UNC Tomorrow Survey Results

Preliminary Data Summary
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Preliminary Summary of Results from the UNC Tomorrow Survey

The SBTDC conducted 6,739 surveys on behalf of UNC Tomorrow initiative from mid-August to mid-October 2007. Surveys were administered in two ways: via paper survey at each of the regional Listening Forums (of which, 552 were collected) and online through a published and publicly accessible website (contributing 6,187 completed surveys).

The surveys measured opinions from a diversity of individuals from across North Carolina. However, the total of respondents did not mirror the state's population as a whole. The majority who completed surveys tended to be of middle age (50% were between 42 and 60 years old), white (83%), female (60%), and highly educated (50% reported having an advanced degree and another 37% claimed a Bachelor's degree).

The demographics of the sample likely skewed the responses to some questions. For instance, over one-third (36%) felt that advancing their education would not improve their job opportunities, help them move ahead in their career, or increase their earning potential. However, distance education/online courses, individual classes to obtain a skill or increase subject knowledge, and part-time evening classes were appealing to over 80 percent of respondents. In contrast, the option of traditional full-time day classes was viewed favorably by only 20 percent – which should not be surprising when you see that nearly 80 percent of the respondents work full-time. Respondents' busy work schedules were also reflected in their answers about obstacles to enrolling in UNC classes. Four of the top five most-frequently stated obstacles had to do with time and convenience – cost was also a top factor. Generally administrative functions such as the enrollment process and admission criteria were not viewed as being very prohibitive.

The survey was not intended to be a representative sample of the whole population but rather to garner statewide feedback from interested and engaged residents and community/business stakeholders of the UNC campuses and UNC-affiliated programs. Respondents were indeed fairly well-informed of UNC services. At least 89 percent were aware of each the broad UNC resources listed in the survey (ranging from sporting events to technical business assistance). Seventy-three percent of respondents or their immediate family members used at least one resource in the past two years – 40 percent used multiples resources.

About 90 percent agreed or strongly agreed that UNC campuses provide quality graduate and undergraduate education that is worth the investment of time and money. Eighty-three percent replied that UNC system graduates are well educated and properly prepared for the workforce. Respondents stated that UNC campuses could stand improvement in the area of community engagement. Only about half felt that the system is actively engaged in assisting businesses, helping to improve the local economy, and in solving the important issues of their community.

Part of the reason people think the North Carolina's universities are not actively engaged in the community could be because they are aware of what the campuses are doing. One-third of respondents could not give an opinion of *any* of the broad engagement activities listed in the survey. Anywhere from 40 to 72 percent of respondents replied with "don't know" when asked about their satisfaction with each listed engagement activity. Of those who were informed of the campuses' community work, the majority responded favorably. Partnering with private industry on research, licensing university patents, and research/data sharing received the highest feedback on average. Faculty interaction/consulting with business/industry, government, and social/community groups received the greatest percentages of "not satisfied" marks (recorded from about 35% of respondents for each).

It is impossible to tell from the survey if the lack of awareness of engagement activities was a factor in respondents' opinions of where to expand the University's resources. The majority of respondents stated the system should increase its efforts in primarily teaching areas. Over two-thirds felt that UNC campuses should enhance their distance/online education and programs/technical assistance for K-12 teachers. Traditional degree-obtaining education, cultural/artistic programs/events, and existing business assistance received the lowest support (from 38% of respondents) for increasing efforts.

It should be no mystery why respondents felt that the UNC campuses should do more to improve assistance and education for K-12 teachers. In their view, K-12 public education is of the highest importance to the future success of their community. Eighty-three percent rated this as an eight or higher on a ten point scale from "fairly important" to "absolutely critical" – with a median score of 10. Providing improved access to health care, retaining/attracting educated young people, and protecting/preserving the environment, were the next most important items mentioned respectively – each with a median rating of nine.

To produce a globally competitive workforce, North Carolinians are going to need knowledge and skills in many areas. Seven of the twelve skills listed in the survey received high ratings of importance (from eight to ten) by over 70 percent of respondents – led by honesty/integrity and professionalism/work ethic respectively. Knowledge of a foreign language was viewed as the least important skill, but it still averaged over a six – which roughly translated to be "highly important."

A breakdown of the responses to each question and a demographic profile of those who completed surveys are included in the subsequent pages. A more thorough analysis comparing various segments of respondents is currently being conducted and will be available for the UNC Tomorrow Commission and Scholars Council prior to the Commission's December 6, 2007 meeting. In addition, results from surveys completed by Community Listening Forum attendees are available by forum.

Demographics

Gender

	Percentage	Count
Male	40.7%	2,339
Female	**59.3%**	**3,404**

Race/Ethnicity

	Percentage	Count
African American/Black	13.4%	769
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.9%	50
Caucasian/White	**82.7%**	**4,732**
Hispanic/Latino	0.9%	52
Multi-racial	1.1%	63
Native American	0.9%	54

Age

	Percentage	Count
26 & under	9.6%	552
27-41	28.2%	1,629
42-60	**49.7%**	**2,867**
61 & older	12.6%	725

Work Status

	Percentage	Count
Working full-time	**77.4%**	**4,483**
Working part-time	9.2%	533
Unemployed	1.5%	89
Retired	9.0%	518
Unable to work	0.5%	29
Home maker	3.4%	195
In school	8.8%	509
Other	2.5%	143

Highest Educational Completion

	Percentage	Count
Less than high school diploma	0.2%	11
High school graduate	3.6%	211
GED	0.4%	22
Associate's degree or some college	9.7%	561
College degree	36.5%	2,113
Advanced degree (masters, doctorate, professional)	**49.6%**	**2,872**

Surveys Completed

	Percentage	Count
At Forums	8.2%	552
Online	**91.8%**	**6,187**

Survey Responses

1. Rate the importance, in your opinion, of the following challenges to the future success of your community.

[The higher the number the more important, moving from 1, "fairly Important," to 10, "absolutely critical."]

Rank Order		Average Rating	% Rating 8 to 10
1	Improving public education (K-12)	8.89	83%
2	Providing improved access to health care	8.20	71%
3	Retaining and attracting educated young people	7.95	67%
4	Protecting and preserving the environment	7.90	66%
5	Increasing the number of well-paying jobs	7.83	63%
6	Reducing crime	7.61	61%
7	Lowering poverty rates	7.56	60%
8	Increasing the percentage of students who go to and graduate from college	7.51	59%
9	Maintaining affordable energy costs	7.48	58%
10	Increasing citizen participation in solving community problems	7.26	53%
11	Increasing continuing education opportunities for adults	7.18	52%
12	Increasing citizen engagement with government	6.90	47%

2. Please rate the importance of the following knowledge and skills in today's globally competitive workplace.

[The higher the number the more important, moving from 1, "fairly Important," to 10, "absolutely critical."]

Rank Order		Average Rating	% Rating 8 to 10
1	Honesty and integrity	9.37	91%
2	Professionalism and work ethic	8.70	80%
3	Critical thinking and reasoning	8.57	78%
4	Ability to use technology	8.50	77%
5	Written communication	8.43	75%
6	Oral communication	8.30	73%
7	Innovative thinking and creativity	8.30	73%
8	Teamwork	7.99	67%
9	Gathering and organizing information	7.98	67%
10	Ability to interpret numbers and statistics	7.34	55%
11	Cultural awareness and understanding	7.04	51%
12	Knowledge of a foreign language	6.09	36%

3. Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about the University of North Carolina campuses.

Rank Order *		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	The quality of an undergraduate education from UNC campuses is worth the investment of time and money	1%	2%	8%	38%	51%
2	The quality of a graduate education from UNC campuses is worth the investment of time and money	1%	2%	9%	37%	50%
3	Graduates of UNC campuses are well educated and properly prepared for today's workforce	1%	5%	12%	55%	28%
4	UNC campuses offer numerous high quality artistic & cultural events to the general public	1%	5%	19%	45%	30%
5	UNC campuses do a good job educating and graduating students in science, technology, engineering, and math	1%	7%	17%	48%	26%
6	UNC campuses are actively engaged in helping improve the local economy and assisting the business community	4%	14%	29%	38%	16%
7	UNC campuses are actively engaged in helping to solve the important issues of my community	4%	18%	30%	34%	13%

*Ranked by total percentage who either Agreed or Strongly Agreed

Note:

- "UNC campuses are actively engaged in helping to solve the important issues of my community" was the only statement that did not garner the agreement of more than half of the respondents.

4. Would advancing your education improve your job opportunities, help you move ahead in your career, or increase your earning potential?

Yes	No
64%	36%

5. If you wanted to advance your education or learn new skills and knowledge, which of the following types of classes would be appealing to you?

Rank Order		Appealing	Unappealing
1	Distance education/online classes	84%	16%
2	Individual classes to obtain a skill or increase subject knowledge	83%	17%
3	Part-time evening classes	81%	19%
4	Classes to obtain a degree	65%	35%
5	Non-credit or certificate programs	58%	42%
6	Traditional full-time day classes	20%	80%

Note:

- Since over 77 percent of the respondents work full-time, it is logical to see why traditional full-time day classes would be unattractive to the majority of the survey sample.

6. Do you consider any of the following to be obstacles to you enrolling in classes or online programs at University of North Carolina campuses?

Rank Order *		Major Obstacle	Minor Obstacle	Not an Obstacle
1	Personal time required to attend and study	49%	37%	14%
2	Inconvenient class schedules	41%	40%	19%
3	Length of time to complete a class/degree	33%	45%	22%
4	Cost	36%	39%	24%
5	Inconvenient location	36%	35%	29%
6	Awareness of classes/programs that can help me	22%	41%	37%
7	Selection of courses/programs that interest me	20%	40%	40%
8	Confusing/difficult enrollment process	16%	33%	51%
9	Criteria for admission	8%	26%	66%
10	Computer, internet, or technology required	6%	19%	75%

* Ranked by total percentage who either said “Major Obstacle" or "Minor Obstacle"

7. Have you or your immediate family members used any of the following resources of University of North Carolina campuses and institutions in the past two years?

[People who responded "yes" or "no" only. Excluded are those that said "no, I was unaware of services/programs."]

Rank Order		Yes	No
1	Athletic events or sports camps	55%	45%
2	Library	51%	49%
3	Cultural and artistic activities and events	51%	49%
4	Continuing education	32%	68%
5	Personal enrichment programs	24%	76%
6	Distance education/online education	23%	77%
7	Medical care or health care advice	23%	77%
8	Cooperative extension program	15%	85%
9	Certificate program	13%	87%
10	Technical assistance or advice for my business	11%	89%

Note:

- 73 percent of respondents or their immediate family members had used at least of listed resources in the past two years.

7a.Were you aware of the following resources of University of North Carolina campuses and institutions?

Rank Order		Yes	No
1	Athletic events or sports camps	98%	2%
2	Library	97%	3%
3	Continuing education	96%	4%
4	Cultural and artistic activities and events	96%	4%
5	Distance education/online education	95%	5%
6	Certificate program	94%	6%
7	Personal enrichment programs	92%	8%
8	Cooperative extension program	91%	9%
9	Technical assistance or advice for my business	89%	11%
10	Medical care or health care advice	89%	11%

Note:

- This was not a stand alone question on the survey. Awareness was calculated based on how many those that responded “yes” or “no” to question 7 vs. those that replied "no, I was unaware of services/programs."

8. How satisfied are you with the level of community engagement by University of North Carolina campuses and institutions in the following areas?

[Excluding those who responded "don't know."]

Rank Order		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied
1	Partnering with private industry on research	15%	61%	24%
2	Research and data sharing	13%	62%	25%
3	Licensing university patents	14%	61%	25%
4	Student internship opportunities for businesses	15%	57%	28%
5	Classes and technical assistance on technology & professional development for workers	11%	59%	31%
6	Programs and technical assistance for existing businesses	10%	58%	32%
7	Programs and technical assistance to support social/community efforts	10%	57%	33%
8	Classes and technical assistance on starting a business	10%	55%	34%
9	Commercializing university technologies to form new companies	10%	55%	34%
10	Programs and technical assistance to support economic development efforts	9%	56%	35%
11	Faculty interaction/consulting with business and industry	11%	54%	35%
12	Faculty interaction/consulting with government	11%	52%	36%
13	Faculty interaction/consulting with social/community groups	12%	52%	36%

Note:

- A significantly high percentage of respondents responded "don't know" for each of the activities listed – ranging from 40 to 72 percent per activities. One may assume that the respondent is completely unaware of this activity. However, it may also be the case that the respondent is aware of the activity but not informed enough to make a judgment of satisfaction.
- 33 percent of respondents could not give a judgment to the satisfaction of *any* of the activities listed.

9. Where should the University of North Carolina focus its efforts and resources to have the greatest impact on your community?

Rank Order		Increase	Remain Same	Decrease
1	Distance / online education	72%	25%	3%
2	Programs and technical assistance for K-12 teachers	67%	31%	2%
3	Professional development	63%	36%	1%
4	Continuing adult classroom education	57%	41%	2%
5	Research and data sharing with your community	56%	43%	2%
6	Medical care or health care advice	56%	41%	3%
7	Leadership training	54%	43%	4%
8	Economic development assistance	49%	47%	4%
9	Business start-up assistance	45%	51%	4%
10	Social and community advising and technical assistance	45%	51%	4%
11	State-level assistance with public policy development and problem-solving	45%	51%	5%
12	Certificate programs	42%	53%	4%
13	Existing business assistance	39%	57%	4%
14	Cultural and artistic programs and events	38%	57%	5%
15	Traditional degree-obtaining education	38%	61%	2%