

**COLLEGE OF SAN MATEO
CAMPUS CLIMATE & SATISFACTION SURVEYS, SPRING 2010
CLASSIFIED STAFF AND
FACULTY & ADMINISTRATORS**

NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

OVERVIEW

In June 2011 CSM's Office of Planning, Research, and Institutional Effectiveness (PRIE) conducted two employee campus climate & satisfaction surveys administrated online to all CSM employees¹: the *Classified Staff Campus Climate & Satisfaction Survey* (48 respondents) and the *Faculty & Administrators Campus Climate & Satisfaction Survey* (123 respondents).^{2 3}

To develop these employee satisfaction surveys, in Spring 2010 PRIE staff reviewed a variety of campus climate and employee surveys employed by numerous 2-year and 4-year institutions as well as CSM's past accreditation instruments. The results were two survey instruments: one designed for faculty and administrators as a group and one designed for classified staff.

Both surveys contained a common thematic structure to allow for comparison of attitudes regarding the same topics between the two study populations.

The common thematic areas include:

- Overall impressions and attitudes about CSM;
- Attitudes regarding co-workers, senior administration, workload, on-the-job recognition, and supervision;
- Opportunities for training and professional development;
- Work and family balance;
- Campus safety and security;
- Effectiveness of channels of communication, shared governance, and institutional planning;
- Diversity awareness, overall campus climate, and CSM as a respectful place;
- Satisfaction with facilities, maintenance, and technology support;

¹ Employees were offered the opportunity of winning an iPod Nano as an incentive to participate in the survey. The gift was made possible through donations to CSM held by the San Mateo County Community Colleges Foundation; no college funds were used.

² This is the second time CSM has administered these surveys. In May-June 2010, 44 classified staff participated in the *Classified Staff Campus Climate & Satisfaction Survey* and 101 faculty and administrators participated in the *Faculty & Administrators Campus Climate & Satisfaction Survey*.

³ Note: Data concerning demographics of participants is included in the last section of this narrative; in Spring 2011, CSM had 113 classified staff and 406 faculty and/or administrators.

- Effectiveness of student support programs and services, including the library and labs; and
- Effectiveness of instructional programs and offerings.

These themes were organized into categories for respondents in the following order:

- *Campus & Facilities*
- *Career Opportunities*
- *Communication*
- *Co-workers*
- *CSM's Senior Leadership*
- *Diversity Awareness*
- *Equipment & Technology*
- *Governance & Planning*
- *Impressions of CSM*
- *Job Attitudes*
- *Overall Attitude toward CSM*
- *Programs and Services*
- *Recognition, Supervision*
- *Training & Professional Development*
- *Work & Family/Life Balance*
- *Workload*

Survey respondents were also asked questions unique to their employee group: e.g., faculty were asked about issues pertaining to academic freedom and using the library for course assignments; staff were asked about issues pertaining to their "customer service" levels, etc.⁴ Both surveys contained items used in and parallel to the *CSM Student Campus Climate & Satisfaction Survey*, also administrated simultaneously in Spring 2011. The *Faculty/Administrators Survey*, in addition, contained questions about items about library usage which replaced a more extensive section used last year; in Spring 2011 several other items were added to both surveys, including questions about campus climate for LGBT employees and students.⁵

METHODS OF ANALYSIS

Conducted by staff from PRIE, this narrative analysis highlights the strengths and challenges for CSM identified in the surveys. It does not address all response items. Generally, this analysis discusses data from both surveys in terms of total satisfaction and dissatisfaction levels (e.g. a sum of "agree" + "agree strongly").

Discussion is organized into categories and includes comparative analysis of the findings from both the *Classified Staff Survey* and the *Faculty /Administrator Survey*; in addition, where appropriate, the comparative analysis includes data from the *CSM Student Campus Climate & Satisfaction Survey (CSM Student Survey)*. Ranking of selected items within a topic area is also addressed in this narrative analysis, particularly as a means to understand the themes within the context of overall high levels of satisfaction.

Comparative Analysis:

⁴ Note: faculty and administrators were grouped together and, while several questions were designed as unique to faculty, none were unique to administrators.

⁵ See *Classified Staff Campus Climate & Satisfaction Survey Item Questions* and *Faculty & Administrators Campus Climate & Satisfaction Survey: Item Questions* for additional items or changes.

PRIE staff also examined several notable differences within or similarities between the sets of surveys conducted in both 2010 and 2011.

Several important question-items indicate “challenges” for CSM employees; however, both surveys indicate overall and consistent levels of satisfaction with CSM.

Generally, variations of a few percentage points between the two years of data are not significant; minor fluctuations are customary in surveys of large populations. This discussion does address some, but not all, fluctuations of 4% or greater. Some question items show significant change in attitudes, more than 20%. When this survey is conducted again next year—the third year—the college may confidently begin to identify “trends.” However, the data do clearly suggest areas of success, improvement, and challenges for CSM.

Change in Survey Response Items: 2010 vs. 2011

The following indicate the complex fabric of responses to question items:

Classified Staff Survey, 2010 vs. 2011

Number of question-items:
 159 in 2011
 153 in 2010
 Positive change: 85
 Negative change: 63
 Percentage of Change between 2010 & 2011
 Greater Than = +4: 48
 Less Than = -4: 33

Note: 6 new question-items in 2011; therefore change not applicable to those items

Faculty /Administrator Surveys 2010 vs. 2011

Number of question-items:
 158 in 2011
 151 in 2010
 Positive change: 96
 Negative change: 55
 Percentage of Change between 2010 & 2011
 Greater Than = +4: 48
 Less Than = -4: 15

Note: 7 new question-items in 2011; therefore change not applicable; also separate discrete library portion not used in 2011

STRENGTHS

Strengths: Employees Overall Positive Attitudes toward CSM

Like student participants in the 2011 CSM Student Survey, respondents in both employee surveys have very positive overall attitudes toward CSM. They very much like working at CSM (classified staff, 98%; faculty/administrators, 93%). They are proud to be employees at CSM; they would recommend CSM to a family member or friend looking for a job, and a healthy majority would choose to work at CSM if starting over (83% to 98% satisfaction). These findings are consistent with last year.

This positive theme is further reflected in employees’ ranking of adjectival descriptors in the section, “Impressions of CSM,” a section common to all surveys. Respondents were asked to rank terms to complete the sentence “CSM is....” While ranking them slightly differently, both groups selected the same adjectival descriptors for 6 highest ranking (82% to 98%). These choices indicate a sense of CSM as a tolerant, welcoming place and include rating with the following terms: “Friendly,” “Welcoming,” “Tolerant of Diversity,” “Respectful,” “Caring” and

"Safe." Both groups ranked "Friendly," and "Welcoming" as the highest. (Students also selected 5 of these descriptors, but included "Improving" rather than "Caring" as among the 6 highest ranked.)

This overall positive attitude is also seen when employees are asked to rate the "friendliness" of their personal interactions, with one exception. Both groups view their interactions with students and staff as "friendly" (90% and higher). The faculty/administrators group views their interactions with administrators in a slightly more positive way than classified staff (79% vs. 73%). Classified staff, however, are significantly more positive about district personnel than faculty/administrators group (83% vs. 59%). The faculty/administrators group indicates a 14% decrease in satisfaction about interactions with district personnel than in last year's survey. (Note: This is the only question-item in the survey related to the district office.)

Strengths: Employees' Positive Attitudes about their Workplace "Sphere"

Similar to responses in the Spring 2010 surveys, CSM's employees like the nature of their work. When asked directly if they like their jobs, almost all employees affirm they do (both groups 98%). Both groups experience a "sense of accomplishment at work" (classified staff, 92%; faculty/administrators, 98%). Both groups also indicate they have the freedom to make decisions that affect their work and have the opportunity to use their "skills and talents" (classified staff, 95% & 89%; faculty/administrators, 97% & 92%). These responses were slightly higher than last year.⁶

In addition to overall satisfaction with the nature of their jobs, CSM's employees like the people with whom they work within their immediate "sphere"—their co-workers and the administrators with whom they interact. They feel "respected" by their co-workers and have good working relationships with them. Both groups indicate that staff as well as other faculty treat them with "respect" (classified staff, 94% & 98%; faculty/administrators, 100% & 92%). In fact for both groups, all items concerned explicitly with co-workers had high satisfaction levels, 87-97%.

However, when compared to last year, classified staff indicated slightly less (-4%) satisfaction with the idea that co-workers "care" about each other; instead they register a 5% increase when asked if they feel "respected by administrators." Faculty indicate improvement (+5%) in the area of teamwork.

In addition, when asked whether their "supervisor" treats them with respect, both groups have positive responses (classified staff, 91%; faculty/administrators, 90%). When asked whether CSM's senior administration (including the president, vice presidents, and deans) respects employees, both groups had positive responses. Classified staff indicated 91% (+11 increase from last year) and faculty/administrators indicated 81% satisfaction, consistent with last year.⁷

⁶ Note: Several studies of faculty job satisfaction in higher education indicate that faculty do receive job satisfaction from working in their discipline and "administrating to clients"—in other words, the work itself. In addition, "pleasant, concerned and enthusiastic co-workers" positively affect job satisfaction (Milosheff, 1990).

⁷ Note: Several studies of faculty job satisfaction illustrate that satisfaction with supervision "often relates directly to the direct supervisors under which a faculty member is working" (Klein and Takeda-Tinker, 2009);

A sense of "being respected" is reflected in a similar way by students. In both the 2010 and 2011 *CSM Student Survey*, for example, students indicated in all items explicitly related to feeling "respected," 90% or higher levels of satisfaction.

In the separate survey category "Supervision," there were significant increases in satisfaction on the majority of items for both groups compared to last year.

Strengths: Roles in Governance

Both groups indicate that CSM understands its purpose: They both affirm, for example, that CSM works actively to fulfill its mission and vision (classified staff, 91%; faculty/administrators, 87%) and that the mission statement guides institutional planning and decision making (classified staff, 88%; faculty/administrators, 83%). In addition, they clearly understand their personal role on the planning committees on which they serve (classified staff, 84%; faculty/administrators, 90%) and the purpose of those planning committees (classified staff, 81%; faculty/administrators, 93%). Both groups generally agree that strategic planning identifies areas of improvement and sets goals for institutional change (classified staff, 88%; faculty/administrators, 84%). And both groups indicate an improvement from last year's responses in whether they believe the "institutional planning process as a whole is effective" (classified staff, 72%; faculty/administrators, 68%). Yet it is in the area of governance and planning that both survey groups express concerns.

Strengths: Diversity Awareness

In the *CSM Student Survey* students indicated very high levels of satisfaction (88%-99%) with almost all question items related to diversity awareness. (The lowest ranked items concerned sensitivity to the needs of working adults.) A positive view of how CSM handles diversity is also generally shared by classified staff and faculty. As noted in analysis of last year's campus climate surveys, it's clear that CSM has made big strides in this area and diversity awareness is becoming an institutional strength. Both groups indicate that CSM supports students regardless of ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs, etc. (classified staff, 88%; faculty/administrators, 92%). Both groups also believe CSM supports all employees in the same way (classified staff, 95%; faculty/administrators, 92%). In two questions new to this year's surveys about LGBT students and employees, both groups indicated high levels of satisfaction (89%-94%).

While faculty/administrators show greater satisfaction (+7%/84%) for feeling CSM has a cultural diverse curriculum, this improvement was not shared by classified staff (-7%/61%).

Strengths: Safety, Facilities, and Technology

Both groups show high levels of satisfaction and significant improvements from last year (+9 to +18%) in their view that that offices and classrooms are "conducive to learning" and "adequately maintained." Generally employees indicate agreement that the campus is safe and; both groups also indicate higher, improved levels of satisfaction (82% to 100%) on

question items related to having access to well-maintained computer technology, the technology required by his or her job, and timely technical support and assistance.

CHALLENGES & THEMES TO INVESTIGATE

This section is intended to identify themes in those items ranked lowest, decreases in levels of satisfaction, or where there may be large gaps among the employee groups or gaps within sections. In some cases the “challenges” or themes suggested here are subtle issues. These themes may suggest areas to be further explored in future surveys and in-depth focus groups or interviews.

Notable Differences Between Faculty/Administrators and Classified Staff

In the section on “Supervision” both faculty and classified staff rate their supervisors fairly highly. However, both groups indicated differences in perceived “recognition” on the job. Classified staff experience a greater sense that “someone else usually gets credit for work I’ve done” (-17%). Faculty felt a greater sense than last year that they are recognized for good work (+6/69%).

The two groups have different perspectives related to a work/life balance. Both, for example, indicate they can “balance personal/family responsibilities with their current workload” (classified staff, 93%; faculty/administrators, 80%) but classified staff are more satisfied with their work schedules than those in the faculty/administrators group (classified staff, 89%; faculty/administrators, 76%). They also view the notion that CSM “values a work/life balance very differently (classified staff, 86%; faculty/administrators, 68%).

In the area of “Workload” both groups showed increases in their levels of satisfaction from last year. Yet both clearly indicate their “work unit” is not “adequately staffed”(classified staff, 44%; faculty/administrators, 43%). Classified staff are also not as satisfied with the professional development options available to them: 64% indicate that they have access to such activities. However in the overall area of “Training and Professional Development” both groups showed increases in satisfaction as compared to responses last year.

Possible Challenges: Governance and Planning

There is a combination of significant increases and decreases in satisfaction for both groups related to governance and planning and clearly these are areas needing further evaluation and improvement.

While improved from last year, among the lowest rated items for classified staff were whether “CSM actively encourages participation in decision making processes” (68%) and whether “I understand CSM’s decision-making processes” (56%). Faculty/Administrators showed similar levels of satisfaction. While classified staff feel constituencies have adequate opportunities to participate in budget development 81%, faculty show a more negative perspective (63%).

Neither group indicates high levels of satisfaction with the notion that “overall, shared governance is working well at CSM” (classified staff, 68%; faculty/administrators, 54%).

Possible Challenge: Diversity Awareness

As noted above, both employee groups generally indicate positive attitudes and high levels of satisfaction with diversity awareness at CSM. However, in both groups there are some individuals who perceive racial or ethnic tensions on campus; feel isolated because of [their] background; and think sexual harassment is a problem at CSM. (See section, "Diversity Awareness.") CSM needs to continue its institutional efforts in this area.

Possible Challenge: Relations outside the Immediate Workplace "Sphere"

As noted, employees in both groups generally indicate satisfaction with their jobs, their immediate supervisors, and their close co-workers and work arenas. In addition, both groups indicate that there is "open, two-way communication" in [their] department/division. They also indicate that conflicts are handled civilly at CSM and they understand their own roles in "managing conflict."

However, in the section "Communication" both groups indicate the least agreement (lower than 70%) for the notions that there is two-way communication between departments (classified staff, 67%; faculty/administrators, 66%) and two-way communication "throughout" the college departments (classified staff, 49%; faculty/administrators, 52%).

In a theme that emerged last year, there is a suggestion that some employees are more dissatisfied with issues and people outside of their immediate sphere of association and influence. The more distant the association, the greater the degree of discomfort. This has implications for CSM's approach to shared governance, planning, and campus-wide communication.

As noted above, employees feel respected by their supervisors, by the administrators with whom they interact, and by CSM's senior administration. Yet they also indicate comparatively low levels of agreement with the notion that "employees truly respect CSM leadership" (classified staff, 68%; faculty/administrators, 56%). However, classified staff indicated a +15% improvement in satisfaction for this item since last year. Note: "CSM leadership" was defined in the survey as including deans, vice presidents, and president.⁸

In addition, while both groups generally indicate feeling valued as an individual in question items concerned with their immediate job environment, they indicate comparatively lower levels of satisfaction with the statement "CSM is...concerned about me as an individual" (classified staff, 69%; faculty/administrators, 58%).

⁸ Note: as discussed earlier, the importance of the "direct" supervisor (administrator) in faculty job satisfaction has been documented by several studies. Typically faculty have the "most confidence in the administrators closest to them" (Johnson, 2009), a phenomenon illustrated here.

EVALUATION OF SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

Both sets of respondents were asked to evaluate the survey instruments' ease of use and whether the instruments reflected issues important to the respondents.

Both employee groups indicate a high rate of satisfaction with their respective instruments.

| Question Items | Total Agree | Total Disagree | Count | |
|---|--|----------------|------------|-----|
| Survey Impressions: Faculty & Administrators | 1. This survey was easy to use. | 92.4% (109) | 7.6% (9) | 118 |
| | 2. This survey adequately addressed issues that are important to me. | 86.6% (97) | 13.4% (15) | 112 |

| | | | | |
|---|--|------------|------------|----|
| Survey Impressions: Classified staff | 1. This survey was easy to use. | 97.8% (44) | 97.8% (44) | 44 |
| | 2. This survey adequately addressed issues that are important to me. | 91.3% (42) | 91.3% (42) | 42 |

Demographics: Faculty/Administrators Respondents

| 1. Employment Status | Count | Pct |
|------------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Adjunct Faculty | 47 | 38.5 |
| Full-Time Faculty | 68 | 55.7 |
| Administrator | 6 | 4.9 |
| Retired or Post-Retirement | 1 | 0.8 |
| Number of Faculty & Administrators | 122 | |

| 2. Years Worked in SMCCCD | Count | Pct |
|------------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| 1 to 5 | 20 | 16.1 |
| 6 to 10 | 31 | 25.0 |
| 11 to 20 | 38 | 30.6 |
| 21 or more | 35 | 28.2 |
| Number of Faculty & Administrators | 124 | |

| 3. Ethnicity | Count | Pct |
|------------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| African American or Black | 5 | 4.3 |
| Asian | 14 | 12.2 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 7 | 6.1 |
| Middle Eastern | 1 | 0.9 |
| Native American | 1 | 0.9 |
| Pacific Islander | 1 | 0.9 |
| White | 80 | 69.6 |
| Multi-Racial | 6 | 5.2 |
| Number of Faculty & Administrators | 115 | |

| 4. My gender | Count | Pct |
|------------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Female | 67 | 56.3 |
| Male | 52 | 43.7 |
| Number of Faculty & Administrators | 119 | |

Demographics: Classified Staff Respondents

| 1. Employment Status | Count | Pct |
|-----------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Full-Time Staff | 46 | 97.9 |
| Part-Time Staff | 1 | 2.1 |
| Number of Staff | 47 | |

| 2. Years Worked in SMCCCD | Count | Pct |
|----------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| 1 to 5 | 18 | 38.3 |
| 6 to 10 | 7 | 14.9 |
| 11 to 20 | 13 | 27.7 |
| 21 or more | 9 | 19.1 |
| Number of Staff | 47 | |

| 3. Ethnicity | Count | Pct |
|---------------------------|--------------|------------|
| African American or Black | 1 | 2.3 |
| Asian | 7 | 15.9 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 8 | 18.2 |
| Native American | 0 | 0.0 |
| Pacific Islander | 2 | 4.5 |
| White | 22 | 50.0 |
| Multi-Racial | 4 | 9.1 |
| Number of Staff | 44 | |

| 4. My gender | Count | Pct |
|---------------------|--------------|------------|
| Female | 30 | 66.7 |
| Male | 15 | 33.3 |
| Number of Staff | 45 | |

REFERENCES

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