



Yukon College Student Exit Survey

2016-17

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Survey Design, Purpose and Context	3
Results	4
Transfer and Participation in Further Education	4
Employment	6
Unemployment	8
Volunteer Work	9
Satisfaction with Yukon College.....	10
“If You Could Change One Thing”	12
Facing Obstacles.....	13
Other Topics	13
Conclusion	14

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- Samantha Richardson – Interviewer
- Dean Smarch – Interviewer
- Kira Beukeboom – Survey Supervisor

Survey Design, Purpose and Context

The Yukon College Exit Survey collects information from former students about their satisfaction with their college experience. This includes student success in making transitions from Yukon College to the labour market and/or to further educational pursuits. The survey has been conducted annually since 2001, providing 17 years of data. The survey is conducted by telephone, with a web completion option, and is delivered approximately nine to eleven months after the completion of the respondents' Yukon College studies. This year's interviews were conducted during March and April of 2018.

The target population for the 2016-17 survey consists of all students who:

- graduated from a Yukon College certificate, diploma, or degree program in 2016-17, or
- completed at least 24 credits at Yukon College between 2015-16 and 2016-17, or
- completed at least 3 College Access Pathways courses in 2016-17, and
- had not been enrolled in more than one Yukon College credit course (equivalent to 3 credit hours) in 2017-18.

The rationale for including former students enrolled in one credit course in 2017-18 is to acknowledge “lifelong learning,” while recognizing that these students will have already completed a large part of their education based on the above criteria.

This year's survey had an overall response rate of 40%. Past year's surveys have had response rates ranging from 16%-50%.

Response to 2016-17 Yukon College Exit Survey

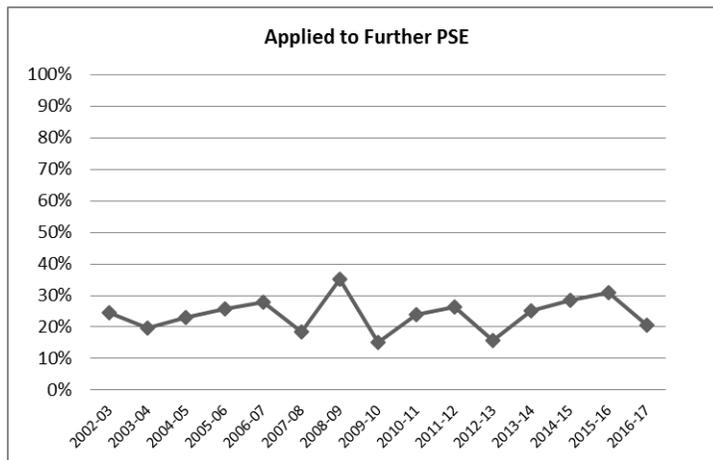
	Number	Percent
Completed by phone	46	27%
Completed by web	23	13%
<i>Total Completed</i>	69	40%
Refused	13	8%
Unable to locate (no working phone or email address)	5	3%
Unable to contact (no response to phone/email)	85	49%
<i>Total Eligible Participants</i>	172	100%

Results

The *Yukon College Exit Survey* covers a variety of topics including: program completion, upgrading, further education, employment, volunteer work, funding for education, satisfaction with the Yukon College experience, and demographic details. The survey is primarily quantitative but does include space for some qualitative remarks. Illustrative comments are used in this report to add context¹, but may not be representative of all respondents. This report presents highlights of the main results of the survey. Additional details may be available upon request from Institutional Research and Planning.

Transfer and Participation in Further Education

One out of five survey respondents (21%) said that they had applied to another post-secondary institution since going to Yukon College. This figure has ranged from 15%-35% in previous years. Among alumni of university transfer programs responding to the survey this year, the proportion was much higher, at 70%.



Out of the 14 respondents who had applied, 86% had been accepted and 14% were still waiting to hear back. Out of those who had been accepted, 91% (or 10 respondents) had enrolled. These figures are within historical ranges.

Of the ten people who had enrolled at another post-secondary institution, seven (or 70%) had expected to receive transfer credit. Five of these seven students (71%) received all the transfer credit they expected, while the other two students (29%) did not. The percentage receiving all the transfer credit they expected is about the same as last year, but prior to that it had averaged closer to 85%.

¹ Illustrative comments have been placed in the report where they fit with the topic. In some cases, these were elicited through broad, open-ended questions towards the end of the survey. In other cases, respondents offered comments in addition to their quantitative responses to specific questions.

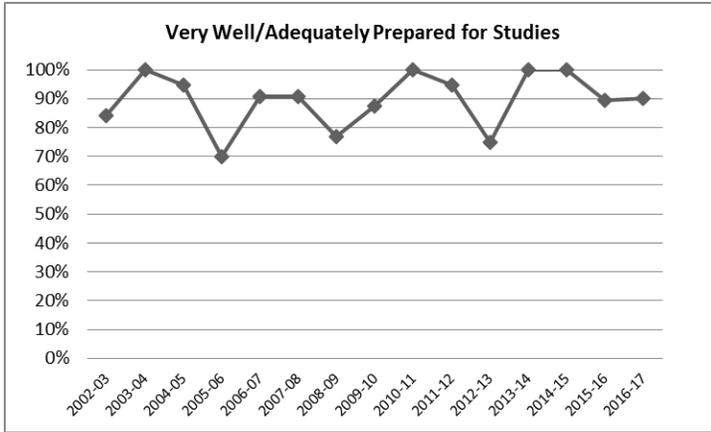


Among the seven respondents who expected to receive transfer credit, five (71%) were satisfied or very satisfied with their transfer experience. This is similar to last year, but is lower than all other previous years of the survey.



The ten respondents who had enrolled at another post-secondary institution were asked how well their studies at Yukon College had prepared them for their studies at the new institution. Nine of the ten respondents (90%) said that they were “very well” or “adequately” prepared, while one respondent (10%) was “not very well” or “not at all” prepared. These figures are within historical ranges.

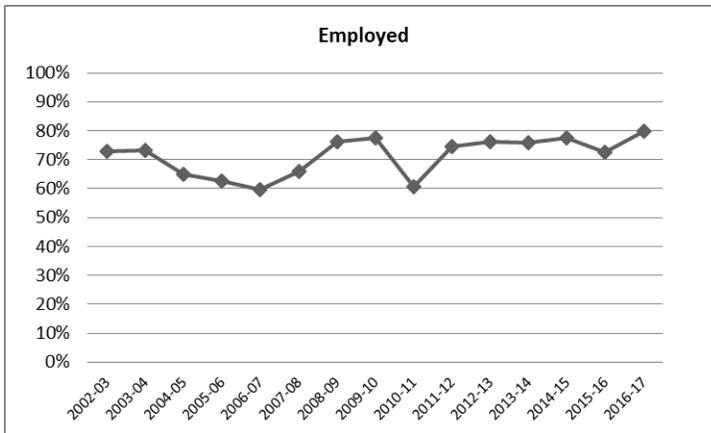
“I would recommend Yukon college as a place to take introductory courses, or a place to gain more Yukon specific, northern knowledge. However, I would pass on the warning to those hoping to stream into a university program that expectations and workload will likely increase dramatically.”



Employment

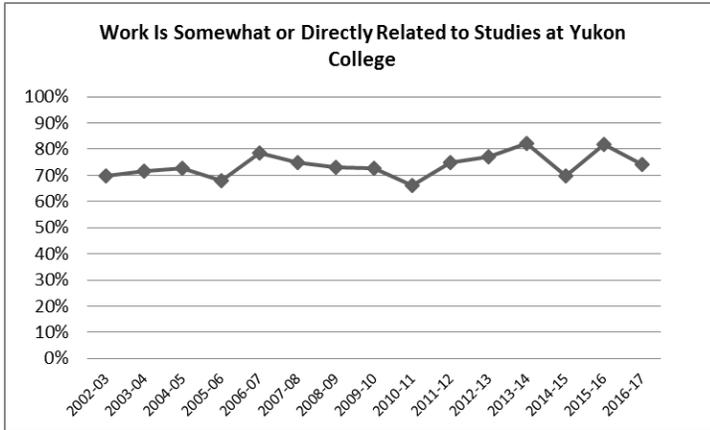
Four out of five respondents (80%) said that they were working at a paid job or business at the time of the survey. This is a historically high level, and is consistent with the very low unemployment rate that was observed in the Yukon Territory around this time (2.3% in April 2018)². The percentage was even higher among graduates of pre-apprenticeship trades and career-oriented certificate and diploma programs, at 85% employed.

Among those who were employed, 76% worked 35 hours per week or more at their main job. Nearly one-third of employed respondents (31%) had more than one job or business, and 4% were self-employed. About three out of five employed respondents (62%) had permanent, year-round positions. Another 16% held temporary positions, 4% were seasonal, and 18% were casual or auxiliary on-call.



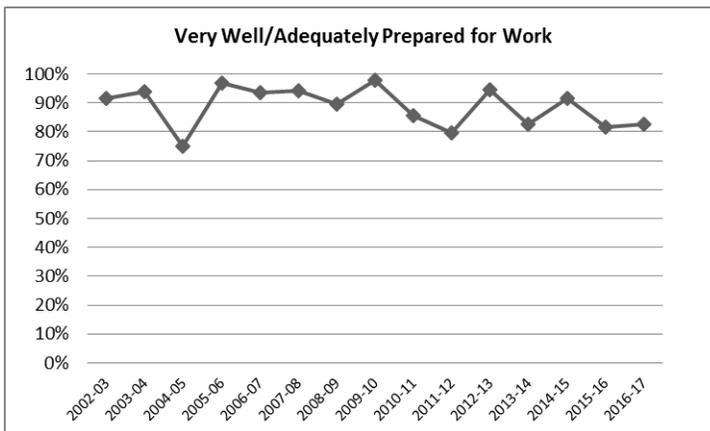
² Yukon Bureau of Statistics, http://www.eco.gov.yk.ca/stats/pdf/employment_apr18.pdf

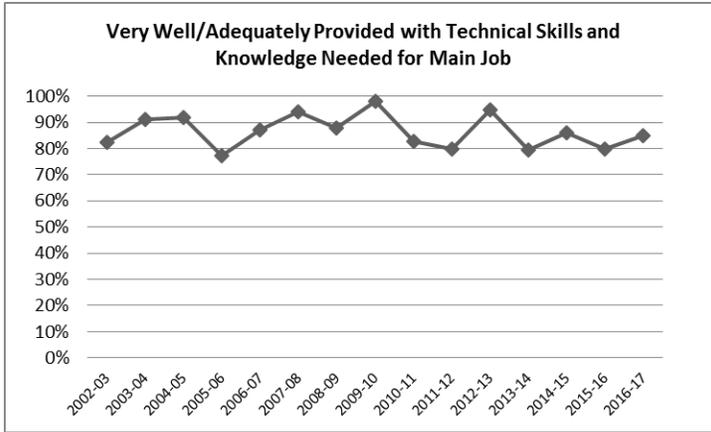
Among those who were employed, 74% said that their work was “directly related” or “somewhat related” to their studies at Yukon College. This is within historical ranges.



Survey respondents who were working in jobs that were “directly” or “somewhat” related were asked how well Yukon College had prepared them for their work, and whether the training and education they received at Yukon College had provided them with the technical skills and knowledge they needed for their main job. More than four out of five respondents said that they were “very well” or “adequately” prepared for their work (83%), and in terms of technical skills and knowledge needed for their main job (85%). These figures are within historical ranges.

“Instructors at the College get you ready for life at work. It goes smoothly.”



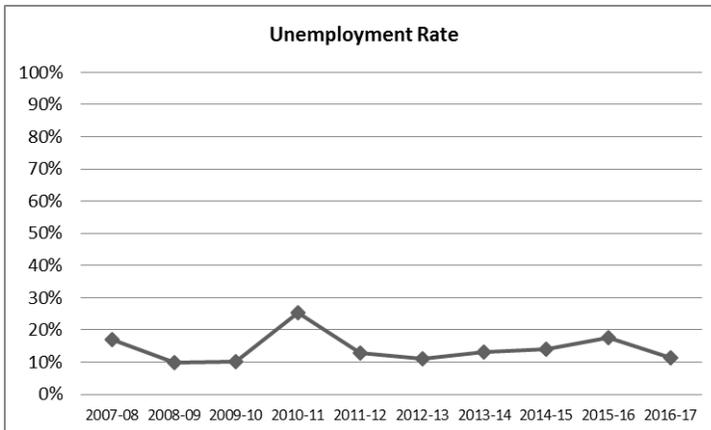


Unemployment

One out of five survey respondents (20%) said that they were not working at a paid job or business at the time of the survey. The main reasons they gave as to why they were not working were that they are attending school, training or studying (29%); have personal or family reasons (21%); have health reasons (14); are on seasonal layoff (7%); can't find work right now (7%); don't qualify for required trade certificate, license or union membership (7%); or other reasons (14%).

In determining an unemployment rate, it is a standard practice to exclude individuals who are unable to work or who are not currently interested in working, e.g. because they are engaged in non-market activities such as education or caregiving. Survey respondents who were not working were asked whether they had done anything to look for work in the last four weeks, and those who answered “yes” are considered part of the labour force along with those who were actually employed.

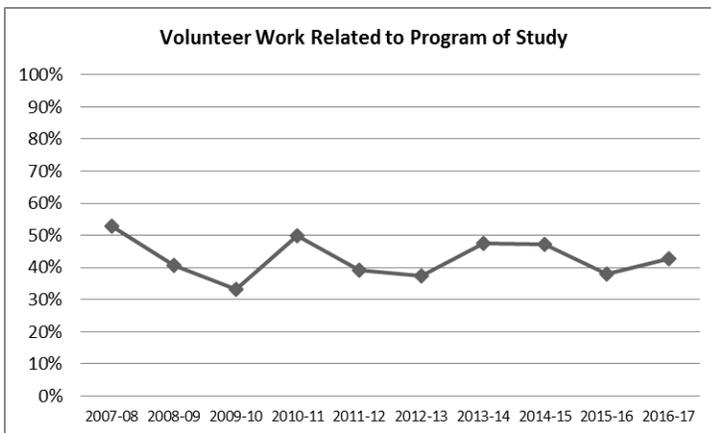
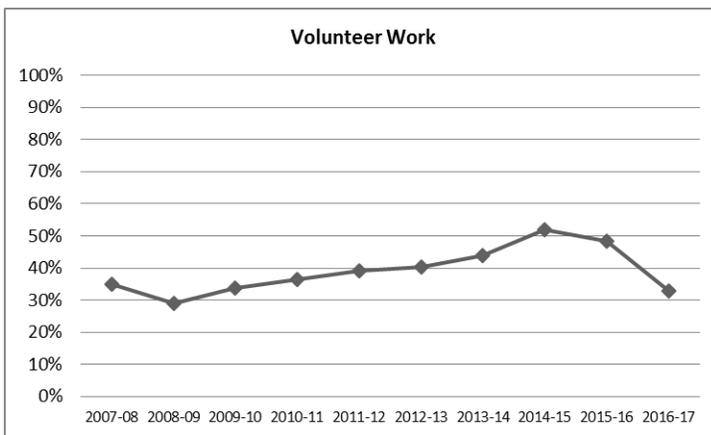
On this year's survey, 90% of respondents were in the labour force (working, or looking for work). The unemployment rate was 11% (not working, but looking). This is within historical ranges.



“There could be more community outreach, connecting students to employers. More bridging into government jobs, the research center, etc. There is more that could be done by the college within the community to promote hiring of Yukon College graduates. The college could teach students how to apply for government contracts or have Yuwin be more involved with students. There are almost no students from this grad class that have jobs in their field. There needs to be better connectivity between the college and employers. Maybe have co-ops or more work placements for programs that don't have them right now so that people can network and build connections before they graduate. The college could create more opportunities for students to gain experience here. Whitehorse needs to do a better job of investing in people that are already in and invested in the community rather than hiring people from down south. It is happening in some ways but it could happen more.”

Volunteer Work

One-third (33%) of respondents do volunteer work, which is lower than at any point in the past ten years. Among those who do volunteer work, 43% said that it is related to their program of study at Yukon College.



Satisfaction with Yukon College

More than nine out of ten respondents would rate the quality of the courses they took at Yukon College (95%) and the quality of instruction (91%) as “good” or “excellent.” These figures are within historical ranges.

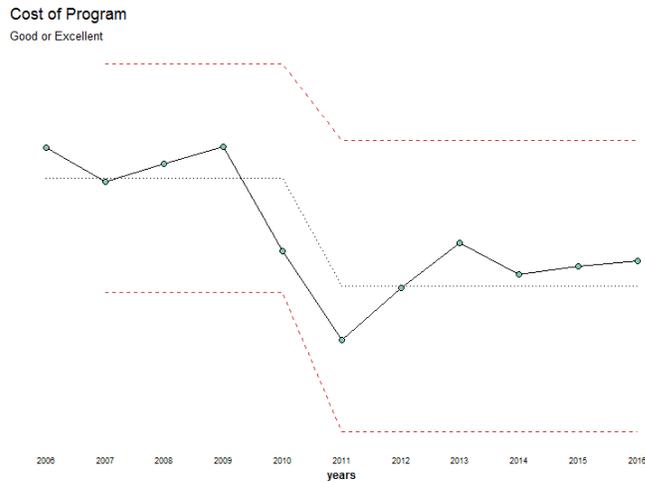
“Yukon College’s teachers are very friendly and approachable. I will look forward to become a University soon!”

Three-quarters of respondents (74%) rated the variety of programs offered at Yukon College as “good” or “excellent.” This figure is within historical ranges.

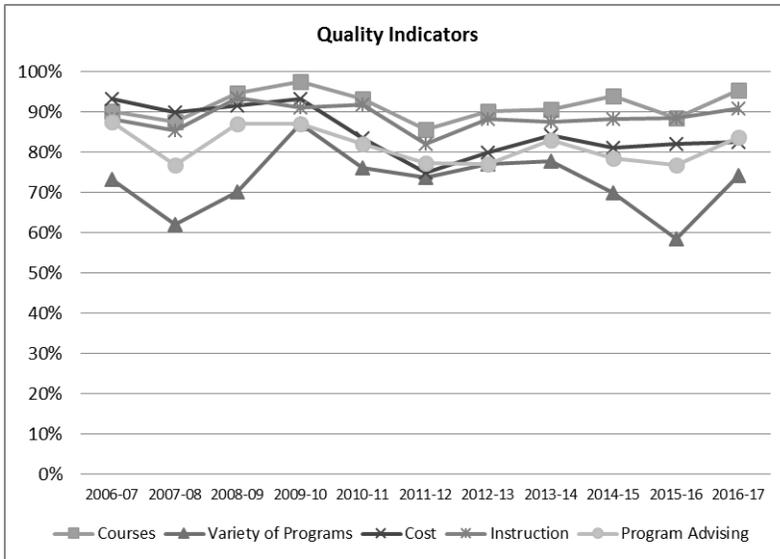
“Degree programs are very limited.”

More than four out of five respondents (84%) rated the quality of program advising as “good” or “excellent,” which is within historical ranges.

When asked to rate the cost of their program at Yukon College, 83% said it was “good” or “excellent.” Overall positive ratings of cost declined by about ten percentage points between 2009-10 and 2011-12, and have remained fairly steady over the past five years.³

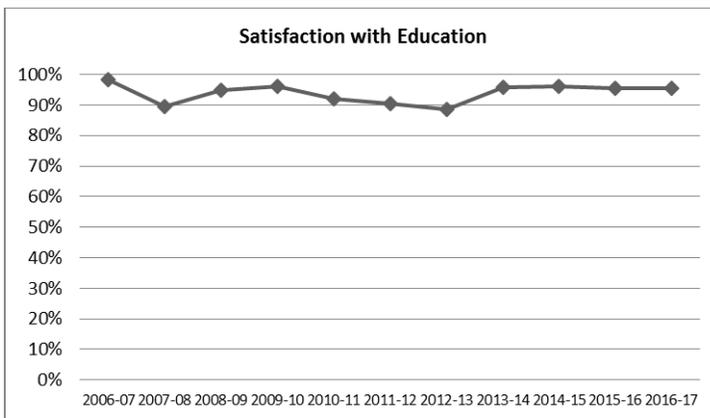


³ Control chart produced using open-source R package “xmrr” developed by Alex Zanidean for Medicine Hat College.

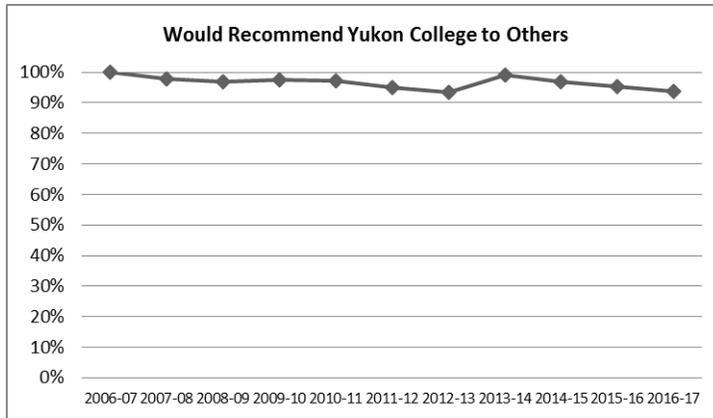


When asked about their satisfaction with the education they received at Yukon College, 95% said that they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied.” As well, 94% would recommend Yukon College to others as a place to study. These figures are within historical norms.

“This is where to start from if you have issues with bigger schools. You'll feel like you're part of a huge family that's constantly growing. You'll feel safe.”



“I'm teaching my son about opportunities to stay in town and go to college here.”



“If You Could Change One Thing”

Survey respondents were asked, “If you could change one thing about your experience at Yukon College, what would that be?” Their responses were analyzed for common themes.

Several students suggested changes to the way their courses were taught, such as having more hands-on experiences, improving the online and Fuze experience, or having a greater diversity of viewpoints in programs where most courses are taught by the same instructors.

“Program was not great, no hands on learning, theory to practice would have been great.”

Course scheduling created issues for some students, and some would have liked to have been able to take their program in either a condensed format, or an extended format leading to a higher credential.

“The schedule of classes, maybe have more offerings so people can condense the time that they are in classes during the day and have more availability to work, etc.”

Some students would have benefited from additional student supports, such as individual assistance from instructors and other staff, child care, access to computer labs, being able to borrow equipment needed for assignments, and a smoother process for International students coming to the College.

“Have staff available more time with students”

A few students said that they would like to have been more involved with extracurricular activities, such as recreational and fitness classes, student clubs, and opportunities to socialize with other students.

“Involved in more extracurricular activities at the college.”

On the other hand, a small number of students said that they would have focused more on their studies.

“Attending class more and study more.”

Facing Obstacles

Survey respondents were asked, “Were there any obstacles you had to overcome to participate in your College program?” Those who faced obstacles were also asked whether the College assisted them in any way. Of the 24 respondents who described obstacles they had faced, more than half (58%) indicated that the College had assisted them with these. One-quarter (25%) indicated that the College did not assist them, and the remaining 17% did not indicate one way or the other.

Obstacles included:

- Finding affordable child care, and balancing school with family life;
- Balancing school with work;
- Financial hardships;
- Personal and mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, dealing with grief and loss, extreme introversion, and self-limiting beliefs; and
- Other issues such as: classes being cancelled; technology; unexpected costs due to lack of information up front; travel; language barriers; health issues; and being satisfied with producing work that may fall short of one’s personal standards.

Other Topics

The survey covers several other topics that are not summarized here. The data on many of these topics is used to inform internal quality assurance processes such as program review. Data on these topics can be obtained by request from Institutional Research and Planning:

- Program non-completion, and plans to complete;
- Participation in and helpfulness of Academic Upgrading;
- Employment income;
- Improvements to employment or job security as a result of studies;
- Whether respondents looked for work in their home community, and whether they found work in their preferred geographic location;
- Perceived likelihood of finding work related to studies (for those not employed at time of survey);

- Usage and ratings of services such as Registration, Library, Learning Assistance Centre, computer labs, personal counselling, career and education planning, Campus Housing, help with financial matters, cafeteria, and recreational facilities;
- Participation in and satisfaction with work placements;
- Participation in student clubs, sports, student government, social events, and cultural activities;
- Additional items regarding perceptions of safety, student activities, cultural sensitivity, knowledge and understanding of Yukon First Nations, and technical knowledge and skills;
- Sources of financing for education; and
- Demographic data.

Conclusion

Overall satisfaction with the Yukon College experience remains high. Students provided suggestions for further improving the College experience, as well as offering insight into the range of obstacles that some students must overcome in order to succeed in their studies.

Last year's survey had noted a decline in satisfaction with the transfer experience among students who had enrolled at another post-secondary institution, and had either transferred or expected to be able to transfer Yukon College courses and credits. This year's survey results were similar to last year's in this regard. There is continued need to ensure that students are set up for successful transfer experiences.