterans' Resource Center, sports coaches, the Library, the Transfer Center, and CSU system counselors.

Students were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements related to the ease of picking a major, finding out what courses they needed to take, registering for courses, getting academic and financial support, and completing their educational goals. Respondents generally *agreed or somewhat agreed* with all of the statements, with the lowest average ratings for "In my first semester, I was able to easily find out what courses I needed to take in order to graduate" (average 3.00 out of 5).

- *I knew where to go if I needed help in a course (3.51)*
- *I had the financial support I needed from CRC to complete my educational goal (3.47)*
- *I had the academic support I needed from CRC to complete my educational goal (3.41)*
- *I found it easy to register for the classes I needed to graduate (3.40)*
- *I began my studies at CRC with a general idea of the program I wanted to study (3.35)*
- *In my first semester, I was able to easily find out what courses I needed to take in order to graduate (3.00)*

Relevant Learning

Several questions on the survey asked respondents to rate the quality, accessibility, affordability, and relevance to their careers of various components of their experience at CRC. For each item, respondents were given a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 representing "very relevant", "high quality", "easy to get", "a lot of interaction", and "very affordable".



Students generally rated all items above 6.5 on the 10-point scale. Respondents were most satisfied with the quality of instruction (8.3 out of 10). Students were least satisfied with the affordability of textbooks (6.5 out of 10).

There is a significant difference for the “availability of registration in required courses” by CAC, such that respondents with Science, Math, and Engineering majors were more likely to rate this item lower on the 10-point scale ($F(8, 291) = 2.68, p < 0.01$). It is important to note that, as with many of the items on this survey, these findings may differ for students who did not complete a degree or certificate, and thus were not surveyed.

Table 2 below lists the average rating, standard deviation, and number of respondents for each item.

Table 2: Please rate the following items on a scale of 1-10

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Relevance of _____ to my future career			
Coursework	7.9	2.2	298
Textbooks or required reading materials	7.0	2.7	296
Quality of _____			
Instruction	8.3	2.0	300
Coursework	8.1	2.0	298
Textbooks or required reading materials	7.5	2.5	296
Inclusivity of diverse racial and gender identities in _____			
Instruction	8.2	2.5	295
Coursework	8.0	2.4	288
Textbooks or required reading materials	7.7	2.6	292
Ease of acquiring _____			
Registration in required courses	7.6	2.5	300
Low-cost options for textbooks	6.5	2.9	295
Low-cost options for course materials	6.9	2.8	289
Quantity of interactions with _____			
Faculty inside of class	7.8	2.6	293
Faculty outside of class (office hours, emails, events...)	7.1	3.0	297
Other students in my major	6.7	3.0	294
Affordability of _____			
Textbooks	6.5	2.7	295
Other materials besides textbooks	6.8	2.6	293

Campus Climate

Respondents generally *Agreed* or *Somewhat Agreed* (a score of 3 or 4 out of 4) with items under the campus climate section. Respondents were least in agreement with the statement “Generally, I feel safe at CRC” (13.7% of respondents *Disagree* or *Somewhat Disagree*). No statistically significant differences were found for any student demographic groups. Table 3 below lists the average rating, standard deviation, and number of respondents for each item.



Table 3: Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
The CRC learning environment was welcoming and inclusive.	3.7	0.6	267
The CRC campus community encourages free and open discussion of difficult topics.	3.6	0.7	247
People at CRC care about my success.	3.6	0.7	268
My perspective was valued during class discussions.	3.7	0.6	267
Generally, I feel safe at CRC.	3.5	0.8	262
CRC staff and managers treat people of all racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds with equal respect.	3.8	0.6	253
CRC staff and managers treat people of all genders/gender identities with equal respect.	3.8	0.5	244
CRC faculty treat people of all racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds with equal respect.	3.8	0.6	256
CRC faculty treat people of all genders/gender identities with equal respect.	3.8	0.5	251

Time to Completion

Graduates were asked to report their expected and actual time to completion. On average, respondents report that they under-estimated the amount of time it would take them to graduate by about .91 years.

Barriers to Completion

Graduates were asked to identify any experiences that they felt delayed their time to completing their degree/certificate. Barriers to completion were sorted into internal to CRC (scheduling, major selection) and external (barriers students face outside of school). The most commonly reported internal barriers to completion for graduates were changing majors (40%) and wanting to take a lighter course load (33%). The most commonly reported external barriers to completion were difficulties outside of school (69%) and challenging financial situations (43%). These barriers to completion are non-comprehensive and are possibly skewed by the sample population (e.g., graduates report overcoming these barriers in order to graduate, while students who did not complete did not take the survey).

Due to low sample sizes in this section, it was only feasible to reliably test for significance by age and gender. Several statistically significant differences were found by graduate age group:

- Students age 25 and over were more likely to report having experienced financial hardship ($\Delta\chi^2(1) = 22.96, p < .001$).
- Students age 24 or younger were more likely to report the barrier 'I was confused about which courses to take' ($\Delta\chi^2(1) = 7.44, p < .01$).

Future Plans

Respondents were asked, "What industry are you planning to work in after completing your educational goals?", with multiple choice industries taken from the US Census Industry and Occupation codes. Respondents most frequently cited plans to work in health care (21%), business / management (11%), computers/technology (9%), undecided (8%), arts & entertainment (6%), and human/social services (6%).



Overall College Experience

In the last section of the survey, respondents were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with their CRC experience. The majority of respondents (70.2%) are *satisfied* with their experience at CRC, and 25.0% are *somewhat satisfied*. An additional 4.78% are *somewhat dissatisfied or dissatisfied* with their experience. No differences were found in overall satisfaction across student demographic groups.

Respondents were asked how COVID-19 affected their learning at CRC, if at all. Respondents most often mentioned the shift to online learning. Some graduates said simply that all their courses were moved online (N=34), others said they were able to adapt to the shift to online learning (N=31), and others still said that they ended up preferring the online learning environment (N=17). Others mentioned that they felt it was harder to learn or concentrate in the online environment (N=14) or that they felt disconnected from faculty and/or peers (N=12).

It cased students to start at home and take classes online. It impacts a lot of classes which had practical applications.

Online learning during the pandemic was amazing. I felt professors were more accessible and learning materials were given in a clear fashion such as receiving powerpoint notes and completing assignments at our own convenience. It allowed students to be able to earn a living and go to school without sacrificing one or the other. There should be a push to give students more online options than eliminating them and forcing students to choose between school or keeping a roof over their heads.

Due to COVID-19, virtual learning impacted my educational path negatively. It was difficult for me to learn material in my major classes for example, anatomy & physiology and microbiology. I retook to those course when campus opened up.

If it wasn't for COVID I don't think I would of ever taken an online class. I came to realize that online classes were just the right journey for me. Now that is how I prefer taking classes.

I learn visually and through face to face interaction with my peers and professors the best. Learning completely through zoom was extremely difficult because I wasn't in a learning environment. It was very hard to focus. It was also hard to feel connected to my studies, peers, professors, and to feel like an actual student. It didn't feel worthwhile for a long time. This in turn largely negatively affected my mental health and my ability to feel confident in asking for help when in person classes DID become available.

Graduates were asked how CRC could have made their experience at the school better. Respondents mostly stated that they were happy with their experience at CRC. 22 respondents said that they encountered issues accessing Counseling services or with the information received from Counseling. 19 graduates recommended increasing the availability of courses, including 11 who suggested expanding online course offerings. Another 11 graduates said they encountered difficulties navigating student services processes.

Communication with faculty such as Admissions & Records, Financial Aid, and Counselors can feel difficult sometimes and leave a student feeling a little unsupported. Whenever I needed help with any of those areas I was never sure if I would get help or feedback that was applicable to me in a timely manner, or if I would get communication back at all.

It seemed like there were never enough councilors. Appointments to see a councillor were a month out so more councilors would have been nice.



Online learning allows students to take their education into their own hands and become more self-reliant. More online classes should be made available regardless of whether students are allowed to be on campus vaccinated or not. Online learning students from different states and countries to be able to take classes at CRC than just the local students. Something to think about.

To close, graduates were asked, “Do you have a favorite memory of CRC that you would like to share with us?” 23 graduates mentioned their relationships with and support received from instructors, and 13 respondents each mentioned the campus environment, the hands-on learning environment, and CRC events.

1.) I absolutely loved the vocals courses. The instruction and the quality of information was shared with respect and care. Being part of the choir motivated me. It was a comforting supportive environment. I made healthy connections that have lasted. 2.) The tutoring center was a great resource; staff eagerly helped me accomplish homework tasks. 3.) Library tutorials were informative and gave a sense of accomplishment and reassurance. Other study online library courses and certificates gave vital information on how to research and navigate information... There are so many other experiences but, I must mention the peaceful ambiance, beautiful nature on campus and the well maintained grounds helped me refocus during unsure times.

Through ups and downs, I encountered great professors. How they teach me/us and how they are patient (specifically during the pandemic/lockdown) how to navigate the technology is beyond and above. Professors help me even outside school matters. I really appreciate how they are compassionate. I will never forget them and be forever grateful to them as I'm pursuing my dream at the University. They provided me a foundation that stronger than rocks. Thank you.

Working in the Child Development Center for my practicum class

Every time I needed a note taker for my classes that I was taking either at the Elk Grove campus or at the main campus, students would step up and tell the professor that they will be the designated note taker, and I will get to meet them and get a chance to tell the students that I am super grateful for them being my note taker. I even had a note taker take notes for me, while the class was held online because of the sudden shift from being in the physical classroom to being online during the last couple months of Spring 2020. I also liked that all the students were friendly and welcoming to me, even if I didn't know them at all.

I felt seen and supported by every single professor I had during my time at CRC.

Considerations for Future Graduate Exit Survey Design and Research

The Research & Equity Office will continue to analyze findings from the new instrument longitudinally. As mentioned in previous evaluations, this survey offers a limited view of students' experiences at CRC, as it only surveys students who received a degree or certificate. The Office of Research & Equity was able to conduct two campus climate surveys in 2021-2022 and 2022-2023, and will work with College and District stakeholders to determine a sustainable schedule for student surveys that both equitably captures the student experience while reducing survey fatigue and redundancy.