



Revealing Institutional  
Strengths and Challenges

Three vertical bars of varying heights are positioned in the background. The leftmost bar is medium height, the middle bar is the shortest, and the rightmost bar is the tallest. They are all a light gray color.

INSTITUTIONAL REPORT  
RISC STUDENT SURVEY SPRING 2023  
**YUBA COLLEGE**

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For more information, please contact Paul Umbach ([paul@percontor.org](mailto:paul@percontor.org)).

Percontor, LLC  
6325 Falls of Neuse Rd.  
Suite 35-381  
Raleigh, NC 27615  
[percontor.org](http://percontor.org)  
[www.risc.college](http://www.risc.college)

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# RISC SURVEY OVERVIEW

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## SURVEY DESCRIPTION

The Revealing Institutional Strengths and Challenges (RISC) Survey provides detailed, actionable data about student success, using the latest advances in survey research and technology. Survey results pinpoint where students are experiencing obstacles and identify campus offices that excel in helping students succeed in college. The survey has three main sections.

The survey first asks students about facing challenges during the current semester in five broad areas: academic support services, campus environment, finances and financial aid, succeeding in their courses, and work and personal issues. Each section has multiple challenges, with over 80 unique challenges to student success across the five areas, such as errors with financial aid paperwork, not being told to take a course necessary for their degree, or difficulty using course technology in online classes.

Next, the survey asks students about their interactions with campus offices. Our research indicates that students want office staff who are accessible, concerned about helping them, and able to effectively solve their problem. Students describe five campus offices on these three dimensions; YC chose the specific offices that appeared in the survey. The survey used office names specific to YC, so that students saw office names they recognized.

Finally, students provide their overall perceptions of the college. Students are asked if they would recommend the college to a friend, whether the college is a good value, and how well the college is helping them meet their enrollment goals, such as improving job and career opportunities or preparing for a four-year degree.

Students are also given two open-response questions, where they could write out an answer: what is YC's greatest strength, and if YC could change one thing to increase student success, what should it change? See your college contact for the written responses to these two questions.

The survey concludes with a section asking about student demographic information.

Interactive and printable versions of the survey can be found at:

<https://www.risc.college/two-year-survey>

## SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

The survey was administered in Spring 2023 to 713 YC students. There were 530 responses used in this report, for a 74.3% response rate. Median time YC students spent taking the survey was 8.3 minutes.

The table below provides some background information about your college's benchmark sample. Forty-four other community colleges participating in the survey during the past two years are used for the benchmark numbers in this report; each college is weighted equally when calculating benchmarks. Your benchmark sample has a total of 28,756 respondents.

**Table 1.1 Community colleges in the benchmark sample**

Carnegie classification		Urbanicity		Student enrollment	
High Career & Technical	24%	City	48%	Under 1,000	7%
Mixed	41%	Suburb	21%	1,000-4,999	31%
High Transfer	24%	Town	14%	5,000-9,999	28%
Other	10%	Rural	14%	10,000-19,999	28%
				20,000 and above	0%

# CHALLENGES TO STUDENT SUCCESS

## MAIN CHALLENGE AREAS

The RISC survey contains over 80 unique challenges that students face during college, and students can indicate they faced more than one challenge. The specific challenges are divided into five main areas:

- ▶ Academic support services
- ▶ Campus environment
- ▶ Finances and financial aid
- ▶ Success in courses
- ▶ Work and personal

The survey begins by asking students if they faced challenges in each of these these areas, and then asks about more specific challenges, depending on how students initially respond. The challenge order is randomly assigned for each respondent.

For example, students are asked:

**Think about your finances and financial aid. Have you had any challenges in the following areas?**

	Yes	No
Paying college and living expenses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working with financial aid office	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Military and employer tuition benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Students choosing “yes” to one or more of these response options are coded as having a challenge with finances and financial aid.

Table 2.1 provides an overview of the main challenges students faced at YC in Spring 2023 in the five main areas. *Work and personal issues* is the area where your students most frequently reported having challenges, with 63% reporting one or more challenges in this area.

A negative number in the *Diff.* column indicates a lower proportion of students at your institution reported challenges in an area, compared to the benchmarking group. These are presented graphically with green bars. Positive numbers indicate a greater proportion of your students are reporting challenges, and are presented with red bars.

**Table 2.1 Major challenges to student success**

	YC % ○	Bench. % ■	Diff.	<i>n</i>	
Work and personal issues	63	60	+3	333	
Success in courses	53	52	+1	281	
Finances and financial aid	45	38	<b>+7</b>	239	
Academic support services	37	32	<b>+5</b>	196	
Campus environment	17	19	-2	90	

**Notes**

Green indicates that YC has a lower proportion of students reporting a challenge compared to the benchmark sample proportion; red indicates YC has a higher proportion. Bold indicates a statistically significant difference from the benchmark sample (two-sample test of proportions,  $p < .05$ ). Percentages do not sum to 100 because students could choose multiple challenges across the five topic areas. *n* in table row is the number of students choosing a challenge in that area at your college; overall sample  $n=530$ .

Tables 2.2 to 2.6 provide more detail about student challenges. For example, if a student answered “yes” to “Paying college and living expenses”, they were prompted with a follow-up question:

**Where did you have issues paying expenses? Please check all that apply.**

- Tuition and fees
- Paying college and living expenses
- Living expenses (housing, food, healthcare)
- Childcare
- None of the above

To help uncover where your students are facing challenges, we rank the major categories of challenges in descending order. We then rank the more specific challenges within each major category in descending order.

For example, 63% of your students chose one or more challenges in the major category of *Work and personal issues*. The most common subcategory was *Family*, with 43% choosing challenges in this subcategory. The most common specific challenge within the *Family* subcategory was *Difficulty balancing demands of family and college*, with 32% of your students mentioning this as a challenge to their success. All percentages in these tables are calculated as the percentage of the entire respondent sample.

**Table 2.2 Challenges with work and personal life**

	YC %	Bench. %	Diff. %	<i>n</i>
Work and personal issues	63	60	+3	333
Family	43	35	+8	229
Difficulty balancing demands of family and college	32	25	+7	167
Difficulty dealing with health of family	21	13	+8	109
Difficulty finding childcare	6	5	+1	32
Family does not support me going to college	5	4	+1	26
None of the above	6	5	+1	32
Work	39	38	+1	206
Work hours do not leave me enough time to study	21	22	-1	109
Pay is not enough to cover expenses while in school	19	17	+2	100
Work schedule conflicts with classes	16	14	+2	84
Work schedule prevents campus resource use	14	13	+1	74
Work schedule is not flexible during the semester	11	10	+1	57
None of the above	5	5	+0	25
Health and disability issues	27	23	+4	144
Emotional/mental health issue	19	16	+3	100
Physical health issue	15	12	+3	79
Disability services did not provide necessary support	2	1	+1	8
Pregnancy and childbirth	1	1	+0	7
Campus is difficult to navigate with my disability	1	1	+0	7
Faculty did not provide necessary accommodations	1	1	+0	6
None of the above	3	2	+1	17
Transportation to campus	19	14	+5	102
Car or carpool not reliable	10	7	+3	53
Travel to campus takes a long time	9	6	+3	49
Public transportation system not reliable	7	4	+3	37
Campus transportation system not reliable	2	2	+0	11
None of the above	3	3	+0	18

**Notes**

Percentages do not sum to 100 because students could choose multiple challenges within this topic area. Denominator for percentages is the total number of survey respondents; *n* in table row is the number of students choosing a challenge in that area.

**Table 2.3 Challenges with success in courses**

	YC %	Bench. %	Diff. %	<i>n</i>
Success in courses	53	52	+1	281
Online classes	30	30	+0	157
Difficulty learning the material on my own	19	17	+2	100
Lack of interaction with faculty	14	14	+0	72
Difficulty keeping up because no regular class time	13	12	+1	67
Lack of interaction with other students	12	10	+2	66
Difficulty using course technology	6	8	-2	33
Difficulty taking exams at testing center	2	3	-1	12
None of the above	3	4	-1	17
Developmental courses (math, reading, or writing)	26	21	+5	136
Courses were too hard	13	7	+6	69
Required to take too many	7	4	+3	37
Did not prepare me for college-level courses	5	4	+1	26
Courses were too easy	1	1	+0	7
None of the above	7	9	-2	38
Doing college-level work	25	20	+5	134
Poor planning and time management skills	13	10	+3	71
Poor study skills	12	9	+3	63
Not motivated to study	12	9	+3	61
Reading or writing assignments were difficult	10	7	+3	54
Required level of math was difficult	7	5	+2	38
Took too many classes	5	3	+2	25
Skipped too many classes	1	1	+0	7
None of the above	2	3	-1	13
Faculty	15	18	-3	77
Did not teach well	9	11	-2	48
Took too long to grade assignments	7	7	+0	38
Not responsive to email	6	6	+0	34
Feedback on assignments not helpful	6	8	-2	30
Not concerned about my academic success	6	7	-1	30
Not helpful outside of class	4	6	-2	21
Not available to meet in person	1	2	-1	5
None of the above	3	3	+0	15

**Notes**

Percentages do not sum to 100 because students could choose multiple challenges within this topic area. Denominator for percentages is the total number of survey respondents; *n* in table row is the number of students choosing a challenge in that area.



**Table 2.4 Challenges with finances and financial aid**

	YC %	Bench. %	Diff. %	<i>n</i>
Finances and financial aid	45	38	+7	239
Paying college and living expenses	40	34	+6	211
Living expenses (housing, food, healthcare)	33	24	+9	174
Books, software, and other supplies	31	18	+13	162
Tuition and fees	18	19	-1	97
Childcare	6	4	+2	32
None of the above	1	1	+0	4
Working with financial aid office	17	13	+4	89
Process was unclear	8	6	+2	43
Difficult to meet with, speak to, or email staff	8	5	+3	40
Errors processing financial aid	6	5	+1	32
Unable to answer questions	6	4	+2	30
Delays in getting money	5	5	+0	26
Gave me wrong information	4	3	+1	19
None of the above	4	2	+2	21
Military and employer tuition benefits	1	2	-1	6
Received wrong information about benefits	1	0	+1	5
Did not know process for obtaining benefits	1	1	+0	3
Experienced delays receiving benefits	1	1	+0	3
None of the above	0	1	-1	0

**Notes**

Percentages do not sum to 100 because students could choose multiple challenges within this topic area. Denominator for percentages is the total number of survey respondents; *n* in table row is the number of students choosing a challenge in that area.

**Table 2.5 Challenges with academic support services**

	YC %	Bench. %	Diff. %	<i>n</i>
Academic support services	37	32	+5	196
Registering for courses	23	18	+5	121
Course was offered but full	12	6	+6	63
Course not offered at times I needed	10	7	+3	52
Course not offered this semester	10	4	+6	51
Had a registration hold	6	4	+2	33
None of the above	5	6	-1	24
Academic advising	17	14	+3	91
Difficult to meet with, speak to, or email advisor	11	8	+3	56
Not told to take necessary course	6	5	+1	30
Told to take unnecessary course	5	3	+2	26
Course/program materials were incorrect	3	2	+1	14
None of the above	3	3	+0	15
Tutoring	10	7	+3	55
Tutoring hours not convenient	3	3	+0	15
Tutoring not helpful	3	2	+1	14
Tutors not available when I need assistance	3	3	+0	14
Tutoring not available in the subject area I needed	2	3	-1	13
None of the above	4	2	+2	19
Library	7	5	+2	37
Resources I needed not available online	2	1	+1	10
Hours not convenient	2	1	+1	8
Study spaces not available when needed	1	1	+0	4
Staff not helpful	0	1	-1	1
None of the above	4	2	+2	19
Computer and science labs	7	6	+1	36
Problems using computers and equipment	3	2	+1	15
Lab busy when needed	1	1	+0	3
Lab hours not convenient	1	1	+0	3
None of the above	3	2	+1	18

**Notes**

Percentages do not sum to 100 because students could choose multiple challenges within this topic area. Denominator for percentages is the total number of survey respondents; *n* in table row is the number of students choosing a challenge in that area.

**Table 2.6 Challenges with the campus environment**

	YC %	Bench. %	Diff. %	<i>n</i>
Campus environment	17	19	-2	90
Interactions with other students	10	9	+1	53
Did not know many other students	6	6	+0	31
Did not feel welcome due to my race or ethnicity	1	1	+0	7
Did not feel welcome due to my gender identity	1	0	+1	5
Did not feel welcome due to my sexual orientation	1	0	+1	3
None of the above	3	3	+0	16
Parking	7	13	-6	37
Difficulty finding parking on or near campus	3	10	-7	15
Parking on or near campus is too expensive	2	1	+1	11
Difficulty getting parking pass	2	1	+1	10
None of the above	2	2	+0	13
Safety and crime	5	3	+2	29
Campus not safe	3	1	+2	15
Parking lots not safe	2	1	+1	10
Was a victim of a crime	1	1	+0	3
None of the above	2	1	+1	8

**Notes**

Percentages do not sum to 100 because students could choose multiple challenges within this topic area. Denominator for percentages is the total number of survey respondents; *n* in table row is the number of students choosing a challenge in that area.

# STUDENT-OFFICE INTERACTIONS

Table 3.1 shows the administrative support units your college chose for the RISC Survey. Unit names appeared on the survey exactly as they are listed in this report. Counseling Department was the most commonly used office, with 69% reporting using the office during the Spring 2023 semester, followed by Financial Aid Office (55%) and Library (47%).

**Table 3.1 Office usage**

	YC % ○	Bench. % ■	Diff.	n	
Counseling Department	69	47	+22	365	
Financial Aid Office	55	37	+18	293	
Library	47	34	+13	249	
Admissions and Records	46	27	+19	243	
Tutoring Support Services	32	19	+13	171	

If students indicated they interacted with an office during the semester, they were asked three questions about their interactions with staff:

**How available were [unit name] staff when you interacted with them?**

- Very available
- Somewhat available
- Somewhat unavailable
- Very unavailable

**How concerned were [unit name] staff about addressing your issue?**

- Very concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- Somewhat unconcerned
- Very unconcerned

**How effective were [unit name] staff when addressing your issue?**

- Very effective
- Somewhat effective
- Somewhat ineffective
- Very ineffective

Results are presented in Table 3.2, which shows the percentage of respondents choosing the top category (*very available/concerned/effective*). Because each college chose the administrative offices for this set of questions, the table only presents benchmark comparisons for an administrative office when at least five other colleges surveyed students about the same type of office.

**Table 3.2 Student-administration interactions**

	YC %	Bench. %	Diff.	<i>n</i>	
					50      60      70      80      90
<b>Admissions and Records</b>					
Available	64	68	-4	242	○————■
Concerned	52	56	-4	242	○————■
Effective	68	68	+0	241	□
<b>Counseling Department</b>					
Available	56	59	-3	361	○————■
Concerned	57	57	+0	360	□
Effective	64	63	+1	360	■————○
<b>Financial Aid Office</b>					
Available	63	64	-1	292	○————■
Concerned	52	51	+1	292	■————○
Effective	63	62	+1	291	■————○
<b>Library</b>					
Available	84	81	+3	249	■————○
Concerned	71	63	<b>+8</b>	247	■————○
Effective	82	78	+4	247	■————○
<b>Tutoring Support Services</b>					
Available	78	71	+7	170	■————○
Concerned	65	61	+4	170	■————○
Effective	71	66	+5	166	■————○

**Notes**

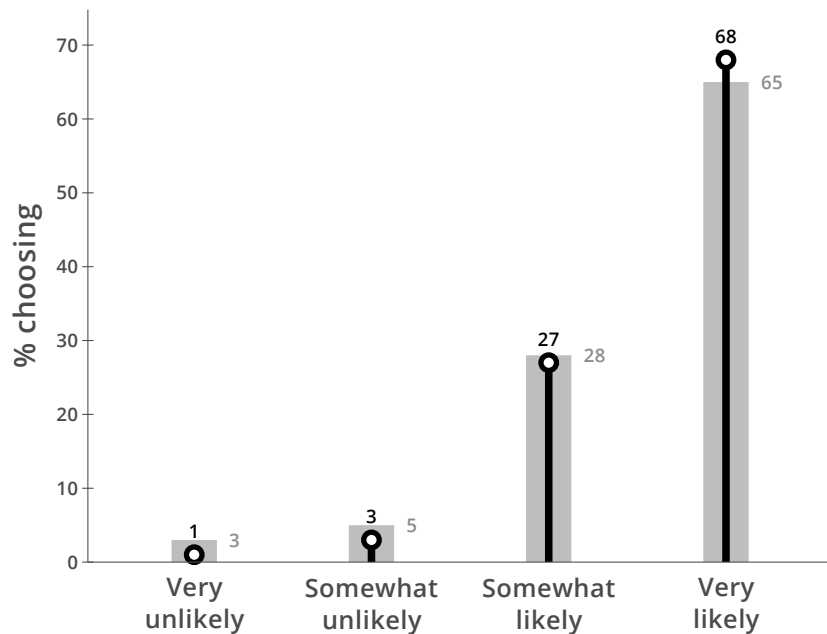
Percentage is the proportion of students rating an office in the top response category (*very available/concerned/effective*). Green indicates that YC has a higher proportion of students choosing the category compared to the benchmark sample proportion; red indicates YC has a lower proportion. Bold indicates a statistically significant difference from the benchmark sample (two-sample test of proportions,  $p < .05$ ). *n* in table row is the total number of students at your college rating an office on that dimension; i.e., the denominator for the row percentage.

# STUDENT VIEWS OF THE INSTITUTION

Besides challenges and office interactions, students were asked several questions about YC overall.

The first question, “Based on your experiences, how likely are you to recommend YC to a friend?”, is a summative measure of how students view your institution. Results are presented in Figure 4.1, with YC represented by the black line and the benchmark sample by the gray line. 95% of your students would be somewhat or very likely to recommend YC. The YC distribution of responses is not statistically significantly different from the benchmark sample.

**Figure 4.1 Would student recommend YC to a friend?**

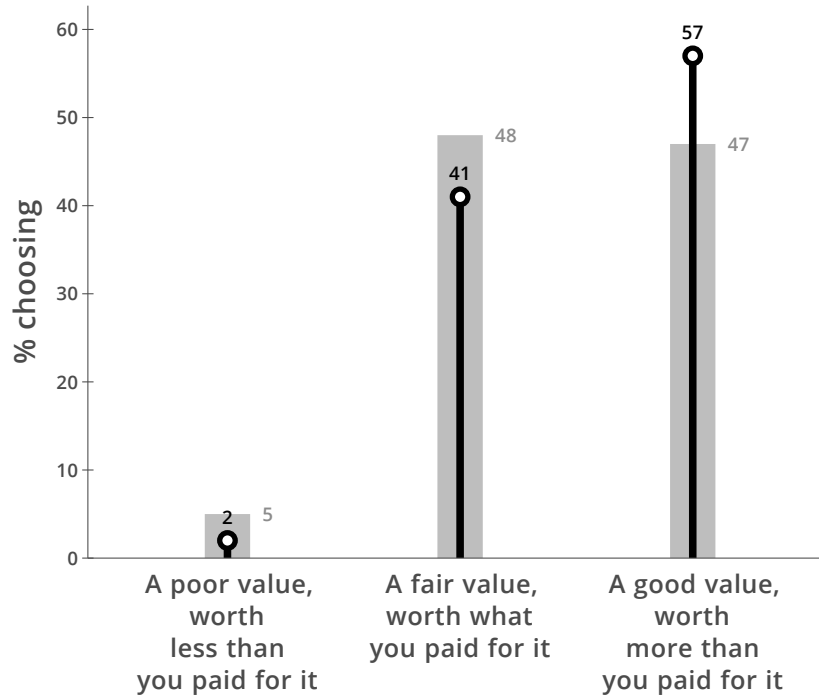


**Notes**

YC is the black bar; benchmark sample is gray.  $\chi^2 = 4.1, p < .25; n = 522$ .

Next, students were asked to rate the overall value of their education at YC (see Figure 4.2). 98% of your students believe their education is worth what they paid (or even worth more). The YC distribution of responses is statistically significantly different from the benchmark sample.

**Figure 4.2 Overall value of education?**



**Notes**

YC is the black bar; benchmark sample is gray.  $\chi^2 = 12.3, p < .01; n = 520$ .

The last set of questions asks students how well your college is doing in preparing students for their educational goals. The top half of Table 4.1 lists students' responses to their primary reason for attending YC. 64% chose *Prepare for a four-year degree* as their primary purpose for attending your institution.

Students were then asked how well YC is helping them achieve the specific goal they chose. Students could choose from *very well*, *fairly well*, *somewhat*, or *not at all*. Responses from the top category are presented in the bottom half of Table 4.1. For example, 52% of the students who chose *Prepare for a four-year degree* as their primary goal indicated that YC is doing *very well* in terms of preparing them for a four-year degree.

**Table 4.1 How well is education helping accomplish goals**

	YC % ○	Bench. % ■	Diff.	<i>n</i>	
<b>Purpose of taking courses at YC</b>					
Prepare for a four-year degree	64	48	<b>+16</b>	332	
Increase job and career opportunities	31	42	<b>-11</b>	160	
Self-improvement	6	10	<b>-4</b>	29	
<b>How well is education at YC ...</b>					
Prepare for a four-year degree	52	47	+5	331	
Increase job and career opportunities	50	46	+4	159	
Self-improvement	66	48	+18	29	

**Notes**

Top panel row percentage is the proportion of students choosing one of the three educational goals. Bottom panel row percentage is the proportion of students choosing *very well* in response to the preparation question for that goal. Bold indicates a statistically significant difference from the benchmark sample (two-sample test of proportions,  $p < .05$ ). *n* in table row is the total number of students responding to the question; i.e., the denominator for the row percentage. Difference bars in the top panel of the table are in black, to reflect that schools may score high or low on these measures, depending on their institutional mission. In the bottom panel, green indicates that YC has a higher proportion of students reporting that YC is helping them achieve their educational goal compared to the benchmark sample; red indicates a lower proportion.



# RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

05

**Table 5.1 Gender identity**

	%	<i>n</i>
Female/Woman	77	385
Male/Man	20	98
Transgender Female/Transgender Woman	0	1
Transgender Male/Transgender Man	1	6
Another gender identity	1	7

**Table 5.2 Race/ethnicity**

	%	<i>n</i>
African American or Black	5	27
Asian American or Asian	25	122
Native American or Alaska Native	5	26
Hispanic or Latino	40	199
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	3	16
White	38	187

**Notes**

Percentages may not sum to 100 because students could choose more than one category.

**Table 5.3 Age**

	%	<i>n</i>
18 or younger	19	97
19-24	42	208
25-34	21	104
35-44	13	63
45-54	4	18
55 or older	2	8

**Table 5.4 Part-time/full-time status**

	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>
Part-time (less than 12 credit hours)	48	243
Full-time (12 or more credit hours)	52	262

**Table 5.5 Total credit hours earned at YC**

	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>
None	6	31
1-15 credits	26	133
16-29 credits	20	98
30-45 credits	14	68
46 or more credits	34	172