



## **Yukon College Student Exit Survey**

**2017-18**

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## Acknowledgements

Yukon College would like to thank all of the students who participated in the Yukon College Exit Survey 2017-18. The College also thanks Karen McLeod for her work conducting the telephone survey phase of data collection.

## 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 18 years of data. The survey conducted approximately nine to eleven months after the completion of the respondents' Yukon College studies. This year's surveys were conducted during March and April of 2018.

Formerly, the survey was conducted primarily by telephone, with a web completion option. Beginning this year, web administration is the primary mode of data collection. Emails were sent to all eligible participants using their personal email address on file. Those who did not respond to the web survey and who had a telephone number on file received a follow-up call from a survey interviewer.

The target population for the 2017-18 survey consists of all students who:

- graduated from a Yukon College certificate, diploma, or degree program in 2017-18, or
- completed at least 24 credits at Yukon College between 2016-17 and 2017-18, or
- completed at least 3 College Access Pathways courses in 2017-18, and
- had not been enrolled in more than one Yukon College credit course (equivalent to 3 credit hours) in 2018-19.

The rationale for including former students enrolled in one credit course in 2018-19 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 42%. Past years' surveys have had response rates ranging from 16%-50%.

**Response to 2017-18 Yukon College Exit Survey**

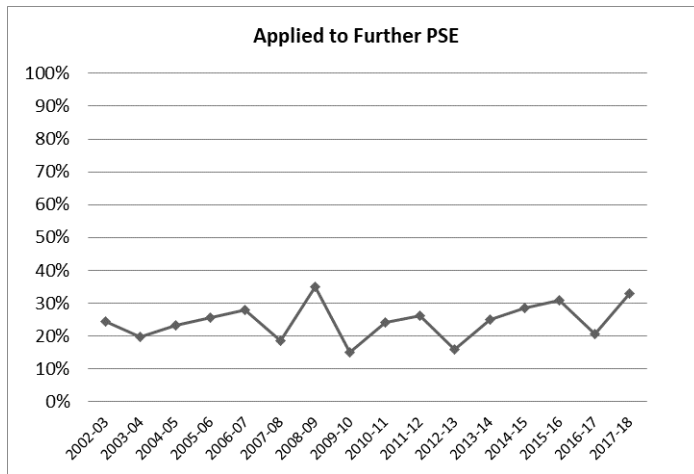
	Number	Percent
Completed by web	73	36%
Completed by phone	12	6%
<i>Total Completed</i>	85	42%
Refused	10	5%
No response to email or telephone calls	104	51%
No working email or telephone number	3	1%
<i>Total Eligible Participants</i>	202	100%

## 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 context<sup>1</sup>, 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-third (33%) of survey respondents said that they had applied to another post-secondary institution since going to Yukon College. The figure has ranged from 15% - 35% in previous years. Among alumni of university transfer programs responding to the survey this year, the proportion was a bit higher at 44%.



<sup>1</sup> Illustrative comments have been placed in the report where they fit with the topic, rather than being grouped by question.

Of the 27 respondents who had applied to another post-secondary institution, 96% had been accepted and 4% (one person) was still waiting to hear back. Of the 26 respondents who had been accepted, 76% had enrolled.

Of the 19 people who had enrolled at another post-secondary institution, 11 (or 58%) were expecting to receive transfer credit, and 60% of these students received all the transfer credit they were expecting. The proportion receiving all the transfer credit they expected is at a historically low level, and the proportion who were expecting transfer credit was relatively low this year as well.

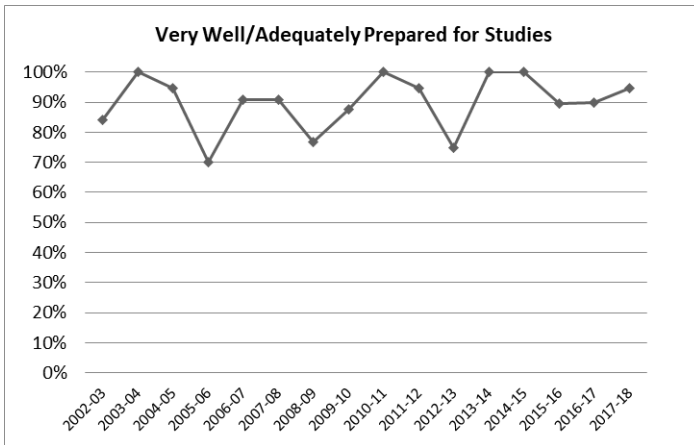


Among the 11 respondents who were expecting to receive transfer credit, 90% were satisfied or very satisfied with their transfer experience. This is within historical norms.



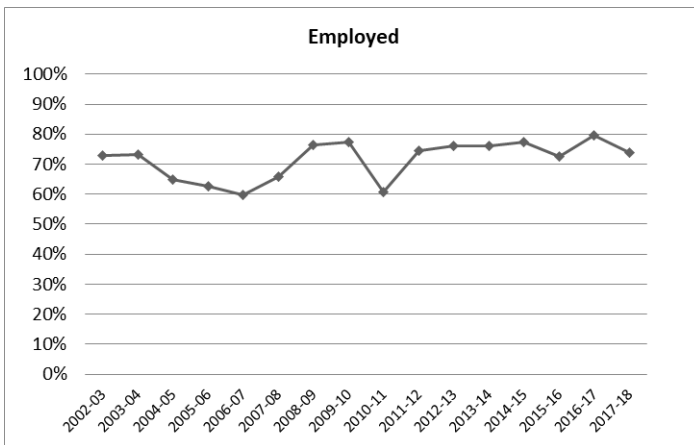
*“Transferring credits to out of territory schools remains very challenging.”*

Of the 19 respondents who had enrolled at another post-secondary institution, 95% said that their studies at Yukon College had prepared them “very well” or “adequately” for their studies at the new institution. This is within historical norms.



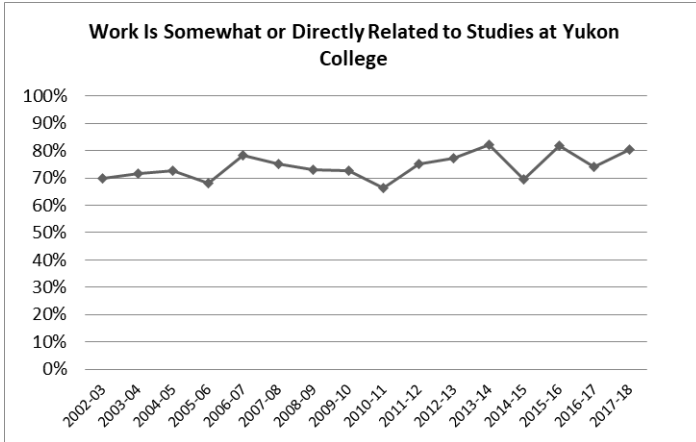
## Employment

Just under three-quarters of respondents (74%) said that they were working at a paid job or business at the time of the survey. This is down from last year but similar to two years ago, and within historical ranges. Alumni of trades certificates and career-oriented certificate and diploma programs had about the same employment rate as overall, at 71% for this group.

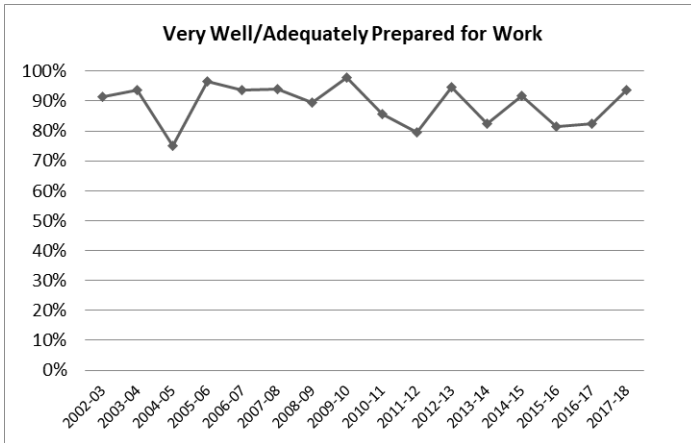


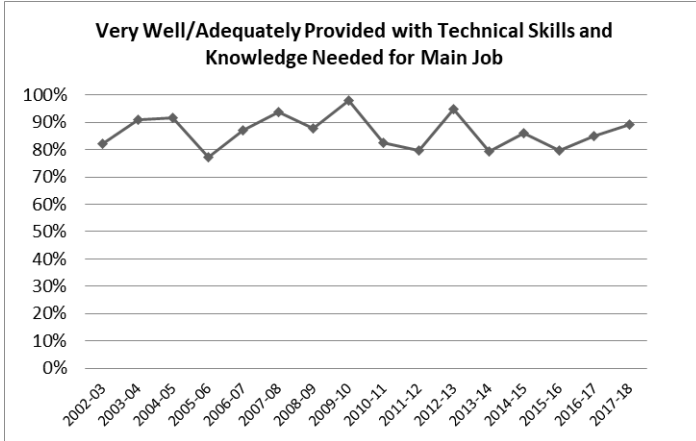
Among those who were employed, 84% worked 35 hours or more per week at their main job or business. More than one-quarter (28%) had more than one job or business. Self-employment was the main job for 7% of working respondents. Seventy percent held permanent, year-round positions, which is higher than it has been for over a decade. Eleven percent were in temporary positions, 7% were seasonal, and 11% were casual or auxiliary on-call.

Four out of five of employed respondents (80%) said that their work is “somewhat related” or “directly related” to their studies at Yukon College. This is within historical ranges.



Respondents working in jobs that are “somewhat” or “directly” related to their studies at Yukon College were asked how well their studies 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. On this year’s survey, 94% said they were “very well prepared” or “adequately prepared” overall. In terms of technical skills and knowledge, 89% were “very well” or “adequately” prepared. These figures are within historical ranges.



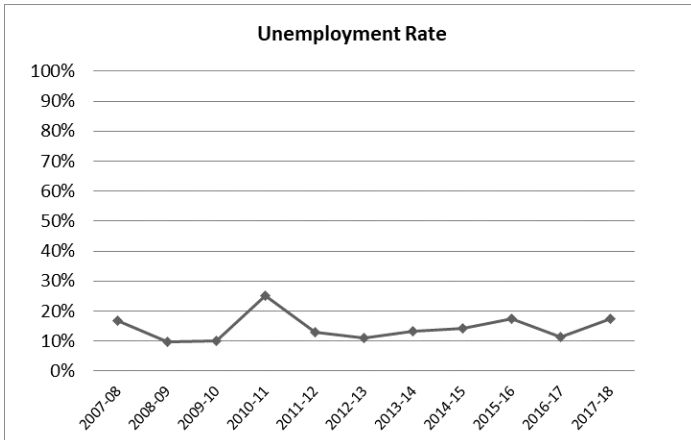


## Unemployment

Just over one-quarter of respondents (26%) said that they were not working at the time of the survey. The main reasons why some respondents are not working is because they are attending school, training or studying (36%); are on seasonal layoff (14%); can't find work (9%); are not interested in working right now (5%); have health reasons (5%); have personal or family reasons (5%); or other reasons (9%).

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.

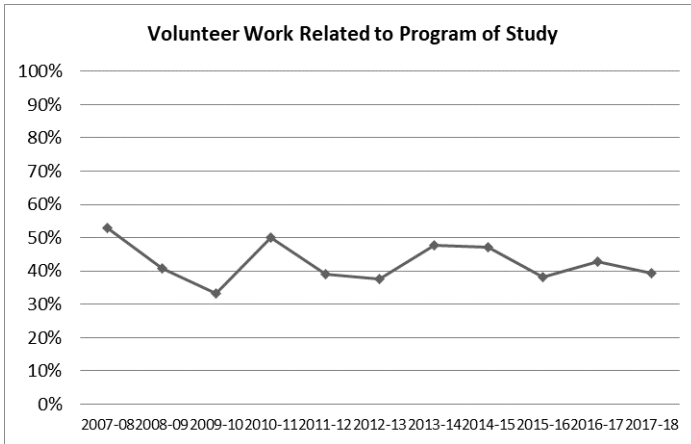
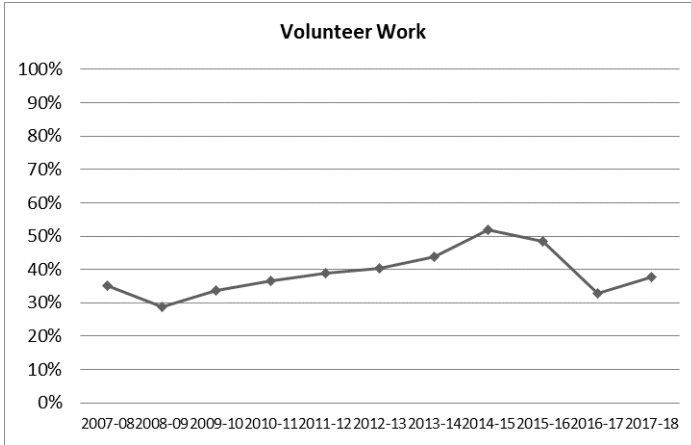
Almost nine out of ten respondents (89%) were in the labour force (working, or looking for work). The unemployment rate was 17% (not working, but looking). Historically, the unemployment rate for *Yukon College Exit Survey* respondents has ranged from 10%-25%.





## Volunteer Work

Close to two out of five respondents (38%) do volunteer work. Among those doing volunteer work, 39% said that it is related to their field of study at Yukon College. These figures are within historical ranges.



## Satisfaction with Yukon College

Nine out of ten survey respondents (90%) said that the quality of instruction is “good” or “excellent,” and 94% gave “good” or “excellent” ratings to the quality of the courses that they took at Yukon College.

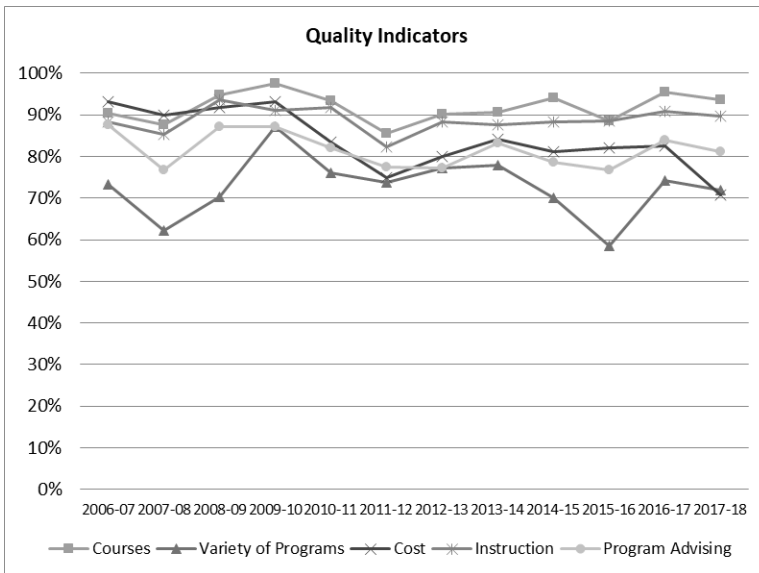
*“Great environment and awesome teachers – lots of help for those that need”*

Under three-quarters of respondents (72%) rated the variety of programs offered at Yukon College as “good” or “excellent.”

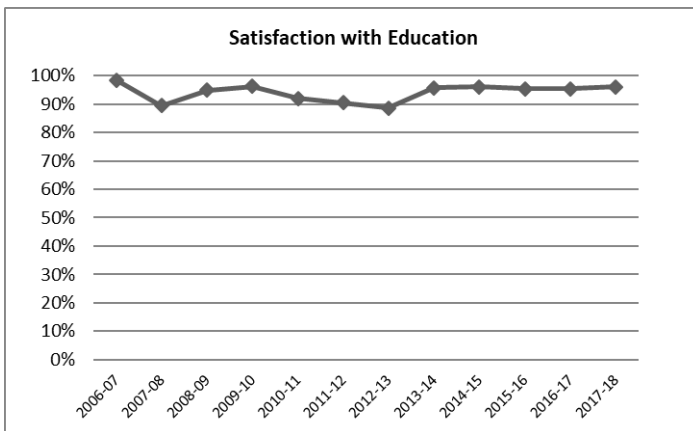
*“Overall I enjoyed going to Yukon College. It would be nice to see more programs and courses in the Dawson City campus that are available in Whitehorse.”*

Program cost was rated “good” or “excellent” by 71% of respondents, which is a historically low level.

Four out of five respondents (81%) gave “good” or “excellent” ratings to the quality of program advising.

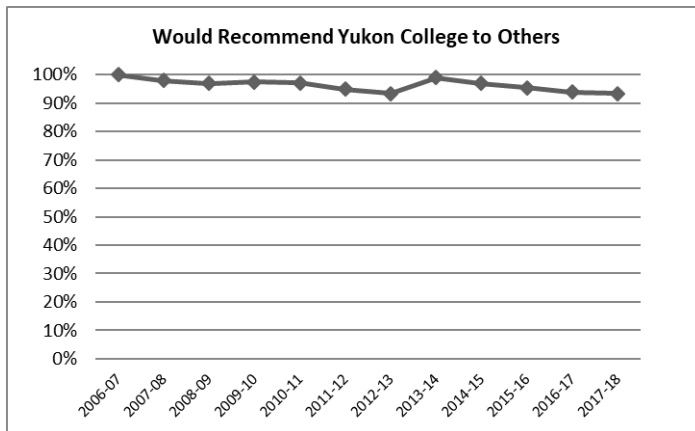


Ninety-six percent of respondents are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the education they received at Yukon College. This has been consistent for the past several years.



*“It was great to get a reputable degree from the University of Alberta/ Yukon college all in my hometown and not having to go outside.”*

Ninety-three percent of respondents would recommend Yukon College to others as a place to study. This is at the lower end of historical norms.



*“The building is just lovely. It's warm and bright and inviting. The library is quite comfortable too. The cafeteria could use more healthy menu options like salad though. And the computer labs had constant problems...”*

## “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?” They answered in their words, and their responses have been analyzed for themes. Some common threads in their responses include: to have more courses and programs to choose from; better school-work-life balance; to alleviate financial pressures; to have classes at different times; and to increase the quality or variety of instructors in some courses and programs.

Several alumni said that they would have liked to have had more selection of programs and courses, or more course options that are directly relevant to their field of study:

*“More course offerings ...”*

*“Within the Multimedia program it would be nice to have more programs to choose from”*

*“More programs”*

*"... more focused programming – lots of time wasted on totally un-relevant things that will never be used in the freild"*

*"More programs offered"*

*"more selection for classes"*

The balance between school, work commitments, and life led to a challenging workload for some students.

*"I would of tried harder and not worked while taking my first year of post-secondary schooling."*

*"Not having to work full time to pay for school. I would have had much more time to devote to classes and homework and to learn and excel in my classes."*

*"Personal work load ..."*

Financial needs created pressures for some students.

*"Finding rent"*

*"provide fianance support for international students"*

*"Cost"*

Some students would have preferred to have classes available at different times of day (evening versus daytime) or year (summer versus winter).

*"More night class options would mean I would continue taking more classes outside of my regular work hours"*

*"To have distance learning course or evening classes."*

*"Would like to have it in the summer, winter made things quite difficult."*

*"... NO evening classes (#1)"*

*"courses schedule, too much night classes"*

Some students had complaints about instructional quality, and some simply wanted more variety of instructors in their programs.

*"For the ... teacher to make less mistakes so that my learning could of been made easier and gotten a bit of better grades"*

*“To change teachers that were not good in teaching or just reading the lessons”*

*“More instructors to choose classes from”*

*“More course/instructor variety ...”*

Other issues included housing, mental health, interpersonal conflicts, becoming more involved, and a variety of individual concerns.

*“Housing”*

*“I would live in campus housing”*

*“Try to get help for my mental health sooner”*

*“... Use of counselling services”*

*“More discussions around how to deal with conflict- differing opinions should be supported in a diverse country like Canada – less emphasis on having to believe or adhere to a specific ideology”*

*“There was another student who did not respect my personal space or boundaries and not much was possible to be done about it which was my only conflict during my time there, besides that my experience with Yukon College was sublime.”*

*“more involve”*

*“more into program”*

*“more activity”*

*“... Continued education Accounting and business”*

*“after cafeteria close if they can sell soup sandwich or healthy food at book store”*

*“I would have liked my final mark from all the exams I took. Since I worked so hard to excel it would have been nice to get an actual mark instead of just knowing I passed. I even phoned and requested my mark and didn't get it.”*

*“more access to child care help finding work ...”*

*“The computer labs ... so many times it would screw up and I'd lose important work. Was soul crushing sometimes.”*

*“Having the co-op portion of our education a paid opportunity”*

## Obstacles and Assistance in Overcoming Them

Survey respondents were asked, “Were there any obstacles you had to overcome to participate in your College program?” Those who answered in the affirmative were asked, “Did the College assist you in any way?”

Twenty-nine respondents (34%) reported obstacles. Close to half of these students (14, or 48%) said that the College assisted them to overcome these obstacles. The other 15 did not receive assistance from the College, had mixed experiences with getting assistance, or did not comment one way or the other.

Types of obstacles that students had to overcome include:

- Financial and/or needing to work (9 respondents, or 31% of those with obstacles);
- Academic challenges, e.g. upgrading, transitioning to post-secondary, returning to school after a lengthy gap, and/or academic workload (6 respondents, or 21%);
- Mental health (3 respondents, or 10%);
- Balancing school with parenting and finding child care (3 respondents, or 10%);
- Personal life and family challenges such as being away from home, lack of family support, or deaths in the family (3 respondents, or 10%);
- Other challenges related to the program itself, e.g. program content, course schedule, admission criteria, etc. (5 respondents, or 17%);
- Other life challenges, e.g. personal health, housing, transportation, etc. (3 respondents, or 10%);
- Other challenges that do not fit the above categories, or that were not specified in detail (3 respondents, or 10%).

## Conclusion

Yukon College provides a positive educational experience. More than nine out of ten alumni are satisfied with the education they received, and would recommend Yukon College to others. Satisfaction with course content and instructional quality is high. Program cost and variety received more moderate satisfaction ratings.

Successful transfer to other post-secondary institutions continues to pose challenges for some students. The proportion of students who received all the transfer credit they expected was lower than usual this year, at 60% of those who had transfer expectations.

The College does a fairly good job of preparing students for employment. Among alumni who were working at the time of the survey, 80% were employed in a job or business that is related to their field of study. About nine out of ten of these alumni felt that the College had prepared them at least adequately for work overall, and in terms of the technical skills and knowledge needed for their jobs. The unemployment rate was 17%.

About one-third of alumni had to overcome obstacles to participate in their program, including financial, academic, and personal life challenges. The College was able to provide assistance to about half of these students to help them succeed.