

Mesa College Employee Perception Survey 2009

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The strong majority of respondents (between 75% and 80%) expressed moderate to strong agreement with statements related to institutional effectiveness and planning, particularly program review. The overall positive ratings regarding program review were confirmed by an unofficial endorsement that, "The SD Mesa Program Review Handbook is an excellent example and comprehensive document," distributed at the 2009 Student Learning Outcomes Regional Meeting of Coordinators and Researchers offered by the Research and Planning Group and State-Wide Academic Senate.

Recommendations: The College may want to incorporate these findings regarding employees' positive perceptions of the College's institutional effectiveness and planning processes, particularly program review, into its Accreditation self-study report 2010.

2. Survey results suggest that respondents feel Mesa is a learning-centered institution where we both "talk the talk" and "walk the talk." About 78% of the respondents moderately to strongly agreed that dialogue about student learning is ongoing and institutional planning considers student learning.

Recommendations: The College may want to incorporate these positive perceptions by employees regarding the learning-centeredness of the institution and its planning processes into the Accreditation self-study 2010. These findings are consistent with the findings in the Student Satisfaction Survey 2009, which suggest that students also are largely satisfied with instruction at Mesa.

3. Survey results also suggest that respondents feel Mesa is a student-centered institution with an appreciation for diversity. Positive agreement was expressed by over 75% of the respondents in response to the statements that the college identifies and seeks to meet the varied needs of students through diverse programs and services; instructors use teaching methodologies that reflect diverse needs of students; the college encourages student development; and the college seeks to enhance student understanding and appreciation of diversity.

Recommendations: The college may want to incorporate these positive perceptions by employees perceptions regarding the student-centeredness of the institution as well as its appreciation for diversity into the Accreditation self-study 2010. These findings also support the mission, vision, and values of the college as well as the institution-level SLO of global awareness.

4. Regarding opportunities for input and communication, a lesser majority, though still the majority of respondents, moderately to strongly agreed that the college planning process provides opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies (67%) and the college establishes governance structures, processes, and practices to facilitate effective communication among constituencies (68%).

Recommendations: The College may wish to re-examine the extent to which opportunities for input into the college planning process are provided to the appropriate constituencies, as well as the degree to which the college facilitates effective communication among these constituencies, particularly among adjunct faculty and the classified staff. Perhaps a more targeted survey or focus groups are warranted in order to investigate this further and to uncover the crux of the perception.

5. The majority of respondents were moderately to very satisfied with the quality of various Mesa student learning programs and services. The following programs and services received satisfied or very satisfied ratings from over 70% of respondents: Library Resources; Duplicating/Reprographics and Audio-Visual Support; Independent Learning Center, DSP&S, and Technical Support; Transfer Center; Admissions; and Tutoring Services. In response to the following program and services, 20% or more had not used the program or service: Student Life/Activities, Counseling, EOPS, Health Services, Financial Aid, Career Services / Job Placement, and TRIO.

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Recommendations: A relatively larger proportion of faculty seem to be less acquainted with Student Life/Activities, Counseling, EOPS, Health Services, Financial Aid, Career Service / Job Placement, and TRIO. Employee familiarity with and promotion of these services is critical because, according to the Point-of-Service Surveys, faculty and staff are one important and perhaps under-utilized means by which students learn of these support services. Further investigation is warranted either through a targeted survey or focus group interviews and/or a reexamination of the open-ended comments from the Employee Perception Survey (see Appendix D: Verbatim Comments, starting p. 39). An awareness campaign may be needed to help improve the visibility of these services.

6. The strong majority of employee respondents agreed that the faculty plays a central role on campus. Moderate to strong agreement was expressed by over 70% of employees in response to the statements that faculty has a central role in assuring the quality of instruction; assessing student learning outcomes; matters related to educational programs, the hiring of faculty and other personnel, and institutional policies; decision-making involving curriculum and development, and that the college supports academic freedom.

Recommendations: Although moderate to strong agreement was expressed by the strong majority of employees regarding the centrality of faculty, several of the open-ended comments suggested that adjunct faculty would like to play a stronger role in these matters. A targeted survey or focus groups are needed to address this issue and devise possible solutions.

7. In response to the statement that Classified Staff exercise a substantial voice in matters related to planning, budgeting, and institutional policies, almost one third (32%) did not know, and of those who did know and respond, approximately half (51%) moderately to strongly agreed while the other half were either neutral (30%) or in moderate to strong disagreement (19%), which is an interesting contrast to the finding that most respondents agree that faculty play a strong central role in college matters.

Recommendations: A substantial proportion of employee respondents were neutral, in disagreement, or uninformed regarding the role of Classified Staff in college affairs. The Annual Classified Staff Professional Development Conference could be used as a venue for discussing this perception and brainstorming possible solutions.

8. Regarding the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Cycle, over 70% of respondents agreed moderately or strongly that effective plans and strategies have been implemented for identifying student learning outcomes (SLOs). However, a substantial proportion of respondents were neutral regarding the availability of research data to assess progress toward SLO achievement and the use of SLO assessment results to make program/discipline/service area improvements, or “closing the loop” (27% neutral for both items). These findings dovetail with the results of the 2008 Mesa College Student Learning Outcomes Survey, which was a census survey conducted at the program/discipline/service area level. According to the SLO Survey, most programs/disciplines/service areas were in the process of or had completed identifying their SLOs, were in varying stages of development with regard to SLO assessment, and had not started closing the loop.

Recommendations: The assessment portion of the SLO Assessment Cycle and the subsequent closing of the loop seem to be the areas in which more improvement is needed. The College may wish to provide intensive, targeted training in SLO assessment for faculty and staff, perhaps using the Program Review Lead Writer Training as one of the venues, and then re-administer the SLO Survey to see whether progress has been made in the areas of assessment and closing the loop.

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9. Opinions were mixed and substantial dissatisfaction or disagreement was expressed (more than 15%) in response to Physical Facilities, Parking, Classrooms, Working Space / Office Space and the statement that the interior of classrooms, offices, and restrooms are adequately maintained. Mesa is in the midst of a multi-year construction project, funded by Propositions N and S, which is designed to construct or improve the condition of buildings and structures on campus. Results from future administrations of this Employee Survey conducted after the completion of the construction projects should provide an interesting contrast to the current 2009 results.

Recommendations: A targeted, follow-up survey should be administered after the construction projects have been completed so that results may be compared with those from this Employee Perception Survey to see whether satisfaction has increased after the construction has been done.