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ABSTRACT

A telephone survey was conducted at John Tyler Community College (JTCC) to determine the initial goals, reasons for leaving, current activities, plans, and characteristics of students who left the college after one or more quarters of attendance. Telephone calls were made to all 103 full-time students and a 17% sample of the part-time students (N=354) who did not return. Study findings, based on a 36.4% response rate, included the following: (1) black students tended to drop out at a slightly higher rate than white students; (2) the programs with the lowest attrition rates were Clerical Studies, Architecture, Nursing, Funeral Services, and Instrumentation; (3) 84% had earned less than 16 cumulative credit hours; (4) almost half had a grade point average of 3.0 or better, and 57% were in good academic standing; (5) half of the students chose JTCC because it was close to their homes; (6) over 75% of the program-placed dropouts stated that their goal for enrolling at JTCC was to obtain a degree or certificate, and over 50% enrolled to take one or more job-related courses; (7) 92% said their courses were either very or somewhat helpful; (8) when asked to indicate their reason for leaving JTCC, 37% said they had completed the courses they wanted to take and 23% indicated that they lacked the time to attend because of job requirements; and (9) 22% had no plans to return to JTCC in the future. The interview schedule is appended. (AYC)

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DROP-INS OR DROP-OUTS:
 A Study of Student Attrition
 at
 John Tyler Community College

Winter Quarter 1987
 to
 Spring Quarter 1987

Conducted by
 The Office of Institutional Research
 September, 1987

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Institutional Research conducts an annual survey of students who leave after one or more quarters of attendance at John Tyler Community College. The purpose of the study is to (1) verify the students' goals for enrolling and determine whether their goals were achieved, (2) identify reasons why they did not return, (3) ascertain their current activities (i.e., working, attending school), (4) determine whether they plan to return to JTCC in the future, and (5) generate a profile of students who fail to return.

Each quarter, the Computer Center provides a printout of all students who were enrolled the previous quarter and did not return for the current quarter. A total of 2,286 students was identified as non-returning between Winter and Spring Quarter 1987. ELI students who elected a 22-week course format (N=30) during the Winter 1987 were deleted as well as applicants for graduation (N=25). The total of non-returning students was adjusted to 2,231.

Due to the continuing decrease in full-time students, the decision was made to include all full-timers who did not return in the survey sample (N=103). In addition, a systematic random sample of every sixth part-time student was selected (N=354), which yielded a 20.5 percent sample overall. Each of the students was telephoned and asked to respond to a ten item survey instrument (See Appendix). The telephone calls generated a 36.4 percent response rate.

In response to the recommendations from last year's attrition study, the analysis of the survey responses is reported by curriculum and unclassified students, instead of full-time and part-time. It

was hypothesized that a sharp distinction could be made in responses of classified and unclassified students which could lead to explaining reasons for their withdrawal.

Below is a list of principal findings:

1. Black students tended to dropout/stopout at a slightly higher rate than whites.
2. As expected, a greater proportion of part-time students tend to dropout/stopout compared to their representation in the College's population.
3. The degree/certificate programs that had the lowest attrition rates were: Clerical Studies, Architecture, Nursing, Funeral Services, and Instrumentation.
4. Unclassified students accounted for 4 out of every 5 students who did not return to JTCC.
5. Students in the Division of Math, Natural Sciences and Allied Health had the lowest attrition rate (11 percent) in comparison to the other three divisions.
6. Overall, 84 percent of the former students had earned less than 16 cumulative credit hours.
7. Almost one-half of the non-returning students had a grade point average of 3.00 or better.
8. Overall, more than one-half (57 percent) of the former students were in good academic standing.
9. When asked why they chose to attend JTCC, almost one-half of the respondents stated they chose the College "because it was close to home."
10. More than three-fourths of the program-placed students who dropped out stated that their goal or objective for enrolling at the College was to obtain a degree or certificate.
11. Over one-half of the unclassified students who did not return said their goal for enrolling was "to take one or more job related courses."
12. Ninety-two percent of the non-returning respondents said that the courses they completed were either "very helpful" or "somewhat helpful."
13. When unclassified students were asked to give their reasons for not returning to JTCC, 37 percent stated that they had "completed the

courses they desired to take," followed by "lack of time due to job requirements," given by 23 percent. The remaining 40 percent gave a variety of reasons for not coming back.

14. A larger percentage of unclassified students indicated that they were working compared to curricula students.
15. While only 15 percent of the non-returning students indicated that they had received a promotion due to the courses completed at JTCC, this percentage is greater than that indicated by survey respondents in the past two years.
16. Overall, 22 percent of the former students stated that they "did not plan to return to JTCC at a later date." Of these students, about three-fourths were unclassified when enrolled at the College.

The following are recommendations based on the findings and student comments:

1. Students should be asked to evaluate class scheduling and registration periodically to verify that the College is meeting their scheduling needs.
2. A more earnest attempt should be made to recruit and retain full-time students since they tend to declare a program of study and engage in continuous study.
3. The College should continue to strengthen its marketing efforts with businesses and industries in the area, especially those cited frequently in this report and past reports.
4. Retention and Advising strategies must be evaluated periodically and those proven successful continue to be shared with College personnel on a regular basis.

INTRODUCTION

Student attrition has been a focal point of discussion in higher education for many years. Despite all of the dialogue, an enormous number of students still drop out before they achieve their educational objectives. Two-year public colleges have been most likely to experience the highest and most sustained attrition rates, however all student attrition is not necessarily bad (Jones, 1986).

Most students who drop out of college are not in academic jeopardy. The literature suggests that community college students are four times more likely to drop out for non-academic reasons than for academic reasons. Inevitably, there will be a certain level of "natural" attrition that occurs when students drop out due to conditions beyond the control of the institution.

Unnecessary attrition, that type which can be predicted by the institution, must become a target of retention activities. Without a doubt, institutions must be challenged to become multi-faceted in their approaches to address problems which adversely affect student retention (Lenning, 1980).

The literature suggests that campus-based research should be one of many facets employed in assisting an institution to better understand and reduce high attrition rates. This report aims to generate a profile of students who fail to return, provide information on why they leave, determine whether they plan to return, and recommend ways in which the College might better serve future students.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following is a list of terms used in this study. Definitions are provided to assure mutual interpretations of the information given.

1. Retention - uninterrupted pursuit of one or more courses at the same institution or resuming one's studies after a period of withdrawal.
2. Attrition - failure to enroll in one or more courses in quarterly succession.
3. Drop-in - a student who takes only occasional courses, usually to satisfy a personal interest or job requirement.
4. Dropout - an individual who leaves college and does not return for additional study.
5. Stopout - an individual who leaves college, but returns at a later time.
6. Persister - one who enrolls in one or more courses at the college without interruption.

METHODOLOGY

The Office of Institutional Research receives a printout each quarter from the Computer Center of all students who were enrolled the previous quarter and did not return in the current quarter. A series of data items are included on each student (name, sex, race, curriculum, phone number, jurisdiction, attendance status, cumulative hours, cumulative grade point average and academic standing). A total of 2,286 students was identified as non-returning between Winter and Spring Quarters 1987. It was recognized that 30 of these students were enrolled in Extended Learning Institute courses, which overlapped into the Spring Quarter. This group, along with 25 students who had completed all requirements for graduation in the previous quarter, was removed from the group of non-returning students. The total number of student withdrawals was adjusted to 2,231.

Due to the continuing decrease in full-time students, the decision was made to include all full-timers who did not return in the survey sample group (N=103). In addition, a systematic random sample of every sixth part-time student was selected (N=354), which yielded a 20.5 percent sample overall. Each of the students was telephoned and asked to respond to ten survey questions (See Appendix). The telephone calls, which were made from June to July 1987, primarily during the afternoons and evenings, generated a 30.4 percent response rate.

RESPONSE RATE

	SAMPLE	RESPONSE	RATE
Full-timers (all)	103	28	27.2%
Part-timers	354	111	31.4%
Total	457	139	30.4%

The data was keyed and analyzed using SAS (Statistical Analysis System). The analysis was limited to frequencies and cross tabulations due to small expected cell frequencies in many cases.

This report can be categorized in two parts: the first section provides general background information on all non-returning students (see Tables 1-9). The second part gives a summary of the non-returning student responses to a ten-item survey instrument (see Tables 10-23).

ANALYSIS OF DATA

- Background Information On
All Non-Returning Students
- Summary of Survey Responses

TABLE 1
NON-RETURNING STUDENTS
BY SEX
WINTER 1987 to SPRING 1987

SEX	N	PCT
Male	857	38
Female	1,374	62
Total	2,231	100

Non-returning students by sex is presented in Table 1. As shown, 62 percent of all non-returning students were female and 38 percent were male. This percentage breakdown is identical to the overall student population.

TABLE 2
NON-RETURNING STUDENTS
BY ETHNICITY
WINTER 1987 to SPRING 1987

ETHNICITY	N	PCT
White	1,574	71
Black	560	25
Other	97	4
Total	2,231	100

Table 2 gives the distribution of non-returning students by ethnicity. The distribution shows that 71 percent of the students who did not return were white, 25 percent were black, and 4 percent were in another category. Since blacks represent only 21 percent of all JTCC students and whites comprise 76 percent, it appears that blacks tended to drop out at a slightly higher rate than whites.

TABLE 3
NON-RETURNING STUDENTS
BY ATTENDANCE STATUS
WINTER 1987 to SPRING 1987

ATTENDANCE STATUS	N	PCT
Full-time	103	5
Part-time	2,128	95
Total	2,231	100

Non-returning students by their attendance status is shown in Table 3. As anticipated, the overwhelming majority of all non-returning students attended JTCC on a part-time basis (95 percent) while only 5 percent attended full-time. College wide, about 83 percent of all students are part-time and 17 percent are full-time.

TABLE 4
NON-RETURNING STUDENTS
BY JURISDICTION
WINTER 1987 to SPRING 1987

JURISDICTION	N	PCT
Amelia	16	**
Charles City	2	**
Chesterfield	731	33
Dinwiddie	163	7
Prince George	88	4
Surry	57	2
Sussex	40	2
Colonial Heights	157	7
Hopewell	156	7
Petersburg	304	14
Richmond	259	12
TOTAL IN SERVICE AREA	1,973	88
TOTAL OUT OF SERVICE AREA	258	12
GRAND TOTAL	2,231	100

** Less than 1 percent

Table 4 gives the summary of non-returning students by jurisdiction. The percent of students that reside in each of the service areas is relatively proportionate to that of the College's

population. Since students located outside the College's service area represent only 7 percent of all JTCC students and in-service area students comprise 93 percent, it seems that out of the service area students tend to dropout/stopout at a slightly higher rate than those residing within the service area.

TABLE 5
NON-RETURNING STUDENTS
BY DEGREE PROGRAM AND UNCLASSIFIED STATUS
WINTER 1987 to SPRING 1987

PROGRAM	N	PCT
College Transfer	83	4
Occupational/Technical	232	10
Certificate	69	3
Unclassified	1,847	83
Total	2,231	100

Non-returning students by degree programs and unclassified status is presented in Table 5. Over three-fourths of the non-returning students attended JTCC as unclassified students (83 percent). Unclassified students represented 63 percent of the total school population during this same period. Occupational/Technical students who did not return comprised 10 percent of all non-returning students, 4 percent were College Transfer students, and only 3 percent were Certificate students.

TABLE 6
NON-RETURNING STUDENTS
BY DIVISION, CURRICULUM AND
UNCLASSIFIED STATUS
WINTER 1987 to SPRING 1987

DIVISION	ENROLLED WINTER 1987	NON-RETURN SPRING 1987	ATTRITION RATE
Business Division			
Business Administration	135	32	24%
Accounting	83	19	23%
Beverage Marketing	24	4	17%
Data Processing	155	43	28%
Management	187	43	23%
Office Systems Tech	66	12	18%
Police Science	70	13	19%
Clerical Studies	17	1	6%
Educational Secretary	7	7	100%
Subtotal	744	174(8%)	23%
Communications & Social Sciences Division			
Education	34	5	15%
General Studies	140	32	23%
Liberal Arts	29	10	34%
Human Services	99	14	14%
Child Care	57	26	46%
Teacher Aide	7	2	29%
Subtotal	366	89(4%)	24%
Engineering Technologies Division			
Architecture	36	3	8%
Automotive Tech	51	13	25%
Electronics Tech	106	21	26%
General Engineering	67	24	36%
Instrumentation	45	6	13%
Auto Diagnosis	4	1	25%
Building Construction	8	6	75%
Machine Shop	8	2	25%
Welding	10	3	30%
Subtotal	335	79(3%)	24%
Math, Natural Sciences, & Allied Health			
Science	14	4	29%
Funeral Services	41	5	12%
Nursing	137	12	9%
Subtotal	192	21(1%)	11%
Career Studies (3 Divisions)			
Subtotal	95	21(1%)	22%
Unclassified Status			
Audit	5	0	0%
Career Exploration	140	99	71%
Developing Skills	232	152	66%
High School Students	135	122	90%
Pending Curriculum	384	228	59%
Personal Satisfaction	724	570	79%
Restricted Enrollment	43	13	30%
Transfer	66	22	33%
Transient	7	4	57%
Upgrading Skills	852	637	75%
Subtotal	2,588	1,847(83%)	71%
GRAND TOTAL	4,320	2,231(100%)	52%

() - Column Percent of Total Non-Returning Students

Table 6 lists the number of students enrolled Winter Quarter 1987 by Division, Curriculum, and unclassified status who did not return Spring Quarter 1987. The corresponding attrition rate is also provided. As in previous research studies, unclassified students exhibited the highest attrition rate between quarters (71 percent). The Divisions of Business, Communications and Social Sciences, and Engineering Technologies had very similar attrition rates, averaging 23 to 24 percent. Career Studies students who are enrolled in various areas of study offered by the three divisions, mentioned above, exhibited an attrition rate of 22 percent. The Division of Math, Natural Sciences and Allied Health had the lowest attrition rate among all divisions -- 11 percent.

The following curricula had the lowest attrition rates at the College: Clerical Studies (6 percent), Architecture (8 percent), Nursing (9 percent), Funeral Services (12 percent), and Instrumentation (13 percent).

TABLE 7
NON-RETURNING STUDENTS
BY CUMULATIVE HOURS
WINTER 1987 to SPRING 1987

CUMULATIVE HOURS	N	PCT
0 - 15	1,878	84
16 - 35	184	8
36 - 50	58	3
51 - 75	52	2
76 - 100	25	1
Over 100	34	1
Total	2,231	99*

*Rounding Error

As shown in Table 7, a large majority of non-returning students had earned less than 16 cumulative credit hours (84 percent). Eight percent

of the students had earned 16 - 35 credit hours and a total of 7 percent earned 36 or more credits.

TABLE 8
NON-RETURNING STUDENTS
BY CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT AVERAGE
WINTER 1987 to SPRING 1987

GRADE POINT AVERAGE	N	PCT
0.00 - 1.00	418	19
1.01 - 2.00	229	10
2.01 - 3.00	546	24
3.01 - 4.00	1,038	46
Total	2,231	99*

*Rounding Error

Almost one-half of the non-returning students had a grade point average (GPA) of 3.01 to 4.00 (Table 8). Twenty-four had a GPA of 2.01 to 3.00; 10 percent, 1.01 - 2.00; and 19 percent, 1.00 or less.

TABLE 9
NON-RETURNING STUDENTS
BY ACADEMIC STATUS
WINTER 1987 to SPRING 1987

ACADEMIC STATUS	N	PCT
Good Standing	1,265	57
Academic Warning	213	10
Academic Probation	39	2
Academic Suspension	2	**
Academic Dismissal	4	**
Reinstated	0	-
Dean's List	6	**
Honor's List	20	**
No Standing Code	682	31
Total	2,231	100

** Less than 1 percent

Non-returning students by academic status is presented in Table 9. As shown, more than one-half of the non-returning students were in "good standing," 10 percent were on "academic warning," and 2 percent were on "academic probation." A sizable percent of former students do not have a status code.

TABLE 10
NON-RETURNING RESPONDENTS
BY SEX
WINTER 1987 to SPRING 1987

SEX	N	PCT
Male	51	37
Female	88	63
Total	139	100

As Table 10 indicates, 37 percent of the non-returning respondents were male and 63 percent were female. The distribution of the respondents by sex is representative of all the non-returning students, which was 38 percent male and 62 percent female.

TABLE 11
NON-RETURNING RESPONDENTS
BY ETHNICITY
WINTER 1987 to SPRING 1987

ETHNICITY	N	PCT
White	118	85
Black	18	13
Other	3	2
Total	139	100

Of the non-returning students that responded, 85 percent were white, 13 percent were black and 2 percent were in other ethnic groups (Table 11). In comparison to all the non-returning students (71 percent white, 23 percent black, and 4 percent in another ethnic group), a much smaller sample of blacks students were surveyed in comparison to the population.

TABLE 12
NON-RETURNING RESPONDENTS
BY ATTENDANCE STATUS
WINTER 1987 to SPRING 1987

ATTENDANCE	N	PCT
Full-time	28	20
Part-time	111	80
Total	139	100

Of the 139 students surveyed, 20 percent indicated full-time status (12 credit hours or more) during their last quarter of attendance and 80 percent were part-time (Table 12). In an effort to reach all non-returning full-time students, each was included in the target group which resulted in a higher percentage of full-time students in the sample (20 percent) compared to the overall group (only 5 percent).

TABLE 13
NON-RETURNING RESPONDENTS
BY JURISDICTION
WINTER 1987 to SPRING 1987

JURISDICTION	N	PCT
Amelia	1	**
Charles City	0	0
Chesterfield	52	37
Dinwiddie	6	4
Prince George	10	7
Surry	2	1
Sussex	1	**
Colonial Heights	9	6
Hopewell	12	9
Petersburg	16	12
Richmond	16	12
TOTAL IN SERVICE AREA	125	90
TOTAL OUT OF SERVICE AREA	14	10
GRAND TOTAL	139	100

** Less than 1 percent

Table 13 shows the non-returning respondents by jurisdiction. The percentage of respondents who reside within JTCC's service area and outside the area is closely representative of the total number of non-returning students (See Table 4 for comparison).

TABLE 14
 NON-RETURNING RESPONDENTS
 BY DIVISION, CURRICULUM AND
 UNCLASSIFIED STATUS
 WINTER 1987 to SPRING 1987

DIVISION	N	PCT
<u>Business Division</u>		
Business Administration	5	
Accounting	3	
Data Processing	5	
Management	5	
Office Systems Tech	4	
<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>16 (8)</u>
<u>Communications & Social Sciences Division</u>		
General Studies	7	
Liberal Arts	2	
Human Services	2	
Child Care	1	
<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>9 (4)</u>
<u>Engineering Technologies Division</u>		
Architecture	1	
Electronics Tech	4	
General Engineering	2	
Instrumentation	1	
Building Construction	1	
Machine Shop	1	
<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>7 (4)</u>
<u>Math, Natural Sciences, & Allied Health</u>		
Science	1	
Nursing	1	
<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1 (1)</u>
<u>Career Studies (3 Divisions)</u>		
<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1 (1)</u>
<u>Unclassified Status</u>		
Career Exploration	11	
Developing Skills	3	
High School Students	5	
Pending Curriculum	19	
Personal Satisfaction	13	
Restricted Enrollment	1	
Transfer	2	
Transient	1	
Upgrading Skills	36	
<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>91</u>	<u>65 (83)</u>
<u>GRAND TOTAL</u>	<u>139</u>	<u>99*(100)</u>

() - Column Percent of Total Non-Returning Students

* Rounding Error

Sixty-five percent of all non-returning respondents were unclassified students (Table 14). As presented in Table 6, unclassified students displayed a much higher dropout/stopout pattern than curriculum students accounting for 83 percent of the total number of non-returning students. Non-returning student respondents to the survey instrument were proportionate to the population as presented in Table 14.

TABLE 15
NON-RETURNING RESPONDENTS
BY REASONS FOR CHOOSING JTCC

PROGRAM	Close to Home	Inexpensive	Open Adm	Courses/Program	Fin. Aid	Job Require.	Other Reason	Total
Division/ Curriculum	23	6	1	14	0	3	1	48
Row Pct	(48)	(12)	(2)	(29)		(6)	(2)	(99)*
Unclassified	35	5	0	33	0	13	5	91
Row Pct	(38)	(5)		(36)		(14)	(5)	(98)*
Total	58	11	1	47	0	16	6	139
Row Pct	(42)	(8)	**	(34)		(11)	(4)	(100)

* Rounding Error

** Less than 1 percent.

Non-returning students were asked to give their primary reason for choosing to attend John Tyler Community College (Table 15). Almost one-half said they chose JTCC because it was "close to home." Other reasons for attending were (in descending order): courses/programs, job requirements, inexpensive, "other" reasons, and open admissions. None of the respondents cited "the availability of financial aid" as a reason for attending. In comparison, curriculum students responded in a somewhat similar manner as unclassified students in this area. A larger percentage of curriculum students chose "inexpensive" as a reason for attending than did unclassified students, while a larger percentage of

unclassified students chose "job requirements" as their reason for attending JTCC.

TABLE 16
NON-RETURNING RESPONDENTS
BY GOAL OR OBJECTIVE FOR ENROLLING

PROGRAM	Job Relat. Course	Degree/ Cert.	Career Cert.	Transfer	Pers. Interest	High School Course	Self Improve.	Credit Transfer	Total
Division/ Curriculum	4	39	2	2	1	0	0	0	48
Row Pct	(8)	(81)	(4)	(4)	(2)				(99)*
Unclassified	46	10	9	4	12	5	2	3	91
Row Pct	(51)	(11)	(10)	(4)	(13)	(5)	(2)	(3)	(99)*
Total	50	49	11	6	13	5	2	3	139
Row Pct	(36)	(35)	(8)	(4)	(9)	(4)	(1)	(2)	(99)*

* Rounding Error

The non-returning students' goals or objectives for enrolling at JTCC are presented in Table 16. As anticipated, a large majority of curriculum students (81 percent) enrolled to obtain a degree or certificate. Yet, the majority of unclassified students enrolled to take one or more job related courses (51 percent), followed by "to satisfy a personal interest" (13 percent), "to obtain a degree or certificate" (11 percent), and "to obtain a career certificate" (10 percent). Additional goals or objectives for enrolling cited by unclassified students were "to take a high school or SAT preparatory course" (5 percent), "to transfer to another college" (4 percent), "to transfer credits to another institution in which they were enrolled" (3 percent), and "to improve English or Math skills" (2 percent).

TABLE 17
NON-RETURNING RESPONDENTS
BY EXTENT TO WHICH COURSES
ASSISTED STUDENTS IN ACHIEVING GOAL

PROGRAM	Very Helpful	Some What Helpful	Not Very Helpful	Not at all Helpful	Did not complete Course	Total
Division/ Curriculum	25	20	3	0	0	48
Row Pct	(52)	(42)	(6)			(100)
Unclassified	54	29	3	0	5	91
Row Pct	(59)	(32)	(3)		(5)	(99)*
Total	79	49	6	0	5	139
Row Pct	(57)	(35)	(4)		(4)	(100)

* Rounding Error

Table 17 gives an evaluation by non-returning respondents of the extent to which the courses they took assisted them in achieving their goal. Ninety-two percent responded that the courses were either "very helpful" or "somewhat helpful," 4 percent said they were "not very helpful," and 4 percent said they did not complete the courses and could not respond to this question (all unclassified students). None of the respondents said that the courses were "not helpful at all." The three curriculum students who stated that the courses were "not very helpful" were enrolled in the following programs: General Studies (2 students) and Electronics (1). The three unclassified students who said that the courses were "not very helpful" were classified as Upgrading Skills (1), Career Exploration (1), and High School Student (1).

TABLE 18
NON-RETURNING RESPONDENTS
BY RANK ORDER OF REASONS WHY STUDENTS
DID NOT COME BACK

RANK	REASON	CURRICULUM	UNCLASSIFIED	TOTAL
1	Completed courses that I desired to take Col Pct	2 (4)	34 (37)	36 (26)
2	Lack of time due to job requirements Col Pct	13 (27)	21 (23)	34 (24)
3	Lack of time due to family/vacation Col Pct	4 (8)	11 (12)	15 (11)
4	Course(s) that I needed were not available Col Pct	2 (4)	10 (11)	12 (9)
5	Needed a break Col Pct	4 (8)	7 (8)	11 (8)
6	Financial Problems Col Pct	9 (19)	2 (2)	11 (8)
7	Transferred to another college Col Pct	5 (10)	2 (2)	7 (5)
8	Was failing or not doing as well as wanted Col Pct	4 (8)	1 (1)	5 (4)
9	Medical reasons Col Pct	3 (6)	1 (1)	4 (3)
10	Was not satisfied with previous course(s) Col Pct	1 (2)	1 (1)	2 (1)
11	Transportation problems Col Pct	1 (2)	0	1 (**)
12	No particular reason Col Pct	0	1 (1)	1 (**)
TOTAL		48	91	139
Col Pct		(98)*	(99)*	(100)

* Rounding Error

** Less than 1 percent

Non-returning students were asked to give the reason or reasons why they did not return to JTCC during the Spring Quarter 1987 (Table 18). Each of the respondents gave one primary reason for not returning. Overall, more students (26 percent) stated that they had "completed the course(s) they desired to take." This reason was followed (in descending rank order) by "lack of time due to job requirements," "lack of time due to family/vacation," "needed a break from school," "financial problems," "transferred to another college," and "was failing or not doing as well as wanted." Additional reasons included "medical reasons," "was not satisfied with previous course(s)," "transportation problems," and "no particular reason" for not returning.

In evaluating the responses, the rank order of the reasons why students did not return differed when comparing curriculum and unclassified students. Unclassified students' ranking of reasons was identical to that of the total group of respondents. A large majority of Curriculum students (27 percent) indicated that "lack of time due to job requirements" was the reason why they did not come back. This reason was followed by (in descending rank) "financial problems," "transferred to another college," "was failing or not doing as well as I wanted," "needed a break," "lack of time due to family/vacation," "medical reasons," "completed courses desired to take," "courses needed were not available," "was not satisfied with previous course(s)," and "transportation problems."

TABLE 19
NON-RETURNING RESPONDENTS
BY CURRENT EMPLOYMENT/EDUCATION STATUS

PROGRAM	Working	In School	Working & In School	Unempl. & Seeking	Unempl. & Not Seeking	Total
Division/ Curriculum	41	2	1	2	2	48
Row Pct	(85)	(4)	(2)	(4)	(4)	(99)*
Unclassified	75	0	9	2	5	91
Row Pct	(82)		(10)	(2)	(5)	(99)*
Total	116	2	10	4	7	139
Row Pct	(83)	(1)	(7)	(3)	(5)	(99)*

* Rounding Error

The employment and educational status of non-returning respondents is presented in Table 19. Eighty-three percent of the non-returning students said they were working, 7 percent were in school and working, and 5 percent said they were unemployed and not seeking work. In addition, 3 percent were unemployed and seeking work and 1 percent was attending school.

In reviewing curriculum and unclassified students, a larger percentage of unclassified students indicated that they were working or were working and in school (92 percent), compared to 87 percent of the program placed curriculum students.

TABLE 20
NON-RETURNING RESPONDENTS*
BY WORK STATUS

PROGRAM	Full-time	Part-time	Total
Division/ Program	36	6	42
Row Pct	(86)	(14)	(100)
Unclassified	71	13	84
Row Pct	(85)	(15)	(100)
Total	107	19	126
Row Pct	(85)	(15)	(100)

* Includes only those respondents who are working or in school and working.

Overall, more than three-fourths of the non-returning students who were working did so on a full-time basis. Fifteen percent indicated that they were working part-time. It is interesting to note that curriculum and unclassified respondents were very similar in full-time and part-time working status (Table 20).

TABLE 21
NON-RETURNING RESPONDENTS*
BY SCHOOL STATUS

PROGRAM	Full-time	Part-time	Total
Division/ Curriculum Row Pct	3 (100)	0	3 (100)
Unclassified Row Pct	4 (44)	5 (56)	9 (100)
Total Row Pct	7 (58)	5 (42)	12 (100)

* Includes only those respondents who are in school, or in school and working.

Albeit the numbers are very small, Table 21 above shows that 58 percent of the non-respondents who were in school attended on a full-time basis, while 42 percent were enrolled as part-time students. All of the curriculum students who were in school were enrolled full-time.* Forty-four percent of the unclassified respondents were enrolled on a full-time basis and all of them attended JTCC as high school students.

*These curriculum students said "transfer to another college" was their reason for not returning to JTCC; they were enrolled in Electronics (1), General Studies (1), and Instrumentation (1) at JTCC.

TABLE 22
NON-RETURNING RESPONDENTS
BY PROMOTION

PROGRAM	Yes	No	Not Applicable	Total
Division/ Curriculum	4	38	6	48
Row Pct	(8)	(79)	(12)	(99)
Unclassified	17	67	7	91
Row Pct	(19)	(74)	(8)	(101)*
Total	21	105	13	139
Row Pct	(15)	(76)	(9)	(100)

* Rounding Error

Fifteen percent of the non-returning respondents said they received promotion(s) due to the courses completed at the College (Table 22). This percentage is higher than that indicated by survey respondents in the past two years (12 percent in 1986 and 6 percent in 1985). Overall, 76 percent indicated that they did not receive a promotion and 9 percent of the respondents were not working.

In reviewing the curricula students' responses, 4 students stated that they had received promotions; they were enrolled in Data Processing (1 student), Electronics (1), General Engineering (1), and Career Studies-Photography (1).

TABLE 23
NON-RETURNING RESPONDENTS
BY PLANS TO RETURN

PROGRAM	YES	NO	TOTAL
Division/ Curriculum	41	7	48
Row Pct	(85)	(15)	(100)
Unclassified	68	23	91
Row Pct	(75)	(25)	(100)
Total	109	30	139
Row Pct	(78)	(22)	(100)

When asked the very important question, "do you plan to return to JTCC at a later date," 78 percent of the respondents said "yes" (Table 23). Twenty-two percent indicated that they did not plan to return. A larger percentage of curriculum students said they planned to return in comparison to unclassified students. The curriculum students who stated that they would not return to JTCC were enrolled in the following programs: Electronics (2 students), Data Processing (1), Management (1), General Studies (1), Liberal Arts (1), and Instrumentation (1).

Based on additional examination of the students who stated that they do not plan to return to JTCC at a later date, it is interesting to note that 57 percent of the students who do not plan to return to the College gave "completed course(s) desired to take" as their reason for not returning during the Spring Quarter 1987. Twenty percent stated that they had "transferred to another college," 7 percent indicated "lack of time due to job requirements," and the remaining 13 percent gave a variety of reasons for not coming back.

As presented in Table 17, six or 4 percent of the non-returning respondents stated that the course(s) they had completed at JTCC were "not very helpful" in assisting them to accomplish their goal for attending. Four of these students stated that they did not plan to return to the College.

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a summary of the principal findings of this study:

1. Black students tended to dropout/stopout at a slightly higher rate than whites.
2. As expected, a greater proportion of part-time students tend to dropout/stopout compared to their representation in the 'College's population.
3. The degree/certificate programs that had the lowest attrition rates were: Clerical Studies, Architecture, Nursing, Funeral Services, and Instrumentation.
4. Unclassified students accounted for 4 out of every 5 students who did not return to JTCC.
5. Students in the Division of Math, Natural Sciences and Allied Health had the lowest attrition rate (11 percent) in comparison to the other three divisions.
6. Overall, 84 percent of the former students had earned less than 16 cumulative credit hours.
7. Almost one-half of the non-returning students had a grade point average of 3.00 or better.
8. Overall, more than one-half (57 percent) of the former students were in good academic standing.
9. When asked why they chose to attend JTCC, almost one-half of the respondents stated they chose the College "because it was close to home."
10. More than three-fourths of the program-placed students who dropped out stated that their goal or objective for enrolling at the College was to obtain a degree or certificate.
11. Over one-half of the unclassified students who did not return said their goal for enrolling was "to take one or more job related courses."
12. Ninety-two percent of the non-returning respondents said that the courses they completed were either "very helpful" or "somewhat helpful."
13. When unclassified students were asked to give their reasons for not returning to JTCC, 37 percent stated that they had "completed the courses they desired to take," followed by "lack of time due to job requirements," given by 23 percent. The remaining 40 percent gave a variety of reasons for not coming back.

14. A larger percentage of unclassified students indicated that they were working compared to curricula students.
15. While only 15 percent of the non-returning students indicated that they had received a promotion due to the courses completed at JTCC, this percentage is greater than that indicated by survey respondents in the past two years.
16. Overall, 22 percent of the former students stated that they "did not plan to return to JTCC at a later date." Of these students, about three-fourths were unclassified when enrolled at the College.

The following are recommendations based on the findings and student comments:

1. Students should be asked to evaluate class scheduling and registration periodically to verify that the College is meeting their scheduling needs.
2. A more earnest attempt should be made to recruit and retain full-time students since they tend to declare a program of study and engage in continuous study.
3. The College should continue to strengthen its marketing efforts with businesses and industries in the area, especially those cited frequently in this report and past reports.
4. Retention and Advising strategies must be evaluated periodically and those proven successful continue to be shared with College personnel on a regular basis.

REFERENCES

Jones, Steven W., "No Magic Required: Reducing Freshman Attrition at the Community College," *Community College Review*, Volume 14, No. 2, Fall 1986.

Lenning, Oscar T., Ken Sauer, and Philip E. Beal. "Student Retention Strategies," AAHE - ERIC/Higher Education Research Report, No. 8, 1980.

COMMENTS BY NON-RETURNING STUDENTS

PART I - PURPOSE/GOALS

1. WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO ATTEND JTCC? (Respondent indicated "Some other reason" and said:)

DIVISION OF ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGIES

Instrumentation

- Too late to be accepted to another college.

UNCLASSIFIED

Career Exploration

- Personal interest.

Pending

- School's reputation.

Personal Satisfaction

- To take class with wife.

Upgrading Skills

- Was impressed with growth of college.

PART II - EMPLOYMENT/EDUCATION STATUS

1. ARE YOU CURRENTLY IN SCHOOL? (Please indicate name of school.)

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

General Studies

- Braxton Business School

DIVISION OF ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGIES

Electronics

- ECPI

Instrumentation

- New River Community College

UNCLASSIFIED

High School Student

- Dinwiddie High School
- VSU
- Dinwiddie High School
- Dinwiddie High School

Pending

- Richard Bland College

Transfer

- J. Sargeant Reynolds

Upgrading Skills

- J. Sargeant Reynolds
- Northern Virginia Community College

2. ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING? (Please indicate name of company.)

DIVISION OF BUSINESS

Accounting

- Chesterfield Mental Health Dept.
- Dotson Bros. Exterminators
- Dept. of Information Technology

Business Administration

- Chuck's Supermarket
- Marine Reserve
- J.C. Penney Beauty Salon
- Eastern Technical Communications
- Synoptic Systems Corp.

Business Management

- Honda World
- Ukrop's
- Trucking Company (did not specify)
- Burger King
- Defense General Supply Center

Computer Programming

- Did not give name
- Ft. Lee
- Sherwin Williams
- DGSC

Secretarial Science

- John Tyler Community College
- Petersburg Oncology, Inc.
- C.F. Scott, Inc.

Career Studies (Accounting)

- J.K. Timmons & Assoc.

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

Child Care

- Heritage Baptist Day Care

General Studies

- Southside Virginia Training Center
- Tomahawk Building & Supply
- Stuart Circle Hospital
- UVB
- AT & T
- Secretary in Hopewell

Human Services

- Poplar Springs Hospital

Liberal Arts

- Goodwill
- E & H Corporation

Career Studies (Photography)

- Multiple Listing Service

DIVISION OF ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGIES

Architecture

- Commonwealth Gas

Building Construction

- Mayton & Johnson Construction

Electronics

- W. W. Grainger, Inc.
- CSX
- Circuit City
- King's Dominion

General Engineering

- Farm Fresh
- Landmark Surveyor

Machine Shop

- Richmond Plastics

DIVISION OF MATH, NATURAL SCIENCES & ALLIED HEALTH

Science

- Philip Morris

UNCLASSIFIED

Career Exploration

- JTCC & self-employed
- Dixon Masonry
- Public relations - freelance
- Ft. Lee
- Virginia Power

- .. Midlothian Tile
- Chase Roofing
- Va. Forklift

Developing Skills

- Douglas Freeman High School
- .. Self-employed
- Ft. Lee

High School Student

- Safeway
- Lerner's
- Edgehill Supermarker
- Stoneybrook Miniatures Collection

Pending

- Park Sussex Development
- Battlefield Park Convalescent Center
- Winfree Baptist Church
- Mays Valentine (lawyers)
- Battlefield Park Nursing Home
- Hales Insurance Agency
- Battlefield Park Nursing Home
- Imperial Printing
- Ft. Lee
- Unijax
- Ft. Lee
- Prince George School System
- Petersburg School System
- Self-employed
- St. Marks Nursery School
- HMK Corporations
- Investor Savings
- Virginia Power

Personal Satisfaction

- Dupont
- Ukrops/Main Office
- Federal Reserve Bank
- Century 21 - John Henkle
- Petersburg Counseling Service
- Clock Shop
- Bellwood - DGSC
- State library
- Bellwood - DGSC
- UPS
- DGSC

Restricted Enrollment

- Safeway

Transfer

- Hess's Department Store
- Whitney Roofing Company

Transient

- HoneyTree Apartments

Upgrading Skills

- Investor Savings
- City of Fairfax
- Harvey L. Darks
- Colonial Savings & Loan
- B.T. Crump Co.
- Optometry Office (did not specify)
- State Department of Transportation
- Burgess Industries
- Colonial Mechanical Corp.
- Ft. Lee
- Ft. Lee
- Bellwood - DGSC
- Coghill Composition Co.
- Ft. Lee
- Stone Container
- Ft. Lee
- McQuire Hospital
- Kenbridge Construction
- Heritage Chevrolet
- Glenna Jean Manufacturing
- A. G. Harocopas & Assoc. (surveyors)
- Taylor & Parrish Construction
- W. T. Curd Contractors
- Aaron Machine
- DGSC
- S. W. Funk Construction
- Mapcon Systems
- Ft. Lee
- Data Systems Corp.
- Manchester Cleaners
- Pioneer Federal
- A T & T
- City of Williamsburg
- Insurance Company in Richmond
- Ft. Lee

PART III - DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS TO MAKE THAT WILL ENABLE JTCC TO IMPROVE ITS PROGRAMS OR SERVICES TO FUTURE STUDENTS?

DIVISION OF BUSINESS

Accounting

- A lot of courses I wanted were not offered.
- Not enough required classes in Accounting are offered during the quarter.

Business Management

- Every time I registered for classes, they were cancelled, especially English and Math at night.

Computer Programming

- Great teachers.
- Very pleased with programs and services.
- Excellent school.

Career Studies

- Offer more Business courses at Watkins Annex.

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

General Studies

- Offer more courses at Ft. Lee such as P.E., etc.
- Teaching staff has diminished. Need to offer a few more courses.
- Very disappointed and frustrated with Admissions. They have told me wrong dates for the start of classes and told me classes (Chemistry II) would be offered in the evening during Spring Quarter and it was not. I have missed two quarters due to mix-ups which has pushed me further back before I can enroll in the Nursing Program.
- More open communication between students and teachers.
- Enjoyed the instructor.

Liberal Arts

- Bookstore is too expensive. Textbooks are \$20 - \$30.

Career Studies

- Need to improve color photography lab.

DIVISION OF ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGIES

Architecture

- More relaxing atmosphere than a 4 year school. Instructors very helpful.

Electronics

- Need to condense classes to cover material in less time.

General Engineering

- Psychology course work was very repetitive from one level to the next. In many classes, too much lecturing. Too many outside classes needed for Engineering Degree.
- JTCC is a "fine learning center."

DIVISION OF MATH, NATURAL SCIENCES & ALLIED HEALTH

Nursing

- Have noticed improvements. LAC is a big help. Nursing staff is superior.

UNCLASSIFIED

Career Exploration

- Registration dates are poorly regulated & scheduled classes are cancelled before registration period - False advertising! Refund policy - too long a time for refunds after classes are cancelled. People (a lot of them) are going to Reynolds - higher probability that course will make due to more sections offered and more students to make minimum enrollment for courses.
- Need a better explanation of courses in schedule and catalog.
- JTCC needs to offer more advanced photography courses. Mr. Lamm had the number of students signed up for Product Photography and someone over him cancelled the class even though 12 students had signed up. "I am greatly upset."
- Counseling guidance needs improvement. One class had to meet in a snack room at Watkins Annex due to a need for additional space which lead to disruptions.
- There is a gap in the Computer Course. Instructors change from course to course and assume students have previous knowledge. This makes the student's work difficult. I have taken classes over the past 4 years and the system has changed, leaving me very confused.
- Students should have some input about the curriculum of programs.

Developing Skills

- Everything is fine.

High School Student

- No complaints.
- Could have been stretched out. Too much information given in short period of time.

Pending

- Wonderful instructors, but need to work on transferring classes to a 4-year college.
- Instructors are really patient with students.
- Johnnie Humphrey is an excellent instructor, She takes time with her students. It would be great if JTCC could have two Johnnie Humphreys.
- Courses were very helpful.
- None. JTCC is an excellent school. Doing a great job!
- Very impressed with services.
- Need to have a Child Care/Day Care program. Would be very helpful as I am a single-parent.
- (1) Would like to see John Tyler Community College advertise its offerings more. Suggest that JTCC's schedule be distributed in the local papers. (Do not receive schedule in the mail, even though I live in Chesterfield. (2) Would like to see JTCC have beginning foreign language classes.
- Johnnie Humphrey was great.
- JTCC is great. Instructor was wonderful.

Pending

- Students should be notified that a class is cancelled before student drives out to class and finds notice on door. Refunds take too long.
- Would like to see more classes available at Watkins Annex.

Personal Satisfaction

- Classes could start on time.
- I was pleased with ELI courses which allowed flexibility in hours.
- Instructors know the subject matter, but are not experienced in teaching. There is too much turnover of instructors.
- Really enjoyed this college, teachers, etc. Overall liked it better here than at J. Sargeant Reynolds. Sorry I didn't start here so I could graduate from here.
- Watkins Annex parking lot was terrible after a snowfall. They were not cleared. Watkins Annex parking lot is too small.
- Enjoyed the class.
- More than adequate services and programs.
- Offer a two year degree in Interior Decorating. Certificate is not enough to enter job market.

Restricted Enrollment

- (1) Need a learning disability department. (2) Need more counselors for one-on-one help and counseling.

Transient

- Very satisfied with course and instructor.

Upgrading Skills

- College Grammar course is always offered on Wednesday nights. Can it be alternated by quarters to different nights?
- Lou Marerdis was an excellent instructor. Sorry he is not there any longer.
- Offer more courses at Ft. Lee.
- Need to offer mainframe classes at Watkins Annex.
- First course taken at JTCC and was pleased with school.
- Concerned that my wife can not take class as in-state student even though we have been in Virginia for three years (Student is in military).
- Offer more courses through ELI.
- Accounting instructor told students that someone else made up the exams and, when given, the exam had areas that were not taught in class. Instructors should make up their own exams!
- Make more PCs available at Ft. Lee. One of the PCs was down during classes.
- Class was taught at job site; this was convenient. JTCC needs to offer more computer classes at McGuire Hospital.
- Johnnie Humphrey is a great instructor.

APPENDIX

ID NO. _____

CURR. _____

RETENTION SURVEY

Good Morning/Afternoon.

My name is _____. I am on the staff at John Tyler Community College. Our records indicate that you are not enrolled in classes this quarter (Spring Quarter). We are conducting a survey of non-returning students to find out if they accomplished their objectives for enrolling. Would you be willing to answer a few questions? Your answers will be strictly confidential. This should only take a few minutes.

cc4 1. Why did you chose to attend JTCC?

- (1) Close to your home
- (2) Inexpensive
- (3) Open admissions policy
- (4) Courses and programs
- (5) Availability of Financial Aid
- (6) To meet job requirements
- (7) Some other reason _____

cc5-6 2. What was your goal or objective for enrolling at the college?

CC7 3. Was/were the course/courses that you completed at JTCC

- (1) Very helpful
- (2) Somewhat helpful
- (3) Not very helpful
- (4) Not helpful at all

in assisting you in your goals for attending? :-

cc8-9 4. Would you please state the reason or reasons why you did not return to JTCC this Spring Quarter?

5. Are you currently in school or working?

cc10 SCHOOL:
(1) Yes _____
(Place)

cc11 WORKING:
(1) Yes _____
(Place)
(Go to #6)

(2) No

(2) No

(Go to #7)

6. (Ask 6 if 5 was answered "yes" concerning working)

cc12 Have you received a promotion as a result of a course or courses that you completed at JTCC?

(1) Yes

(2) No

7. (Ask 7 if 5 was answered "no" concerning working)

cc13 Are you

(1) Unemployed and seeking work or

(2) Unemployed and not seeking employment

(3) Other _____

8. Are you full- or part-time (working or in school)?

cc14 SCHOOL:
(1) Full-time
(2) Part-time

cc15 WORKING:
(1) Full-time
(2) Part-time

9. Do you plan to return to JTCC at a later date?

cc16 (1) Yes

(2) No

10. Do you have any comments or suggestions to make that will enable JTCC to improve its programs or services to future students?

- cc17 () Sex
- cc18-20 () Curriculum
- cc21 () Race
- cc22-24 () Jurisdiction
- cc25 () Attendance Status
- cc26 () Cumulative Hours
- cc27 () Grade Point Average
- cc28 () Status Code

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