

STUDENT PREFERENCES & EXPERIENCES SURVEY

Fall 2026

Office of Institutional Research
Tarrant County College

CONTENTS

Section I: Survey Overview

Includes survey methodology, demographics, and Net Promoter Score.

Section II: Next Steps & Student Preparedness

Includes responses to questions regarding students' plans, or next steps, and feedback on how well TCC prepared them for their next steps, how well the college impacted their skills, and if they thought their educational experience at TCC was worth the time/financial investment.

Section III: Artificial Intelligence (AI) – Student Sentiment

Includes responses to questions meant to measure perceived usefulness of AI, current usage of AI tools, time spent verifying AI generated content, and how faculty discuss/ implement AI for coursework purposes.

Section IV: Student Feedback

Includes student feedback about challenges or barriers that impact their success as well as changes TCC could make to improve the student experience.

SECTION I: SURVEY OVERVIEW

Survey methodology, demographics, and Net Promoter Score for the Fall 2026 *Student Preferences and Experiences Survey* respondents are presented in this section.

Methodology

All 2026FL students (N~48,000) received the survey invitation by email. In addition, students received a series of text messages with the survey link, and a survey link was posted in Canvas. Lastly, the survey was promoted at various campus events and by faculty. About 3,000 (~6%) participated by answering at least one question.

- 25% responded through class/Faculty link
- 7% responded through poster/event QR code
- 27% responded through Canvas link
- 30% responded through text link
- 11% responded through email link

Since not all respondents answered every question, the analysis of each question is based on the total number of respondents who answered that question.

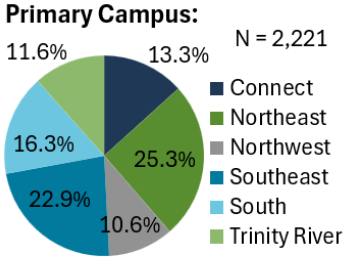
Respondent Demographics

About 44% of respondents reported being full-time and about 56% reported being part-time (N = 2,206). About 57% reported working (N = 2,215), and about 30% reported providing caregiving support (N = 2,198).

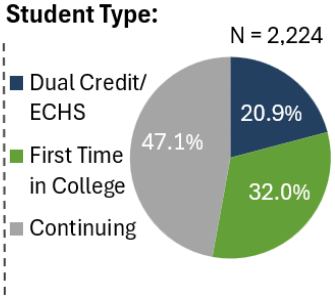
Demographics	N	%
I am not currently employed for pay.	953	43.0%
Part-time (working < 35 hours per week)	707	31.9%
Full-time (working 35+ hours per week)	555	25.1%
None/do not have dependents	1,548	70.4%
Occasional caregiving support	231	10.5%
Primary caregiver	419	19.1%

Based on primary campus, Northeast was the most frequently reported campus followed by Southeast. About one-fifth of respondents reported being dual enrolled, and about 32% reported being first time in college.

Primary Campus:



Student Type:

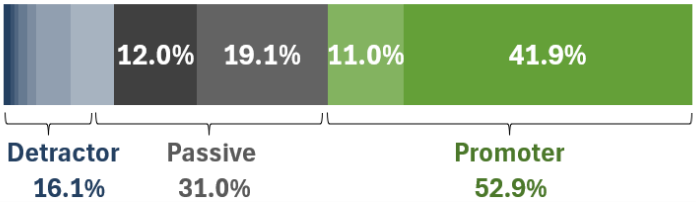


Net Promoter Score (NPS)

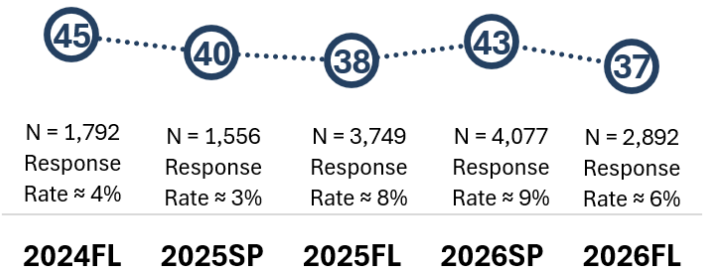
The students' Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a measure of student loyalty and satisfaction. Respondents were asked to consider how likely they were to recommend TCC to others using a 0 to 10 scale. Promoters were those who responded with a score of 9 or 10 and were generally considered being enthusiastic about the College. Passives were those who responded with a score of 7 or 8 and were generally satisfied with the College but might not promote it. Detractors were those who responded with a score of 0 to 6 and were dissatisfied to some extent with the College and might dissuade others from attending. The NPS was calculated by taking the difference between the percentage of promoters and the percentage of detractors. Any positive value is good, with a score above 20 generally considered great.

The student NPS for 2026FL was 37. Almost half of respondents were promoters. The NPS remained near 40 or above since 2024FL, and the response rate doubled after 2025SP, which likely means 2025FL and 2026SP are more accurate estimates.

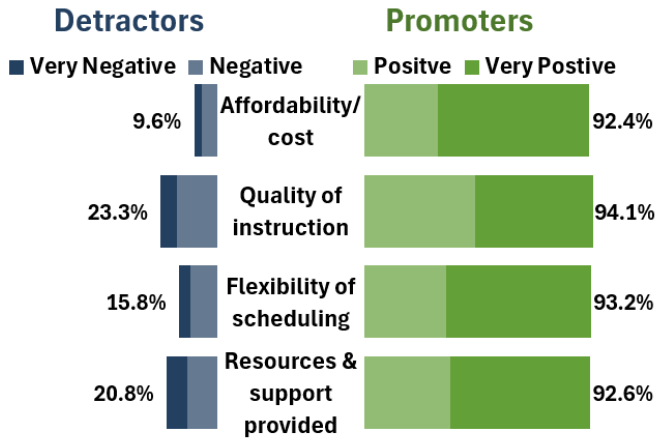
2026FL NPS - Rating Distribution



Student Net Promoter Score (NPS)



Promoters' scores were similarly impacted by each factor considered. Detractors' scores were most impacted by quality of instruction followed by resources and support provided.

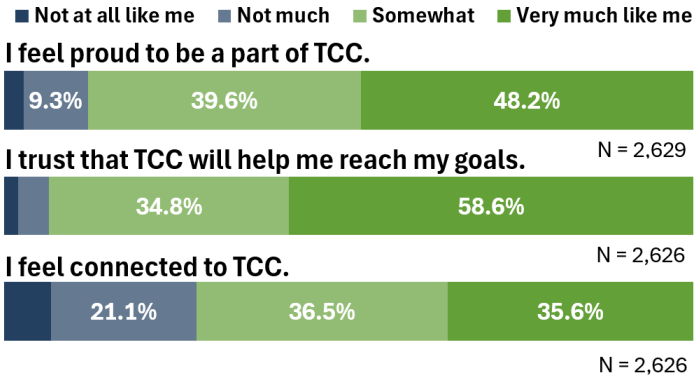


The NPS differed by campus and student type with dual credit/ECHS students having a much lower score than other students.

	N	NPS
Full-time	960	41
Part-time	1,240	38
Connect	296	49
Northeast	561	24
Northwest	236	49
Southeast	506	35
South	361	44
Trinity River	255	58
Continuing	1,046	56
Dual Credit/ECHS	462	-5
First Time in College	710	44

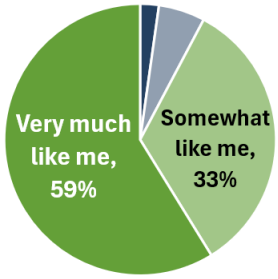
TCC Brand

About 88% of respondents reported feeling proud to be part of TCC was *somewhat like me* or *very much like me* and about 93% of respondents reported trusting that TCC will help me reach my goals was *somewhat like me* or *very much like me*. Almost three-quarters reported feeling connected to TCC was *somewhat like me* or *very much like me*.



Respondents reported whether they felt confident about their return on investment (ROI) they were making through their education at TCC.

Confident in ROI



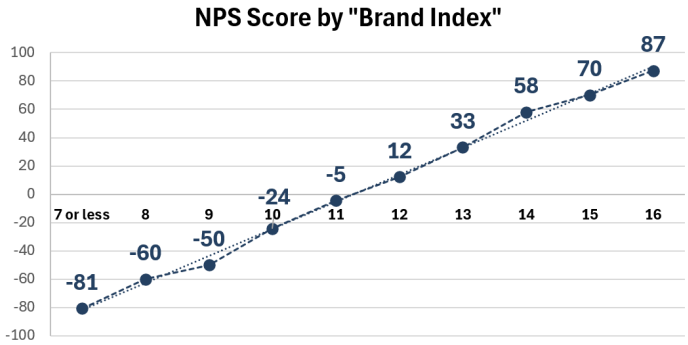
About 59% reported that feeling confident that they would see a positive return on their financial & time investment at TCC was *very much like me*. N = 2,606

- Dual enrolled respondents had less agreement with TCC brand statements. For example, about 43% of dual enrolled reported that feeling confident that they would see a positive return was very much like me compared to 61% for FTIC and 65% for Continuing.

Brand Index

The four statements regarding feeling proud to be part of TCC, trusting TCC to help them reach their goals, feeling connected, and feeling confident about ROI created a brand index ranging from 4 (*Not at all like me on all statements*) to 16 (*Very much like me on all statements*). *(N =2,590)*

NPS Score was almost perfectly correlated with brand index.

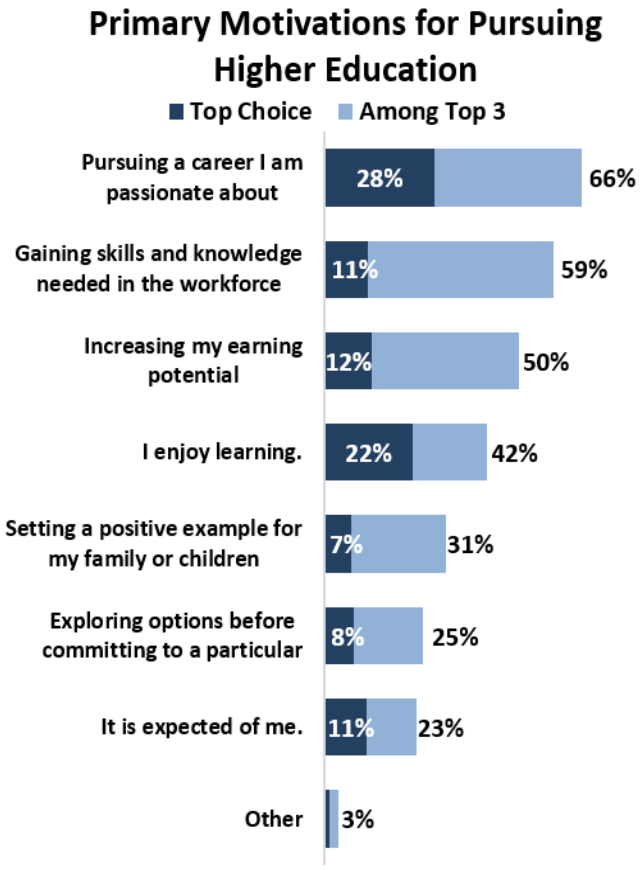


SECTION II: NEXT STEPS & STUDENT PREPAREDNESS

Students who participated in the 2026FL Student Preferences and Experiences Survey reported their educational motivations, pathway selection, plans after TCC, and perceptions of how well TCC has prepared them for their next steps. Results and analyses from the responses to these questions are presented in this section.

Motivation

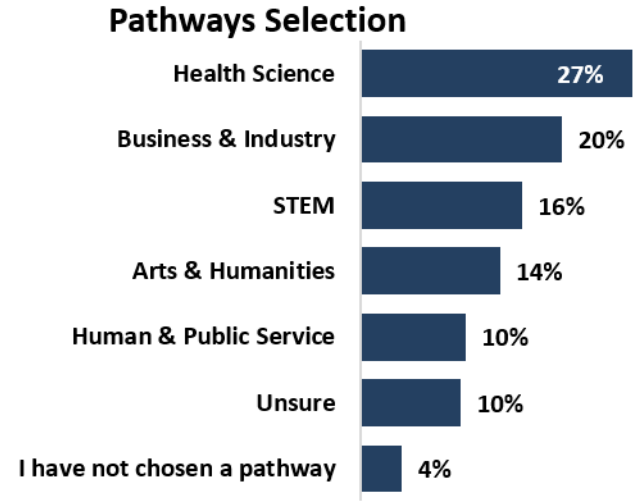
Respondents ranked their top 3 motivators for pursuing higher education at TCC. Respondents identified *pursuing a career they are passionate about* as their primary motivation for pursuing higher education, with 66% ranking it among their top three reasons and 28% selecting it as their top choice overall. Career-related factors, including *gaining workforce skills* (59%) and *increasing earning potential* (50%), were also frequently selected. Other less career-focused factors, including *enjoying learning* (42%), *serving as a role model* (31%), or *expected of me* (23%) were less common. (*N=1,996*)



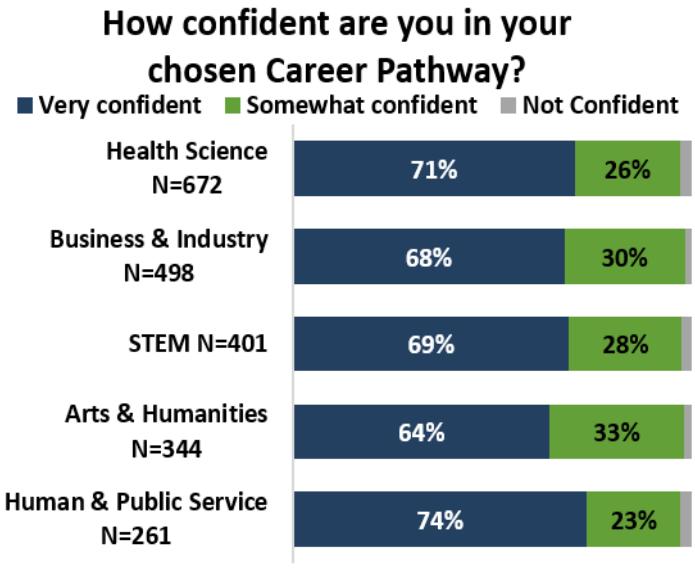
While *pursuing a career* and *gaining skills* were the top two motivating factors selected regardless of student type, dual-enrolled students were more likely to report attending college because it was expected of them. (Dual enrolled – 42%, N=396; FTIC – 21%, N=570; Continuing – 15%, N=820).

Career Pathways

Respondents most often selected Health Science as their career pathway (27%). Business & Industry followed at 20%, while STEM accounted for 16%. One in ten respondents was unsure of their pathway choice, while only 4% reported that they had not yet chosen a pathway. *(N=2,543)*



Overall, respondents expressed a high level of confidence in their chosen career pathways. Across all pathway areas, 69% of respondents indicated they were *very confident* while 28% were *somewhat confident* and only 3% lacked confidence. (*N=2,185*)



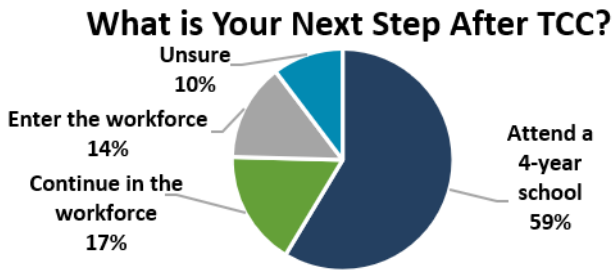
Confidence in pathway varied by students' primary motivation for pursuing higher education. About 78% were very confident in their chosen career pathway among those whose primary motivation was *enjoying learning*; whereas only 47% were very confident among those whose primary motivation was *expected of me*. Additionally, confidence in pathway was related to student type (Very confident: Dual enrolled – 59%, N=370; FTIC – 67%, N=621; Continuing – 75%, N=928).

Moreover, confidence in career pathway correlated with confidence in return on investment (ROI). *(N=2,164)*

Confidence in Career Pathway	Confident that I will see a positive ROI				
	N	Very much like me	Somewhat like me	Not much like me	Not at all like me
Very confident	1,497	72%	24%	3%	1%
Somewhat confident	608	39%	52%	8%	2%
Not confident	59	19%	31%	24%	27%

Next Steps

Respondents most often indicated that they planned to attend a four-year school after they left TCC, with more than half (59%) of respondents choosing this response. *(N=2,539)*



Overall, respondents felt that TCC has helped prepare them for their next step after TCC.

87% either *somewhat agreed* or *strongly agreed* TCC has prepared me for my next step. *(N=2,256)*

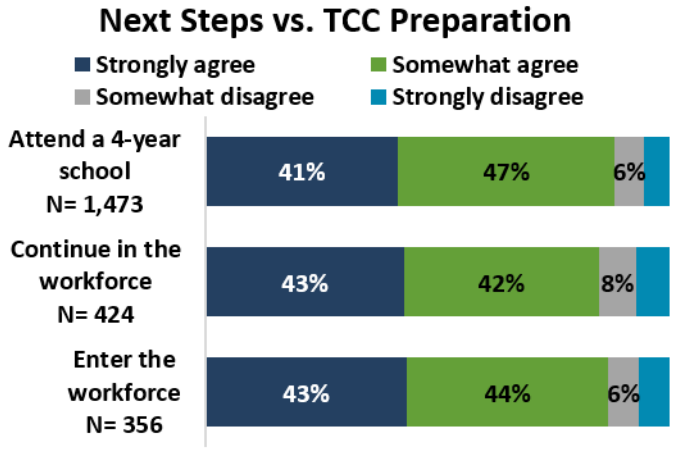
However, FTIC and Continuing students had stronger agreement. About 29% of dual enrolled *strongly agreed* compared to 40% for FTIC and 49% for Continuing. Those who agreed that TCC prepared them cited academic advising, support services, faculty guidance, and opportunities to develop academic and professional skills as reasons they felt prepared for their next steps. (*N=902*).

> *"TCC has helped me feel prepared for my next steps by giving me clear guidance, supportive professors, and resources that make college easier to navigate. The classes have helped me build confidence in my skills, and the advising and campus tools make planning my future feel more organized and achievable." – TCC Student*

Those who did not agree that TCC prepared them reported how TCC could have helped them feel more prepared. Many of the comments focused on advising services and expanding career development opportunities. (*N=115*).

> *"One change that TCC could make to improve my student experience would be to provide more career-focused guidance and resources that connect students with internships, volunteer opportunities, and potential employers. Having more opportunities to gain practical experience and build professional connections while completing a program would help students feel more confident and prepared for their next steps after graduation" – TCC Student*

Respondents' level of agreement that TCC has help them prepare for their next step did not differ markedly based on whether their next step was a four-year school or the workforce.



Conclusion & Considerations

In general, respondents to the 2026FL Student Experience Survey felt TCC has prepared them for their next steps. Most respondents had a pathway and reported strong confidence in their educational and career direction. Career and interest alignment as well as career advancement/ skill development emerged as primary motivations for pursuing higher education. Students who cited enjoying learning reported the highest level of confidence in their chosen pathway. Opportunities may exist for dual enrolled students. Dual enrolled respondents were more likely to attend college because it was expected of them, have less confidence in their chosen pathway, and ultimately less confidence in a positive ROI. Overall, TCC may benefit from continuing to emphasize career readiness, advising, and workforce connections while helping students connect their educational experiences to personal career interests.

SECTION III: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE(AI) – STUDENT SENTIMENT

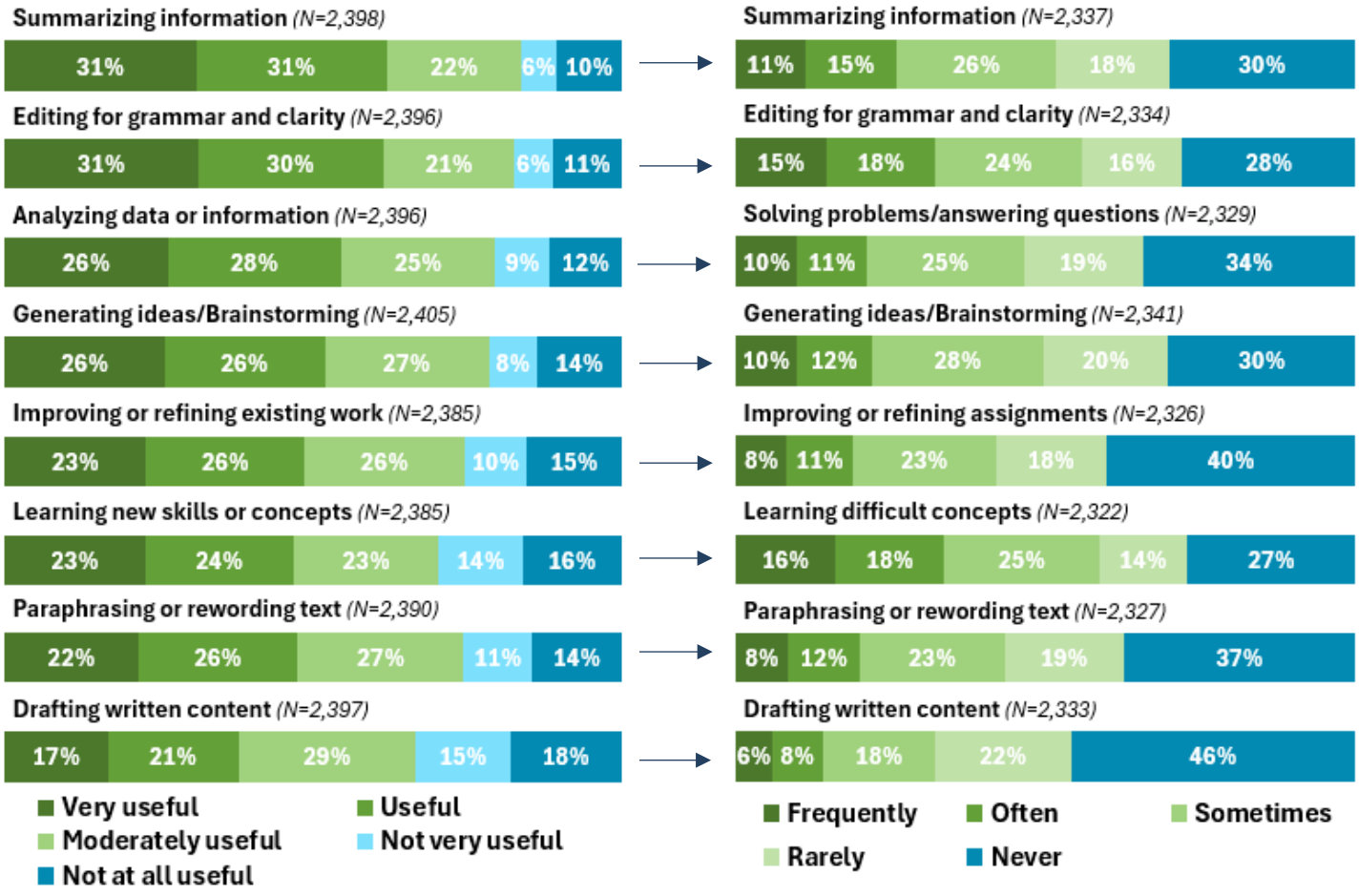
The 2026FL student survey included multiple questions meant to measure student sentiment and current adoption or usage of AI tools for coursework purposes. Students also reported how their instructors implement AI tools into coursework as well as how long they spent verifying AI generated content.

Perceived AI Usefulness

In general, respondents perceived AI as useful with about **90% believing it was at least 'moderately useful' for one or more purposes**. However, a much smaller percentage had a high perceived usefulness for every purpose. Only about one out of four respondents believed that AI tools were 'useful' to 'very useful' for all purposes surveyed. *(N=2,331)* Hence, perceived usefulness differed by purpose.

AI Usage

Actual reported usage was a bit below perceived usefulness with **around 85% reporting some level of usage for one or more purposes.** *(N=2,275)* While there was a gap between perceived usefulness and reported usage for all purposes, they were correlated. Purposes with higher perceived usefulness tended to align with those that had higher reported usage.



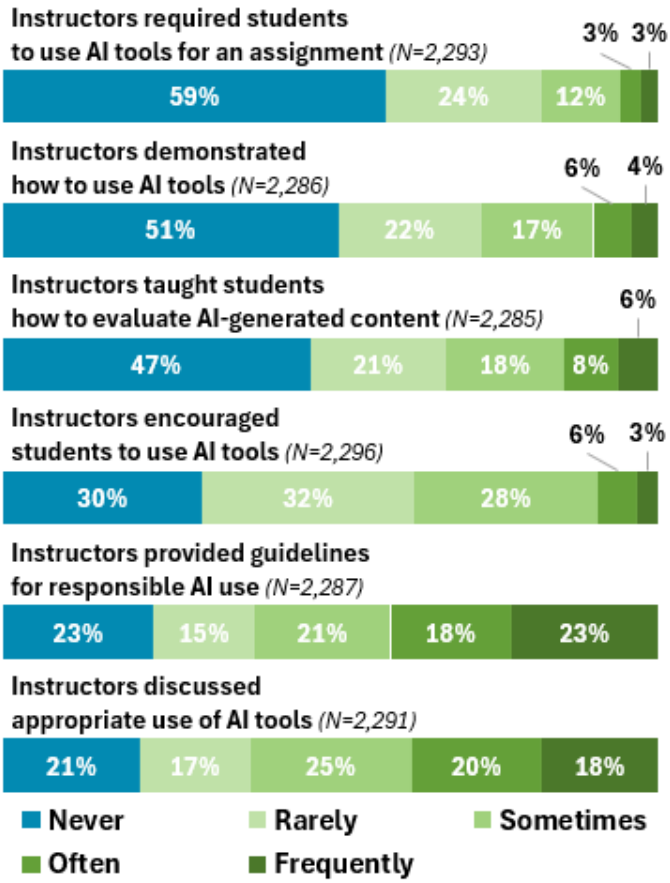
- Purposes with **80% or more** believing that AI tools would be useful included: *summarizing information*, *editing for grammar/clarity*, or *analyzing data/information*.
- Conversely, purposes with **25% or more** believing that AI tools would be 'not very useful' or 'not at all useful' included: *drafting written content*, *learning new skills or concepts*, *paraphrasing/ rewording text*, and *improving or refining existing work*.

- Purposes with **40% or more** of respondents stating they 'never' used AI tools included: *drafting written content* or *improving/refining assignments*.
- Meanwhile, purposes with **30% or more** of respondents stating they 'frequently' or 'often' used AI tools in their coursework included: *editing grammar/clarity* and *learning difficult concepts*.

Instructor AI Promotion

Respondents reported that it was uncommon for instructors to avoid discussions about AI. Only **around 13%** of respondents stated that instructors had 'never' discussed AI tools or AI-generated content as it relates to their coursework. *(N=2,262)*

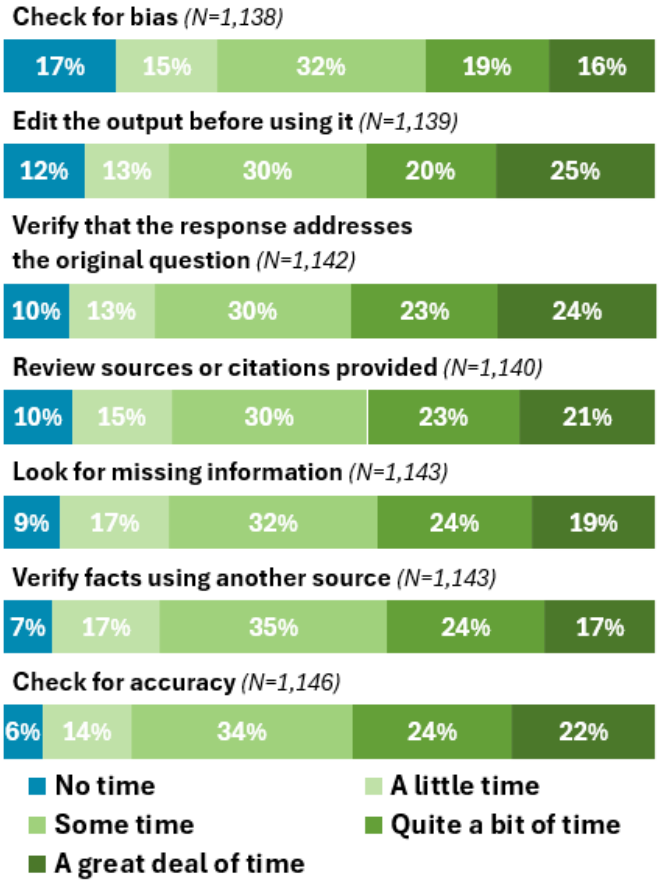
Respondents, however, indicated that their instructors were more likely to encourage/promote responsible use of AI tools but less likely to require/ demonstrate AI-generated content in the classroom.



- **Nearly 60%** of respondents stated that instructors had 'never' required them to use AI tools for an assignment. Additionally, **over half** of respondents stated that their instructors had 'never' demonstrated how to use AI tools.
- Purposes with **70% or more** of respondents stating that instructors had at least mentioned AI included: *discussed appropriate use of AI tools*, *provided guidelines for responsible use of AI tools,* and *encouraged students to use AI tools* regarding coursework.

Reviewing AI Generated Content

Among those who reported AI usage, almost all reported some level of vetting of AI content. **Less than 3% of respondents** who used AI-generated content stated that they spent 'no time' on all vetting processes before submitting AI content. However, the extent to which they vetted varied with only about 24% of respondents stating that they spent 'a great deal of time' on one or more vetting processes of AI generated content. *(N=1,110)*



- Purposes with **10% or more** of respondents stating they spent 'no time' reviewing AI content included: *reviewing sources/citations, verifying that the response addresses the original question, editing the output,* or *checking for bias.*
- Purposes with **45% or more** of respondents that spend at least 'quite a bit of time' reviewing AI content included: *checking for accuracy and verifying that the response addresses the original question.*

Artificial Intelligence Comments

Respondents provided numerous comments centered around policies regarding AI usage in an academic setting, as well as the need to teach students about AI tools for evolving workplace demands. *(About 55 comments related to AI)*

"AI is here to stay and it's in everything now. There are even a lot of jobs requiring AI skills...I just wish TCC would teach us and not cripple us as we are trying to enter or work upwards in an already difficult job field." – TCC Student

"I do not believe AI should be used as an academic tool. It is unreliable, not always accurate, and most of the time, not used with good intent. On top of it all, it is devastating to the environment." – TCC Student

"Don't use AI for event graphics when y'all have graphic design students to ask instead." – TCC Student

"It's crucial for AI literacy and ethics to play a prominent role in education going forward. Students need to know how to interpret and utilize AI output and do so ethically. In particular, courses with any amount of writing assignments need to demonstrate proper AI citation guidelines (MLA, Chicago, etc.)."– TCC Student

"I think AI should be allowed because it is part of our real world daily experience and businesses are increasingly adopting AI tools for more efficient work processes." – TCC Student

"I never want to HAVE to use AI for an assignment. It genuinely goes against my beliefs, and I hate being encouraged to use it, even if it has benefits"– TCC Student

Conclusion

Overall, respondents indicated a relatively high perceived usefulness of AI tools with about 9 in 10 perceiving some level of usefulness for at least one purpose. Perceived usefulness differs by purpose with *summarizing information* having the highest perceived usefulness and *drafting written content* having the lowest perceived usefulness. There was a gap between perceived usefulness and usage since about 85% (not 90%) reported usage – and some of reported rare usage. However, purposes with higher perceived usefulness aligned with purposes with higher reported usage.

Respondents stated that their instructors generally promoted responsible use of AI tools but were less likely to require/ demonstrate AI and teach how to evaluate AI generated content for accuracy.

Among respondents who used AI tools, the majority spend at least some time reviewing AI generated content. They were most likely to check for accuracy and least likely to check for bias.

Respondent comments included both skepticism and eagerness to use AI tools both academically and in their professional work.

Ultimately, survey respondents appear to recognize the usefulness of AI tools and those who have adopted AI tools seem to recognize the need to check AI generated content for accuracy and validity before approving the work as their own. There are opportunities for faculty to further demonstrate AI tools and teach students how to evaluate their outputs.

SECTION IV: STUDENT FEEDBACK

Students identified challenges or barriers that impact their success as well as changes TCC could make to improve the student experience. Summaries of their feedback are included in this section. While the number of students providing comments was small, there were recurring themes from those who provided input.

What is the biggest challenge or barrier currently affecting your success as a student?

Respondents frequently mentioned challenges and/or barriers to students' success including time management, adjusting to college, financial concerns, and managing health and stress. (N~1,100)

Time Management and Balancing Schedules

Of those who left substantiative comments*, more than 1 in 3 respondents raised time management concerns regarding balancing combinations of school, work, and/or family obligations.

"I feel I rarely have time for myself, but I do work on my time management to the best of my abilities. My top priority is family, work, and school." – TCC Continuing Student

"Balancing coursework with work and personal responsibilities is my biggest challenge. Time management can be difficult, especially during busy periods with multiple assignments and deadlines." – TCC FTIC Student

College Readiness

Close to 25% of respondents mentioned challenges with adjusting to college, being academically prepared for course rigor, as well as life skills including procrastination and motivation.

"Coming straight out of high school into college. It is an entirely different shift from one another." – TCC FTIC Student

"I have not been in school in over 20 years. So getting back into it has been a challenge." – TCC FTIC Student

"The biggest barrier affecting my success is procrastination and social media." – TCC Dual Enrolled Student

"The change from high school to college classes, also not knowing how to study." – TCC FTIC Student

Finances

About one in 10 respondents mentioned finances as a current challenge or barrier affecting their success.

"My biggest challenge is working enough to make a living wage and not to stress about my financial situation while balancing school." – TCC Continuing Student

"Financial struggles, even though I don't qualify for financial aid. Finances have been a challenge while we are navigating school on a single income." – TCC Continuing Student

"For me time and money are my biggest barriers especially with rising costs. It has been difficult to find a higher paying job while also balancing school and life alongside work." – TCC Continuing Student

Health and Stress

Several respondents commented on health and stress as academic barriers.

"*Balancing my mental health, sleep, work, and school schedules, while still trying to get good grades and be happy" – TCC Continuing Student*

"Stress from work on top of school. I work in trades and its demanding and tiring and then on top of it I have school; it is my choice, but I am still tired and stressed." – TCC FTIC Student

What one change could TCC make to improve your student experience?

Common themes for improving the student experience included scheduling, student engagement, and changes to coursework and instruction. (N~1,100)

Schedule and Registration

About 10% of respondents mentioned the need for more classes, for classes to be offered more frequently and in multiple modalities, and for sections not to be cancelled.

"Class availability can be difficult to manage with students who are also working as many STEM classes are either on-campus only or have limited sections per semester that fill almost immediately on registration days." – TCC Student

"Make classes available every semester so students can successfully plan on finishing" – TCC Student

"Adding more classes due to limited spot availability to help with not waiting a semester to complete the class." – TCC Student

"Improve course selection for evenings, nights, and weekends" – TCC Student

Aligning College Expectations

About one in 10 respondents identified challenges that represent misalignment between their expectations and college expectations. Several respondents mentioned the workload, attendance policies, and instructor expectations as issues to be addressed. Additionally, several raised issues with instruction. Based on the barriers students identified related to college readiness, there is an opportunity to orient students to college expectations.

"I don't know how this could happen, but somehow, to get more reminders that work is due soon, it would be so helpful if I could get reminders on my phone." – TCC Dual Enrolled Student

"Limits on class hours/assignments per week. Expectations for 3-5 hours of daily homework per class are incredibly difficult and result in burnout early on." – TCC FTIC Student

"I would change the level of effort professors put into teaching and make sure students understand the material rather than expecting us to teach ourselves." – TCC Continuing Student

"Attendance being more lenient, I work full time and my day starts early in the morning. If attendance was more lenient then I wouldn't have to spend countless hours in a class that doesn't provide the style of learning I'm adept to." – TCC Continuing Student

Student Engagement

Several students mentioned the need for students to engage with each other through clubs, activities, and events. Some comments noted a need for more communication about what is happening, as well as requests for more options and opportunities.

"More clubs would be nice, the ones on offer are quite limited. More events would also be appealing. Really just more excuses to socialize." – TCC Student

"More student engagement/community" – TCC Student

"Enhanced Campus Life: Increasing accessible extracurriculars and Student Life activities builds a stronger sense of community outside the classroom" – TCC Student

No Changes, A Positive Experience

About one in four respondents indicated that no changes were needed and/or that things at TCC were good.

"Everything has been great and there are so many resources available for any help students need." – TCC FTIC Student

"Honestly, I learned a lot. professors are very knowledgeable and helpful." – TCC Continuing Student

"So far, I have had a great experience with my career advisor and any department that I have gone into to inquire help with." – TCC Continuing Student

**Excluded comments such as N/A, none,"-", etc.*