

Overall Campus Climate at PCC

Accreditation requires institutions “to maintain an ongoing, collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness.”¹ Employees’ perceptions about the campus climate are important indicators to measure when assessing whether an institution has an environment that is collegial and inclusive for all its members. Pasadena City College (PCC) strives to maintain an atmosphere conducive to the educational needs of a diverse student population as well as maintain the quality and efficiency of campus services. In Spring 2005 and again in Spring 2007, PCC administered a campus climate survey to its employees to gain a better understanding of their perceptions of the campus climate, to identify areas in which the College can better serve employees, and to improve the campus climate. The survey asked employees a broad range of questions about the overall campus climate, various processes at the College, areas of improvement, the mission, accreditation, and core values. To identify the changes over time, the results of both surveys, Spring 2005 and Spring 2007, will be presented in a series of Research Findings. This issue presents a brief overview and highlights of the survey findings on the overall climate of the College.

Brief Overview of Methodology

The Institutional Planning and Research Office (IPRO) administered an anonymous survey to all full-time employees. Specifically, IPRO asked department secretaries and managers to give hourly faculty and hourly classified staff a survey to complete. Employees completed and returned the survey anonymously. In Spring 2005, of the 801 surveys sent to full-time employees, 351 were completed and returned, resulting in a **43.8%** response rate. In Spring 2007, of the 813 surveys sent to full-time employees, 285 were completed and returned, resulting in a **35.0%** response rate. In Spring 2005, the educational administrators had the highest response rate at **71.4%** and in Spring 2007 the classified staff had the highest response rate at **78.0%**. In Spring 2005 and Spring 2007, 194 and 178 hourly employees completed and returned the survey, respectively. The response rate for the hourly employees is unknown.

Snapshot of Respondent Profile

The employee survey respondents were somewhat representative of PCC’s employee population (see Table 1). Overall, there were almost no differences in the percentages of employees who completed the survey in 2005 to those of the employees who completed the survey in 2007. In 2005, compared to the overall employee population, the survey sample had more classified staff, more managers/supervisors, more administrators, and fewer contract faculty. In Spring 2007, compared to the overall employee population, the survey sample had more managers/supervisors, more administrators, fewer classified staff, and about the same proportion of contract faculty. It is unknown how representative the hourly survey sample is because IPRO did not directly administer the survey to the employees and the Human Resources Office did not provide numbers for the hourly employees.

	2005		2007	
	Survey Sample	Spring Employee Population	Survey Sample	Spring Employee Population
Job Classification	%	%	%	%
Contract Faculty	41.3	47.1	47.0	47.3
Classified Staff	46.4	45.0	42.8	44.6
Manager/Supervisors	6.6	3.5	4.9	3.7
Administrator (Certificated)	5.7	4.4	5.3	4.4

Note: The proportions for the spring employee populations were provided by the Human Resources Office.

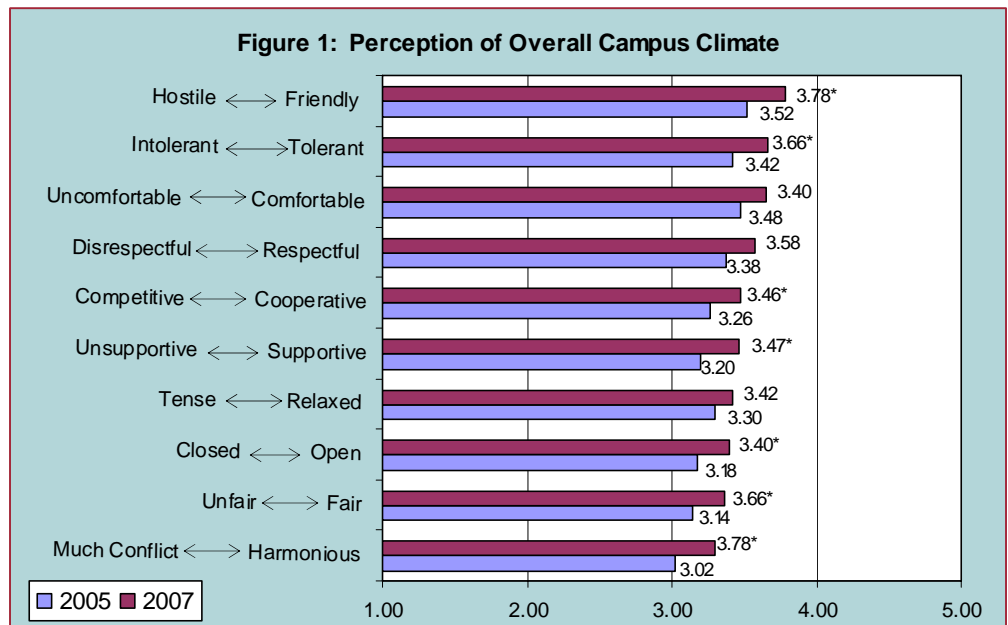
Source:

¹Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges. July 2003.

Perception of Overall Campus Climate

Employees were asked to rate, along a five point scale, aspects of the campus climate or environment using 10 sets of word pairs. A response of one or two indicates the employee felt the campus climate reflected a more negative feeling (such as “hostile” or “tense”) and a response of four or five reflected a more positive feeling (such as “friendly” or “relaxed”). Overall, employees rate all 10 aspects of the campus climate more favorably in 2007 than in 2005 (see Figure 1). Below are some highlights of the findings:

- Employees report significant increases in 2007 for seven of the 10 aspects of the campus climate.
- The largest increases in employees’ ratings are in how much more harmonious, friendly, and supportive the campus climate is in 2007 than in 2005.
- The smallest increases in employees’ ratings are in how much more relaxed, comfortable, and respectful the campus climate is in 2007 than in 2005.



* Statistically significant difference at the .05 level.

Perception of Overall Campus Climate by Job Classification

Below are employees’ perceptions of the overall campus climate by their job classification (see Table 2).

- Contract faculty, hourly classified staff, and classified managers/supervisors rate all 10 aspects of the campus climate **more** favorably in 2007 than in 2005.
- Certificated educational administrators rate eight of the 10 aspects of the campus climate **less** favorably in 2007 than in 2005. They view the campus climate **less** friendly, tolerant, comfortable, fair, and supportive; and more tense, competitive, and with much conflict.
- There is consensus among all the employee groups that PCC’s campus climate is **more** respectful and open in 2007 than in 2005.

Table 2. Perception of Overall Campus Climate by Job Classification

	CONTRACT FACULTY		HOURLY FACULTY		CLASSIFIED		HOURLY CLASSIFIED		MANAGER/SUPERVISOR		EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATOR	
	2005	2007	2005	2007	2005	2007	2005	2007	2005	2007	2005	2007
Hostile ↔ Friendly	3.41	3.70	3.82	3.98	3.32	3.51	3.76	4.11	3.30	3.93	3.70	3.57
Intolerant ↔ Tolerant	3.26	3.58	3.81	3.96	3.17	3.38	3.62	3.81*	3.43	3.64	3.50	3.36
Uncomfortable ↔ Comfortable	3.28	3.53	3.81	3.93	3.23	3.41	3.90	3.98	3.48	3.64	3.60	3.14*
Disrespectful ↔ Respectful	3.30	3.48	3.86	3.92	2.95	3.18*	3.71	3.84	3.36	3.50	3.20	3.64
Competitive ↔ Cooperative	3.19	3.38	3.72	3.84	2.89	3.10	3.48	3.73	3.22	3.50	3.30	3.07
Tense ↔ Relaxed	3.13	3.33	3.78	3.75	3.04	3.04	3.61	3.93	3.00	3.50	3.10	2.57*
Unsupportive ↔ Supportive	3.04	3.26	3.68	3.86	2.82	3.17	3.64	3.84	2.91	3.43	3.50	2.93
Closed ↔ Open	2.94	3.20	3.63	3.79	2.88	2.99	3.79	3.85	2.91	3.43	3.05	3.14
Unfair ↔ Fair	3.11	3.19	3.53	3.79	2.76	2.98	3.57	3.72	2.91	3.36	3.16	3.00
Much Conflict ↔ Harmonious	2.89	3.17	3.52	3.71	2.63	2.82	3.39	3.79	2.87	3.00	3.00	2.71

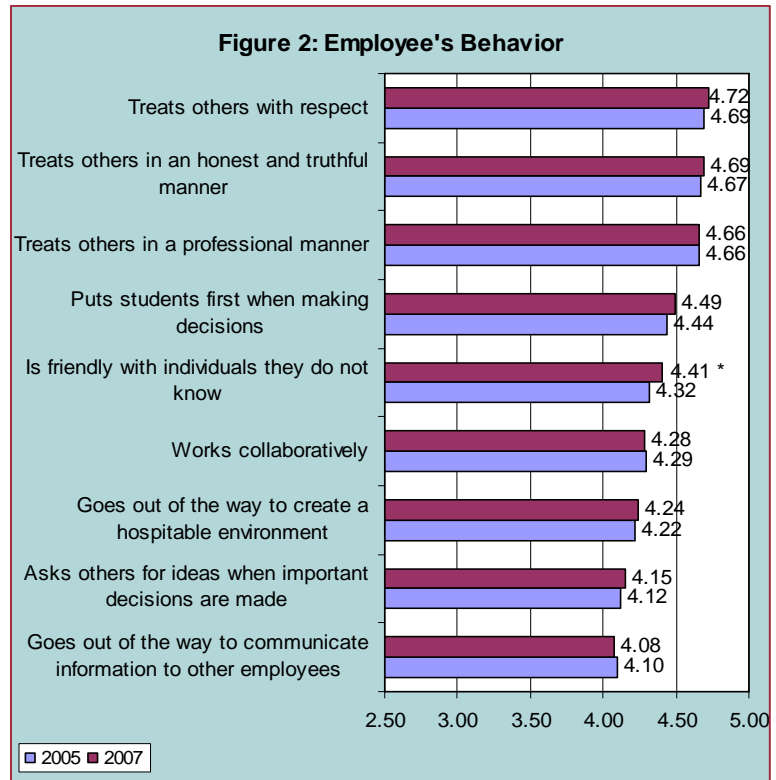
* Statistically significant difference at the .05 level.

- With the exception of the educational administrators, all the employee groups view the campus climate more friendly, tolerant, comfortable, and supportive in 2007 than in 2005.

Employees' Perceptions of their Behavior versus Other PCC Employees' Behavior

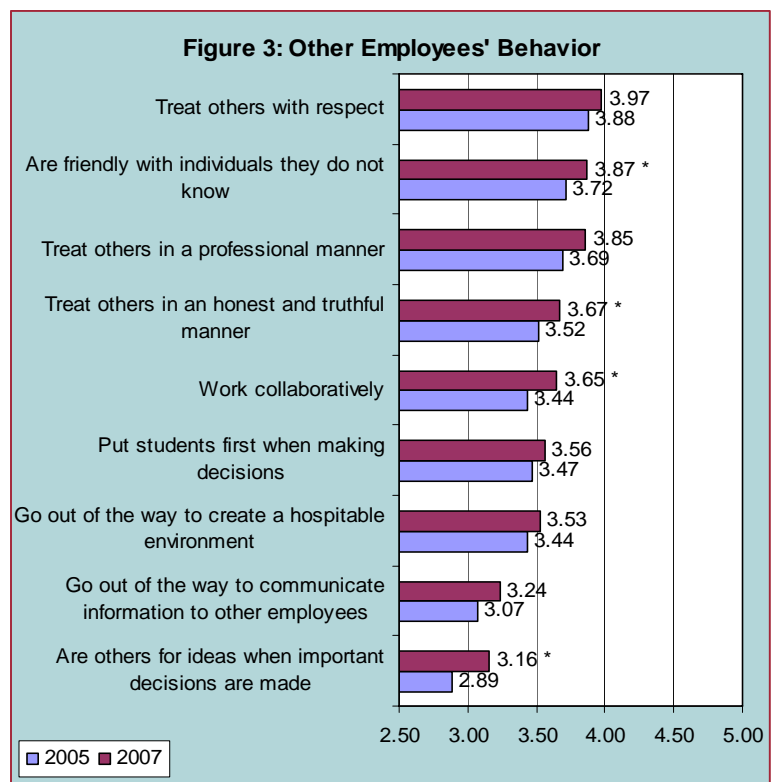
Employees' behaviors within a workplace can positively or negatively influence the climate of an institution. How often employees engage in positive behaviors are important indicators to measure when examining the campus climate. Employees were asked to indicate how often at PCC **they** are friendly, respectful, honest, etc., with others, using a five-point scale (1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, and 5 = Very Often). Overall, there are almost no differences between employees' ratings in 2007 compared to 2005 in how often **they** are friendly, respectful, honest, etc., with others at PCC (see Figure 2). Below are some findings:

- Employees report that they are more likely to treat others with respect, followed by treat others in an honest and truthful manner, and treat others in a professional manner in 2007 than in 2005.
- Employees report a significant increase in 2007 compared to 2005 in how often they are friendly with individuals they do not know.



Employees were also asked to indicate how often **other employees** are friendly, respectful, honest, etc., with others at PCC, using a five-point scale (1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, and 5 = Very Often). Overall, there are slight improvements between employees' ratings in 2007 compared to 2005. Specifically, employees report that other employees are more friendly, honest, professional, etc., with others at PCC (see Figure 3). Below are some findings:

- Employees give the highest ratings to how often **other** employees treat others with respect, followed by how often **other** employees are friendly with people they do not know, and treat others in a professional manner in 2007 and 2005.
- Employees report in 2007 that other employees are significantly more often friendly with people they do not know, honest and truthful, working collaboratively, and asking others for ideas when important decisions are made.
- The largest significant **increases** in employees' ratings in 2007 compared to 2005 are in how often **other** employees ask others for their ideas when important decisions are made and work collaboratively.



Employees' Perceptions of their Behavior versus Other PCC Employees' Behavior by Job Classification

Employees' ratings to how often they and other employees are friendly, respectful, honest, professional, etc., varied by job classification. Below are some findings (see Table 3):

- Contract faculty is the only employee group that reports that they and other employees are **more** friendly, professional, respectful, communicative, etc., with others at PCC in 2007 than in 2005.
- Certificated educational administrators is the only employee group that reports that they and other employees are **less** friendly, professional, respectful, communicative, etc., with others at PCC in 2007 than in 2005.
- With the exception of the certificated educational administrators, all employee groups think that other employees are **more** friendly, professional, respectful, communicative, etc., with others at PCC in 2007 than in 2005.
- Contract faculty report significant increases in 2007 in how often other employees treat others in an honest and truthful manner, work collaboratively, ask others for their ideas when important decisions are made, and go out of their way to communicate information.
- Hourly classified staff report that there is a significant increase in 2007 in how often other employees work collaboratively.

Table 3. Employees' Perceptions of their Behavior versus Other PCC Employees' Behavior by Job Classification

	CONTRACT FACULTY		HOURLY FACULTY		CLASSIFIED		HOURLY CLASSIFIED		MANAGER/SUPERVISOR		EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATOR	
	2005	2007	2005	2007	2005	2007	2005	2007	2005	2007	2005	2007
<i>Employee</i>												
Treats others with respect	4.66	4.75	4.76	4.77	4.71	4.61	4.59	4.80	4.57	4.79	4.80	4.47*
Treats others in an honest and truthful manner	4.62	4.72*	4.79	4.71	4.62	4.64	4.67	4.71	4.61	4.64	4.75	4.47*
Treats others in a professional manner	4.68	4.69	4.75	4.74	4.61	4.62	4.54	4.65	4.78	4.79	4.90	4.40*
Puts students first when making decisions	4.57	4.60	4.58	4.61	4.32	4.38	4.16	4.20	4.52	4.71	4.60	4.33
Is friendly with individuals they do not know	4.24	4.43*	4.33	4.38	4.38	4.34	4.26	4.45	4.52	4.64	4.60	4.47
Works collaboratively	4.28	4.32	4.09	4.01*	4.39	4.33	4.38	4.53	4.39	4.43	4.70	4.40*
Goes out of the way to create a hospitable environment	4.13	4.24	4.25	4.27	4.25	4.22	4.19	4.21	4.17	4.14	4.65	4.20*
Asks others for ideas when important decisions are made	4.19	4.21	3.95	3.98	4.18	4.23	4.08	4.05	4.22	4.50	4.42	4.27
Goes out of the way to communicate information	4.04	4.08	3.97	3.97	4.22	4.21	4.13	3.98	4.39	4.21	4.35	4.00
<i>Other Employees</i>												
Treat others with respect	3.85	3.94	4.17	4.21	3.66	3.68	4.04	4.20	3.70	3.79	3.95	3.93
Treat others in an honest and truthful manner	3.49	3.58*	3.82	3.98	3.28	3.29	3.78	4.11	3.04	3.29	3.50	3.40
Treat others in a professional manner	3.70	3.78	4.02	4.15	3.44	3.53	3.77	4.06	3.50	3.64	3.60	3.80
Put students first when making decisions	3.35	3.41	3.64	3.75	3.38	3.44	3.52	3.75	3.61	3.57	3.50	3.33
Are friendly with individuals they do not know	3.68	3.83	3.80	3.92	3.69	3.68	3.81	4.20	3.57	3.79	3.90	3.87
Work collaboratively	3.41	3.58*	3.63	3.79	3.25	3.36	3.68	4.12*	3.09	3.21	3.60	3.47
Go out of the way to create a hospitable environment	3.43	3.52	3.56	3.66	3.34	3.35	3.62	3.74	3.09	3.36	3.50	3.20
Ask others for ideas when important decisions are made	2.82	3.06*	3.22	3.36	2.49	2.83	3.13	3.52	3.14	3.29	3.45	3.20
Go out of the way to communicate information	3.01	3.20*	3.36	3.42	2.85	2.90	3.35	3.64	2.87	2.86	2.90	3.20

* Statistically significant difference at the .05 level.

Possible Action Implications for the College

- * Given that educational administrators rate the campus climate less favorably in 2007, what are some possible reasons for these findings? Are there things the College can do to improve this rating? Why did this group respond so differently than the others? Is this a reflection of the additional demands placed on this group such as planning, program review, and the development/assessment of Student Learning Outcomes/Support Services Outcomes?