

Results and Analysis of the Career Advantage Survey of Teachers, Counselors and Principals  
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## Introduction

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness at Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) was engaged by the DMACC Program Development Office to summarize and analyze the results of a survey conducted during spring 2010 for teachers, counselors and Principals involved with Career Advantage (dual or concurrent enrollment). The results are loosely summarized according to the question order on the surveys. The intent of this report is to provide summary information, highlight important findings and compare and contrast results based on job at the participating high schools. If there are questions or comments regarding this information, please feel free to contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness according to the title page of this report.

## Demographics

The respondents to this survey represent a good cross-section of the education professionals involved with Career Advantage programming with DMACC. As shown in Table 1, the majority of respondents were high school teachers responsible for teaching the dual or concurrent courses in the high school. In addition, high school counselors and Principals also provided survey information.

Table 1- Number of Career Advantage Survey Respondents by Position

Position	Number of Respondents
Teachers	70
Counselors	16
Principals	7
TOTAL	93

DMACC is a large community college district covering 11 counties in Central Iowa. Our service area includes urban, suburban and rural school districts. Table 2 below shows that survey respondents were included from each of the three types of school districts representing a similar make-up to our service area.

Table 2- Number of Schools Participating in Career Advantage Survey by Position

	Teachers	Counselors	Principals
Urban	1	1	1
Suburban	7	5	2
Rural	12	5	2
TOTAL	20	11	5

Tables 2 also shows that there is representation from the three position types from in all three schools types in the DMACC service area.

Table 3 below also shows that respondents have had significant experience with Career Advantage programming and are not first-time career advantage teachers, counselors and Principals. Their

responses are primarily based on multiple years of experience which makes the results of the survey more representative of the program over time. All three position types had a majority of respondents that have been involved with the program for 3 or more school years. Counselors and Principals have the most experience with over 90% having three or more years experience with career advantage.

Table 3- Percent of Survey Respondents with 3 or More Years Career Advantage Experience by Position

Position	Percent
Teachers	70%
Counselors	94%
Principals	100%

The teachers surveyed teach a variety of courses that DMACC offers as career advantage as evidenced in Table 4 below. The largest subject areas were English and Foreign Language, and Math followed by the natural sciences.

Table 4- Subjects Taught by Teachers Responding to Career Advantage Survey

Subject	Number of Teachers
English and Foreign Language	27
Sciences (Physics, Biology, Chemistry)	7
Business	2
Math	13
Psychology	1
Agriculture	2
History/Government	4
Education	2
CAD/ Technology	4
Art	2
Building Trades	3

Note: Number of teachers are duplicated due to one instructor teaching multiple subjects

The majority of the survey beyond demographic data was split into four areas each asking the effect of career advantage programming on students, student enrollment trends, counseling, teachers, and the school in general. Not all of these areas were asked of each group. Some of the following tables have missing information which is due to that question not being asked of that position type.

Though all groups responded favorably towards career advantage programming, Principals generally responded more favorably than counselors and teachers. Counselors often responded more favorably than teachers, but not always. This may be because of their role in the educational process, or could be in part due to these groups also have the greatest experience with the program.

### **Career Advantage Effects on Students**

Tables 5 and 6 below show both Likert scale and open-ended responses regarding the effects of career advantage on students. Only one question had a majority of respondents from each job category below or near 50% agreement. They felt that most of the students had already given thought to going to

college prior to becoming involved with Career Advantage. Most benefit for students centered on gaining in-depth knowledge of a subject area, rigorous learning, developing realistic expectations for college, and developing an understanding of their academic skills. Table 6 is a summary of the open-ended responses with findings similar to the strengths identified above.

Table 5- Career Advantage and Your Students

Question 9: As a result of taking career advantage courses in my school, students have.....	Teachers			Counselors			Principals		
	SA/A	Neutral	SD/D	SA/A	Neutral	SD/D	SA/A	Neutral	SD/D
..continued rigorous learning in their senior year	91%	6%	1%	75%	12%	12%	100%	0%	0%
..developed realistic expectations of college	89%	11%	0%	94%	0%	6%	99%	0%	0%
..considered for the first time, going to college	37%	31%	20%	43%	25%	31%	86%	0%	14%
..developed a good understanding of their academic skills	88%	13%	0%	88%	12%	0%	100%	0%	0%
..gained in-depth knowledge in the subject areas.	93%	4%	3%				100%	0%	0%
..developed effective time management skills	77%	16%	5%				100%	0%	0%
..developed effective study skills	78%	19%	5%				100%	0%	0%

Note: Totals will not equal 100% because NAs are left out of this table

Table 6- What is the Single Greatest Impact Career Advantage Has Had on Your Students?

	Teachers	Counselors	Principals
Preparation for college and earning college credits while in high school	45		6
Encouraging students to achieve at a high level	10		2

### Career Advantage and Student Enrollment Trends

The shortest section of the survey asked all three groups of educators about student enrollment patterns with the results shown below in Table 7. Of the two questions, there was consensus that students enroll in more challenging courses as a result of having Career Advantage Programming in their school. Though teachers also felt that students are staying on campus as opposed to leaving for other venues to take college coursework, counselors and Principals were not as certain. This was one of the few questions that Principals did not agree 100%.

Table 7- Career Advantage and Student Enrollment Trends

<b>Question 10: As a result of the presence of Career Advantage in my school, more students..</b>	Teachers			Counselors			Principals		
	SA/A	Neutral	SD/D	SA/A	Neutral	SD/D	SA/A	Neutral	SD/D
..have enrolled in more academically challenging courses	88%	7%	1%	81%	6%	12%	100%	0%	0%
..are staying on the high school campus instead of attending college courses at another site	83%	10%	3%	63%	19%	12%	71%	29%	0%

Note: Totals will not equal 100% because NAs are left out of this table

### Career Advantage Effects on Counseling

Table 8 below shows a summary of responses from all three employee types regarding guidance counseling. Though counselors and Principals strongly agreed that Career Advantage had changed the way college options were presented to students, and has increased counselor knowledge of current college academic requirements, teachers were not as convinced. There were lower levels of agreement across all three groups that counselors have developed a better understanding of knowledge and skills student need to be successful in college, and that they perceive more students as capable of higher levels of academic achievement. There were no open-ended questions regarding counseling.

Table 8- Career Advantage and Guidance Counseling

<b>Question 11: As a result of the presence of Career Advantage in my school, guidance counselors have..</b>	Teachers			Counselors			Principals		
	SA/A	Neutral	SD/D	SA/A	Neutral	SD/D	SA/A	Neutral	SD/D
..changed the way college options are presented to students	49%	35%	5%	75%	19%	6%	100%	0%	0%
..increased counselor knowledge of current college academic requirements	59%	35%	5%	75%	12%	6%	100%	0%	0%
..developed a better understanding of the skills and knowledge students need to be successful in college	53%	32%	2%	56%	31%	6%	100%	0%	0%
..perceived more students as capable of higher levels of academic achievement	55%	32%	2%	44%	31%	19%	71%	29%	0%

Note: Totals will not equal 100% because NAs are left out of this table

### Career Advantage Effects on Teachers

The largest section of the survey regarded the effect of career advantage on teachers. The results are shown in Table 9 below. This section was only required of teacher and Principals. There was strong

agreement that teachers learned new ideas and developments in their disciplines, found teaching to be more satisfying, have become more energized, and have established higher standards for student work. There was less agreement that teachers are released from other school duties as a result of being involved with Career Advantage. There was also less agreement that teachers benefitted from support from other schools or their Career Advantage liaison.

The results in Table 9 are consistent with the aggregated results from the open-ended questions shown in Table 10. It is notable that one of the most prevalent responses was that teachers felt there was no impact on them. It may be that though teachers see benefits for their students and school, they feel there is less benefit for them.

Table 9- Career Advantage and Teachers

<b>Question 12: As a result of the presence of Career Advantage in my school, teachers in my school have..</b>	Teachers			Principals		
	SA/A	Neutral	SD/D	SA/A	Neutral	SD/D
..learned about new ideas and developments in academic disciplines	83%	16%	2%	85%	14%	0%
..learned new instructional strategies	64%	27%	8%	58%	43%	0%
..found teaching to be more satisfying	82%	17%	0%	100%	0%	0%
..taken leadership positions within departments, schools or professional associations	54%	36%	2%	86%	14%	0%
..been more energized	82%	18%	0%	71%	29%	0%
..found it more difficult to fulfill other responsibilities	24%	23%	48%	14%	14%	72%
..benefited from the support of an contact with other high schools and the career advantage liaison	39%	37%	18%	53%	57%	0%
..been released from other school duties, enabling more time for courses and students	1%	10%	81%	14%	29%	57%
..developed a good understanding of what colleges expect students to know and be able to do in the academic discipline of their CEP classes	78%	16%	5%	85%	14%	0%
..felt more connected with their academic disciplines	74%	20%	4%	58%	29%	0%
..found content and/or pedagogy of the CEP course useful in non-CEP courses	63%	30%	4%	71%	14%	0%
..established higher standards for student work	84%	14%	1%	72%	14%	0%
.. felt supported by the CEP liaison/mentor	71%	17%	9%	72%	14%	0%

Note: Totals will not equal 100% because NAs are left out of this table

Table 10- What is the single greatest impact Career Advantage has had on you as a teacher?

	Teachers
Increased expectations for students	19
Understand my academic discipline better	8
None	5
Improve teaching skills	4

### Career Advantage Effects on the School

According to the data shown below in Table 11, teachers, counselors and Principals most strongly agree that Career Advantage has helped their school meet its goal of offering rigorous classes for students, demonstrate to parents that students are doing challenging work in their Junior and Senior years, and has enhanced its prestige and academic reputation. Though still a significant level of agreement, helping schools offer appropriately rigorous pre-requisites and raising expectations for course preceding CEP courses showed lower levels of agreement. It appears that educators feel that schools have stronger benefits from the courses themselves and what students take away from these courses. Schools may still be wrestling with the benefits in getting students prepared for Career Advantage courses. From the open-ended questions shown in Table 12, Career Advantage offerings were a selling point for the school, not only to parents, but to students looking to open enroll into their districts. The open-ended questions reinforced the information gained in the likert scale questions.

Table 11- Career Advantage and the School

Question 12/13: As a result of the presence of Career Advantage in my school, my school..	Teachers			Counselors			Principals		
	SA/A	Neutral	SD/D	SA/A	Neutral	SD/D	SA/A	Neutral	SD/D
..progressed in meeting its goal of offering rigorous classes for students	91%	7%	0%	82%	12%	6%	86%	0%	0%
..offers pre-requisite courses for CEP courses that are appropriately rigorous	72%	16%	8%	57%	12%	6%	86%	0%	0%
..raised expectations for student performance preceding CEP courses	67%	23%	10%	75%	19%	6%	86%	0%	0%
.. demonstrated to parents that their students are doing challenging work as juniors and seniors	83%	16%	1%	82%	12%	6%	86%	0%	0%
..enhanced its prestige and academic reputation	83%	13%	1%	69%	19%	12%	86%	0%	0%

Note: Totals will not equal 100% because NAs are left out of this table

Table 12- What is the single greatest impact Career Advantage has had on your school?

	Teachers	Counselors	Principals
Enhance offerings/ selling point for the district	4	7	0
Providing students with college credit and college preparation with in high school	12	2	3
Encouraging students to achieve at a high level	13	2	4

### Conclusions

It is clear from the data collected in this survey that teachers, counselors and Principals agree strongly of the benefits of Career Advantage programming for their students, teachers and the school as a whole. All three groups agree very strongly that students benefit by earning college credit while in high school, becoming prepared for their college careers, and becoming motivated to achieve at higher levels. The most pronounced benefits for teachers included becoming more knowledgeable in their disciplines and gaining knowledge regarding what their students will need as they enter college. Counselor benefits included being able to adapt the way they present options regarding college to students and gaining knowledge about current college academic requirements. The most prominent benefits for schools included providing more rigorous classes for students, demonstrating the value of Junior and Senior years to parents, and enhancing the schools prestige and academic reputation. Schools may still be developing ways to leverage career advantage programming to motivate and prepare students to achieve at high levels in earlier grades to make them eligible for Career Advantage programming.