

**Northwestern Michigan College
Community Attitude and Awareness Study
Conducted November 15-17, 29, 2004
Mitchell Research and Communications, Inc.
(N=400)
Margin of Error $\pm 5\%$**

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INTRODUCTION

Mitchell Research & Communications, Inc. conducted a survey of 400 residents located within the service area of Northwestern Community College. The survey was conducted November 15-17, 2004 and has a margin of error of $\pm 5\%$ at the 95% level of confidence.

The primary purpose of the survey was to provide foundational research on which a communication plan could be designed for the school (attitude and awareness). The secondary purpose was to identify and rate qualities and characteristics of NMC and to determine any unmet needs in the community either academic or non-academic.

NAME IDENTIFICATION OF NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE

A. Campus Visits

Eighty three percent of all respondents have had some sort of contact with NMC by attending an event, visiting the campus or taking classes. Twenty percent (17% of all respondents) of respondents who have attended an event or visited the campus state that the most recent event they attended was the barbeque, confirming the fact that this event works well for the college to draw people to the campus (people who might not otherwise visit). Every effort should be made to continue this event and, perhaps, use this event to promote other events and activities that are available to the community.

Twenty-eight percent (23% of all respondents) of respondents who have visited state that the last event they attended was cultural/historical, related to performing arts or related to the museum. Clearly exhibits and performances draw a sizeable number of people to the campus.

Twenty-seven percent (22% of all respondents) state that their most recent campus visit was academic related, either by attending class, orientation or a training session or conference.

Four percent (3% of all respondents) visited the campus for ceremonial purposes such as a graduation or building opening.

Have you ever attended an event or visited NMC?

Yes	83%
No	17
DK/Refused	<1

What was the most recent event you attended at NMC?

Barbeque	20%	Public Meeting	1
Class	15	Training Session	1
Museum/Exhibit	12	Ceremony	<1
Concert/Choir/Musical Event	7	Field Trip	<1
Seminar/Conference	6	Academic Event or Activity	<1
Art Display/Exhibit/Craft Show	6	Conference	<1
Open House/Campus Day	3	Cultural Event	<1
Graduation	3	Mentoring Program	<1
Banquet/Dinner Event/Benefit	3	Building Opening	<1
Theatre Production/Play	2	Other	2
Sporting Event/Sports Activity	2	DK/Refused	12
Orientation/Registration	1		

B. Favorability of NMC

Do you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable impression of Northwestern Michigan College ... ?

Very Favorable	53%	
Somewhat Favorable	35	88%
Somewhat Unfavorable	3	5%
Very Unfavorable	2	
Aware/No Impression	5	
Not Aware	2	

1. Overall

The overall impression of Northwestern Michigan College is very positive with 88% of all respondents surveyed stating that they have a very favorable (53%) or somewhat favorable (35%) impression of the school. Only 5% of all respondents surveyed state that they have a somewhat unfavorable (3%) or very unfavorable (2%) impression of NMC. Of respondents living in Grand Traverse County, 91% have a very favorable (61%) or somewhat favorable (30%) impression of NMC while only 7% say they have a somewhat unfavorable (4%) or very unfavorable (3%) impression of the school. The percentage of those saying they have a favorable impression slightly was lower than the percentages from a survey conducted by Wirthlin Worldwide July 21-22, 1999 in which 96% of Grand Traverse respondents stated they had a favorable impression of NMC while only 2% stated that they had an unfavorable impression.

Grand Traverse County Only

	Total Aware	Total Favorable	Total Unfavorable
MRC Survey, 2004 (N=158)	100%	91%	7%
Wirthlin Survey, 1999 (N=400)	98%	96%	2%

2. Area

In Wexford County, the number of respondents who have a positive impression of the school is lower than the overall total. Seventy-eight percent (compared to 88% overall) have a very favorable (40%) or somewhat favorable (38%) impression of NMC. However, only 6% have a somewhat unfavorable (2%) or very unfavorable impression (4%) of the school. Eleven percent of all respondents who reside in Wexford County state that they are aware of the school but have no opinion of it (positive or negative). All other counties in the NMC service area have impressions consistent with the overall total impression.

3. Publicity

Among respondents who get most of their information about NMC from the *Traverse City Record Eagle* (1st mention), 88% of all respondents say they have a very favorable (43%) or somewhat favorable (45%) impression of NMC (2% unfavorable/7% ANI). Among respondents who get some of their information about NMC from the *Traverse City Record Eagle* (1st, 2nd or 3rd mention), 92% have a very favorable (57%) or somewhat favorable (35%) impression of NMC with 2% stating they have an unfavorable impression of NMC and 4% having no opinion, positive or negative. These results indicate that the recent publicity generated by the *Record Eagle* may have had some impact on the public's impression of NMC; however it seems to be minimal. Clearly, the strength of favorability among those who get most of their information from the *Record Eagle* is slightly lower, but overall favorability is consistent with respondents' ratings overall. The major area of deviation is the lower percentage of those saying they have a "very favorable" impression of NMC. It drops from 53% to 43% among TCRC first responders.

“Favorability” among those who get some or all of their information about NMC from the Traverse City Record Eagle:

	Overall	Record Eagle First Responders	Record Eagle Overall Responders
Very Favorable	53%	43%	57%
Somewhat Favorable	35	45	35
Overall Favorable	88%	88%	92%
Somewhat Unfavorable	3	2	2
Very Unfavorable	2	0	0
Overall Unfavorable	5%	2%	2%
ANI	5	7	4
Not Aware	2	3	2

4. Education

A respondent's education level impacts opinions of NMC. Those with the highest regard for NMC are those with the highest levels of education. Among those who have a graduate degree or higher degree, 95% say that they have a very favorable (70%) or somewhat favorable (25%) impression of NMC with only 2% saying they have an unfavorable impression of the school.

NMC scores lowest among high school graduates. Among high school graduates, 80% say they have a very favorable (41%) or somewhat favorable (39%) impression of NMC while 4% say they have a somewhat unfavorable (1%) or very unfavorable (3%) impression of NMC.

5. Income

The number of respondents who have a favorable impression increases with annual household incomes:

	Very Favorable	Somewhat Favorable	Overall Favorable	Somewhat Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable	Overall Unfavorable	ANI
Overall	53%	35%	88%	3%	2%	5%	5%
Under \$35,000	41%	42%	83%	4%	2%	6%	8%
\$35,000-\$45,000	53%	36%	89%	0%	2%	2%	7%
\$46,000-\$60,000	52%	38%	90%	3%	4%	7%	3%
Over \$60,000	61%	30%	91%	5%	0%	5%	2%

6. Gender

Both men and women were consistent in the number of respondents who have a favorable impression of NMC. However, favorable ratings by women were stronger than favorable ratings by men. Among women, 87% state that they have a very favorable (58%) or somewhat favorable (29%) impression of NMC (6% unfavorable/4% ANI). Ninety percent of men have a very favorable (49%) or somewhat favorable (41%) impression of NMC (3% unfavorable/5% ANI).

7. Likelihood of Furthering Education

Among respondents who say that they are very likely to further their education in some way, 96% have a very favorable (57%) or somewhat favorable (39%) impression of NMC (3% unfavorable). Ninety-three percent of respondents who say that they are somewhat likely to take classes at some point in the future have a very favorable (54%) or somewhat favorable (39%) impression of NMC (2% unfavorable/3% ANI). Clearly, respondents who are most likely to become future students at NMC like the school.

Among respondents who are not very likely to take classes, 88% have a very favorable (50%) or somewhat favorable impression (38%) of NMC (7% unfavorable/4% ANI). Among respondents who are not at all likely to take classes, 80% have a very favorable (53%) or somewhat favorable (27%) impression of NMC (7% unfavorable/9% ANI).

8. NMC Students

Among current* and former students, the groups with the most knowledge of the school, Northwestern Michigan College has very strong favorable ratings:

	Very Favorable	Somewhat Favorable	Overall Favorable	Somewhat Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable	Overall Unfavorable	ANI
Overall	53%	35%	88%	3%	2%	5%	5%
Current Students*	64%	36%	100%	0	0	0	0
Former Students	64%	30%	94%	4%	<1%	4%	<1
Non-Students	47%	38%	85%	2%	2%	4%	7%

*not a significant sub-sample, for directional purposes only.

9. Event Participants/Visitors

Among those who have participated in an event or have visited NMC, 91% have a very favorable (58%) or somewhat favorable (33%) impression of the school (5% unfavorable/4% ANI) while 79% of respondents who have not visited or attended an event have a very favorable (32%) or somewhat favorable (47%) impression of NMC (5% unfavorable/9%ANI).

C. Meeting Expectations

Ninety-four percent of all respondents say that NMC meets their expectations. Offering more programs or classes were the top mentioned items by those respondents who say that NMC does not meet their expectations.

In general, does Northwestern Michigan College meet your expectations?

	Original Results	Undecideds Removed
Yes	86%	94%
No	6	6
DK/Refused	8	--

COMPETITION

A. Four-Year Degree Competition

When asked, “Of all the choices that are available for an education beyond high school, which school would be your first choice to begin a four-year degree,” 32% say that NMC would be their choice followed distantly by the University of Michigan (10%), Michigan State (8%) and Ferris State University (5%). Other top-choice competitors for starting a four-year degree program include Central Michigan University (4%), Baker College (4%), Western Michigan University (3%), and Grand Valley State University (2%).

Among overall mentions (first and second choice combined), NMC was mentioned most often (20%) followed by Michigan State University (10%), University of Michigan (8%) and Ferris State University (5%).

First Choice/Second Choice by Total Mention

Northwestern Michigan Coll/UC	20%	Western Michigan University	3
Michigan State University	10	Ivy League School	2
University of Michigan	8	MTECH	1
Ferris State University	6	Other*	11
Central Michigan University	5	*includes schools with less than	1%
Baker College	3	mention	
Grand Valley State University	4	DK/Refused	27%

B. Workforce Training Competition

Forty percent of all respondents were unsure of which school they would choose for continuing professional education or workforce development training. This indicates, perhaps, an opportunity for NMC to increase its advantage in this area of education. NMC is the most often mentioned provider in this category with 28% of all mentions.

What provider would be your first choice for continuing professional education or workforce training?

Northwestern Michigan Coll/UC	28%	Ivy League School	1
Michigan State University	6	Western Michigan University	1
University of Michigan	5	Walden	<1
Ferris State University	3	University of Ohio	<1
Central Michigan University	3	Sioux College	<1
Baker College	3	Other	5
Grand Valley State University	2	DK/Refused	40%
MTECH	2		

C. Personal Interest Course Competition

Over half of all respondents (55%) say that NMC would be their school of choice for taking classes for personal interest. Baker College follows distantly with 4% of respondents mentioning the school.

Which would be your first choice to take classes for personal interest?

Northwestern Michigan Coll/UC	55%	Notre Dame University	<1
Baker College	4	Western Michigan University	<1
Michigan State University	3	MTECH	<1
University of Michigan	3	Ivy League School	<1
Ferris State University	2	Walden	<1
Grand Valley State University	1	North Central Community College	<1
Central Michigan University	1	Other	4
		DK/Refused	26

D. Competition for an Associate's Degree/Transferring Credits

Almost half (49%) of all respondents would select NMC as their choice of schools to seek an Associates Degree or for transferring credits toward a four year degree. The fact that the number of respondents who would select NMC for an Associates degree is slightly lower (49%) than those who would select NMC to take classes for personal

interest (55%) indicates a possible opportunity to increase NMC's profile as the school of choice for an Associates Degree and for transferring credits toward a four year degree.

Which would be your first choice for an Associate's degree or for transferring credits toward a four year degree?

Northwestern Michigan College	49%	MTECH	<1
Ferris State University	4	Spring Arbor College	<1
Michigan State University	3	Notre Dame University	<1
Baker College	3	Eastern Michigan University	<1
Grand Valley State University	2	Lansing Community College	<1
University of Michigan	2	Landin University	<1
Central Michigan University	2	Maury State	<1
Western Michigan University	1	Ivy League School	<1
Davenport University	<1	Other	5
Lake Superior State University	<1	DK/Refused	28

THE BRAND

After nine questions, respondents were informed the survey was being conducted for Northwestern Michigan College. They were then asked, "What words or phrases come to mind when you think of NMC?"

Based on the Aaker model for building strong brands, words or phrases that respondents use to describe NMC are placed into six categories:

Brand as Product (i.e., quality education, good school, convenient)	57%
Brand as Organization (i.e.; well run, mismanage funds, local)	10
Brand Personality (i.e.; friendly, liberal)	7
Brand Symbolism/Image (i.e.; trees)	7
Other	5
Did Not Answer/Don't Know	13

<u>Brand as Product (i.e., quality education, good school, convenient)</u>	<u>65%</u>
Positive	97% (56%)
Negative	3% (1%)

<u>Brand as Organization (i.e.; well run, mismanage funds)</u>	<u>10%</u>
Positive	94% (9%)
Negative	6% (<1%)

<u>Brand Personality (i.e.; friendly, liberal)</u>	<u>7%</u>
Positive	93% (6%)

Negative 7% (<1%)

Brand Symbolism/Image (i.e.; Traverse City, trees)	7%
Positive	98% (7%)
Negative	2% (<1%)
Other	5%
Did Not Answer/Don't Know	13%

Very few respondents made negative statements about NMC (2%) which is consistent with NMC's high favorability ratings. Clearly, most statements made (65%) were related to the brand of NMC as a product such as "local, convenient, great school, excellent."

More specifically, responses can be grouped into the following categories:

Good Place to Go/Good School	15%	Community College/College	2
Local	10	Friendly	2
Convenient	10	NMC	2
Location	5	Courses/Curriculum	2
Nice Campus	4	Education/School	2
Affordable	3	Personal Attention	1
High Standards/Competitive	3	Community/Community Service	1
Good Teachers/Staff	3	Unhelpful/Inadequate	1
Traverse City	3	Other (less than 5 mentions)	14
Small/Small Class Sizes	3	None/Nothing/Don't Know	12

SENDING AND RECEIVING THE MESSAGE

NMC's most powerful sounding board is itself. Publications, brochures, course schedules and other forms of mail that NMC sends to residents in the six county service area are mentioned most often by respondents as how they get most of their information about the college (13%) followed by self initiated contact with the school (5%) and the fact that people drive by and see the school (<1%).

The second most powerful messengers for the school are newspapers (13%); specifically, the *Traverse City Record Eagle* (8%). NMC must work very hard to maintain a strong working relationship with this newspaper in order to encourage positive messages from the publication. As was mentioned earlier, there is possible evidence that the negative information being printed in the TCRE is having some impact on the public's impression of the school. NMC needs to work to ensure that this slight impact does not turn into heavy impact.

Television and word of mouth were both mentioned by 8% of all respondents followed by radio (6%), the Internet (3%) and local high schools (2%). Based on the results of this question, NMC is having an impact through all obvious methods of communication.

Listed By Total Mention

NMC Publications/Brochures	13%	Total NMC (18%)
NMC Contact/Self/Affiliation	5	
Proximity/Drive By/See It	<1	
<hr/>		
Television	6	Total Television (8%)
9/10 CBS	1	
4/7 NBC	<1	
29/8 ABC	<1	
33 FOX	<1	
<hr/>		
Radio	3	Total Radio (6%)
WTCM AM 580/FM 103.5	1	
WKLT FM 97.5	<1	
WLDR FM 101.9	<1	
WKHQ FM 105.9	<1	
WCCW AM 1310/FM 107.5	<1	
<hr/>		
Newspaper	3	Total Newspapers (13%)
Traverse City Record Eagle	8	
Cadillac Evening News	1	
Petoskey News	<1	
Northern Express	<1	
<hr/>		
Internet/Website	3	
Word of Mouth	8	
High School/Other School	2	
Other	14	
DK/Refused	44	

Less than one percent of all respondents could correctly identify NMC’s slogan “Find it Here.” After respondents were informed of the slogan, they were, then, asked “what does that mean to you.” The strong positive response to this question indicates that the slogan, if used more often, or placed more prominently in NMC advertising might help build an even stronger connection between NMC and the community it serves.

Clearly, respondents are aware of the college and they have a strong favorable impression of the school. Placing more emphasis on this slogan can only benefit the school as a realistic choice for some students who may be looking elsewhere because they are not aware of the breadth and depth of programming and opportunities available at the school. The slogan causes respondents to think or realize that NMC is more than just a local community college.

Can you tell me what the NMC advertising slogan is?

Could Not Name Slogan	97%
Named Something Else	2
Find it Here	<1
Refused	<1

The current slogan for NMC is “Find it Here.” What does that slogan mean to you?

Grouped Responses	
Find Whatever You are Looking For	21%
Find Education Here	19
Find Any Course/Class/Program	10
Local/Local Opportunities	9
Have a Lot to Offer	7
Find Your Career/Future	5
Don't Have to Leave to Get a Degree	3
Opportunities	3
Find It Here	2
Get You to Go to Their School	2
Convenient	2
Wide Range of Services Available	1
Whatever Degree/Find It Here	1
Offers the Same as Everyone Else	1
Find Your Start	1
Creates and Unfavorable Illusion	1
Other (Less than 2 mentions)	4
DK/Nothing	8

IMPORTANCE VS. PERFORMANCE

Respondents were read a list of characteristics people consider when choosing where they would go to obtain a post high school education. For each element, respondents were asked to tell the interviewer if that would be very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important in their decision to continue their education with a particular provider. Respondents were, then, asked whether or not NMC does an excellent, good, fair or poor job with that element.

Each NMC element (graded as excellent, good, fair or poor) will be described using two sets of data; with undecided respondents and without undecided respondents. The first description (with undecided respondents) is to help determine community knowledge of each element. The second (undecided respondents removed) will provide actual performance ratings among knowledgeable respondents and will allow a better comparison from one element to another.

The second data set will also be used to extrapolate cross-tabulated data to highlight significant differences among demographic groups (as opposed to the first data set).

A. *Tuition, Fees*

As would be expected, 96% of all respondents say that tuition and fees would be very important (78%) or somewhat important (18%) in their decision to select a school.

<i>The importance of tuition and fees</i>	Very Important	78%	
	Somewhat Important	18	96%
	Not Very Important	4	4%
	Not at all Important	<1	
	DK/Refused	<1	

While most respondents agree that tuition and fees are at least somewhat important, there are varying degrees of importance for some demographic groups:

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Overall Importance
Overall	78%	18%	96%
High School Graduates	90%	9%	99%
Age 18-29	85%	14%	99%
Income \$35,000-\$45,000	85%	12%	97%
Graduate Degr. or Higher	69%	24%	93%
Income Over \$60,000	67%	26%	93%

Fifty-eight percent of all respondents believe the tuition and fees at NMC are excellent (19%) or good (39%) while only 16% say that they are fair (15%) or poor (<1%). Based on the fact that many colleges and universities in Michigan have proposed and implemented double- digit percentage increases in tuition consistently over the past few years, these numbers are very encouraging for NMC. More importantly tuition and fees at NMC appear to be in line with most resident’s expectations.

The results are even better when those who say that they do not know enough about the tuition and fees at NMC to answer the question are removed from consideration. When undecided respondents are removed from the study, 79% of knowledgeable respondents say that NMC’s tuition rates are excellent (26%) or good (53%) and 21% say that they are fair (20%) or poor (1%).

Do you think the tuition and fees at NMC, compared with other educational institutions, are excellent, good, fair or poor?

Original	Undecideds		Removed	
	Response			
Excellent	19%		26%	
Good	39	58%	53	79%
Fair	15	16%	20	21%
Poor	1		1	
DK/Refused	27		--	

The following demographic groups rated NMC tuition significantly higher/lower than respondents overall:

	Excellent	Good	Total
Overall	26%	53%	79%
Graduate/Doctorate Degree Respondents	38%	58%	89%
Tuition and Fees are “Somewhat Important”	32%	56%	88%
Incomes over \$60,000	31%	50%	81%
Incomes under \$35,000	21%	66%	87%
Incomes \$46,000-\$60,000	22%	50%	72%

B. Academic Reputation

Almost all respondents (96%) say that academic reputation would be very important (70%) or somewhat important (26%) in their decision to select an educational provider.

<i>The importance of academic reputation</i>			
Very Important	70%		
Somewhat Important	26	96%	
Not Very Important	2	4%	
Not at all Important	2		
DK/Refused	<1		

There are varying degrees of importance among some demographic groups:

	Very <u>Important</u>	Somewhat <u>Important</u>	Overall <u>Importance</u>
Overall	70%	26%	96%
Lived in Service Area 30+ Years	78%	18%	96%
Grad/Doctorate Degree Respondnts	76%	22%	98%
Women	75%	22%	97%
Age 18-29	56%	37%	93%

Far fewer respondents were “undecided” when asked about NMC’s reputation. This information indicates that respondents might not know a lot about NMC in general but the perception is that the school can provide a quality education. Eighty percent of all respondents state that they think the academic reputation at NMC is excellent (29%) or good (60%) while only 12% think it is fair (11%) or poor (1%).

Do you think the academic reputation at NMC is excellent, good, fair or poor?

	Original <u>Response</u>	Undecideds <u>Removed</u>
Excellent	26%	29%
Good	54 80%	60 89%
Fair	10 11%	11 12%
Poor	1	1
DK/Refused	10	--

Some demographic groups rated NMC’s academic reputation significantly higher/lower than respondents overall. One group that might be of concern is respondents who are age 18-29. Seventy-one percent of these respondents say that NMC’s academic reputation is excellent (18%) or good (53%) which is a strong number. However, compared with the overall percentages, it is a significantly lower rating.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Total</u>
Overall	29%	60%	89%
Lived in Service Area 30+ Years	39%	57%	96%
Academic Reputation is “Very Important”	35%	57%	92%
Income \$35,000-\$45,000	35%	47%	82%
Woman	34%	56%	90%
Income Over \$60,000	23%	67%	90%
Men	23%	63%	86%
Age 18-29	18%	53%	71%
Lived in Service Area Less Than 10 Years	17%	67%	84%
Academic Reputation is “Somewhat Important”	14%	71%	85%

C. Financial Aid

Eighty-eight percent of all respondents say that the availability of financial aid would be very important (68%) or somewhat important (20%) in their decision to select and educational provider beyond high school.

The importance of the availability of financial aid

Very Important	68%	
Somewhat Important	20	88%
Not Very Important	4	5%
Not at all Important	1	
DK/Refused	6	

Several demographic groups rate the overall importance and/or the level of importance higher/lower than the overall total.

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Overall Importance
Overall	68%	20%	88%
High School Graduates	83%	10%	93%
Age 18-29	81%	8%	89%
Incomes \$35,000-\$45,000	76%	14%	90%
Lived in Area 30+ Years	75%	12%	87%
Women	75%	14%	89%
Age 40-49	73%	19%	92%
Incomes \$46,000-\$60,000	62%	24%	86%
Incomes Over \$60,000	62%	25%	87%
Age 50+	61%	24%	85%
Lived in Area Less Than 10 Years	61%	24%	85%
Men	60%	27%	87%
Grad/Doctorate Degree Respondnts	56%	30%	86%

Over half (52%) of all respondents had no knowledge about the financial aid programs available at Northwestern Michigan College. Among those who are aware, 78% state that the availability is excellent (28%) or good (50%).

How would you rate the availability of financial aid at Northwestern Michigan College: Excellent, good, fair or poor?

	Original Response	Undecideds Removed
Excellent	14%	28%
Good	24 38%	50% 78%
Fair	9 11%	19 22%
Poor	2	3
DK/Refused	52	--

Because there were a large number of respondents who chose not to respond to this question (stated that they did not know enough to rate financial aid), there are only a few demographic groups that could be analyzed. Below are those groups of individuals who scored NMC’s availability of financial aid higher or lower than the overall total (where there were a significant number of respondents in a category).

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Total</u>
Overall	28%	50%	78%
Former Students	33%	40%	73%
Not Likely to Further Education	22%	47%	69%
Incomes over \$60,000	22%	55%	77%
Financial Aid Availability is "Somewhat Important"	19%	54%	73%

D. Personalized Attention

Ninety-six percent of all respondents state that personalized attention would be very important (68%) or somewhat important (28%) in their consideration of an educational provider. The importance of personalized attention is consistent with elements such as tuition and fees and academic reputation.

<i>The importance of personalized attention</i>	Very Important	68%	
	Somewhat Important	28	96%
	Not Very Important	1	2%
	Not at all Important	1	
	DK/Refused	2	

Personalized attention varies in the strength of importance with different groups:

	<u>Very Important</u>	<u>Somewhat Important</u>	<u>Overall Importance</u>
Overall	68%	28%	96%
Age 40-49	77%	23%	100%
Lived in Service Area 30+ Years	75%	20%	95%
High School Graduates	74%	19%	93%
Women	73%	23%	96%
Incomes \$46,000-\$60,000	61%	35%	96%
Age 18-29	61%	33%	94%

Among those who were confident enough to grade NMC on personalized attention, the school gets very high marks. Eighty-three percent of all respondents say that NMC does an excellent (30%) or good (53%) job providing students with personalized attention.

Do you think NMC does an excellent, good, fair or poor job providing its students with personalized attention?

	<u>Original Response</u>	<u>Undecideds Removed</u>
Excellent	22%	30%
Good	38 60%	53 83%
Fair	11 13%	15 17%
Poor	2	2
DK/Refused	28	--

Some demographic groups vary in the strength of their positive ratings:

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Total</u>
Overall	30%	53%	83%
Incomes under \$35,000	38%	47%	85%
Age 30-39	37%	52%	89%
Not Likely to Further Education	24%	57%	81%
Age 50 and Over	22%	61%	83%
Lived in Service Area Less than 10 Years	22%	64%	86%

Campus Appearance

Eighty nine percent of all respondents state that campus appearance would be very important (35%) or somewhat important (54%) in their decision to attend a school.

<i>The importance of campus appearance</i>	Very Important	35%	
	Somewhat Important	54	89%
	Not Very Important	9	10%
	Not at all Important	1	
	DK/Refused		1

The strength of importance varies among some groups:

	<u>Very Important</u>	<u>Somewhat Important</u>	<u>Overall Importance</u>
Overall	35%	54%	89%
High School Graduates	49%	46%	95%
Age 18-29	46%	42%	88%
Incomes Under \$35,000	41%	49%	90%
College Graduates	28%	60%	88%
Incomes \$46,000-\$60,000	27%	57%	84%

Most respondents are familiar with the campus at Northwestern Michigan College and respondents rated NMC's campus appearance very high. Ninety-seven percent of all respondents rate NMC's campus as excellent (43%) or good (54%).

How would you rate the overall appearance of NMC's campus: Excellent, good, fair or poor?

	<u>Original Response</u>	<u>Undecideds Removed</u>
Excellent	40%	43%
Good	50 90%	54 97%
Fair	4 4%	4 4%
Poor	0	0
DK/Refused	7	--

There were some variations in the strength of the positive ratings, however, there were no total positive ratings below 94% indicating the campus at NMC is highly regarded by the surrounding regional community.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Total</u>
Overall	43%	54%	97%
Incomes \$35,000-\$45,000	58%	36%	94%
Campus Appearance is "Very Important"	55%	42%	97%
Women	49%	47%	96%
Campus Appearance is "Somewhat Important"	38%	58%	96%
Age 40-49	37%	59%	96%
Incomes Over \$60,000	37%	58%	95%
Men	36%	60%	96%

F. Small Class Sizes

Consistent with many other elements, small class sizes is an important attribute residents in NMC's service area would look for in an educational provider. Ninety four percent of all respondents to this survey state that small class sizes would be very important (58%) or somewhat important (36%) when considering a school for furthering their education.

The importance of small class sizes

Very Important	58%	
Somewhat Important	36	94%
Not Very Important	3	5%
Not at all Important	2	
DK/Refused	1	

As has been the case with every element tested, overall importance has been consistent among demographic groups however the strength of importance varies among some demographic groups:

	<u>Very Important</u>	<u>Somewhat Important</u>	<u>Overall Importance</u>
Overall	58%	36%	94%
Lived in Service Area 11-20 Years	65%	31%	96%
Lived in Service Area Over 30 Years	64%	31%	95%
Age 40-49	64%	31%	95%
Respondents with Some College	63%	34%	97%
Lived in Service area 21-30 Years	48%	45%	93%
Age 18-29	46%	44%	90%

Over one third (37%) of all respondents say that they are unaware of the class structure at NMC by answering "don't know" when asked if NMC does an excellent, good, fair or poor job keeping class sizes small. Among those who answered with a rating, nine in

10 (90%) state that NMC does an excellent (37%) or good (53%) job and only 10% said they do a fair job.

Do you think that NMC does an excellent, good, fair or poor job keeping class sizes small?

	Original Response	Undecideds Removed	
Excellent	23%	37%	
Good	33	53	90%
Fair	6	10	10%
Poor	<1	<1	
DK/Refused	37	--	

	Excellent	Good	Total
Overall	37%	53%	90%
Lived in Service Area 11-20 Years	44%	44%	88%
Graduate/Doctorate Degree Respondents	44%	53%	97%
Income \$35,000-\$45,000	43%	43%	86%
Age 50 and Over	31%	57%	88%
Lived in Service Area 21-30 Years	29%	62%	91%

G. Size of Institution

While the size of an institution scored well among respondents (62% state that it would be very important, 19% or somewhat important, 43% in their decision), it scored well below all other elements tested in this survey. Compared with other items, size of institution does not have the impact that other elements have in resident's decision making process. Respondents are evenly split on whether they would prefer a small (44%) or medium sized (45%) institution with only 6% stating they would rather attend a large university.

The importance of the size of the institution

Very Important	19%	
Somewhat Important	43	62%
Not Very Important	28	37%
Not at all Important	9	
DK/Refused	<1	

Would you prefer to attend a small, midsize or large institution?

Small	44%
Midsize	45
Large	6
DK/Refused	6

The level of importance varies among very few demographic groups, the fewest demographic groups of all elements tested:

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Total Importance
Overall	19%	43%	62%
Prefer Small Institution	25%	40%	65%
High School Graduates	25%	44%	69%
Prefer Mid-Size Institution	14%	51%	65%

Whether or not the size of an institution is important or not, 88% of all respondents rate the size of Northwestern Michigan College as excellent (26%) or good (62%) with only 12% saying fair (11%) or poor (1%).

How would you rate the size of Northwestern Michigan College: Excellent, good, fair or poor?

	Original Response	Undecideds Removed
Excellent	24%	26%
Good	58 82%	62 88%
Fair	10 11%	11 12%
Poor	<1	1
DK/Refused	7	--

Significant demographic differences are as follows:

	Excellent	Good	Total
Overall	26%	62%	88%
Size of Institution is "Very Important"	39%	49%	88%
Prefer "Small" Institution	33%	61%	94%
Incomes \$46,000-\$60,000	33%	59%	92%
Women	32%	61%	93%
Residents with Some College Education	31%	60%	91%
High School Graduates	21%	65%	86%
Men	20%	64%	84%
Size of Institution is "Not Very Important"	16%	74%	90%

Recommendation of Family and Friends

Eighty-three percent of all respondents state that the recommendation of family and friends would be very (42%) or somewhat (41%) important to them in their decision to select an educational provider. Seventeen percent state that it would not be very important (12%) or not at all important (5%).

The importance of the recommendations of family or friends

Very Important	42%	
Somewhat Important	41	83%
Not Very Important	12	17%
Not at all Important	5	
DK/Refused	1	

Demographic variances:

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Total Importance
Overall	42%	41%	83%
High School Graduates	51%	38%	89%
Age 30-39	49%	33%	82%
Age 18-29	35%	40%	75%
Grad/Doctorate Degree Respondents	35%	47%	82%

Respondents (who answered) perceive that 89% of their family members or friends would rate Northwestern Michigan College as excellent (30%) or good (59%) overall while just over one in 10 (12%) would rate NMC as fair (11%) or poor (1%).

Based on the opinions of your family and friends, how would they rate Northwestern Michigan College overall: Excellent, good, fair or poor?

	Original Response	Undecideds Removed
Excellent	26%	30%
Good	51 77%	59 89%
Fair	10 11%	11 12%
Poor	1	1
DK/Refused	12	--

Demographic groups varied widely:

	Excellent	Good	Total
Overall	30%	59%	89%
Recommendation is "Very Important"	43%	51%	94%
Incomes \$45,000-\$60,000	38%	53%	91%
Lived in Service Area 30+ Years	36%	56%	92%
Graduate/Doctorate Degree Respondents	36%	56%	92%
Incomes \$35,000-\$45,000	36%	52%	88%
Women	35%	55%	90%
Incomes Over \$60,000	24%	68%	92%
Men	24%	62%	86%
Lived in Service Area Less than 10 Years	22%	63%	85%
Recommendation is "Somewhat Important"	17%	72%	89%

I. Summary of Importance versus Performance

The following elements are listed in order from highest rate (level of importance) to lowest. The second number indicates its rank (excellent/good vs. fair/poor) against the other elements tested.

	Ranks	
	<u>Importance</u>	<u>Performance</u>
Tuition and Fees	1	7
Academic Reputation	2	4
Personalized Attention	3	6
Small Class Sizes	4	2
Campus Appearance	5	1
Financial Aid Availability	6	8
Recommendations	7	3
Institution Size	8	5

The highest ranked priority (tuition and fees) is rated seven of eight elements tested. This indicates a clear opportunity for NMC to tout its reasonable tuition and fees. NMC's top four competitors in all areas (four year degree, workforce development, personal interest and Associate's degree/transfer credits) are four year, state-run universities. These universities cannot compete with the tuition and fees at Northwestern Michigan College and this school needs to emphasize that at every opportunity.

Academic reputation is ranked second in terms of importance when choosing a school and it is ranked fourth (at 89%). It is important to mention that the difference between the top five rated items with the exception of campus appearance is 2 points.

Personalized attention is ranked third and rated sixth (at 83%). Small class size is ranked fourth and rated second. This presents an opportunity to help the public link small class size and personalized attention as one combined element. As receivers make the connection between the two, the rating for personalized attention should increase.

Campus appearance is ranked fifth but rated number one by a sizeable margin. Clearly, NMC has a beautiful campus and most community residents know about it so it can only help the college improve its image. However, because other elements are more important to residents, NMC should emphasize those other, higher-ranking elements to bring in students and use the campus attractiveness to encourage increased community visits.

Availability of financial aid is ranked sixth and rated last of all elements tested. This could present an opportunity to inform residents about the financial aid available (or the ease of applying for financial aid).

The recommendation of family and friends is ranked seventh of eight items tested. In this case, the responses may not be reflective of true sentiment. Eight

percent of all respondents state that they get most of their information about NMC based on “word of mouth.” Many people do not realize the amount of weight they put on recommendations. Family and friends, co-workers and neighbors are all good sources communicating a message, as long as the message is shaped by NMC.

Institution size is ranked last and rated fifth. Residents are satisfied with NMC's size but it is not an important element when compared with the others tested.

Importance

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Total Important	Not Important	DNA
Tuition and Fees	78%	18%	96%	4%	<1%
Academic Reputation	70%	26%	96%	4%	<1%
Personalized Attention	68%	28%	96%	2%	2%
Small Class Sizes	58%	36%	94%	5%	1%
Campus Appearance	35%	54%	89%	10%	1%
Financial Aid Availability	68%	20%	88%	5%	6%
Recommendations	42%	41%	83%	17%	1%
Institution Size	19%	43%	62%	37%	<1%

Performance

	Excellent	Good	Total	Fair/Poor
Campus Appearance	43%	54%	97%	4%
Small Class Sizes	37%	53%	90%	10%
Recommendations	30%	59%	89%	12%
Academic Reputation	29%	60%	89%	12%
Institution Size	26%	62%	88%	12%
Personalized Attention	30%	53%	83%	17%
Tuition and Fees	26%	53%	79%	21%
Financial Aid Availability	28%	50%	78%	22%

The chart below lists the elements tested in order of importance. A positive performance gap, in this case means that NMC is exceeding resident expectations in relation to importance. It is important to note that all elements have a mean score between good and excellent.

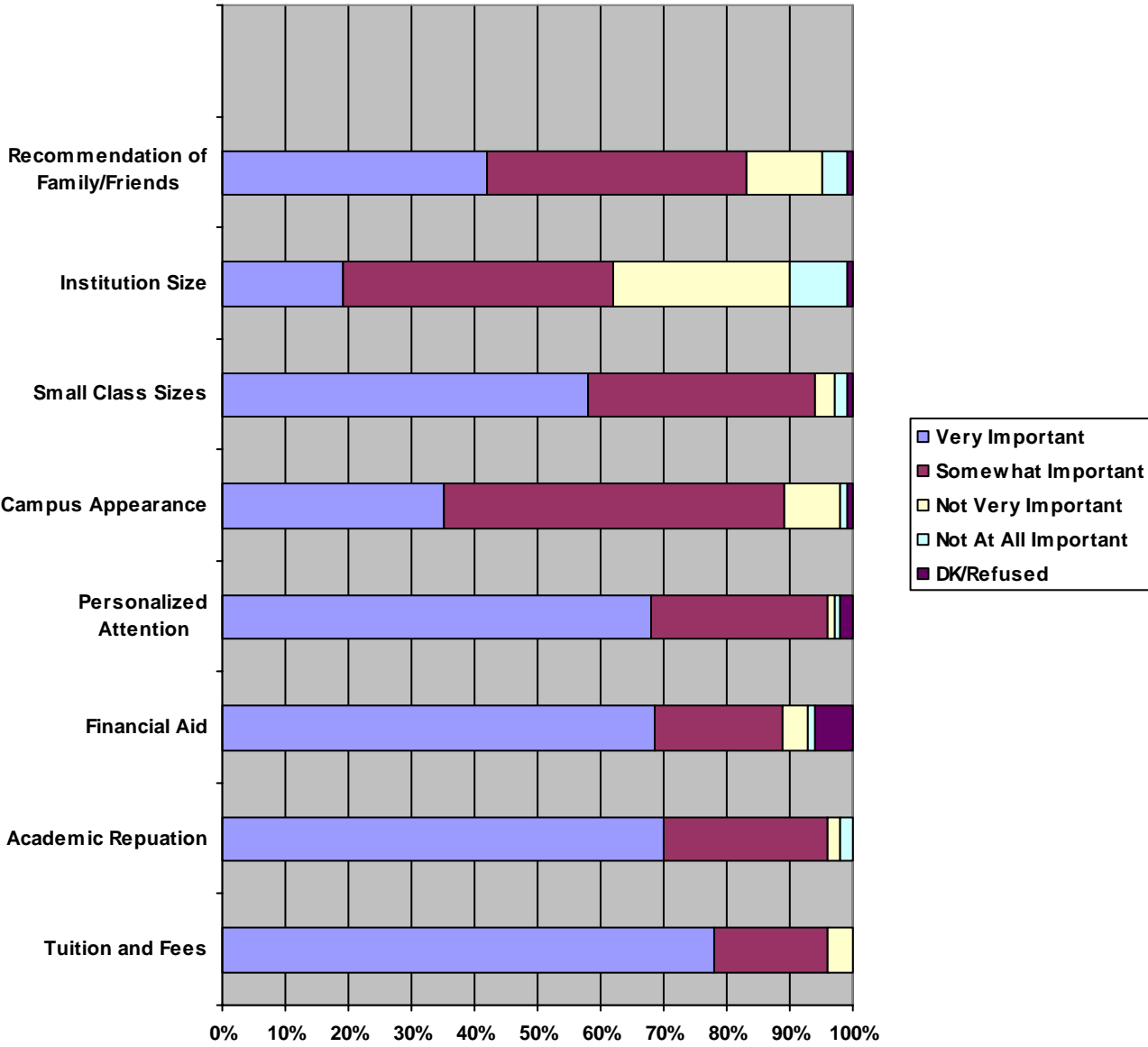
Performance Gap Chart

- 1=Very Important
- 2=Somewhat Important
- 3=Not Very Important
- 4=Not at all Important

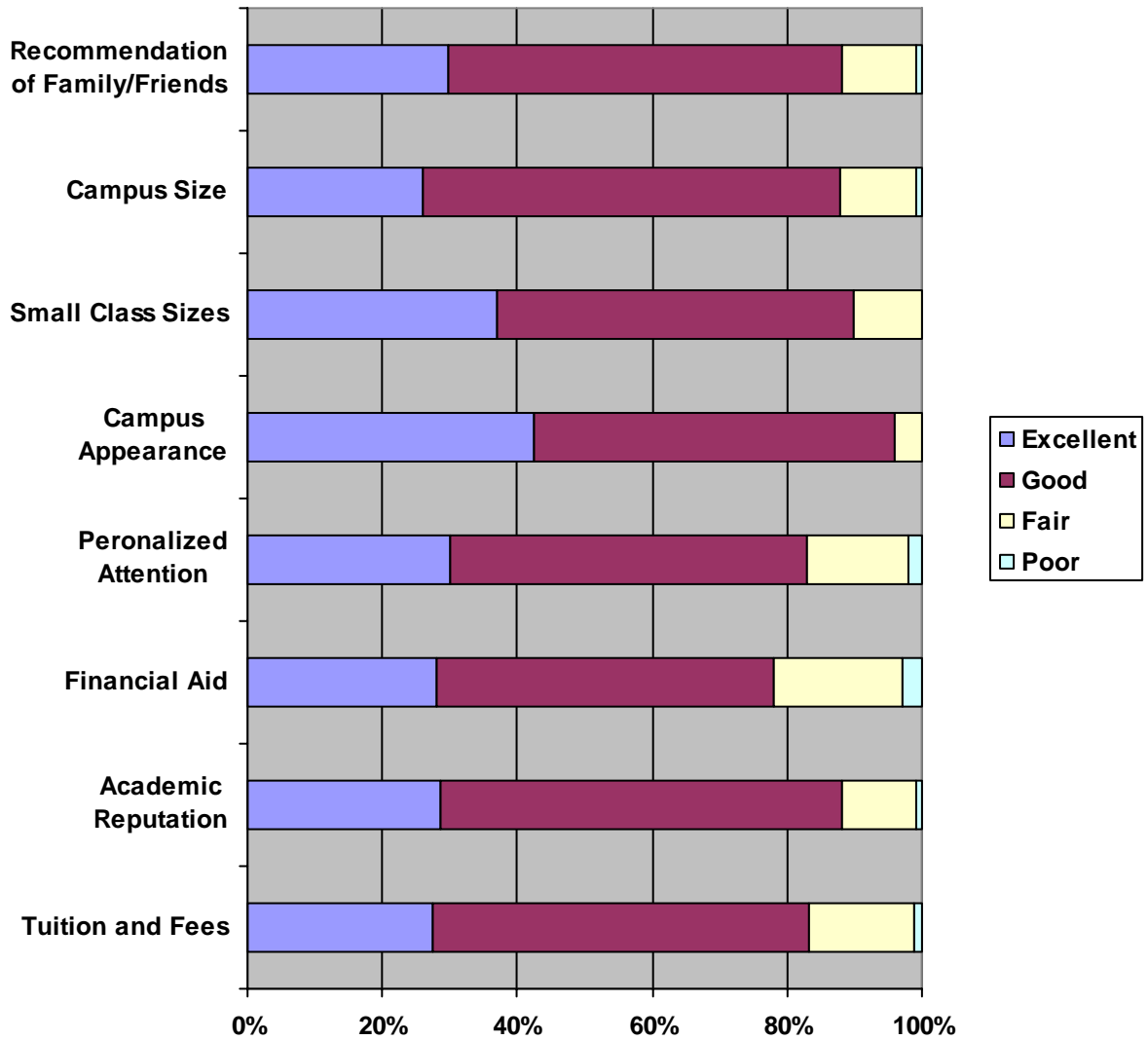
- 1=Excellent
- 2=Good
- 3=Fair
- 4=Poor

	Importance Mean	Ratings Mean	Performance Gap
Tuition and Fees	1.26	1.97	-0.71
Academic Reputation	1.36	1.84	-0.48
Personalized Attention	1.34	1.89	-0.55
Small Class Sizes	1.49	1.74	-0.25
Campus Appearance	1.76	1.62	+0.14
Financial Aid Availability	1.35	1.97	-0.62
Recommendations of Family and Friends	1.79	1.76	+0.03
Size of Institution	2.27	1.86	+0.41

Importance



Performance



Respondents were also asked about the importance of programmatic offerings available at the college. These are not comparable to the elements tested earlier as they were presented using a different method.

J. Preparing Students to Transfer

Ninety-eight percent of all respondents state that it is very (90%) or somewhat (8%) important that NMC prepare students to transfer to a four year university.

How important is it that NMC provide courses that prepare students to transfer to a four year college or university? (read choices)

Very important	90%	
Somewhat Important	8	98%
Not very important	0	0%
Not at all important	0	
DK/Refused	2	

Eighty-seven percent of all respondents believe that NMC does an excellent (38%) or good (49%) job of preparing students to transfer to a four-year college or university.

Do you think that NMC does an excellent, good, fair or poor job preparing students to transfer to a four year college or university?

	Original Response	Undecideds Removed
Excellent	29%	38%
Good	38 67%	49 87%
Fair	9 10%	12 14%
Poor	1	2
DK/Refused	23	--

Demographic differences are as follows:

	Excellent	Good	Total
Overall	38%	49%	87%
Lived in Service Area 30+ Years	46%	46%	92%
Respondents with Some College Education	32%	52%	84%
Age 18-29	31%	49%	80%
Lived in Service Area Less Than 10 Years	22%	63%	85%
Graduate/Doctorate Degree Respondents	43%	43%	86%
Incomes \$35,000-\$45,000	43%	43%	86%

K. Providing Vocational/Technical Education

As is similar to the importance of preparing students to transfer, 97% of all respondents believe that it is very important (78%) or somewhat important (19%) to provide instruction in vocational, technical and career fields.

How important is it that Northwestern Michigan College provides instruction in vocational, technical and career fields? (read choices)

Very important	78%	
Somewhat Important	19	97%
Not very important	<1	1%
Not at all important	<1	
DK/Refused	2	

Eighty-nine percent of respondents who answered this question say that NMC does an excellent (36%) or good (53%) job of preparing student with instruction in vocational, technical and career fields. Eleven percent say that they do a fair (10%) or poor (1%) job.

Do you think that NMC does an excellent, good, fair or poor job providing instruction in vocational, technical and career fields?

	Original Response	Undecideds Removed
Excellent	28%	36%
Good	41 69%	53 89%
Fair	8 8%	10 11%
Poor	<1	1
DK/Refused	23	--

	Excellent	Good	Total
Overall	36%	53%	89%
Incomes \$35,000-\$45,000	57%	30%	87%
Incomes Under \$35,000	50%	41%	91%
Age 30-39	48%	42%	90%
High School Graduates	42%	46%	88%
Age 18-29	30%	57%	87%
College Graduates	30%	57%	87%
Incomes Over \$60,000	28%	61%	89%
Incomes \$46,000-\$60,000		26%	61%
87%			

Providing Personal Interest Courses

Eighty-percent of all respondents say that it is very important (50%) or somewhat important (39%) that NMC provide classes for personal interest while 9% do not think that this is important.

How important is it that Northwestern Michigan College offer classes for personal interest such as fitness classes, arts & crafts and computer workshops? (read choices)

Very important	50%	
Somewhat Important	39	89%
Not very important	7	9%
Not at all important	2	
DK/Refused	2	

Eighty-two percent of respondents who answered this question say that NMC does an excellent (27%) or good (55%) job in terms of their selection of classes offered for personal interest.

Do you think that NMC does an excellent, good, fair or poor job in terms of the selection of classes offered for personal interest?

	Original Response	Undecideds Removed
Excellent	19%	27%
Good	39 58%	55 82%
Fair	13 13%	18% 19%
Poor	<1	<1
DK/Refused	28	--

Demographic differences are as follows:

	Excellent	Good	Total
Overall	27%	55%	82%
Personal Interest Classes are "Very Important"	38%	49%	87%
Lived in Service Area 10-20 Years	36%	45%	81%
Incomes \$35,000-\$45,000	36%	47%	83%
Age 18-29	21%	62%	83%
Lived in Service Area Less than 10 Years	20%	51%	71%
Personal Interest Classes "Somewhat Import." 16%		62%	78%

Training for Local Employment

Ninety-six percent of all respondents say that providing programs for local employment is very (69%) or somewhat (27%) important for NMC and 82% of respondents who answered say that NMC does an excellent (22%) or good (60%) job with this programming (18% say fair 16%, or poor, 2%).

How important is it that NMC provide programs to train employees in local businesses and organizations? (read choices)

Very important	69%	
Somewhat Import.	27	96%
Not very important	2	3%
Not at all important	<1	
DK/Refused	3	

Do you think that NMC does an excellent, good, fair or poor job training employees for jobs in local businesses and organizations?

	Original Response		Undecideds Removed	
Excellent	15%		22%	
Good	40	55%	60	82%
Fair	10	11%	16	18%
Poor	1		2	
DK/Refused	34		--	

Summary of Programmatic Preferences

Clearly, each type of educational program is important to the school. Residents see NMC as primarily a preparatory educational institution for pursuing a four-year degree. They also recognize that there is importance in offering vocational education in technical and career fields and programs for direct hire into local companies.

Culinary programs and computer/technology classes were most often requested for additional programs. Computer classes, art classes (both participating and appreciating) and fitness classes are the most often mentioned personal interest requests.

There is a slight dip in the ratings (excellent, good, fair, poor) for personal interest courses and training for local employment. This could be due to lack of knowledge or interest in these programs.

Importance

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Total Important	Not Important	DNA
Prep Students to Transfer	90%	8%	98%	0%	2%
Provide Voc Education	78%	19%	97%	1%	2%
Train for Local Employment	69%	27%	96%	2%	2%
Personal Interest Classes	50%	39%	89%	9%	2%

Performance

	Excellent	Good	Total Positive	Fair	Poor
Prepare Stud to Transfer	38%	49%	87%	12%	2%
Provide Voc Education	36%	53%	89%	10%	1%
Personal Interest Classes	27%	55%	82%	18%	<1%
Train for Local Employment	22%	60%	82%	16%	2%

The chart below lists the elements tested in order of importance. A positive performance gap, in this case means that NMC is exceeding resident expectations in relation to importance. It is important to note, again, that all elements have a mean score between good and excellent.

Performance Gap Chart

1=Very Important
 2=Somewhat Important
 3=Not Very Important
 4=Not at all Important

1=Excellent
 2=Good
 3=Fair
 4=Poor

	Importance Mean	Ratings Mean	Performance Gap
Provide Courses that Prepare Students to Transfer	1.08	1.77	-0.69
Provide Instruction in Vocational, Technical, and Career Fields	1.22	1.75	-0.53
Offer Personal Interest Classes	1.60	1.92	-0.32
Train Employees for Jobs in Local/Regional Area	1.31	1.98	-0.67

Awareness of Additional Opportunities

Only 60% of all respondents are aware that NMC offers four-year degree programs through the University Center. This is one of the few areas where a knowledge gap exists.

Are four-year degree programs available through NMC?

Yes	60%
No	10
DK/Refused	30

COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS BEYOND EDUCATION

Respondents were read a list of statements and asked if they strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each statement. Again, there are two sets of data, a set to determine the number of undecided respondents and a set to allow for a comparison of actual agreement/disagreement. Statements are listed here in the order of highest agreement to lowest agreement.

There were no items tested that scored below 91% in respondent agreement which, indicates the NMC has an excellent community outreach program in place and does a great job implementing it consistently.

A. Good Reputation

Ninety-nine percent of all respondents strongly (57%) or somewhat (42%) agree that NMC has a good reputation in the community. There is little room for improvement in this area. NMC should continue its current method of outreach and service.

NMC has a good reputation in the community.

	Original Response	Undecideds Removed
Strongly Agree	56%	57%
Agree	41 97%	42 99%
Disagree	1 1%	1 1%
Strongly Disagree	0	0
DK/Refused	2	--

B. Asset to the Regional Economy

Just as residents in the community recognize that NMC has a great reputation, they also concede that NMC is a valuable asset to the regional economy. Ninety-seven percent of all respondents who answered this question strongly (61%) or somewhat (36%) agree with this statement.

NMC is a valuable asset to the regional economy.

	Original Response		Undecideds Removed	
Strongly Agree	59%		61%	
Agree	35	94%	36	97%
Disagree	2	3%	2	3%
Strongly Disagree	<1		<1	
DK/Refused	3		--	

C. Responsive to Community Needs

Again, residents are sending a message with these responses. Overwhelmingly, the community agrees that NMC is responsive when they are in need of assistance. Ninety-seven percent of all respondents to this survey strongly (32%) or somewhat (65%) agree with this statement.

NMC is responsive to the needs of the community.

	Original Response		Undecideds Removed	
Strongly Agree	29%		32%	
Agree	58	87%	65	97%
Disagree	3	7%	3	3%
Strongly Disagree	4		0	
DK/Refused	5		--	

D. Regional Education Leader

Ninety-five percent of all respondents strongly (43%) or somewhat agree (52%) that NMC is a regional leader in post-high school education.

NMC is a regional leader in post-high school education.

	Original Response		Undecideds Removed	
Strongly Agree	38%		43%	
Agree	45	83%	52	95%
Disagree	4	16%	5	5%
Strongly Disagree	12		0	
DK/Refused	12		--	

E. Open to the Public

Ninety-four percent of all respondents strongly (37%) or somewhat agree (57%) that NMC provides information openly to the public.

NMC provides information openly to the public.

	Original Response		Undecideds Removed	
Strongly Agree	32%		37%	
Agree	49	81%	57	94%
Disagree	4	5%	5	6%
Strongly Disagree	1		1	
DK/Refused	13		--	

F. Well-Managed Finances

Ninety two percent of all respondents strongly (21%) or somewhat agree (71%) with this statement. Among respondents who get their information about NMC from the Traverse City Record Eagle, 97% of respondents strongly (21%) or somewhat (76%) agree that NMC manages its finances properly (3% disagree). This would indicate the paper has not negatively impacted public opinion on this subject.

NMC manages its finances responsibly.

	Original Response		Undecideds Removed	
Strongly Agree	12%		21%	
Agree	41	53%	71	92%
Disagree	4	5%	7	8%
Strongly Disagree	<1		1	
DK/Refused	43			

G. Delivering Excellence

Ninety-one percent of all respondents strongly agree (19%) or somewhat agree (72%) that NMC delivers excellence in everything they do.

NMC delivers excellence in everything they do.

	Original Response		Undecideds Removed	
Strongly Agree	16%		19%	
Agree	59	75%	72	91%
Disagree	7	8%	8	9%
Strongly Disagree	1		1	
DK/Refused	17			

CULTURAL AWARENESS AND PARTICIPATION

Twenty-four percent of all respondents have visited the observatory and almost half (47%) have attended an event at the Dennis Museum Center within the last year. Whether or not respondents have participated in events or visited either cultural facility on NMC's campus, 92% of all respondents say that it is very (67%) or somewhat (25%) important that NMC provide them. Music concerts and art exhibits are the most often mentioned activities desired followed by performing arts programs and different (changing) cultural exhibits.

<i>Have you ever visited the observatory at NMC?</i>	Yes	24%
	No	75
	DK/Refused	1

In the last year, have you attended any cultural events at the NMC Dennis Museum Center such as an art exhibit, concert or other performance?

Yes	47%
No	53
DK/Refused	0

How important is it that Northwestern Michigan College provide cultural events and activities? (read choices)

Very important	67%
Somewhat Import	25 92%
Not very important	6 7%
Not at all important	1
DK/Refused	2

What type of cultural event or activity would you most like to see at NMC?

Music/Concerts	25%	Local Artists/Celebrities/Stars	<1
Art Exhibits	14	Performances for Children	<1
Performing Arts	6	Astronomy/Events	<1
Different Cultural Exhibits	6	Glass Blowing/Canoe Making	<1
Theater/Plays	3	Ships	<1
Traveling Shows/Exhibits	3	Michigan Focus	<1
History/Historical Exhibits	3	Business Expo	<1
Guest Speakers	2	Sporting Events	<1
Science	<1	Political Events	<1
Variety	<1	Other	1
Religious Activities	<1	DK/Refused	33
Artifact Displays	<1		

INTERNET CLASSES

Twelve percent of all respondents have taken one or more classes over the Internet and of those who have not, over half (51%) would take them if they were taking college courses and they were offered online. Most respondents that have taken online courses took them through Northwestern Michigan College followed by Central Michigan, Ferris State, Baker and Davenport. Internet colleges like Phoenix have not yet taken hold in northern Michigan. Students are taking online classes as part of a local program.

Have you ever taken any online courses for college credit?

Yes	12%
No	88

Would you take college courses for credit if they were offered online?

Yes	51%
No	44
DK/Refused	5

From which school/schools have you taken online courses?

Northwestern Michigan College	25%
Central Michigan University	10
Ferris State University	8
Grand Valley State University	5
Baker College	5
Davenport	5
Lake Superior State University	3
Western Michigan University	3
Bay Mills Community College	3
Eastern Michigan University	3
Mary Grove College	3
Oak State College	3
North Dakota State	3
Colorado Tech	3
Colorado University	3
Walden	3
Michigan State University	3
Other	5
DK/Refused	5

Second Mention

Northwestern Michigan College	5
Ferris State University	3
DK/Refused	92

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

There is no question that the administrative leadership, faculty and support staff at Northwestern Community College plays many roles in this community. More importantly, they play those roles very well. Northwestern Michigan College scored well in every element tested in this survey:

- The school has an 88% favorable.
- Eighty-nine percent of qualified respondents say that NMC's academic reputation is excellent (29%) or good (60%).
- Eighty-three percent of qualified respondents say that NMC does an excellent (30%) or good (83%) job providing its students with personalized attention.
- Ninety-seven percent of qualified respondents rate the overall appearance of NMC's campus as excellent (43%) or good (54%).
- Ninety percent of qualified respondents say that NMC does an excellent (37%) or good (53%) job keeping class sizes small.
- Eighty-eight percent of qualified respondents rate the size of NMC's campus as excellent (26%) or good (62%).
- Eighty-nine percent of qualified respondents say that their family and friends would rate NMC (overall) as excellent (30%) or good (59%).
- Eighty-seven percent of qualified respondents say that NMC does an excellent (38%) or good (49%) job in preparing students to transfer to a four-year college or university.
- Eighty-nine percent of qualified respondents say that NMC does an excellent (36%) or good (53%) job providing instruction in vocational, technical and career fields.
- Eighty-two percent of qualified respondents say that NMC does an excellent (27%) or good (55%) in terms of its selection of personal interest courses.
- Eighty-two percent of qualified respondents say that NMC does an excellent (22%) or good (60%) job training employees for jobs in the local or regional area.
- Ninety-nine percent of respondents agree that NMC has a good reputation in the community.
- Ninety-seven percent of respondents agree that NMC is a valuable asset to the regional economy.
- Ninety-seven percent of respondents agree that NMC is responsive to the needs of the community.
- Ninety-five percent of respondents agree that NMC is a regional leader in post-high school education.

- Ninety-four percent of respondents agree that NMC provides information openly to the public.
- Ninety-two percent of respondents agree that NMC manages its finances responsibly.
- Ninety-one percent of respondents agree that NMC delivers excellence in everything they do.
- Ninety-four percent of qualified respondents say that NMC meets their expectations.

There are a number of potential opportunities that were discovered:

- Seventy-nine percent of qualified respondents say that NMC's tuition and fees are competitive with other schools. While these are very high percentages compared with other items tested, tuition and fees scored lower. One reason is likely due to the consistent publicity surrounding double digit percentage increases at schools across the state. Another reason may be that people in NMC's service area are unaware of how competitive their tuition and fees are. If the tuition and fees are, in fact, competitive or better than competitive, NMC needs to increase public awareness of this issue.
- Seventy-eight percent of qualified respondents say that the availability of financial aid at NMC is excellent (28%) or good (50%). Again, this is, likely, due to the fact that financial aid, on the whole, is becoming more difficult to qualify for and receive. If NMC has competitive programs, they need to raise awareness here as well.

There are three key motivators for students attending and potential students considering Northwestern Michigan College.

- It is a "good place to go,"
- It is "local,"
- It is "convenient."

Secondary motivators are the "nice" campus, affordability, and competitive standards.

NMC's slogan "Find it Here" resonates very well with respondents. However, no one knows what the slogan is. When asked, less than 1% could identify the slogan. Responses to this slogan were overwhelmingly positive which means that NMC should increase the use of this slogan and work very hard to tie the slogan to the school.

One area where northern Michigan is behind the curve in education is the prevalence of Internet college competition. It has not yet reached NMC and northern Michigan but it is difficult to tell when it will get there. NMC (as is indicated by the survey) needs to increase and publicize its online classes and programs especially since the area serviced by the school is so expansive. This would allow potential students who might not otherwise be able to pursue an education the opportunity to do so and it would also help to keep NMC remain the regional leader of post secondary education.

Because Northwestern Michigan College is considered a regional leader in post-high school education, it is difficult to imagine that NMC would have any real competition. In fact, there is no one school that NMC competes with for students. There are, however, a number of schools that share in competing with NMC all of which offer four-year degree programs and most of which are four-year universities. Among them are Michigan State University, University of Michigan, Davenport University, Baker College, Ferris State University, Central Michigan University, Western Michigan University and Grand Valley State University. NMC needs to develop and implement a plan to handle this type of competition.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

What is the likelihood, in the future, that you might decide to further your education in some way either by taking classes for personal interest or career advancement or to pursue a degree? Are you very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely or not at all likely?

	Very Likely	23%		go to 4
	Somewhat Likely	25	48%	go to 4
	Not Very Likely	20	45%	go to 4
	Not at all likely	25		go to 4
Volunteered	Current Student	7		goes to 3
	DK/Refused	<1		go to 4

At what school are you a student?

Northwestern Michigan College (NMC)	37%
Ferris State University	15
Grand Valley State University	7
Baker College	7
Central Michigan University	4
Western Michigan University	4
Spring Arbor College	4
Walden	4
Other	15
DK/Refused	3

Have you ever visited the NMC website?

Yes	38%
No	62
DK/Refused	<1

Were you able to find what you were looking for?

Yes	94%
No	3
DK/Refused	3

What was it that you were looking for?

Class/Type of Class/Certain Class	100%
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Are you a current or former student at NMC?

Current	4%
Former	34
No	62
DK/Refused	<1 go to 79

Asked of current and former students:

Are you/did you taking/take classes to... (Read choices)

Transfer to a 4-Year College or University

Yes	39%
No	61

Earn an Associates Degree

Yes	42%
No	58

Earn a Certificate

Yes	32%
No	68

Learn skills to advance in a job or get a new job

Yes	59%
No	41

Take courses for personal interest

Yes	52%
No	48

Undecided/Unsure

Yes	7%
No	93

Which of these is/was most important to you?

Associates Degree	19%
Certificate	9
Transfer to a 4-Year College	28
Personal Interest	9
Career Advancement/Job Skills Training	32
DK/Refused	3

What is your age?	18-24	7%
	25-29	7
	30-39	18
	40-49	29
	50-59	32
	60 and over	8
	DK/Refused	<1

How long have you lived in this area (Antrim, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Benzie, Wexford or Grand Traverse Counties)?

Less than 5 Years	10%
5-10 Years	18
11-20 Years	25
21-30 Years	21
Over 30 Years	27
DK/Refused	0

What is your racial or ethnic heritage?

Caucasian	95%
Native American	2
Arab American	<1
Hispanic	<1
Bi-racial	<1
Asian/Other	<1
DK/Refused	1

In school, what is the furthest you have gone...? (READ ALL BUT LAST)

Did not graduate high school	%
High school graduate	17
Some college	31
College graduate	27
Graduate degree	11
Post graduate degree	11
DK/Refused	<1

In which of the following categories does your household income fall, including Everyone In your household?

Under \$25,000	10%
\$25,000 to \$35,000	11
\$36,000 to \$45,000	15
\$46,000 to \$60,000	20
\$61,000 to \$75,000	10
\$76,000 to \$100,000	11
More than \$100,000	11
DK/Refused	13

Are you employed outside the home? Gender by observation.

	Male/Home	12%
	Male/Works	37
	Female/Home	16
	Female/Works	35
County	Grand Traverse	40%
	Wexford	14
	Antrim	13
	Leelanau	14
	Benzie	10
	Kalkaska	10

Notes

¹ Philip Kotler, *Kotler on Marketing*, New York: The Free Press: 1999

² David A. Aaker., *Building Strong Brands*, New York: The Free Press: 1996

³ Aaker, pp. 7-8

⁴ SRI Consulting Business Intelligence, <http://www.sric-bi.com/VALS/>