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ABSTRACT

The second in a series of institutional research reports that demonstrate the role the Community College of Philadelphia (CCP) plays in supporting the educational needs of the community, this report highlights some of the opportunities and benefits that students accrue from their enrollment at the College. CCP provides the community with affordable, nondiscriminatory access to higher education; 37% of 1995 graduates said they would have been unable to participate in higher education without the College. Main reasons for enrollment included preparation for new employment, educational transfer, personal interest and general education, basic skills development, and strengthening of existing employment skills, and CCP provides programs in business, liberal arts, allied health, science and technology, and the social sciences to meet those needs. In 1995, 50% of CCP graduates transferred successfully within a year, exceeding the state-wide community college transfer rate of 38.6%. Most of the College's transfer students enroll at a college within the Philadelphia region, particularly Temple University, with high rates of academic success. The majority of CCP career program graduates successfully achieve their employment objectives; in 1995, 52.4% found a new job and 88% were working in a field directly related to their studies. Students expressed a very high degree of satisfaction with their CCP education and the role it played in achieving their transfer and career goals. (YKH)

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Community College of Philadelphia

**An Assessment of
Community College of Philadelphia's
Effectiveness in Preparing Students for
Transfer and Employment**

Office of Institutional Research

Report #92

Prepared by Jane Grosset

December 1996

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Office of Educational Research and Improvement
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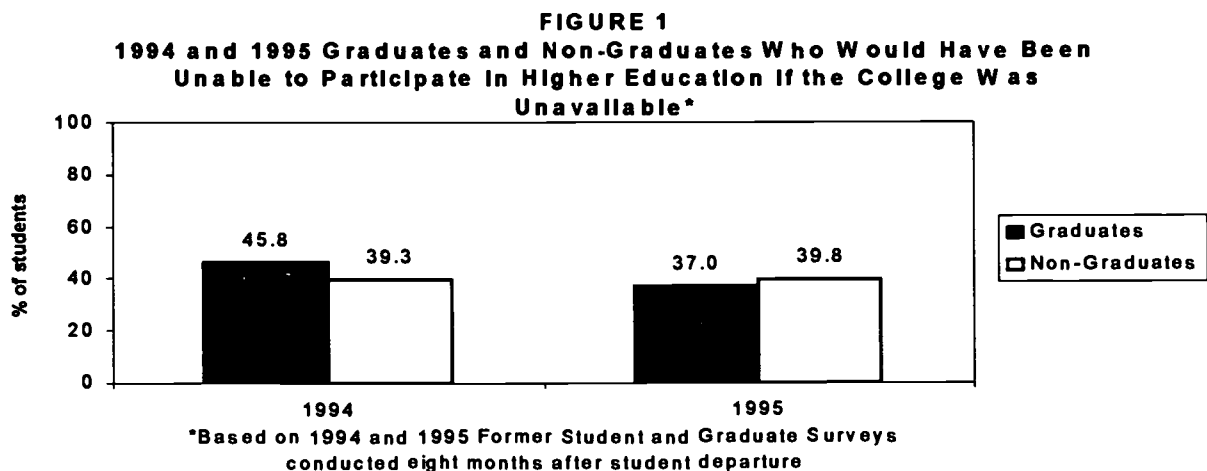
Introduction

This is the second in a series of Institutional Research reports that demonstrate the important role the College plays in supporting the educational needs of the City and its residents. The first in this series is Institutional Research Report #87, entitled “Economic Impact Characteristics of the Community College of Philadelphia”, in which measures of economic development, human development and cost effectiveness demonstrate the prominent role Community College of Philadelphia plays in the City’s economy.

This report highlights some of the opportunities and benefits that students accrue from their enrollment at the College. While students benefit in many ways from their community college experiences, this report focuses on a few core indicators that reflect the mission to provide programs of study that lay a “coherent foundation for college transfer and employment”. Several examples of human and financial resources and institutional programs that promote and support these aspects of the mission are also presented.

Access to Higher Education Through Community College of Philadelphia

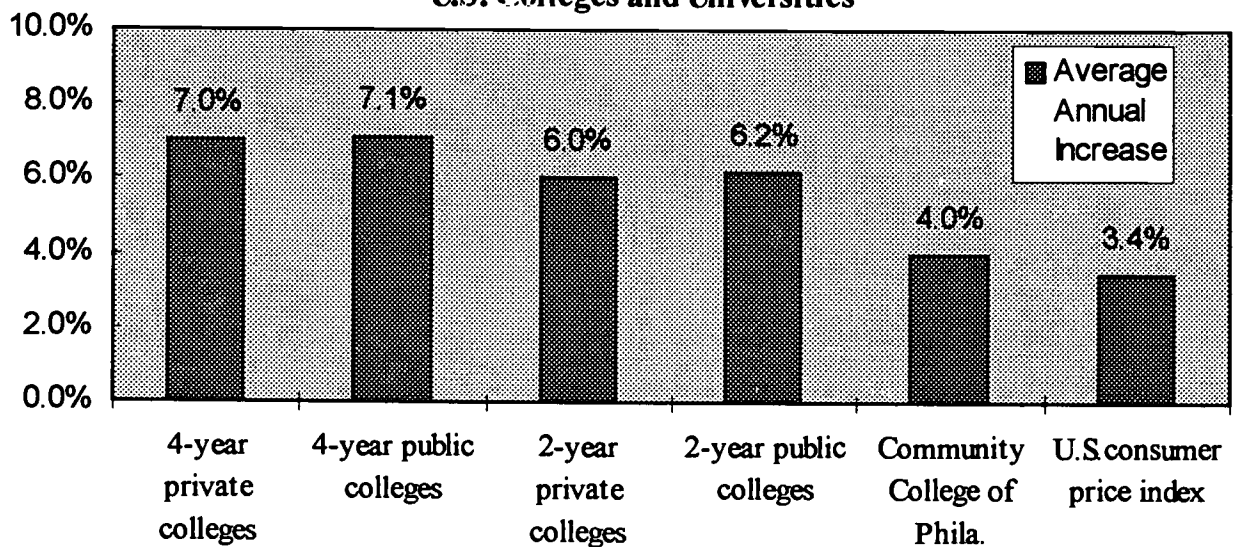
Forty-six percent (46%) of graduates in 1994 and 37% in 1995 said they would have been unable to participate in higher education were it not for the opportunities the College offers (Figure 1). Approximately 40% of the College’s non-graduates over the same two years would



have been unable to participate in higher education in the absence of the College.

The College has attempted to minimize tuition increases, thereby helping to ensure financial accessibility to the citizens of Philadelphia. Between 1987/88 and 1996/97, the average annual tuition and fees increase at the College was 4.0% (Figure 2). During this same time

FIGURE 2
Average Annual Increase in Tuition and Fees 1987-88 to 1996-97 at
U.S. Colleges and Universities



Source: Chronicle of Higher Education

Community College of Philadelphia tuition is based on 30 credit hours plus fees

period, the national average annual tuition and fees increase for all other two-year public colleges was 6.2%.

The College is the largest single point of entry into higher education for minorities in Pennsylvania. During the 1995-96 academic year, 20,715 African American; 13,837 White; 2,305 Asian; and 3,754 Latino students were enrolled at the College (Table 1). In Fall 1995, the College's minority enrollment (exclusive of nonresident aliens) represented 17.7% of all minority

undergraduates at Pennsylvania colleges and 52.7% of all minority enrollments at Pennsylvania community colleges.

TABLE 1
Total Community College of Philadelphia 1995-96
Enrollments by Racial/Ethnic Background Compared With
the City of Philadelphia as of the 1990 Census

	City of Philadelphia (1990 Census)	Percent Distribution	Community College of Philadelphia 1995-96 Enrollments	Percent Distribution
African American	623,510	39.3%	20,715	50.8%
White	825,839	52.1%	13,837	33.9%
Asian	42,156	2.7%	2,305	5.6%
Native American	3,144	0.2%	192	0.5%
Other	1,735	0.1%	--	--
Latino	89,193	5.6%	3,754	9.2%
Total	1,585,577		40,803	

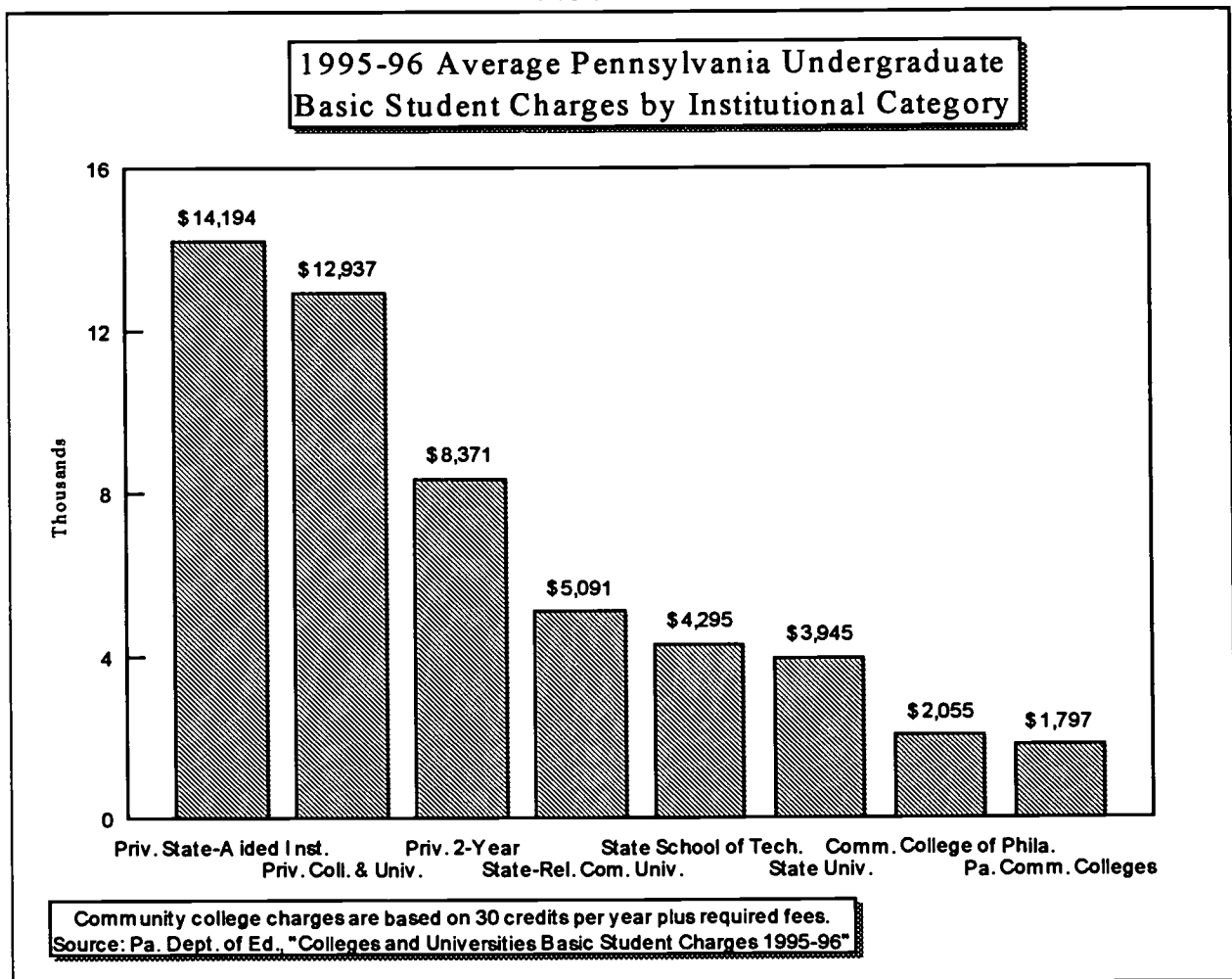
Upon entry to the College, many students indicate they enrolled to fulfill career-related and transfer goals. Approximately 40% of new fall students in 1994 and 1995 were primarily interested in preparing for new employment and another 7% to 11% enrolled to strengthen existing employment skills (Table 2). One-quarter of new fall 1994 and 1995 students enrolled with the principal goal of preparing to eventually transfer to another college or university.

TABLE 2
Most Important Goals for New Students in Fall 1994 and 1995

Goals	Fall 1994	Fall 1995
<u>Preparation for new employment</u>		
Prepare for new job	614	642
Discover jobs of interest	357	356
Improve socioeconomic status	103	133
Total	1074 (39.4%)	1131 (38.0%)
<u>Transfer</u>		
	685 (25.1%)	718 (24.2%)
<u>Personal interest and general education</u>		
Increase self-confidence	215	211
Meet new and interesting people	10	18
Study new and different subjects	93	99
Broaden understanding of community/world	58	61
Reduce dependence on others	105	102
Total	481 (17.7%)	491 (16.5%)
<u>Basic skills development</u>		
	282 (10.4%)	317 (10.7%)
<u>Strengthen existing employment skills</u>		
Improve knowledge/skills for current job	135	198
Improve chances for raise/promotion-current job	67	118
Total	202 (7.4%)	316 (10.6%)
GRAND TOTAL	2724	2973

For students who are eventually planning to transfer to a baccalaureate-degree granting institution, the College provides an affordable access point into higher education. In keeping with its commitment to providing opportunity to City residents, the College's basic student charges compare favorably with those at other institutions. In 1995-96, average tuition and fees at the College was \$2,055 compared to an average of \$3,945 and \$5,091 charged by Pennsylvania state universities and state-related universities (Figure 3).

FIGURE 3

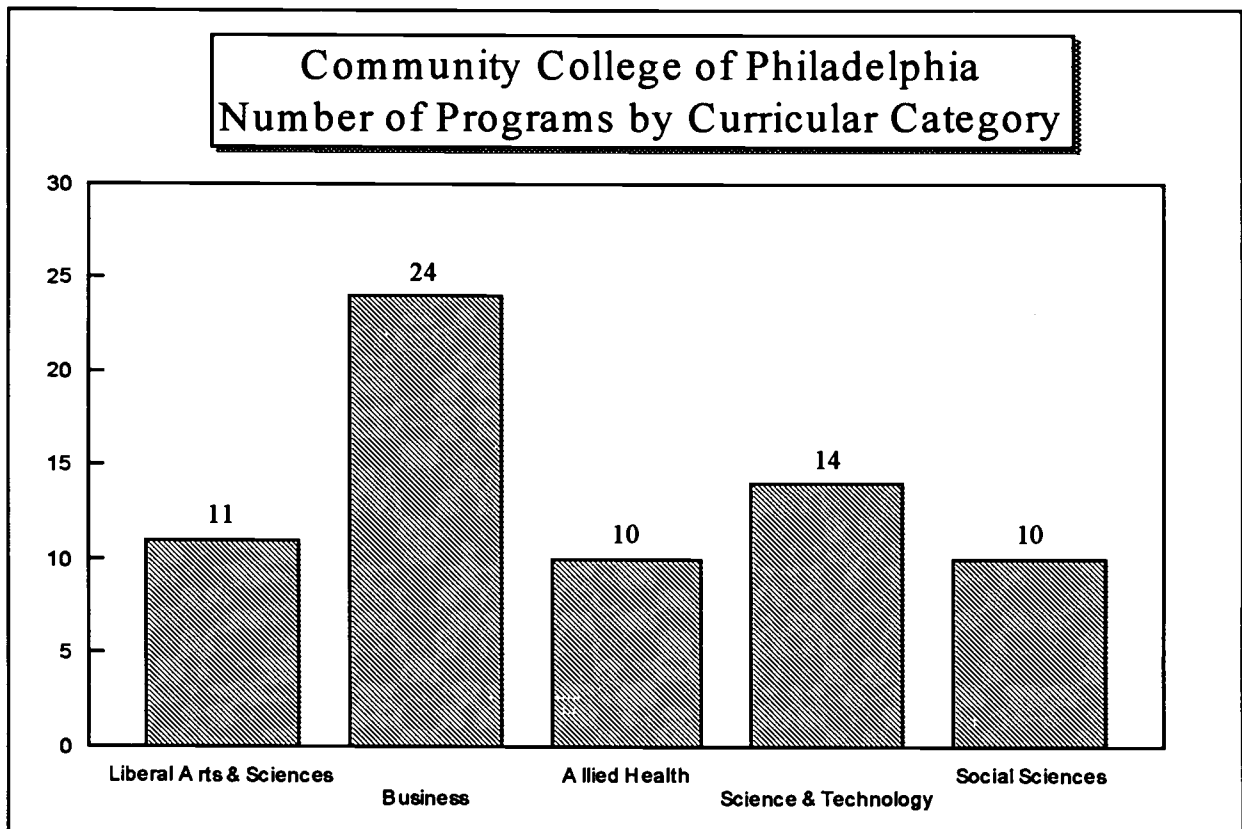


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Resources that Support Mission

The magnitude and diversity of degree programs demonstrates the responsiveness of the College to offering programs that support student and community needs. Approximately 58 career programs, including those in the areas of business, allied health, science, technology and the social and behavioral sciences, were available in recent semesters (Figure 4). Fifteen transfer

FIGURE 4



programs were among the College's recent offerings including programs in the humanities, education, business and general studies. In recent semesters, approximately 5700 students were enrolled in career programs and 14,000 were enrolled in transfer programs. Two thousand credit courses were offered and enrollments in these courses totaled nearly 47,000.

During the 1995/96 academic year, 383 full-time faculty were employed by the College. Eleven percent (11%) had achieved the rank of full professor, 43% associate professor, 41% assistant professor, and 5% instructor. Approximately one-quarter (26.9%) of the full-time faculty had earned doctorates and another 62.9% held master's degrees. Of the 116 administrators employed during 1995/96 academic year, 15.5% had earned doctorates, 25% held masters degrees and 42.2% held bachelor's degrees.

Community College of Philadelphia has devoted a higher percentage of its employment resources to faculty than has been the statewide pattern in higher education. During the 1994/95 fiscal year, the ratio of full-time faculty to full-time non-faculty staff was 0.98. By comparison, the ratio for community colleges statewide was 0.62. Full-time equivalent (FTE) student to FTE non-faculty staff ratios have been above national averages. At the same time, the College has maintained a level of FTE students per FTE faculty that is comparable with national averages of student-to-faculty contact at all two-year colleges and public comprehensive institutions (Figure 5).

In Fall 1995, the average class section size at the College was 22.5 students which compares favorably with a community college state-wide average of 19.4.

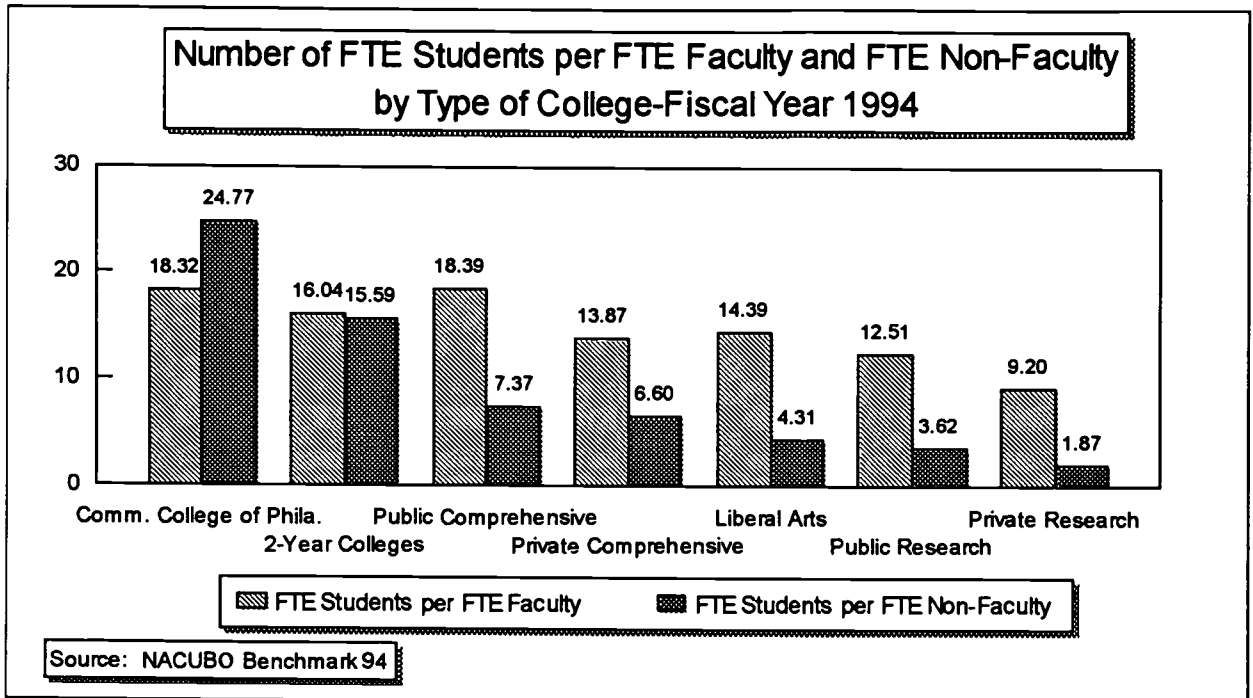
Transfer and Employment Outcomes

This section of the report presents outcome indicators that help to assess the College's effectiveness in fulfilling core aspects of its mission related to career and transfer development. Where possible, a comparable set of inter- or intra-institutional indicators have been provided.

Transfer Outcomes

The College plays a vital role in providing a path to the award of the bachelor's degree.

FIGURE 5

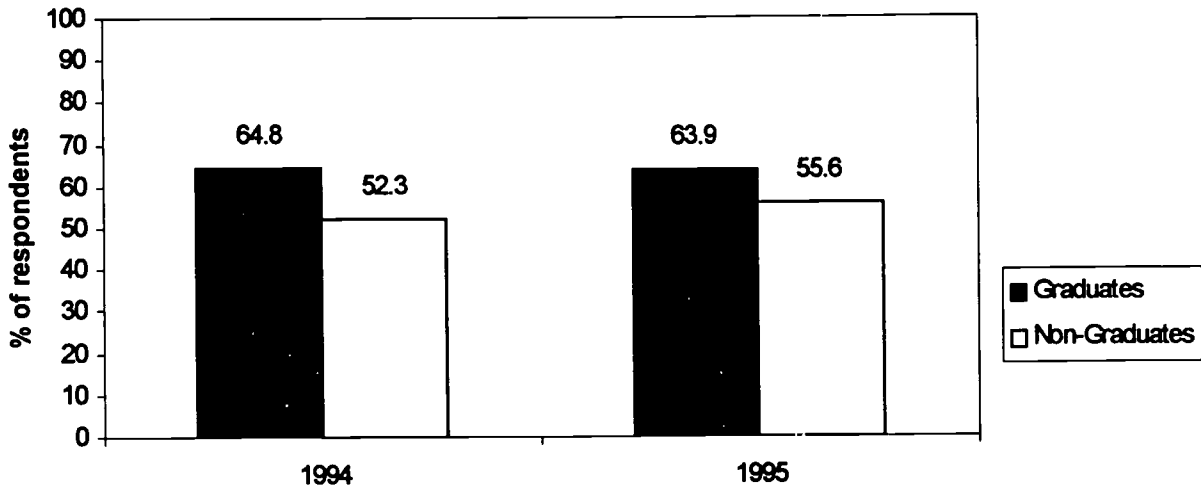


Large numbers of graduates and non-graduates continue their education after leaving Community College of Philadelphia. During 1995, 8682 former students requested that their transcripts be sent to another institution for admission evaluation.

Transfer rates, which are available for a variety of categories of former students, are high. Based on recent surveys of former students, approximately 64% of graduates and 54% of non-graduates who enrolled at the College to prepare for transfer did so within one year of leaving the College (Figure 6).

The transfer rate of all graduates, regardless of transfer intentions, compares very favorably with state-wide community college transfer activity. Fifty percent (50%) of all 1995 graduates of the College transferred nine months after commencement compared to 38.6% of all Pennsylvania community college graduates in this year.

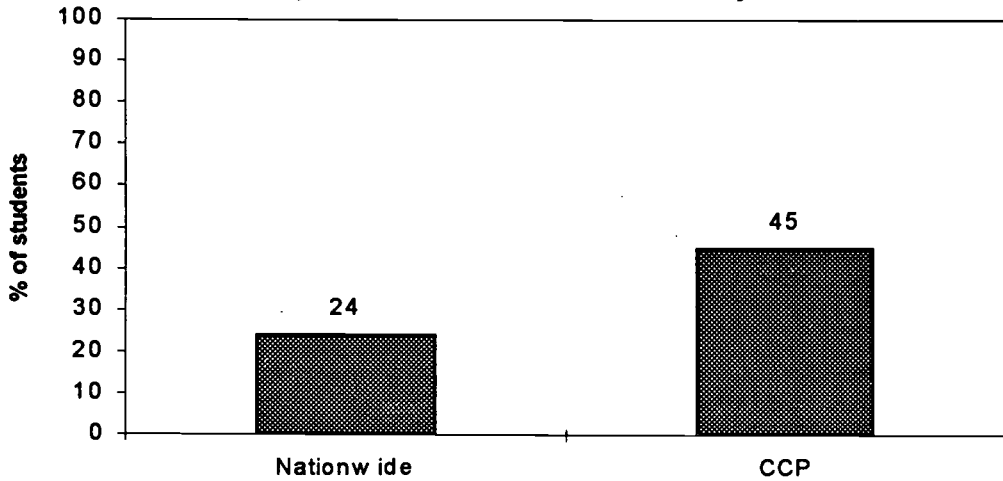
FIGURE 6
Short-term* Transfer Rates of 1994 and 1995 Graduates and Non-
Graduates Who Enrolled With the Intention to Transfer



*Based on 1994 and 1995 Former Student and Graduate Surveys conducted eight months after student departure.

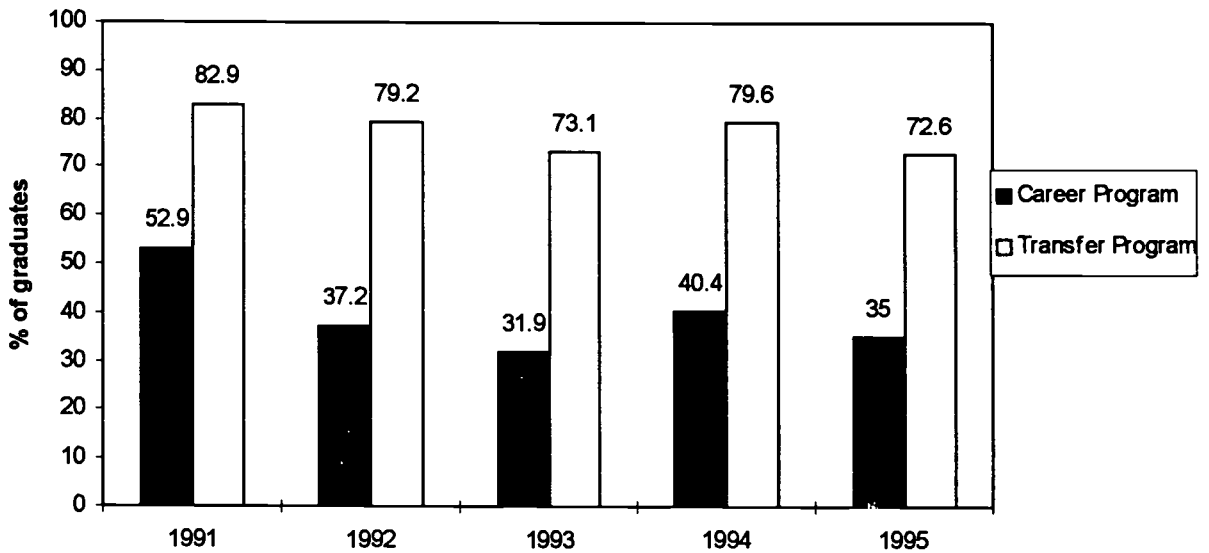
In a national study of community college transfer rates, conducted by the Center for the Study of Community Colleges, it was learned that 45% of students who completed at least 12 credits at the College transferred within four years of their initial enrollment. Once again, this transfer rate compared very favorably with a community college national average of 24% (Figure 7). The transfer rate of the College's transfer program graduates from 1991 through 1995 has ranged from 72.6% in 1995 and 82.9% in 1991 (Figure 8). Except for 1994, there has been a slight down-trend in the transfer activity of graduates over this time frame. Over the same time there has been greater fluctuation in the transfer activity of career program graduates. For these graduates, the transfer rate was highest in 1991 (52.9%), dropped to 31.9% by 1993 and recovered to 35.0% in 1995.

FIGURE 7
Nationwide and Community College of Philadelphia
Transfer Rates Based on New Fall 1987 Students Who
Completed 12 or More Credits by Fall 1991*



*Nationwide figures are based on transfer outcomes from 48 community colleges gathered by the Center for the Study of Community Colleges.

FIGURE 8
Short-term* Transfer Rates of Transfer and Career Program Graduates
1991 Through 1995



*Based on information gathered through Graduate Surveys 1991 through 1995.

Eighty-three (83%) percent of the College's students who transfer enroll at a college or university within the Philadelphia region. Another 7% attend a Pennsylvania college outside of the metropolitan area, while the remaining 10% transfer to an out-of-state institution. Recently popular transfer institutions for students include Temple University, University of Allegheny Hospital (formerly Hahnemann University), Thomas Jefferson University, La Salle University, Holy Family College, Episcopal Hospital, Drexel University and Penn State University.

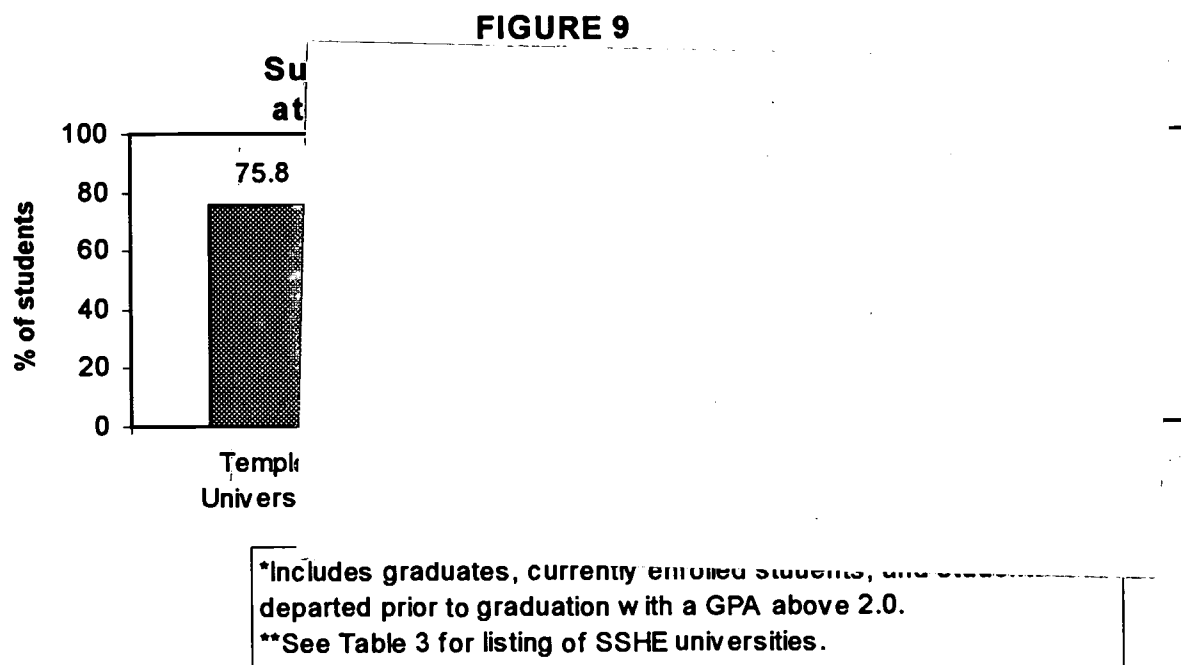
Temple University has been the most popular transfer institution with the College's former students. Between 1988 and 1994, approximately 6,000 students had their transcripts sent to Temple University for admissions evaluation. The acceptance rate at Temple for the College's applicants is typically high. For example, 86% of former students who applied for admission in fall 1994 were accepted. Further evidence of the importance of Community College of Philadelphia as a feeder institution for Temple is the fact that 344 of the 3,305 bachelors degrees earned by Temple University graduates between January 1993 and 1994 were awarded to former students of the College.

While former students have not transferred in large numbers to the 14 universities that comprise the State System of Higher Education (SSHE), a cooperative state-wide data exchange with these universities has contributed to a greater understanding of the College's effectiveness in preparing students for transfer to universities within the state-system. Between 1993 and 1995, 226 to 237 former students were enrolled at SSHE universities (Table 3). Because of the geographic proximity to Philadelphia, approximately two-thirds of these students were enrolled at West Chester and Cheyney universities. While admissions outcomes were not available for transfers to each SSHE university, Kutztown and West Chester universities have indicated that

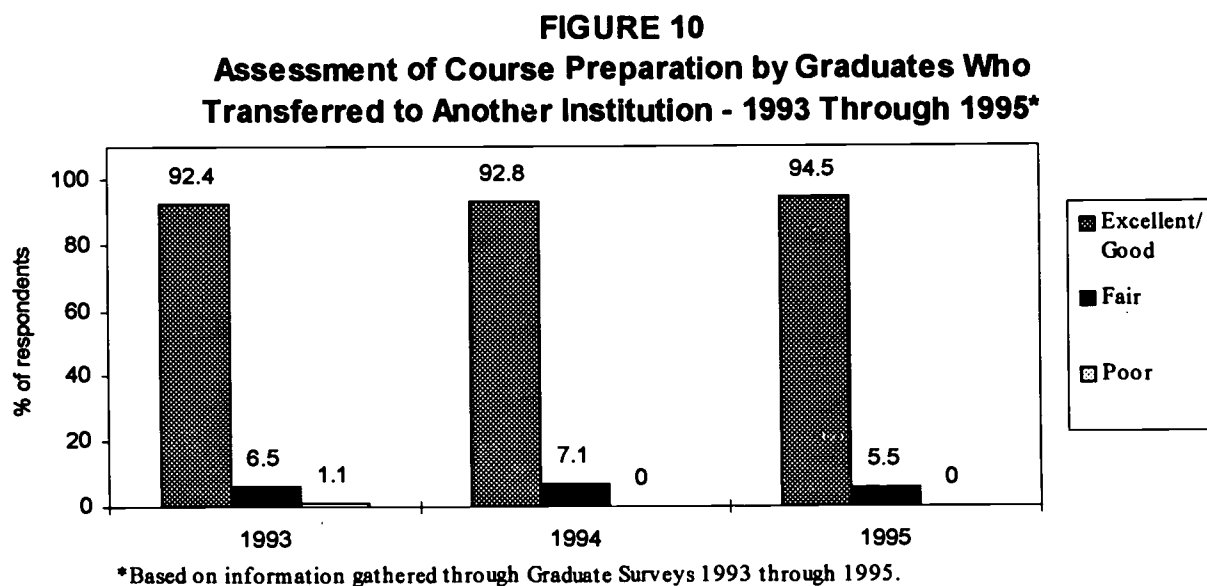
the acceptance rates for College students for the fall 1994 semester were 79% and 69%, respectively.

University	Fall 1993	Fall 1994	Fall 1995
Bloomsburg University	5	7	12
California University of PA	2	1	1
Cheyney University	66	77	60
Clarion University	2	3	2
East Stroudsburg University	13	12	7
Edinboro University	1	0	1
Indiana University	15	11	13
Kutztown University	9	13	9
Lock Haven University	9	8	3
Mansfield University	2	3	6
Millersville University	12	13	14
Shippensburg University	5	5	5
Slippery Rock University	3	3	3
West Chester University	82	81	101
Total	226	237	237

Information from several receiving institutions indicate that transfers from the College generally make a successful academic transition between institutions. Success rates of former students ranged from 72% at La Salle University to 83% at Widener University. Three-quarters of transfers to Temple and 82% to SSHE universities have been successful in their baccalaureate studies (Figure 9).



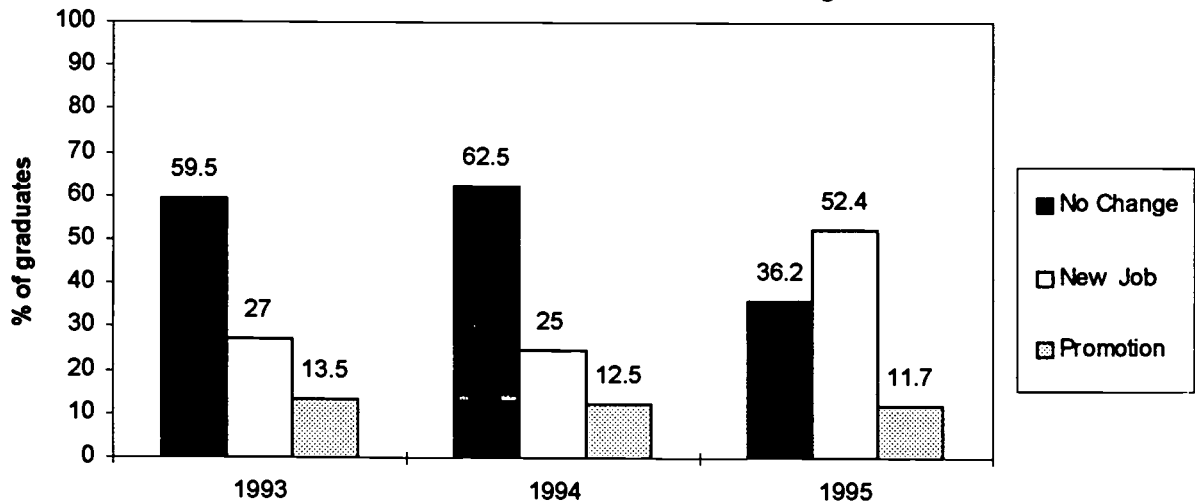
Nearly all recent graduates who have transferred have been satisfied with the support and course preparation they received while at the College in helping them meet the demands at the baccalaureate level. Nearly ninety-four percent (94.5%) rated their course preparation at the College as either excellent or good (Figure 10).



Employment Outcomes

Based on their post-College labor market experiences, many recent graduates have successfully achieved their employment objectives. Regarding job mobility, approximately 52.4% of 1995 career program graduates found a new job and an additional 12% were promoted eight months after graduating (Figure 11).

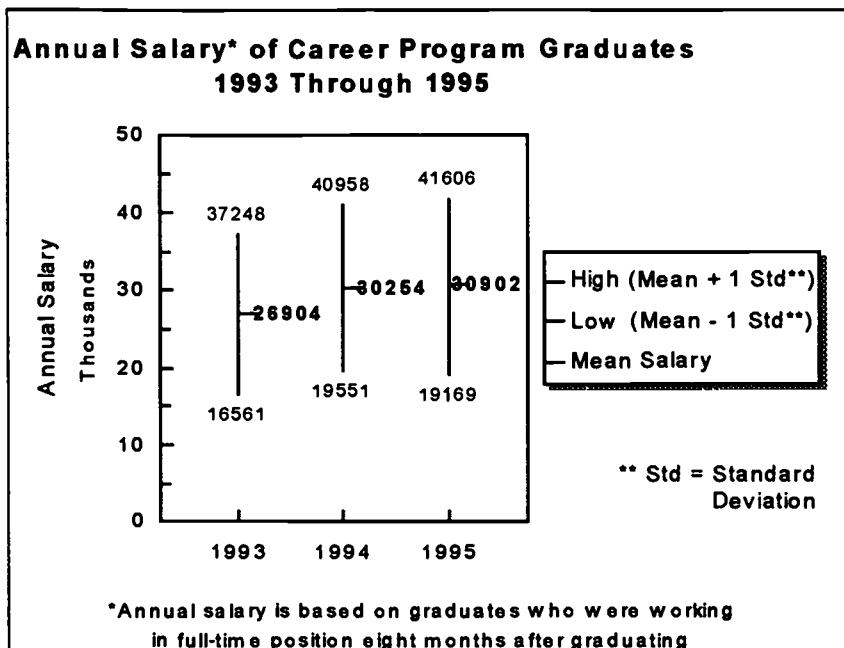
FIGURE 11
Change in Employment Status Since Graduating
Career Program Graduates - 1993 Through 1995*



*Based on information gathered through Graduate Surveys 1993 through 1995.

Of those career program graduates who were employed in a new job, 88% were working in a field directly related to their studies. Eight months after commencement, the average salary earned by 1995 graduates was \$30,902, an increase of \$3,998 over 1993 graduates (Figure 12). As shown in Figure 12, annual salaries earned by two-thirds of 1996 graduates shortly after graduating ranged from \$19,169 to \$41,606.

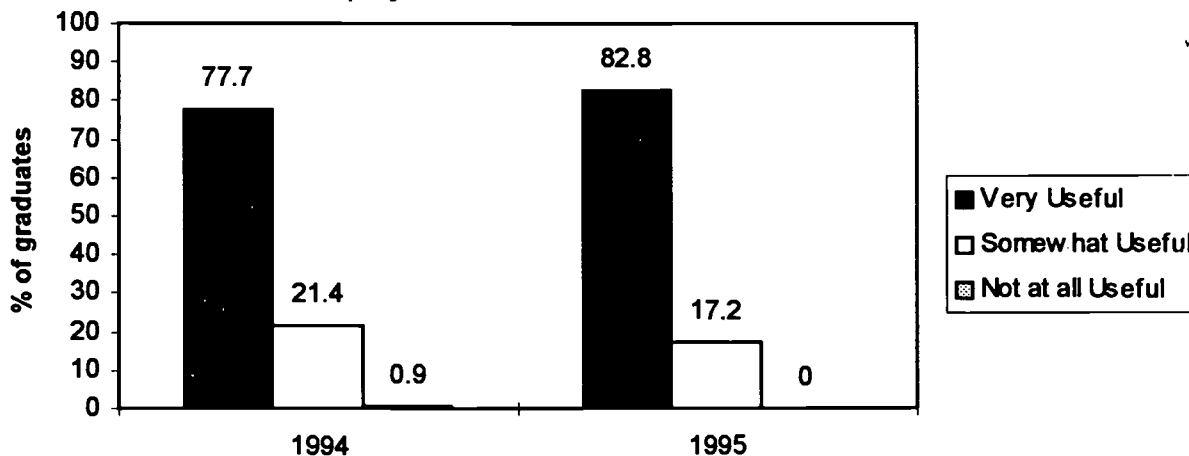
FIGURE 12



Recent graduates who were employed in a job that was related to their College studies have been highly complimentary about the usefulness of their education in enhancing their job performance (Figure 13). All of the 1995 graduates felt that their studies were useful to them in this regard.

FIGURE 13

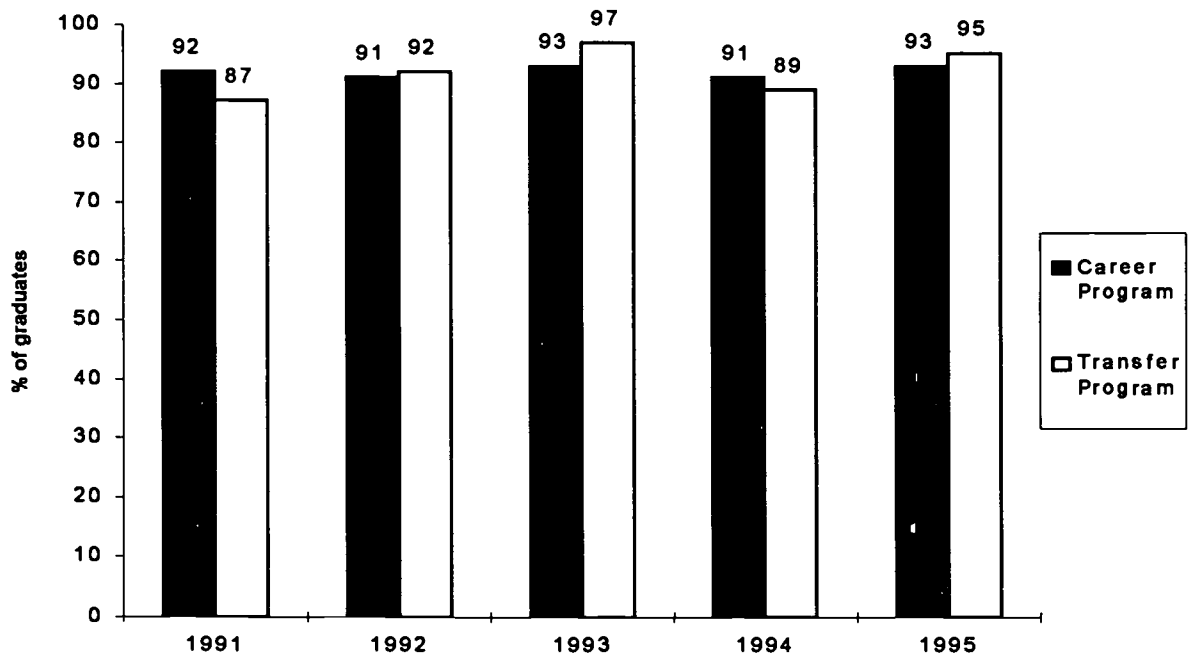
**Assessed Usefulness of Education in Performing Job
Graduates Employed in a Job Related to Their Studies***



*Based on responses to the 1994 and 1995 Graduate Surveys.

The employment rates in Figure 14, which are based on career program graduates between 1991 and 1995, have remained high. Ninety-one percent (91%) to 93% of graduates who were

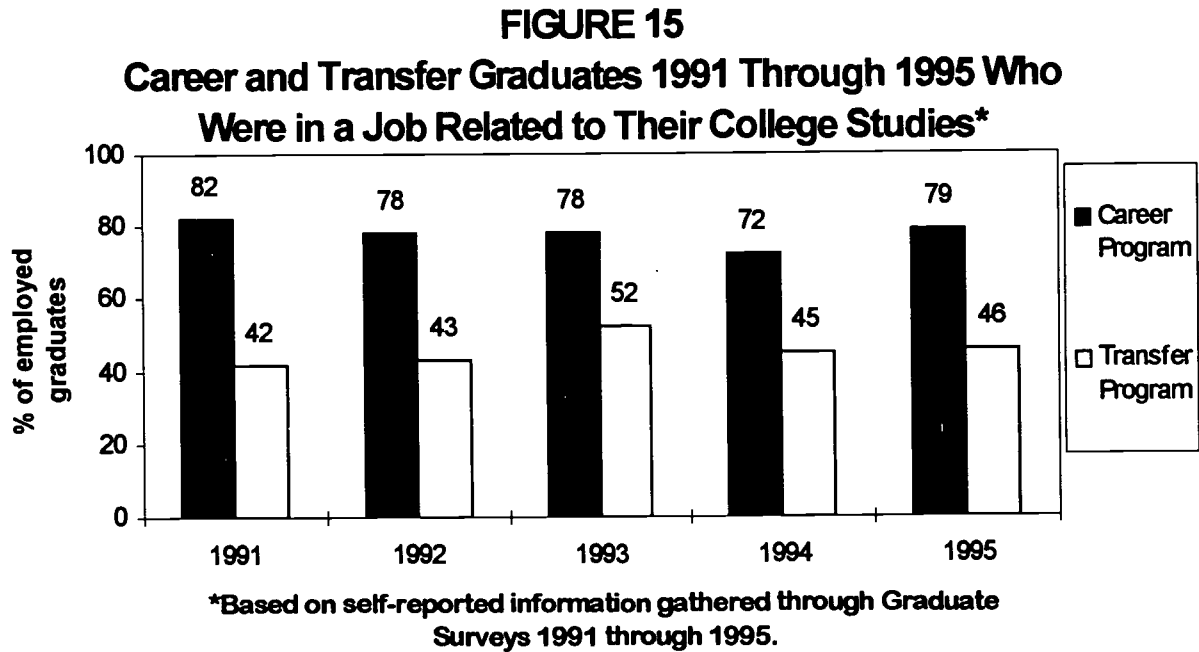
FIGURE 14
Employment Rates of Career and Transfer Program Graduates - 1991 Through 1995*



*Based on self-reported information gathered through Graduate Surveys 1991 through 1995.

available to work, were doing so shortly after graduating. Between 1991 and 1995, the employment rate among transfer program graduates was also consistently high, ranging from 85% to 97%. Although the employment rates of transfer and career program graduates have been comparable, the proportion of career program graduates working in jobs related to their College studies far exceeds that of transfer program graduates (Figure 15). In 1995, graduates from career programs were nearly twice as likely as transfer graduates to be working at a job that was related to their College studies.

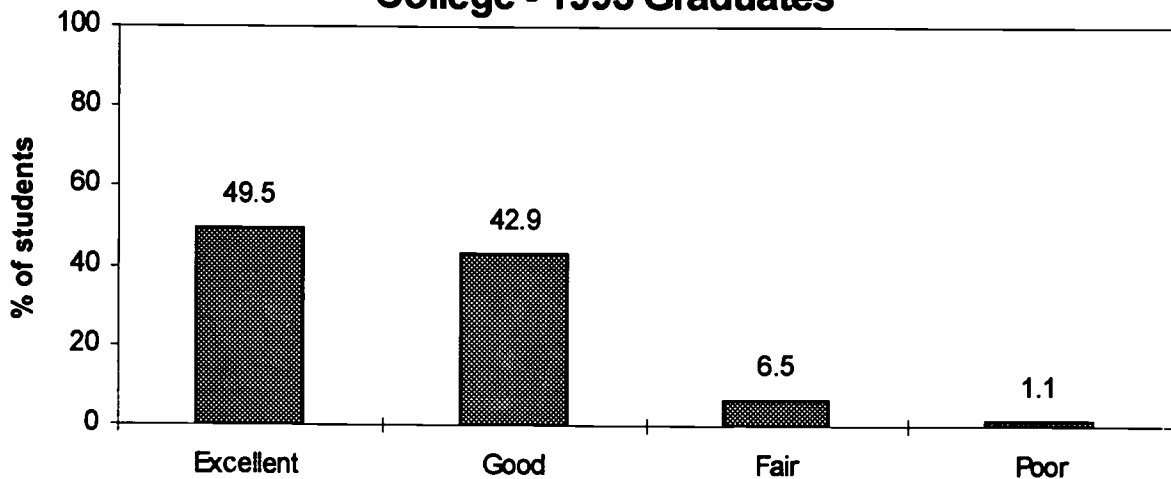
The unemployment rate for all 1995 graduates of the College (6.0%) compares favorably with the rate for 1995 graduates from 10 other Pennsylvania community colleges (5.6%). Equal percentages (51%) of 1995 Community College of Philadelphia's graduates and those from other



Pennsylvania community colleges were employed in a job related to their studies.

To the extent that satisfaction with experiences is a function of the correspondence between expectations and experiences, an indicator of the College's mission effectiveness with regard to meeting the transfer and employment objectives of students is the high level of overall satisfaction students expressed about their experiences (Figure 16) and the many former students who say they would recommend the College to someone else (97%).

FIGURE 16
Rating of Overall Education Experience at the
College - 1995 Graduates*



*Based on responses to the 1995 Graduate Survey

SUMMARY

As stated in *The CCP Mission*, the College is committed to providing programs of study that lay a “coherent foundation for college transfer and employment” and the information presented herein indicates that the College is effectively achieving this aspect of its mission. Community College of Philadelphia continues to play a vital role in providing residents of Philadelphia with a path to the award of the bachelor’s degree. Large numbers of graduate and non-graduates alike continue their education after leaving the College and are academically successful in their studies at the baccalaureate degree granting institutions they subsequently attend.

While in recent years there has been a down-trend in the percentage of graduates who continue their studies elsewhere, this decline has been offset by an increase in the number of

recent graduates who have a new job since graduating from the College. This shift in post-community college activities is not unexpected given improving economic conditions within the City which have given rise to greater current employment opportunities than has been true for past graduates.

When compared with graduates from other Pennsylvania community colleges, graduates of the Community College of Philadelphia experience equally successful employment outcomes and transfer rates. In fact, transfer rates for former College students exceed both statewide and national averages. On a qualitative note, former students express a very high degree of satisfaction with their experiences while at the College and acknowledge the contributions these experiences have made to their transfer and career successes.



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