

Graduate Survey Report: Class of 2017

Research Report No. 91-17

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NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT SUCCESS

The purpose of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success is to conduct analytical studies and provide information in support of institutional planning, policy formulation, and decision making. In addition, the office provides leadership and support in research related activities to members of the NOVA community engaged in planning and evaluating the institution's success in accomplishing its mission.

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Introduction

Each year, Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) conducts an online survey of its recent graduates to gather information about their experiences at the College. This report pertains to the 2017 graduating class and contains responses to survey questions that address educational goals, educational and employment status, and the effect that NOVA had on these areas (see survey instrument in Appendix B).¹ The annual survey also allows graduates to evaluate instruction, college services, and facilities at NOVA. The latter results are presented in a separate report: *92-17 Graduate Evaluation of NOVA Instruction, Services, and Facilities: Class of 2017*.

The 2017 Graduate Survey had a response rate of nine percent, which is substantially lower than the 19-percent response rate that the survey attained during the previous two years (see Table 1). In previous years, the Graduate Survey was conducted in the summer months (June or July). However, the 2017 Graduate Survey was conducted in the Fall (October 2017). Additionally, in 2016, graduates were offered an incentive to complete the survey; however, no incentive was offered in 2017. These changes to the administration of the survey may explain the relatively low response rate in 2017.

Table 1. Graduate Survey Response Rate: 2015 through 2017

	Year		
	2015	2016	2017
Graduates	6,771	6,939	6,669
Respondents	1,315	1,323	598
Response Rate	19.4%	19.1%	9.0%

Responses to the survey questions are disaggregated by the primary credential earned by the graduate. The occupational-technical category includes graduates who earned either an A.A.A. or an A.A.S. degree, while the transfer degree category includes graduates who earned either an A.A. or an A.S. degree. One quarter of respondents graduated with a certificate. However, most of those respondents earned a general education certificate, which is automatically awarded to students once they have fulfilled their general education requirements, regardless of whether they are placed into that certificate program. As such, some students may be counted as graduates even though they are still pursuing an associate's degree at NOVA. Therefore, the responses of certificate holders are not disaggregated in the body of the report; however, these responses can be found in the data tables in Appendix A.

¹ The 2017 graduating class refers to students who graduated from NOVA in either Summer 2016, Fall 2016, or Spring 2017.

Section 1. Profile of 2017 Graduate Survey Respondents

Table 2 presents a demographic comparison of the overall 2017 graduating class (“graduates”) and the 2017 graduates who responded to the survey (“respondents”). While these two groups are substantially similar, there are several noteworthy differences:

- **Award Type:** Graduates who earned an A.S. award were underrepresented in the survey responses; they accounted for 58 percent of graduates but only 49 percent of respondents.
- **Gender:** Female graduates were overrepresented in the survey responses; they comprised 54 percent of graduates but 63 percent of respondents. Conversely, male graduates were underrepresented in the survey responses.
- **Age Group:** Graduates under the age of 30 accounted for 73 percent of graduates but only 63 percent of respondents and thus were underrepresented in the survey responses.
- **Race/Ethnicity:** White graduates were overrepresented in the responses (accounting for 40 percent of graduates and 45 percent of respondents), and Hispanic graduates were underrepresented (23 percent of graduates and 18 percent of respondents).

Table 2. Graduates and Survey Respondents: Class of 2017

Characteristic		Graduates		Respondents	
		#	%	#	%
Award Type	A.A.	421	6.3	41	6.9
	A.S.	3,847	57.7	295	49.3
	A.A.A./A.A.S.	1,011	15.2	122	20.4
	Certificate/CSC	1,390	20.8	140	23.4
Gender	Male	3,048	45.7	223	37.3
	Female	3,621	54.3	375	62.7
Race/Ethnicity	White	2,641	39.6	271	45.3
	Black/African American	918	13.8	77	12.9
	Hispanic/Latino	1,501	22.5	107	17.9
	Asian	1,206	18.1	107	17.9
	American Indian/Alaska Native	18	0.3	1	0.2
	Native Hawaiian/Other Pac. Islander	25	0.4	2	0.3
	Not Specified	61	0.9	4	0.7
	Two or More Races	227	3.4	21	3.5
Unknown	72	1.1	8	1.3	
Age Group	18-21	1,505	22.6	139	23.2
	22-24	2,015	30.2	140	23.4
	25-29	1,375	20.6	97	16.2
	30-44	1,337	20.0	140	23.4
	45-59	384	5.8	68	11.4
	60+	53	0.8	14	2.3
Home Campus	Alexandria	1,141	17.1	111	18.6
	Annandale	1,903	28.5	149	24.9
	Loudoun	1,053	15.8	110	18.4
	Manassas	963	14.4	73	12.2
	Medical Education	538	8.1	65	10.9
	Woodbridge	1,071	16.1	90	15.1
Total		6,669	100.0	598	100.0

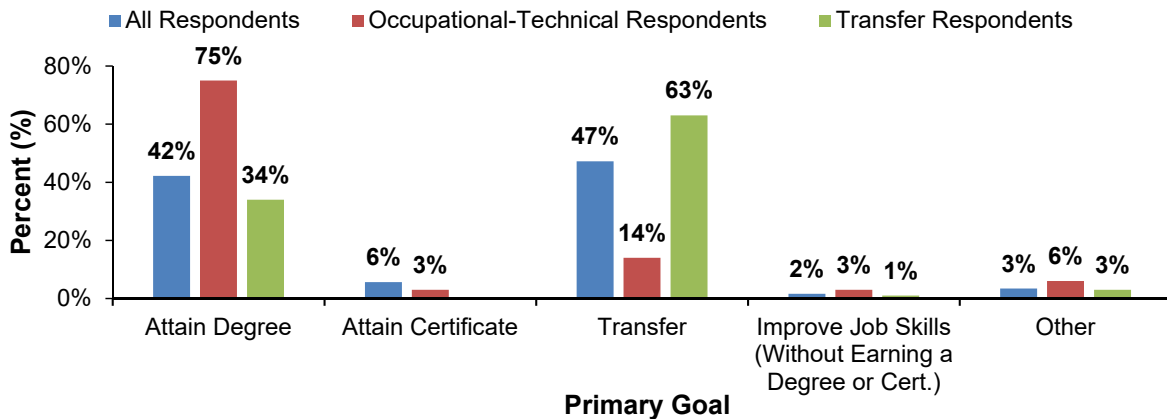
Section 2. Goals of Respondents

Stated Goals at NOVA

Transfer to a four-year institution was the primary goal of about half of all respondents, and attaining an associate’s degree was the second most popular response. As shown in Figure 1, respondents who sought to either attain a degree from NOVA or transfer to a four-year institution had a much higher survey response rate than respondents who did not plan to earn a degree or transfer.

- Seventy-five percent of respondents who attained an occupational-technical credential (A.A.A. or A.A.S.) listed attaining an associate’s degree as their primary goal.
- Most respondents (63 percent) who attained a transfer degree (A.A. or A.S.) listed transfer to a four-year institution as their primary goal while attending NOVA.

Figure 1. Primary Goal of Respondents by Award Type

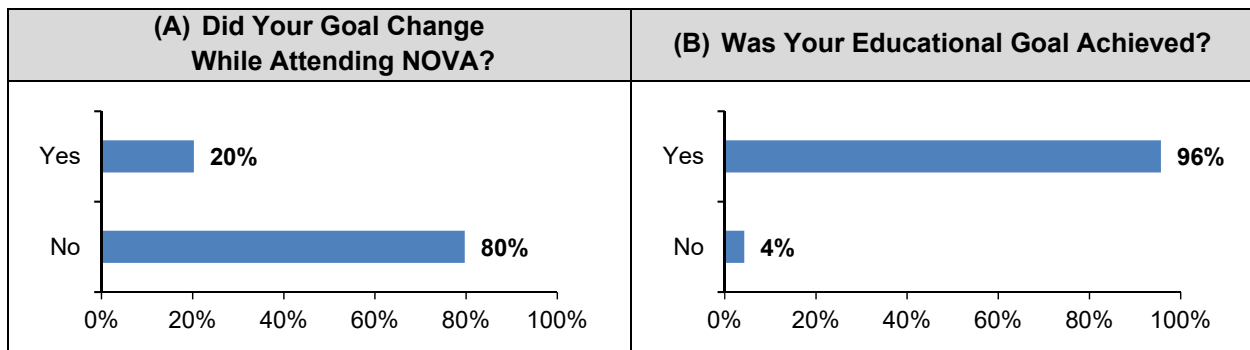


Note: See Table A1. All (587 respondents); Occupational Technical (122 respondents); Transfer (331 respondents).

Changes in and Achievement of Stated Goals

As shown in Figure 2, most respondents indicated that their goal had not changed while attending NOVA and that they had achieved their educational goal. There was little variation between the responses of occupational-technical and transfer respondents. (See Tables A2 and A3 in the Appendix for responses by degree type.)

Figure 2. Goal Changes and Goal Achievement of Respondents



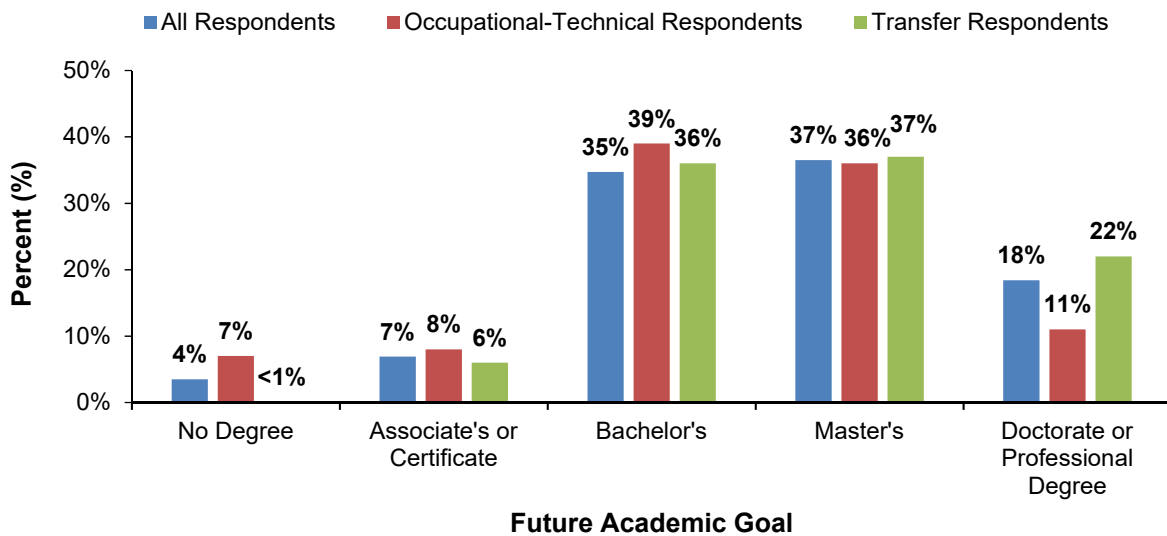
Note: See Tables A2 and A3. Figure 2A (587 respondents); Figure 2B (579 respondents)

Future Academic Goals

As shown in Figure 3, about one third of all respondents intended to earn a bachelor’s degree (35 percent). Another 55 percent planned to earn a higher-level degree, such as a master’s (37 percent) or doctorate or other professional degree (18 percent).

- Occupational-technical respondents were slightly less likely to plan to earn a bachelor’s degree or higher (86 percent) compared to transfer respondents (94 percent) (see Table A4 in the Appendix).
- In particular, a higher proportion of transfer respondents intended to earn a doctorate or professional degree (22 percent) compared to occupational-technical respondents (11 percent).

Figure 3. Future Academic Goals of Respondents by Award Type



Note: See Table A4. All (576 respondents); Occupational Technical (120 respondents); Transfer (326 respondents).

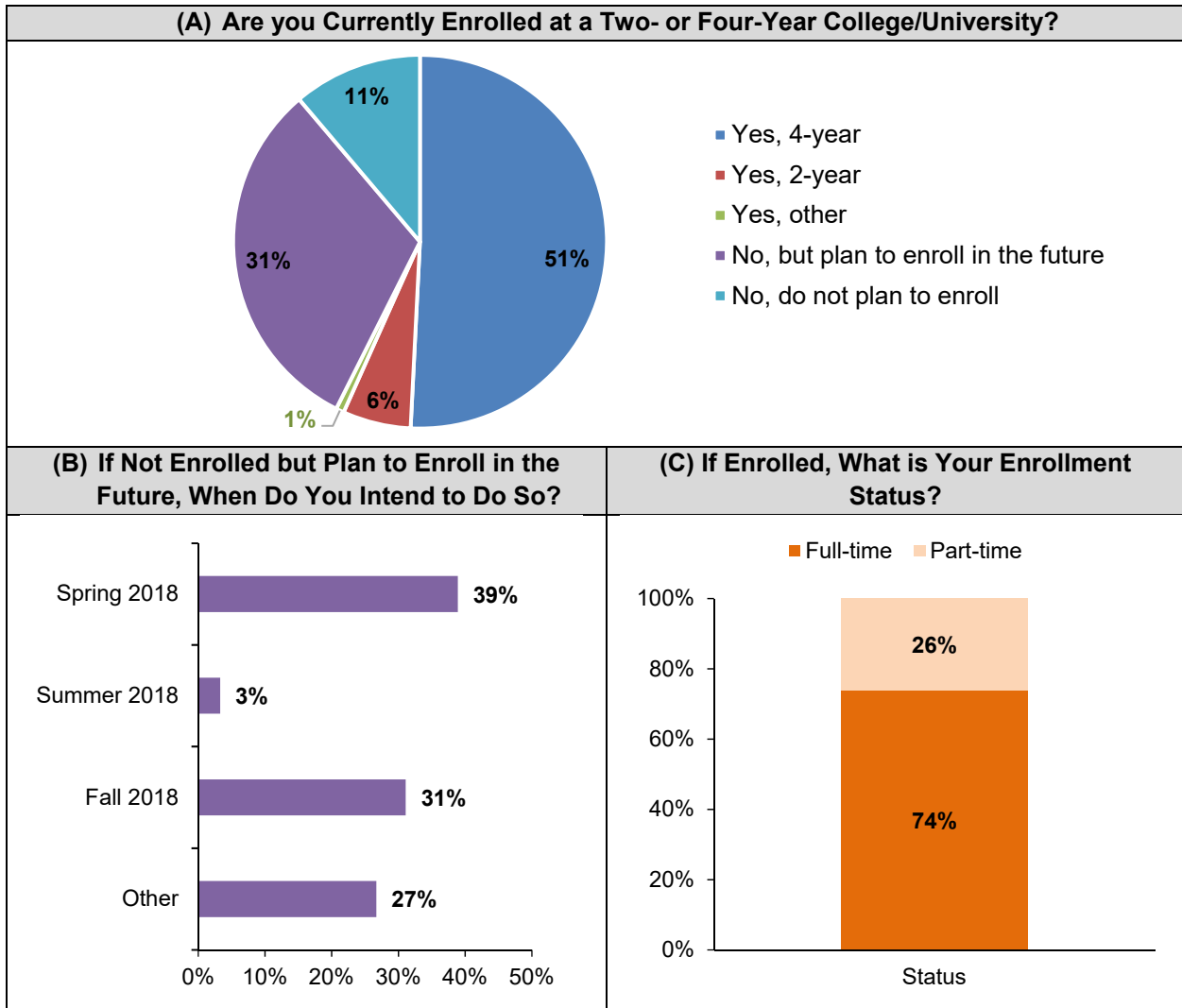
Section 3. Education After NOVA

Current Education Status of Graduate Respondents

Fifty-seven percent of survey respondents indicated that they were currently enrolled at a two- or four-year college or university—see Figure 4(A). Nearly three quarters of these respondents were attending their institution as full-time students—see Figure 4(C).

Almost one third of respondents (31 percent) were not enrolled at a postsecondary institution but had plans to enroll at one in the future; most of these respondents planned to enroll within the next year—see Figure 4(B). Eleven percent of respondents were not enrolled at a postsecondary institution and did not plan to enroll at one in the future.

Figure 4. Educational Status of Respondents



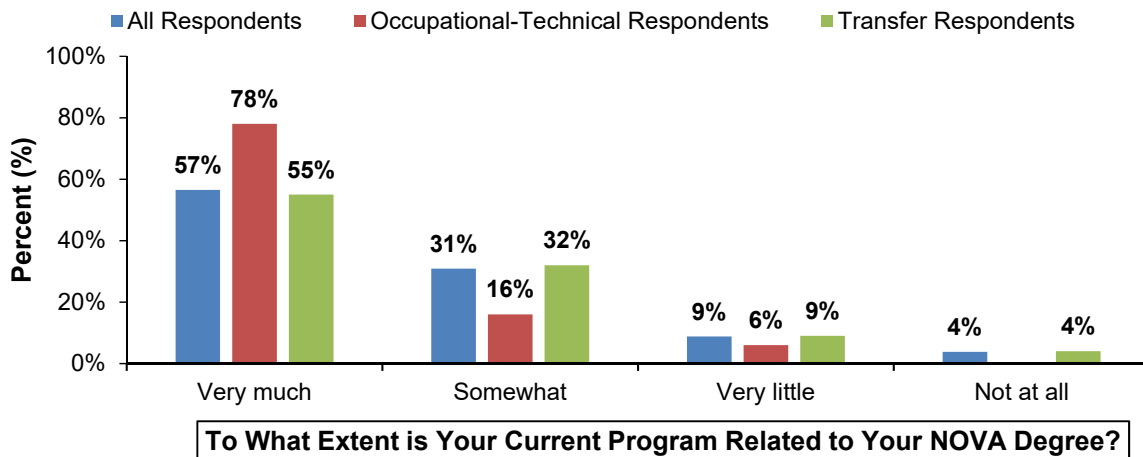
Note: See Table A5. Figure 4A (573 respondents); Figure 4B (180 respondents); Figure 4C (317 respondents)

Preparation for Continued Studies

Most respondents who were enrolled at a postsecondary institution indicated that their major there was “very much” related to what they had majored in at NOVA. However, responses varied widely by degree type earned at NOVA (see Figure 5).

- In comparison to transfer degree respondents, occupational-technical degree earners were 23 percentage points more likely to continue studying in a field “very much” related to their NOVA degree (78 percent compared to 55 percent).

Figure 5. Relevance of NOVA Credential to Respondent’s Current Educational Program by Award Type



Note: See Table A6. All (317 respondents); Occupational Technical (32 respondents); Transfer (239 respondents).

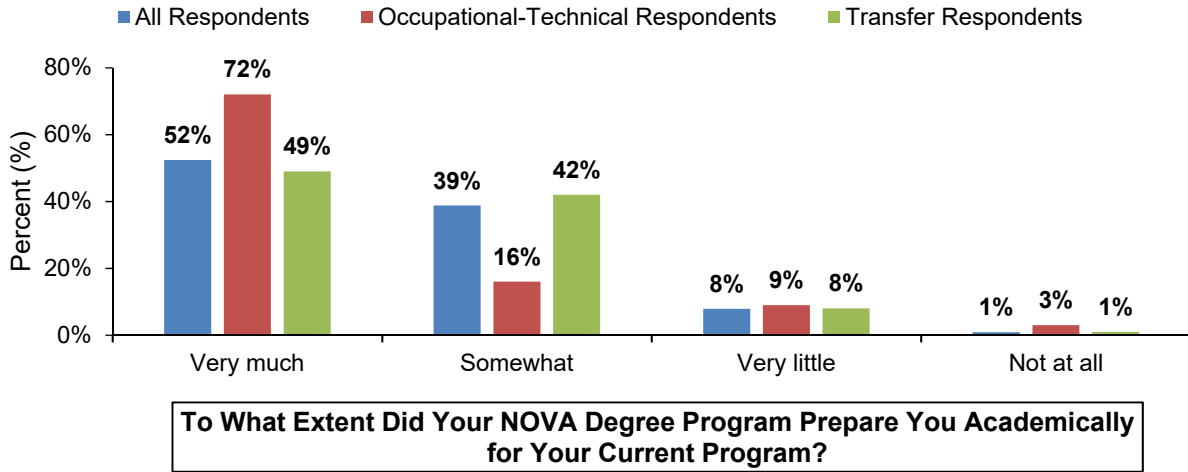
Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt that their NOVA degree had prepared them academically for their current program (see Figure 6 on the next page).

- Most respondents (52 percent) felt that NOVA had “very much” prepared them for their current program, while 39 percent felt that NOVA had “somewhat” prepared them. Here, too, survey results varied depending on the credential that the respondents had earned from NOVA.

Given that occupational-technical respondents were more likely to be in a program that was “very much” related to their NOVA degree, it is perhaps unsurprising that this group of respondents also felt that their NOVA degree had better prepared them for their new educational program.

- Occupational-technical respondents were more likely than transfer degree respondents to indicate that NOVA had “very much” prepared them for their current educational studies (72 percent compared to 49 percent).

Figure 6. Preparation NOVA Credential Offered to Respondent’s Current Educational Program by Award Type

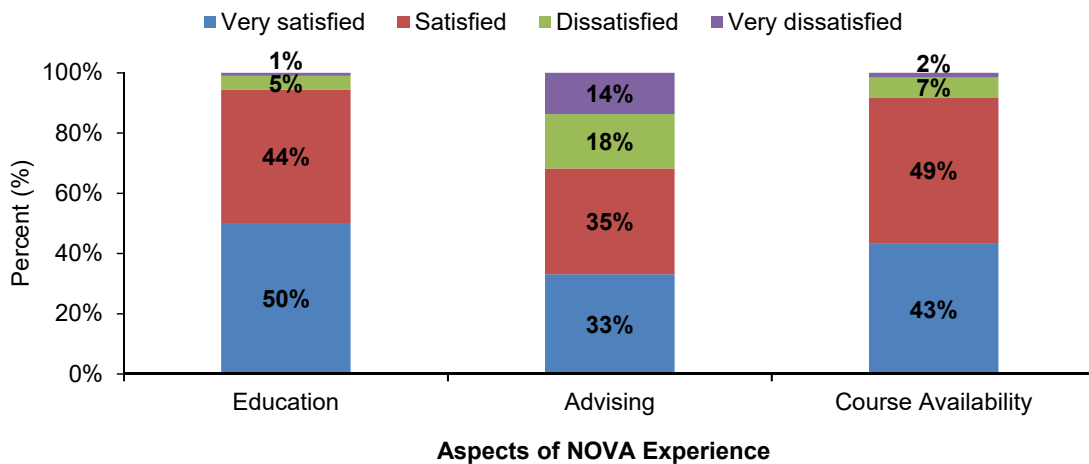


Note: See Table A7. All (317 respondents); Occupational Technical (32 respondents); Transfer (239 respondents).

Figure 7 indicates the respondents’ levels of satisfaction with various aspects of their NOVA experience, including education, advising, and course availability.

- Almost all respondents were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their NOVA education (94 percent).
- Approximately 92 percent of respondents were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with course availability at NOVA.
- Comparatively, respondents were less satisfied with advising at NOVA; only 68 percent indicated that they were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with NOVA’s advising.

Figure 7. Level of Satisfaction with NOVA Education, Advising, and Course Availability

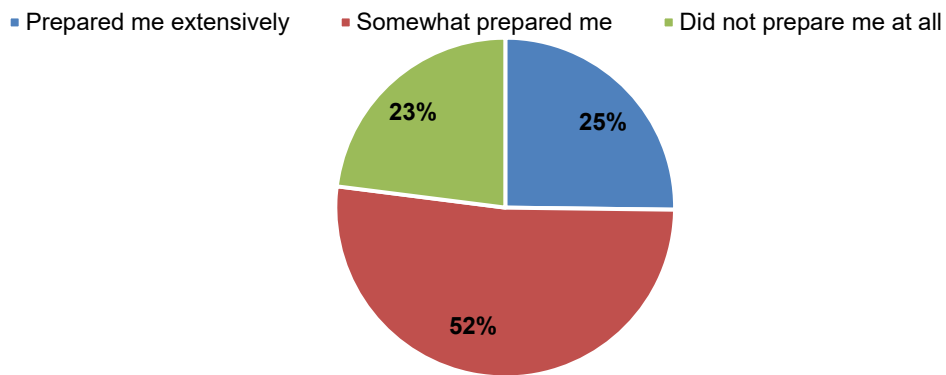


Note: See Table A8. Education (509 respondents); Advising (459 respondents); Course availability (500 respondents).

Figure 8 indicates the extent to which respondents felt that their NOVA education prepared them for citizenship.

- Seventy-seven percent of respondents felt that their NOVA education had “extensively” or “somewhat” prepared them for citizenship by providing them with knowledge of both their community and the political process.
- Less than one quarter of respondents felt that their NOVA education had “not at all” prepared them for citizenship.

Figure 8. Extent to Which Respondents Felt Their NOVA Education Prepared Them for Citizenship

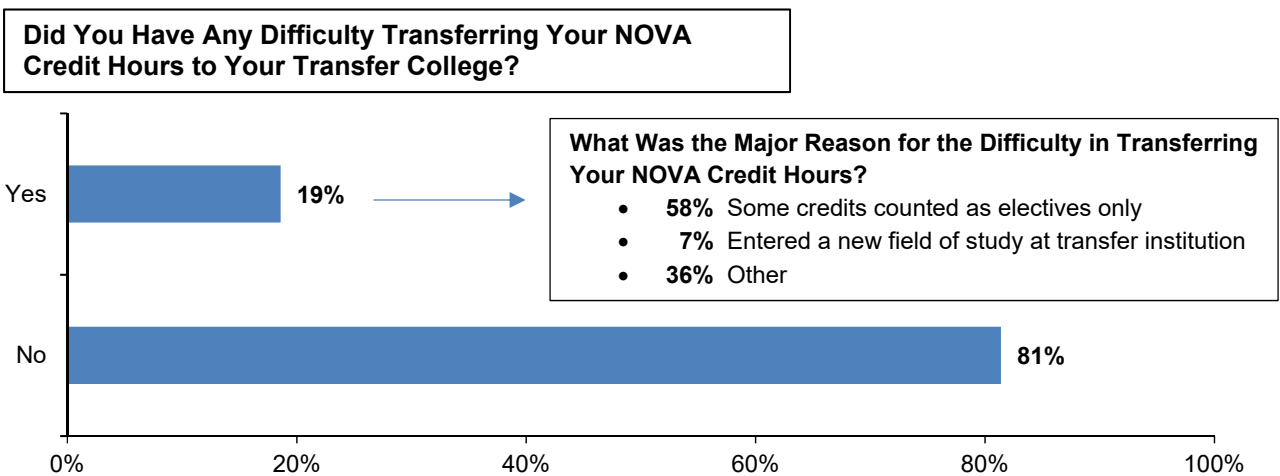


Note: See Table A9. 512 respondents.

Difficulties with Transferring Credits

As shown in Figure 9, most respondents indicated that they did not experience any difficulties transferring their NOVA credit hours to their transfer institution. For the 19 percent who experienced such difficulties, most of those difficulties were due to some credits transferring as elective credits only.

Figure 9. Ease with Which Respondents Were Able to Transfer NOVA Credit Hours



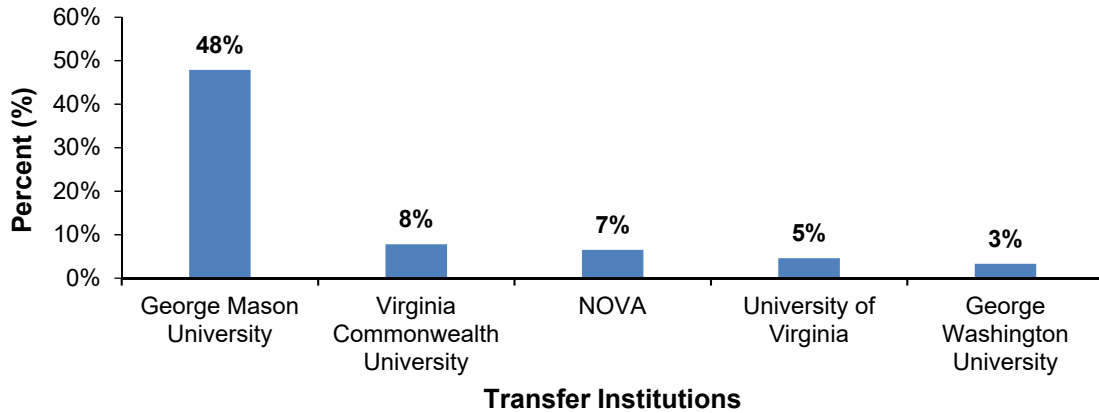
Note: See Table A10. 317 respondents.

Colleges Attended by NOVA Graduates

Figure 10 lists the top 5 transfer institutions attended by respondents.

- About half of respondents who were currently enrolled at a postsecondary institution indicated that they had transferred to George Mason University (48 percent).

Figure 10. Top 5 Transfer Institutions Attended by Respondents

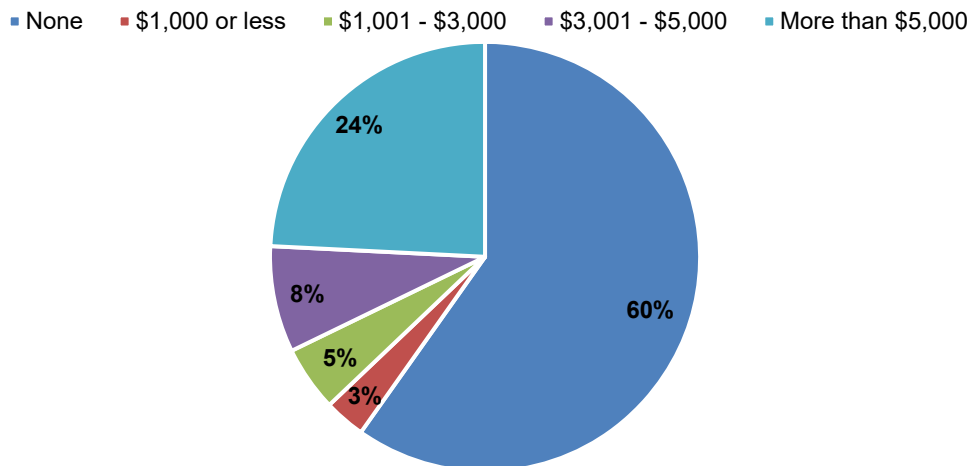


Note: See Table A11. 308 respondents.

Figure 11 illustrates the proportion of respondents who borrowed money in order to finance their NOVA education.

- Most respondents (60 percent) indicated that they did not borrow any money to finance their NOVA education.
- However, among respondents who indicated that they did borrow money, most (24 percent) indicated that they borrowed an amount in excess of \$5,000.

Figure 11. Amount of Money Borrowed by Respondents to Finance Their NOVA Education



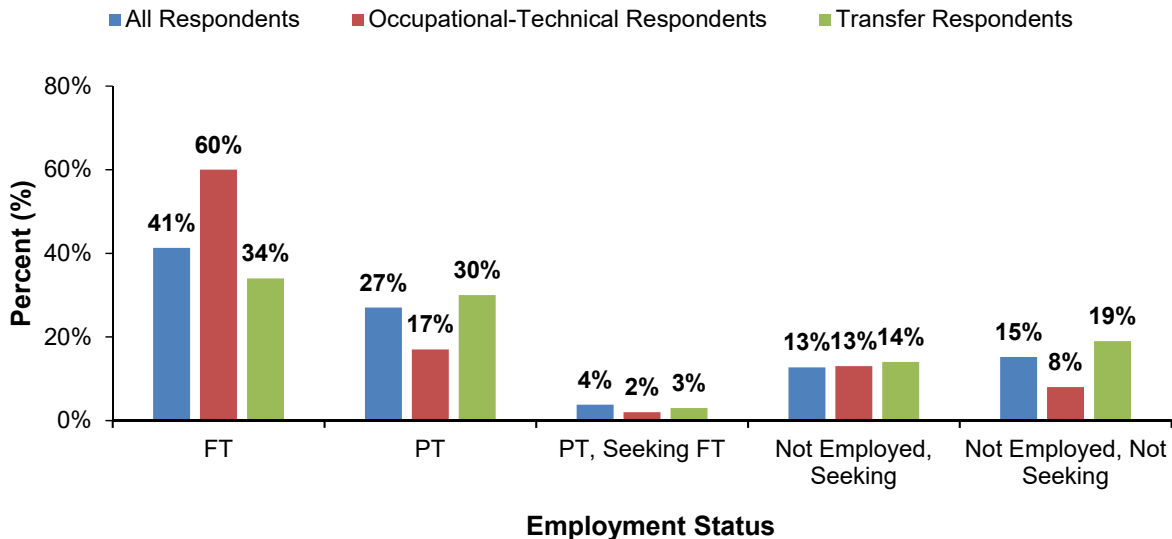
Note: See Table A12. 512 respondents.

Section 4. Employment

Just under three quarters of all respondents were employed; 41 percent were employed full-time, 27 percent were employed part-time, and 4 percent were employed part-time but seeking full-time employment. Approximately 28 percent of respondents were unemployed (see Figure 12).

- Respondents who earned an occupational-technical degree from NOVA had the highest proportion of respondents working full-time (60 percent), with just under one fifth working part-time (17 percent).
- Respondents who earned a transfer degree had a relatively smaller proportion of respondents working full-time (34 percent); almost one third of these respondents (30 percent) were working part-time.

Figure 12. Employment Status of Respondents by Award Type



Note: See Table A13. All (559 respondents); Occupational Technical (120 respondents); Transfer (315 respondents).

Outcomes of Employed Respondents

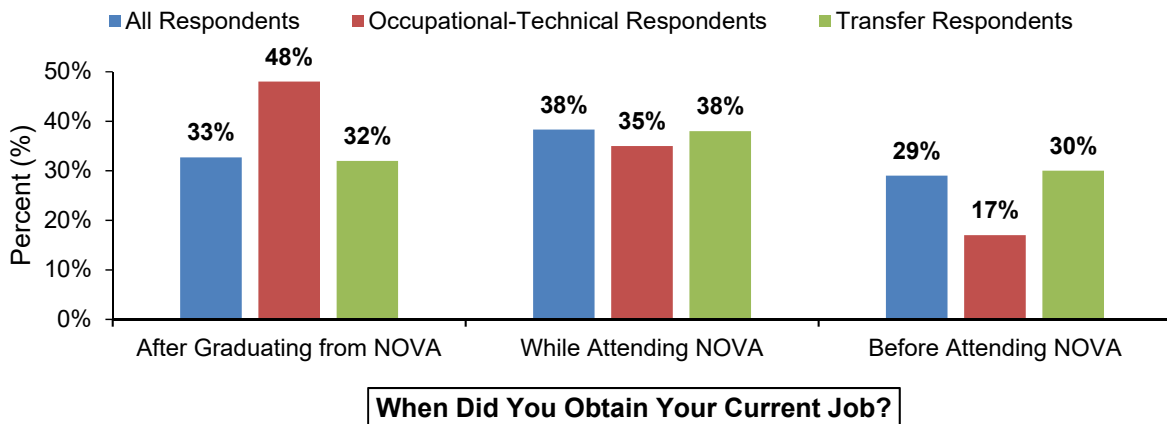
Respondents who indicated that they were employed at the time of the survey were asked a series of questions concerning how their job relates to their educational achievements at NOVA (see Figures 13 through 18 on the following pages).

- Typically, occupational-technical degree holders responded to these questions more favorably than other respondents. This is perhaps unsurprising because occupational-technical degrees are designed to prepare graduates to either enter or advance in the workplace, unlike transfer degrees, which are designed to provide students with a pathway to a bachelor's degree.

Respondents were asked when they obtained their job (see Figure 13).

- Most respondents (67 percent) indicated that they attained their job either before attending NOVA or while attending NOVA.
- Occupational-technical respondents were more likely than transfer respondents to have attained their job after graduating from NOVA (48 percent compared to 32 percent).

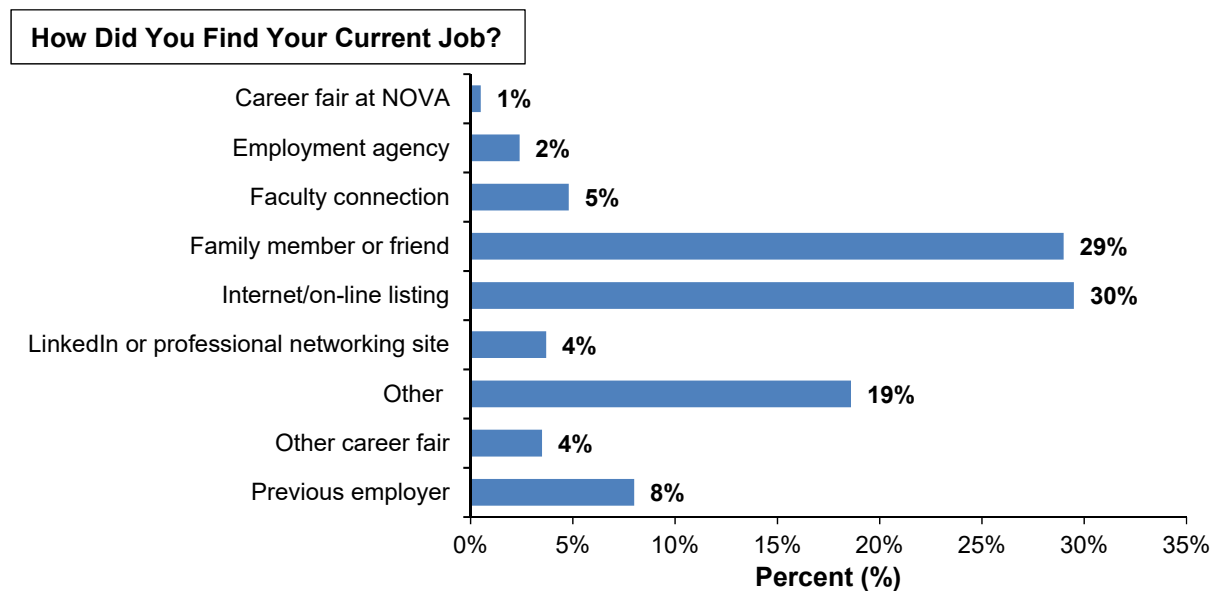
Figure 13. Time at Which Employed Respondents Attained Their Job by Award Type



Note: See Table A14. All (376 respondents); Occupational Technical (87 respondents); Transfer (198 respondents).

As shown in Figure 14, respondents most often indicated that they found their current job by viewing online job listings (30 percent) or through friends and family (29 percent).

Figure 14. Platforms Used by Respondents to Find Employment

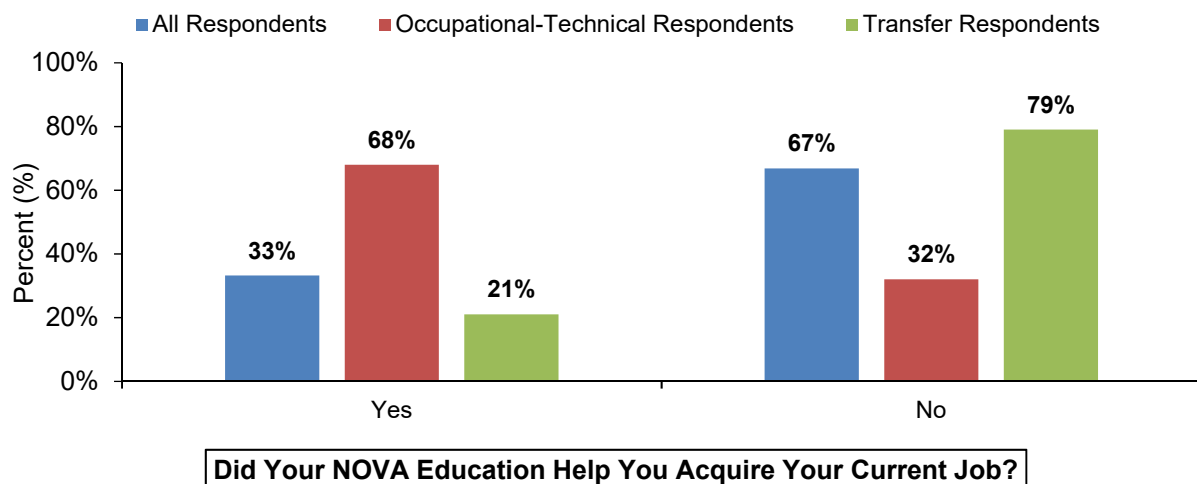


Note: See Table A15. All (376 respondents); Occupational Technical (87 respondents); Transfer (198 respondents).

Figure 15 presents the effect of the respondents' NOVA education on their employment opportunities. Overall, transfer respondents were more likely than occupational-technical respondents to be currently enrolled at a postsecondary institution (76 percent compared to 27 percent, see Table A5) and more likely to be working part-time (33 percent compared to 18 percent, see Table A13). This suggests that the responding transfer students may have prioritized completing their postsecondary work over attaining a job related to their degree.

- Most occupational-technical respondents (68 percent) indicated that their NOVA education helped them to acquire their job.
- Conversely, most transfer respondents (79 percent) indicated that their NOVA education had not helped them to acquire their job.

Figure 15. Effect of NOVA Education on Employment Opportunities of Respondents by Award Type

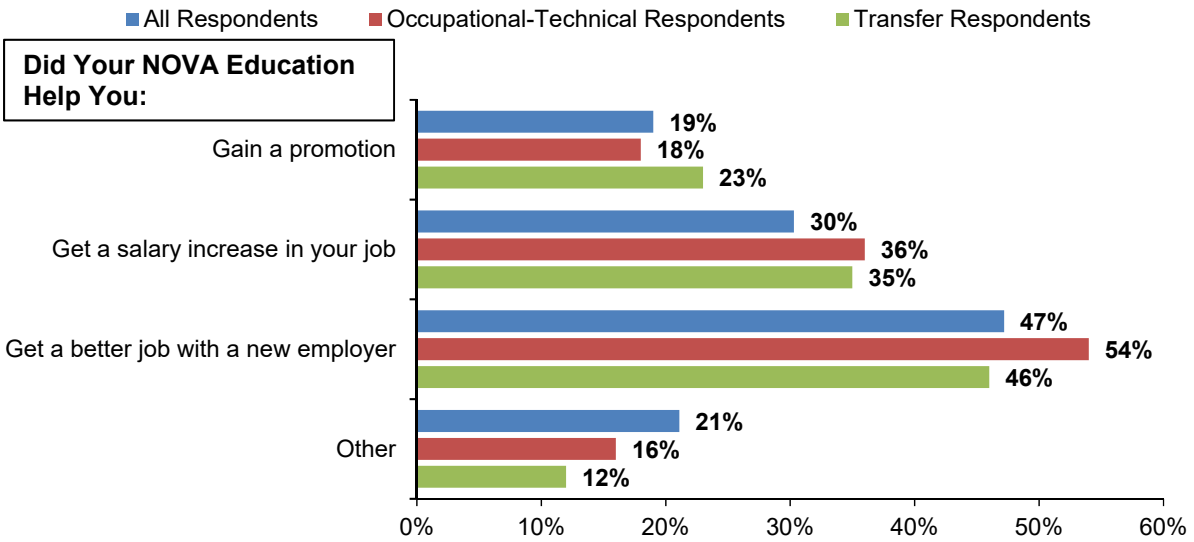


Note: See Table A16. All (376 respondents); Occupational Technical (87 respondents); Transfer (198 respondents).

Respondents were asked if their NOVA education had advanced their career by means such as gaining a promotion at work, gaining a salary increase, or obtaining an entirely new and better job with a new employer (see Figure 16 on the next page). It should be noted that few employed respondents answered this survey question.

- Compared to transfer degree respondents, a higher proportion of occupational-technical respondents indicated that their NOVA education had helped them to secure a better job with a new employer (54 percent compared to 46 percent).

Figure 16. Effect of NOVA Education on Career Advancement of Respondents by Award Type

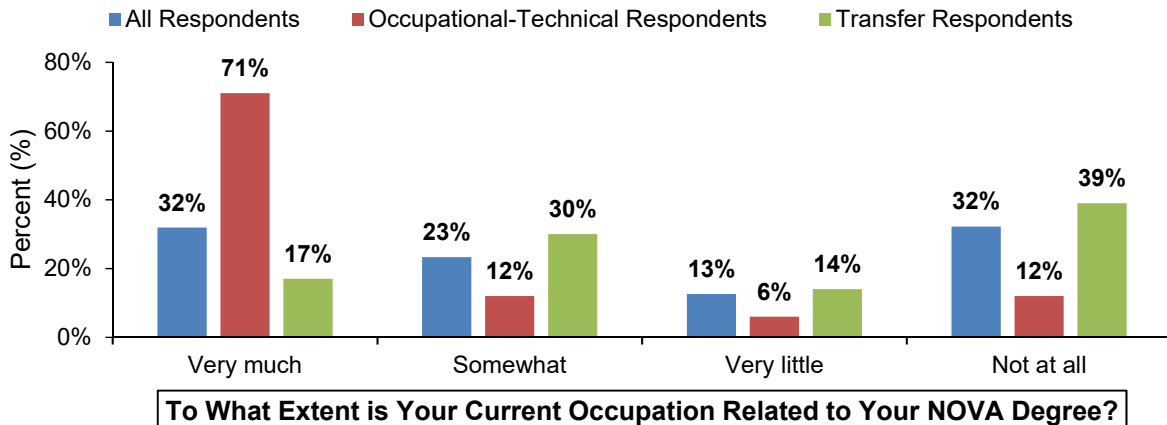


Note: Figures do not add to 100 percent as respondents were allowed to select all responses that applied. See Table A17. All (142 respondents); Occupational Technical (50 respondents); Transfer (57 respondents).

In terms of the perceived relevance of the respondents' NOVA education to their occupation, the survey results varied largely by the credential type that the respondents earned (see Figure 17).

- About one third of all employed respondents (32 percent) indicated that their occupation was "very much" related to their NOVA degree program.
- The same proportion of respondents (32 percent) indicated that their NOVA credential was "not at all" related to their current occupation.
- Seventy-one percent of occupational-technical respondents indicated that their NOVA degree was "very much" related to their occupation, compared to 17 percent of transfer degree respondents.

Figure 17. Relevance of NOVA Education to Respondents' Occupation by Award Type

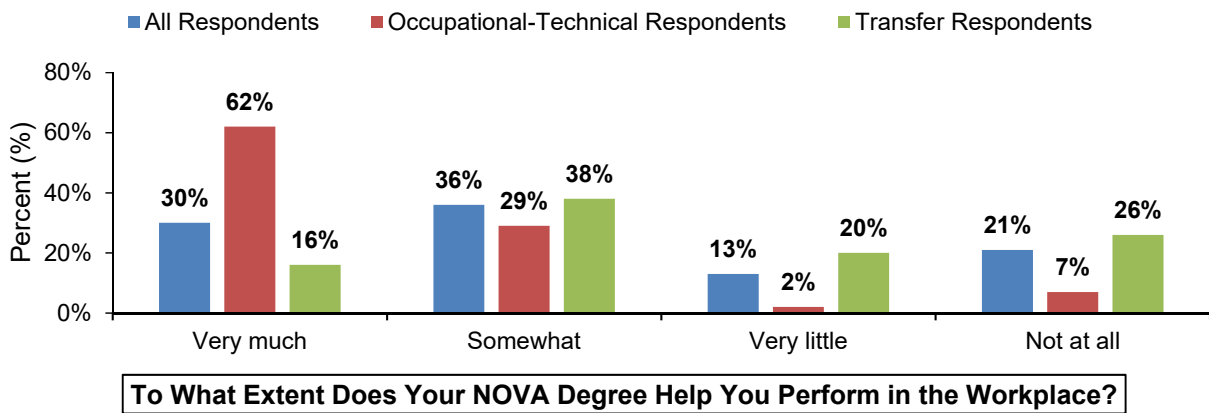


Note: See Table A18. All (373 respondents); Occupational Technical (87 respondents); Transfer (195 respondents).

Figure 18 indicates the extent to which respondents said that their NOVA education prepared them to perform in the workforce. These results varied by respondent type.

- Most respondents (66 percent) indicated that their NOVA credential either “very much” helped or “somewhat” helped them to perform in the workplace.
- A substantial group of respondents, approximately one fifth (21 percent), indicated that their NOVA credential did “not at all” help them to perform in the workplace.
- Sixty-two percent of occupational-technical respondents indicated that their NOVA credential “very much” helped them to perform in the workplace; in contrast, 16 percent of transfer degree respondents indicated this.

Figure 18. Extent to Which a NOVA Education Prepared Respondents to Perform in the Workforce by Award Type



Note: See Table A19. All (373 respondents); Occupational Technical (87 respondents); Transfer (195 respondents).

Appendix A. Data Tables

Table A1. Primary Goal of Respondents by Award Type

Primary Goal at NOVA by Award Type	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Improve job skills (without earning a degree or certificate)	3	2.2	4	3.3	2	0.6	9	1.5
Attain a certificate	30	22.4	3	2.5	0	0.0	33	5.6
Attain an Associate's degree	45	33.6	91	74.6	112	33.8	248	42.2
Transfer to a four-year college/university	53	39.6	17	13.9	207	62.5	277	47.2
Other	3	2.2	7	5.7	10	3.0	20	3.4
Total	134	100.0	122	100.0	331	100.0	587	100.0

Table A2. Goal Changes of Respondents by Award Type

Did Your Goal Change While Attending NOVA?	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Yes	29	21.6	24	19.7	66	19.9	119	20.3
No	105	78.4	98	80.3	265	80.1	468	79.7
Total	134	100.0	122	100.0	331	100.0	587	100.0

Table A3. Goal Achievement of Respondents by Award Type

Was Your Educational Goal Achieved?	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Yes	121	91.7	121	100.0	312	95.7	554	95.7
No	11	8.3	0	0.0	14	4.3	25	4.3
Total	132	100.0	121	100.0	326	100.0	579	100.0

Table A4. Future Academic Goals of Respondents by Award Type

What is the Highest Degree You Plan to Earn in the Future?	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
No Degree	11	8.5	8	6.7	1	0.3	20	3.5
Associate's or Certificate	13	10.0	9	7.5	18	5.5	40	6.9
Bachelor's Degree	35	26.9	47	39.2	118	36.2	200	34.7
Master's Degree	48	36.9	43	35.8	119	36.5	210	36.5
Doctorate or Professional Degree	23	17.7	13	10.8	70	21.5	106	18.4
Total	130	100.0	120	100.0	326	100.0	576	100.0

Table A5. Educational Status of Respondents by Award Type

Are You Currently Enrolled at a Two- or Four-Year College/University?	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Yes, four-year college/university	33	25.8	25	20.8	233	71.7	291	50.8
Yes, two-year college	15	11.7	6	0.5	13	4.0	34	5.9
Enrolled at postsecondary institution but it is neither a 2- or 4-year college	2	1.6	1	0.8	1	0.3	4	0.7
No, but I plan to enroll in the future	53	41.4	62	51.7	65	20.0	180	31.4
No, do not intend to enroll in the future	25	19.5	26	21.7	13	4.0	64	11.2
Total	128	100.0	120	100.0	325	100.0	573	100.0

If Enrolled, What is Your Enrollment Status?	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Full-time (12 or more credits)	31	67.4	17	53.1	186	77.8	234	73.8
Part-time (<12 credits)	15	32.6	15	46.9	53	22.2	83	26.2
Total	46	100.0	32	100.0	239	100.0	317	100.0

When Do You Intend to Enroll at a Two- or Four-Year College?	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Spring 2018	21	39.6	18	29.0	31	47.7	70	38.9
Summer 2018	2	3.8	2	3.2	2	3.1	6	3.3
Fall 2018	17	32.1	18	29.0	21	32.3	56	31.1
Other	13	24.5	24	38.7	11	16.9	48	26.7
Total	53	100.0	62	100.0	65	100.0	180	100.0

Table A6. Relevance of NOVA Credential to Respondent's Current Educational Program by Award Type

To What Extent is Your Current Program Related to Your NOVA Degree?	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Very much	23	50.0	25	78.1	131	54.8	179	56.5
Somewhat	16	34.8	5	15.6	77	32.2	98	30.9
Very little	4	8.7	2	6.3	22	9.2	28	8.8
Not at all	3	6.5	0	0.0	9	3.8	12	3.8
Total	46	100.0	32	100.0	239	100	317	100.0

Table A7. Preparation NOVA Credential Offered to Respondent's Current Educational Program by Award Type

To What Extent Did Your NOVA Degree Program Prepare You Academically for Your Program?	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Very much	26	56.5	23	71.9	117	49.0	166	52.4
Somewhat	18	39.1	5	15.6	100	41.8	123	38.8
Very little	2	4.3	3	9.4	20	8.4	25	7.9
Not at all	0	0.0	1	3.1	2	0.8	3	0.9
Total	46	100.0	32	100.0	239	100.0	317	100.0

Table A8. Level of Satisfaction with NOVA Education, Advising, and Course Availability by Award Type

All Respondents							
Satisfaction Level	Education		Advising		Course Availability		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Very satisfied	255	50.1	152	33.1	216	43.2	
Satisfied	225	44.2	161	35.1	243	48.6	
Dissatisfied	24	4.7	83	18.1	33	6.6	
Very dissatisfied	5	1.0	63	13.7	8	1.6	
Total	509	100.0	459	100.0	500	100.0	
Certificates							
Satisfaction Level	Education		Advising		Course Availability		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Very satisfied	47	42.0	36	34.6	34	31.5	
Satisfied	62	55.4	38	36.5	64	59.3	
Dissatisfied	2	1.8	18	17.3	8	7.4	
Very dissatisfied	1	0.9	12	11.5	2	1.9	
Total	112	100.0	104	100.0	108	100.0	
Occupational-Technical Degrees							
Satisfaction Level	Education		Advising		Course Availability		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Very satisfied	68	60.2	32	33.3	54	50.0	
Satisfied	36	31.9	36	37.5	45	41.7	
Dissatisfied	6	5.3	17	17.7	7	6.5	
Very dissatisfied	3	2.7	11	11.5	2	1.9	
Total	113	100.0	96	100.0	108	100.0	
Transfer Degrees							
Satisfaction Level	Education		Advising		Course Availability		
	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Very satisfied	140	49.3	84	32.4	128	45.1	
Satisfied	127	44.7	87	33.6	134	47.2	
Dissatisfied	16	5.6	48	18.5	18	6.3	
Very dissatisfied	1	0.4	40	15.4	4	1.4	
Total	284	100.0	259	100.0	284	100.0	

Table A9. Extent to Which Respondent Felt Their NOVA Education Prepared Them for Citizenship by Award Type

To What Extent Did Your NOVA Degree Program Prepare You for Responsible Citizenship?	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Prepared me extensively	26	22.8	27	24.1	76	26.6	129	25.2
Somewhat prepared me	62	54.4	55	49.1	148	51.7	265	51.8
Did not prepare me at all	26	22.8	30	26.8	62	21.7	118	23.0
Total	114	100.0	112	100.0	286	100.0	512	100.0

Table A10. Ease with Which Respondents Were Able to Transfer NOVA Credit Hours by Award Type

Did You Have Any Difficulty Transferring Your NOVA Credit Hours to Your Transfer College?	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Yes	8	17.4	8	25.0	43	18.0	59	18.6
No	38	82.6	24	75.0	196	82.0	258	81.4
Total	46	100.0	32	100.0	239	100.0	317	100.0

What was the Major Reason for the Difficulty in Transferring Your NOVA Credit Hours?	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Some credits only transferred electives	3	37.5	2	25.0	29	67.4	34	57.6
New field of study at transfer institution	0	0.0	3	37.5	1	2.3	4	6.8
Other	5	62.5	3	37.5	13	30.2	21	35.6
Total	8	100.0	8	100.0	43	100.0	59	100.0

Table A11. Top 5 Transfer Institutions of Respondents

Institution	Respondents	
	#	%
George Mason University	147	47.9
Virginia Commonwealth University	24	7.8
NOVA	20	6.5
University of Virginia	14	4.6
George Washington University	10	3.3

Table A12. Amount of Money Borrowed by Respondents to Finance Their NOVA Education by Award Type

Occupational Status	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
None	75	65.8	66	58.9	165	57.7	306	59.8
\$1,000 or less	4	3.5	3	2.7	9	3.1	16	3.1
\$1,001 - \$3,000	5	4.4	1	0.9	19	6.6	25	4.9
\$3,001 - \$5,000	9	7.9	5	4.5	27	9.4	41	8.0
More than \$5,000	21	18.4	37	33.0	66	23.1	124	24.2
Total	114	100.0	112	100.0	286	100.0	512	100.0

Table A13. Employment Status of Respondents by Award Type

Occupational Status	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Full-time (35+ hrs/wk)	51	41.1	72	60.0	108	34.3	231	41.3
Part-time (<35 hrs/wk)	36	29.0	20	16.7	95	30.2	151	27.0
Part-time, seeking full-time	10	8.1	2	1.7	9	2.9	21	3.8
Not employed, actively seeking	12	9.7	16	13.3	43	13.7	71	12.7
Not employed, not actively seeking	15	12.1	10	8.3	60	19.0	85	15.2
Total	124	100.0	120	100.0	315	100.0	559	100.0

Table A14. Time at which Employed Respondents Attained Their Job by Award Type

When Did You Get Your Current Job?	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Before attending NOVA	35	38.5	15	17.2	59	29.8	109	29.0
While attending NOVA	38	41.8	30	34.5	76	38.4	144	38.3
After graduating from NOVA	18	19.8	42	48.3	63	31.8	123	32.7
Total	91	100.0	87	100.0	198	100.0	376	100.0

Table A15. Platforms Used by Respondents to Find Employment by Award Type

How Did You Find Your Current Job?	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Career fair at NOVA	0	0.0	1	1.1	1	0.5	2	0.5
Employment agency	2	2.2	1	1.1	6	3.0	9	2.4
Faculty connection	1	1.1	8	9.2	9	4.5	18	4.8
Family member or friend	35	38.5	16	18.4	58	29.3	109	29.0
Internet/on-line listing	27	29.7	27	31.0	57	28.8	111	29.5
LinkedIn/professional networking site	3	3.3	1	1.1	10	5.1	14	3.7
Other	13	14.3	19	21.8	38	19.2	70	18.6
Other Career Fair	3	3.3	4	4.6	6	3.0	13	3.5
Previous employer	7	7.7	10	11.5	13	6.6	30	8.0
Total	91	100.0	87	100.0	198	100.0	376	100.0

Table A16. Effect of NOVA Education on Employment Opportunities of Respondents by Award Type

Did Your NOVA Education Help You Acquire Your Current Job?	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Yes	25	27.5	59	67.8	41	20.7	125	33.2
No	66	72.5	28	32.2	157	79.3	251	66.8
Total	91	100.0	87	100.0	198	100.0	376	100.0

Table A17. Effect of NOVA Education on Career Advancement of Respondents by Award Type

Did Your NOVA Education Help You? (Mark All That Apply):	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Gain a promotion	5	14.3	9	18.0	13	22.8	27	19.0
Get a salary increase in your job	5	14.3	18	36.0	20	35.1	43	30.3
Get a better job with a new employer	14	40.0	27	54.0	26	45.6	67	47.2
Other	15	42.9	8	16.0	7	12.3	30	21.1
Total	35	--	50	--	57	--	142	--

Note: Total based on number of respondents. Respondents may have selected more than one response, therefore responses will exceed respondents.

Table A18. Relevance of NOVA Education to Respondents' Occupation by Award Type

To What Extent Is Your Current Occupation Related to Your NOVA Degree?	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Very much	24	26.4	62	71.3	33	16.9	119	31.9
Somewhat	19	20.9	10	11.5	58	29.7	87	23.3
Very little	14	15.4	5	5.7	28	14.4	47	12.6
Not at all	34	37.4	10	11.5	76	39.0	120	32.2
Total	91	100.0	87	100.0	195	100.0	373	100.0

Table A19. Extent with Which a NOVA Education Prepared Respondents to Perform in the Workplace by Award Type

To What Extent Does Your NOVA Degree Help You Perform in the Workplace?	Certificate		Occupational-Technical		Transfer		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Very much	25	27.5	54	62.1	31	15.9	110	29.5
Somewhat	36	39.6	25	28.7	74	37.9	135	36.2
Very little	8	8.8	2	2.3	39	20.0	49	13.1
Not at all	22	24.2	6	6.9	51	26.2	79	21.2
Total	91	100.0	87	100.0	195	100.0	373	100.0

Appendix B. Survey Instrument: 2017 Graduate Survey

Please answer all of the questions in this short survey. For each question, choose or write-in the answer that best describes your situation. This survey is for internal research purposes only, and all respondents' identities will be kept confidential.

Thank you in advance for taking the survey.

Educational Goals

What was your primary educational goal upon entering NOVA?

- Attain an associate's degree
- Attain a certificate
- Transfer to a four-year college/university
- Improve job skills (without earning a degree or certificate)
- Other (please explain) _____

While attending NOVA, did your primary goal ever change?

- Yes
- No

What did your goal change to?

- Attain an associate's degree
- Attain a certificate
- Transfer to a four-year college/university
- Improve job skills (without earning a degree or certificate)
- Other (please explain) _____

Did you achieve your educational goal at NOVA?

- Yes
- No

What is the HIGHEST degree you plan to earn in the future?

- No degree
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Doctorate or professional degree

Educational Status

Are you currently enrolled at a postsecondary institution?

- Yes, I am currently enrolled at a two-year college
- Yes, I am currently enrolled at a four-year college/university
- I am enrolled at a postsecondary institution, but it is neither a two- or four-year college
- No, but I plan to enroll at one in the future
- No, I am not currently enrolled at a postsecondary institution and do not intend to enroll in the future

What is your current educational status?

- Full-time student (taking 12 or more credits)
- Part-time student (taking fewer than 12 credits)

To what extent did your NOVA degree program prepare you academically for your present college studies?

- Very much
- Somewhat
- Very little
- Not at all

To what extent is your current program related to your NOVA degree?

- Very much
- Somewhat
- Very little
- Not at all

What is the name of the college/university you attend? _____

What is your present major or field of study? _____

Did you have any difficulty transferring your NOVA credit hours to your transfer college?

- Yes
- No (or not applicable)

What was the major reason for the difficulty in transferring your NOVA credit hours?

- Some credits were transferred as electives only
- Entirely new field of study at transfer institution
- Other _____

When do you intend to enroll at a two- or four-year college?

- Spring 2018
- Summer 2018
- Fall 2018
- Other (please specify) _____

Current Employment Status

Which of the following choices best describes your current occupational status?

- Full-time (35 or more hours per week)
- Part-time (fewer than 35 hours per week)
- Part-time, but seeking full-time employment
- Not currently employed, but actively seeking employment
- Not currently employed and not actively seeking employment

What is your job title? _____

Please provide the name and address of your employer (street address, city, state, and zip code). _____

When did you get your current job?

- Before attending NOVA
- While attending NOVA
- After graduating from NOVA

How did you find your current job?

- Internet/on-line listing
- Career fair at NOVA
- Other career fair
- Family member or friend
- Faculty connection
- Previous employer
- LinkedIn or professional networking site
- Employment agency
- Other _____

Did your NOVA education help you acquire your current job?

- Yes
- No

How did your NOVA education help you obtain your current job? _____

Did your NOVA education help you (mark all that apply):

- Gain a promotion
- Get a salary increase in your job
- Get a better job with a new employer
- Other _____
- Not Applicable

To what extent is your current occupation related to your NOVA degree?

- Very much
- Somewhat
- Very little
- Not at all

To what extent does your NOVA degree help you perform in the workplace?

- Very much
- Somewhat
- Very little
- Not at all

What type of employee are you?

▼ Hourly wage employee ... Salaried employee
--

What is your annual salary? _____

What is your hourly wage? _____

Assessment of College Instruction

OVERALL, to what extent were you satisfied with each of these aspects of your NOVA degree program?

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	N/A	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advising	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Course availability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Considering your OVERALL experience, rate your educational proficiency gained at NOVA in each of the skill areas listed below.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Below average	Poor	No basis to judge
Writing effectively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Speaking effectively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understanding mathematics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using computers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understanding international issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cooperating with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appreciating other points of view	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Awareness of many cultures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Excellent	Good	Average	Below average	Poor	No basis to judge
Technical knowledge in your area of study	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understanding fundamental scientific concepts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Based on your OVERALL experience at NOVA, please rate the quality of the faculty and instruction at NOVA in each of the areas listed below.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Below average	Poor	No basis to judge
Quality of instruction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Course content	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fairness of grading	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faculty concern for students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faculty teaching ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faculty availability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faculty advisement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Assessment of College Services and Facilities

Please rate the performance of the College services and facilities below.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Below average	Poor	No basis to judge
Career & educational planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal counseling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Course & program advisement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Testing lab	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning lab	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Writing lab	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Extended Learning Institute (ELI)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Registration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial aid	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Campus security	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bookstore	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disability support for students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintenance & custodial	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Classroom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Science labs & equipment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Computer labs & facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Excellent	Good	Average	Below average	Poor	No basis to judge
Library facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning lab facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cafeteria	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Physical access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To what extent did your NOVA degree program prepare you for responsible citizenship (e.g., better informed about your community and the political process)?

- Prepared me extensively
- Somewhat prepared me
- Did not prepare me at all

How much money in student loans did you borrow to pay for tuition, books, and other educational expenses before you graduated from NOVA?

- None
- \$1,000 or less
- \$1,001 - \$3,000
- \$3,001 - \$5,000
- More than \$5,000

Comments

In a few words, please tell us what was best about your NOVA education, what your major problems were, and how the College can improve in the future. Please limit your responses to 250 words for each question.

What was best about your NOVA education?

What were the major problems, if any, in your NOVA experience?

How can NOVA improve its instruction and services?

PATHWAY TO THE AMERICAN DREAM—NOVA’S STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2023

THE NOVA COMMITMENT

As its primary contributions to meeting the needs of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Northern Virginia Community College pledges to advance the social and economic mobility of its students while producing an educated citizenry for the 21st Century.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

To deliver on this commitment NOVA will focus its creativity and talent, its effort and energy, and its resources and persistence, on achieving three overarching goals—success, achievement, and prosperity. It will strive to enable **Every Student to Succeed, Every Program to Achieve, and Every Community to Prosper.**

To advance the completion agenda described above, thereby promoting students’ success and enhancing their social mobility, ensuring that programs achieve, and producing an educated citizenry for the 21st Century, the following goals and objectives are adopted:

GOAL 1: Every Student Succeeds

- **Objective 1:** Develop a College-wide approach to advising that ensures all students are advised and have access to support throughout their time at NOVA
- **Objective 2:** Implement VIP-PASS System as the foundational technology based on NOVA Informed Pathways for student self-advising, assignment and coordination of advisors, and course registration

GOAL 2: Every Program Achieves

- **Objective 3:** Develop comprehensive, fully integrated Informed Pathways for every program to ensure seamless transitions from high school and other entry points to NOVA, and from NOVA to four-year transfer institutions or the workforce
- **Objective 4:** Develop effective processes and protocols for programmatic College-wide collective decisions that include consistent, accountable leadership and oversight of each academic program with designated “owners,” active advisory committees, clear student learning outcomes and assessments, and program reviews in all modalities of instruction
- **Objective 5:** Align NOVA’s organizational structures, position descriptions, and expectations for accountability with its overarching mission to support student engagement, learning, success and institutional effectiveness

GOAL 3: Every Community Prospers

- **Objective 6:** Enhance the prosperity of every community in Northern Virginia by refocusing and prioritizing NOVA’s workforce development efforts
- **Objective 7:** Further develop NOVA’s IT and Cybersecurity programs to support regional job demand and position NOVA as the leading IT community college in the nation
- **Objective 8:** Re-envision workforce strategies and integrate workforce development into a NOVA core focus
- **Objective 9:** Plan to expand the breadth and reach of NOVA’s healthcare and biotechnology programs, and prioritize future programs to support regional economic development goals

NOVA

**Northern Virginia
Community College**

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