

RESEARCH REPORT

Los Rios Community College District Office of Institutional Research

THE NOEL-LEVITZ STUDENT SATISFACTION INVENTORY CONDUCTED IN SPRING 2008

FINAL DRAFT

August 2008

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the spring 2008 semester, the District Office of Institutional Research collaborated with the College Research Offices to conduct the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, the fourth administration of this student satisfaction survey since 1998. Random samples of courses were drawn for each college, stratified by day and evening, in order to have a representative response from both day and evening students. These stratified random samples were also generated to closely replicate enrollment by age, gender and ethnicity. Research offices at each college administered the surveys, some with help from students. The survey results are based on responses from 1,452 students attending classes at the four colleges and at El Dorado and Natomas Centers. The student profile for 2008 is similar in many respects with the student demography for 2004, except that the student respondents in 2008 are overall much younger.

What follows is a brief summary of the survey findings:

- Survey results point to many strengths at the four colleges. These include students' satisfaction with the quality of instruction, faculty who are knowledgeable in their fields, access to faculty after class and during office hours, adequacy of library resources and services, and the opportunities for intellectual growth. Additionally, each college has particular strengths;
- Survey results also suggest possible areas of concern. These are scheduling of classes, the knowledge level of academic advisors with transfer and program requirements, emergency response by security staff, and students' perception of college response in helping them to reach their educational goals. At three of the colleges, parking and security issues continue to be of concern;
- Improvements in student satisfaction with specific areas surveyed have occurred since the 2004 survey. They vary by college but some examples are faculty understanding of students' life circumstances and their availability after class and during office hours, the timeliness of financial aid award announcements, accessibility and adequacy of computer labs and of up-to-date lab equipment, other facility improvements, and clarity of policies and procedures for registration and course selection;
- The most important factor in student decision to enroll at LRCCD is cost. Financial aid, the college's academic reputation, and geographic setting are also important factors;
- Of the 70 survey questions merged into 11 composite scales or experiences, student responses indicate seven areas as being "important" and the remaining four areas as "somewhat important," with no area considered either "neutral" or "unimportant";
- On the average, students seem to be "somewhat satisfied" or close to "somewhat satisfied" with the specific areas surveyed in the inventory and there is no indication of student dissatisfaction on any composite scale;
- Compared with students nationally and at other California community colleges, students at LRCCD are more likely to respond positively to the question of whether they would enroll again at the same college were they to do it over again.

Overall, there are positive indications that the past downward trend in student satisfaction appears to be reversing. Students in 2008 seem to have higher satisfaction levels on the major composite areas they deem important, including their perception of the colleges' commitment to various groups of non-traditional students. Increases in satisfaction do vary by college but taken as a whole and in conjunction with student responses to summary questions on expectation, overall satisfaction, and enrollment, the results do suggest strongly that student satisfaction levels have improved since 2004.

Introduction

During the spring 2008 semester, the District Office of Institutional Research collaborated with the College Research Offices to conduct the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, the fourth administration of this student satisfaction survey since 1998. Random samples of courses were drawn for each college, stratified by day and evening, in order to have a representative response from both day and evening students. These stratified random samples were also generated to closely replicate enrollment by age, gender and ethnicity. Research offices at each college administered the surveys, some with help from students. To ensure that the survey would be administered in the same way at each location, the District Office provided each college with an instruction sheet that was read to the students and the glossary of terms, originally developed for the 2004 survey, to ensure that our students would better understand the questions being asked in the survey (see Table 1 in the appendix).

Who participated in the 2008 survey?

The results were based on responses from 1,452 students attending classes at the four colleges and at El Dorado and Natomas Centers. Responses from students at the El Dorado Center were combined with those of students at FLC while responses from students at the Natomas Center were combined with those of students at ARC. In order to achieve a desirable sample size for the survey, numerical targets were established for each college and center.

Below are some highlights of students who participated in the 2008 survey:

- Gender: a greater proportion of female than male students
- Age Groups: more than half of the students are ages 19 to 24 years
- Academic Load: more than half are full-time students, except at ARC
- Primary Time of Attendance: students attending primarily during the day
- Class Level: 40% are in their first year of attendance
- Employment: 70% of the students are employed off campus, either full-time or part-time
- Academic Goal: more than half of the students report transfer as their goal
- College of Choice: the majority of students report that the college they are attending is their first choice

Compared with the student profile in 2004, there are some differences. These are:

- A smaller proportion of students in the 2008 survey are ages 35 years or above (15% in 2008; 23% in 2004)
- A larger proportion of students in the 2008 survey indicate transfer as their goal (59% in 2008; 52% in 2004)
- A smaller proportion of students in the 2008 survey report they are living at their own house (17% in 2008; 25% in 2004)

Again as in the 2004 survey, the most noticeable demographic difference among the survey respondents is in the different ethnic mix of respondents at the colleges. There are far more ethnic minority respondents at CRC and SCC than there are at ARC and FLC. For a detailed look at each of the demographic questions asked of respondents in the 2008 survey, please refer to Table 2 in the appendix.

Factors in Student Decision to Enroll

The most important factor in student decision to enroll at LRCCD is cost. The availability of financial aid, the college's academic reputation, and geographic setting are also important factors. At FLC, however, the availability of financial aid is, on the average, lower in importance, than factors such as the geographic setting and campus appearance.

Composite Experiences of Importance at LRCCD

Noel-Levitz collapses the questions on the survey into 11 composite scales or experiences. These include: Academic Advising/Counseling; Academic/Learning Resource Services; Admissions and Financial Aid; Campus Climate; Campus Support Services; Concern for the Individual; Instructional Effectiveness; Registration Effectiveness; Safety and Security; Service Excellence (attitude of staff toward students, especially front-line staff); and Student Centeredness (campus effort to convey to students that they are important to college). The survey provides a 12th area, but only for a satisfaction measure, about Responsiveness to Diverse Populations; there is no equivalent importance measure for this area.

Students rate each item in terms of their importance to them and on how satisfied they are. The response scale for importance ranges from "1" (Not Important at All) to a high of "7" (Very Important). For items that are not applicable to the student, there is a selection called "Does Not Apply." For satisfaction, the response scale ranges from a low of "1" (Not Satisfied at All) to a high of "7" (Very Satisfied). For particular services that may not be offered or used by the students, there is a selection called "Not Available/Not Used."

Mean Level of Importance

The following composite areas (ranked in descending order) are considered “important” by the student respondents at LRCCD:

- Academic Advising/Counseling
- Instructional Effectiveness
- Safety and Security
- Registration Effectiveness
- Academic Services
- Concern for the Individual
- Admissions and Financial Aid

Lower in importance but still “somewhat important” are:

- Service Excellence
- Campus Climate
- Student Centeredness
- Campus Support Services

It would appear that there are no composite areas considered either “neutral” or “unimportant” by the student respondents.

Mean Level of Satisfaction

In terms of satisfaction, the students seem to indicate that for the most part they are “somewhat satisfied.” The composite areas which elicited the “somewhat satisfied” responses (ranked in descending order of satisfaction) are as follows:

- Academic Services
- Registration Effectiveness
- Responsiveness to Diverse Populations
- Instructional Effectiveness
- Student Centeredness
- Campus Climate
- Service Excellence

Composite areas which are close to the rating of “somewhat satisfied” are:

- Concern for the Individual
- Academic Advising/Counseling
- Safety and Security
- Admissions and Financial Aid
- Campus Support Services

There seems to be no composite areas receiving dissatisfaction ratings.

Gaps between Importance and Satisfaction

Noel-Levitz suggests that educational institutions look closely at composite areas showing gaps that are 1.25 points or higher between the mean levels of importance and satisfaction. These areas may be worthwhile in reviewing as possible concerns. At LRCCD, the two composite areas which may indicate possible concerns are “Safety and Security” (with a gap of 1.41 points) and “Academic Advising/Counseling” (with a gap of 1.29 points). Although the composite area of “Admissions and Financial Aid” appears to not reach the threshold, it is very close with a gap of 1.23 points and may possibly also be worth reviewing as an area of concern.

Comparisons with State and National Level Data

In comparison with results from Noel-Levitz surveys administered within the past three years at community colleges nationally, it does appear that students at LRCCD show somewhat lower satisfaction in the composite areas assessed, except for “Academic Services” and “Registration Effectiveness” where they are about the same. Further, the national results reveal that the largest discrepancies between importance and satisfaction levels are in the same areas as those seen in the survey of students at LRCCD, namely “Safety and Security,” “Academic Advising/Counseling,” and “Admissions and Financial Aid.” In other words, these are areas of importance to students across the country but they are on average only somewhat satisfied.

When the LRCCD survey results on composite areas are contrasted with those from other California community colleges, the level of satisfaction is quite similar. Moreover, in three composite areas, students at LRCCD indicate higher levels of satisfaction. These areas are “Safety and Security,” “Academic Services,” and “Registration Effectiveness.”

The numerical ratings for the composite areas for each college, the district, the California community colleges, and community colleges nationally, are summarized in Table 3, located in the appendix.

Comparisons with Spring 2004

When the results from the spring 2008 survey are compared with those of four years ago, it is clear from Charts 1a and 1b below that student satisfaction has increased on all composite scales or areas. Chart 1a displays the scales rated by students as “important” while Chart 1b shows the remaining scales rated by students as “somewhat important.” Please note that students are not asked to rate the importance of the scale on “Responsiveness to Diverse Populations.”

Chart 1a: Mean Levels of Satisfaction at LRCCD on Composite Scales Considered Important: 2004 and 2008

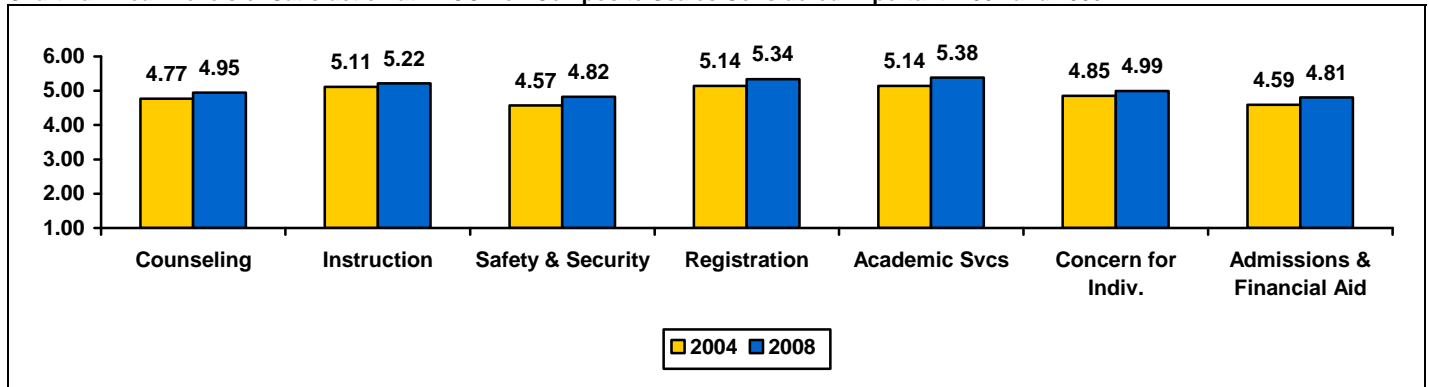
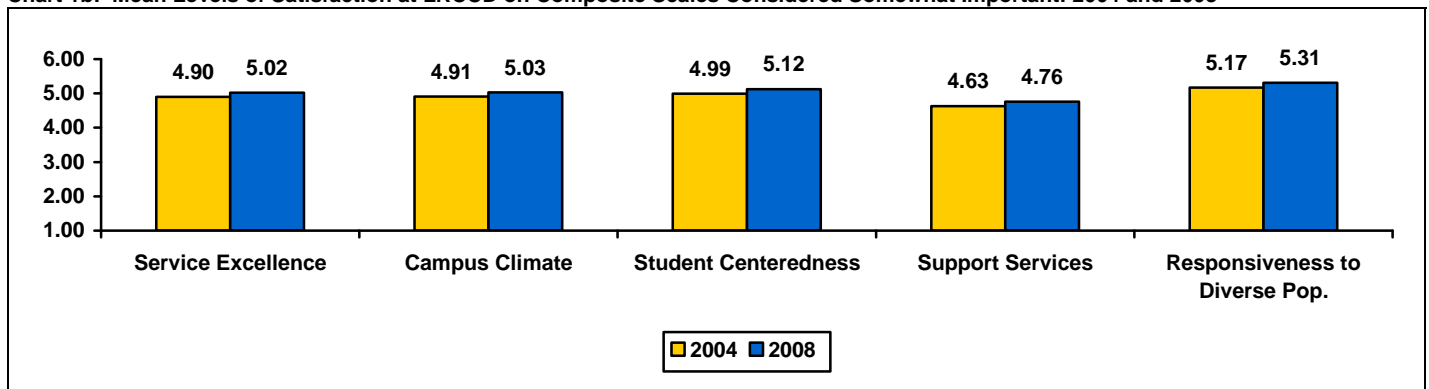


Chart 1b: Mean Levels of Satisfaction at LRCCD on Composite Scales Considered Somewhat Important: 2004 and 2008



* Mean Satisfaction Scores: 1 = Not Satisfied at All; 2 = Not Very Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Dissatisfied; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat Satisfied; 6 = Satisfied; and 7 = Very Satisfied. There is also a selection called “Not Available/Not Used.”

College Results

What follows is a closer look at the survey items for each college. It is this more detailed review which can help each college to better understand student perceptions of specific areas and to use the results for campus planning and improvement, as well as student follow-up, where needed.

Beginning this year, Noel-Levitz has provided a new report summarizing areas of strengths and areas of challenges from the results of individual survey items. The strengths are those items with relatively high importance and high satisfaction (defined as above the mid-point in importance and in the upper 25 percent of satisfaction scores). In contrast, the challenges are those items with relatively high importance but lower satisfaction or large performance gaps (defined as above the mid-point in importance and in the lower 25 percent of satisfaction scores or the top 25 percent of performance gap scores). Also summarized below for each college are the 2008 survey results compared with the 2004 results, listing specific areas where improvements in satisfaction have occurred and any areas showing declines.

American River College

Fifteen specific areas have been identified as strengths. The top ten strengths, in descending order of importance, are:

- The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent
- Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students
- There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus
- I am able to experience intellectual growth here
- Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their fields
- Program requirements are clear and reasonable
- Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours
- Library resources and services are adequate
- Class change (drop/add) policies are reasonable
- Computer labs are adequate and accessible

Fifteen areas have been identified as possible sources of challenge. Please see each college's breakout report for the complete list. The top ten areas, in descending order of importance, are:

- Classes are scheduled at times that are convenient for me
- The campus is safe and secure for all students
- I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts
- My academic advisor is knowledgeable about my program requirements
- The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate
- Parking lots are well-lighted and secure
- My academic advisor is knowledgeable about the transfer requirements of other schools
- Adequate financial aid is available for most students
- Security staff respond quickly in emergencies
- This school does whatever it can to help me reach my educational goals

Since the 2004 Survey, there have been improvements in satisfaction levels on ten areas surveyed. These are reported below, with areas showing greater improvements at the top and those with modest improvements further down the list.

- Faculty are understanding of students' unique life circumstances
- The equipment in the lab facilities is kept up to date
- There are convenient ways of paying my school bill
- Financial aid awards are announced to students in time to be helpful in college planning
- Financial aid counselors are helpful
- Faculty take into consideration student differences as they teach a course
- Tutoring services are readily available
- Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours
- Billing policies are reasonable
- Admissions staff are knowledgeable

There does not appear to be any areas of decline between the two time periods.

Cosumnes River College

Sixteen areas have been identified as strengths. In descending order of importance, the top ten strengths are:

- The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent
- I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts
- There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus
- I am able to experience intellectual growth here
- Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their fields
- Policies and procedures regarding registration and course selection are clear and well-publicized
- Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours
- Program requirements are clear and reasonable
- Library resources and services are adequate
- On the whole, the campus is well-maintained

Thirteen areas have been identified as possible sources of challenge. The top ten, again in descending order of importance, are:

- Classes are scheduled at times that are convenient for me
- The campus is safe and secure for all students
- My academic advisor is knowledgeable about the transfer requirements of other schools
- My academic advisor is knowledgeable about my program requirements
- Parking lots are well-lighted and secure
- The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate
- Security staff respond quickly in emergencies
- My academic advisor helps me set goals to work toward.
- This school does whatever it can to help me reach my educational goals
- Students are notified early in the term if they are doing poorly in a class

Since the 2004 Survey, there have been improvements in satisfaction levels on 44 areas assessed by the inventory. The ten areas showing the most improvement in satisfaction levels (in descending order) are:

- Computer labs are adequate and accessible
- The quality of instruction in the vocational/technical programs is excellent
- Policies and procedures regarding registration and course selection are clear and well-publicized
- The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate
- Adequate financial aid is available for most students
- There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus
- Faculty take into consideration student differences as they teach a course
- There are a sufficient number of study areas on campus
- Billing policies are reasonable
- The equipment in the lab facilities is kept up to date

There are no declines between the two time periods in student satisfaction on any of the specific areas surveyed.

Folsom Lake College

Fourteen areas have been identified as strengths. The top ten strengths, in descending order of importance, are:

- The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent
- Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their fields
- I am able to experience intellectual growth here
- The campus is safe and secure for all students
- Library resources and services are adequate
- Policies and procedures regarding registration and course selection are clear and well-publicized
- Class change (drop/add) policies are reasonable
- Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours
- On the whole, the campus is well-maintained
- Computer labs are adequate and accessible

Twelve areas have been identified as possible sources of challenge. The top ten possible sources, again in descending order of importance, are:

- I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts
- Classes are scheduled at times that are convenient for me.
- There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus
- My academic advisor is knowledgeable about the transfer requirements of other schools
- My academic advisor is knowledgeable about my program requirements
- Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course
- Students are notified early in the term if they are doing poorly in a class
- This school does whatever it can to help me reach my educational goals
- Security staff respond quickly in emergencies
- My academic advisor helps me set goals to work toward

Since the 2004 Survey, there have been improvements in satisfaction on 33 areas. The top ten areas showing the greatest improvement (in descending order) are:

- The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate
- There are a sufficient number of study areas on campus
- The student center is a comfortable place for students to spend their leisure time
- College's commitment to students with disabilities
- Computer labs are adequate and accessible
- There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus
- Tutoring services are readily available
- The equipment in the lab facilities is kept up to date
- Parking lots are well-lighted and secure
- Library resources and services are adequate

There is one area surveyed showing a drop in satisfaction. It is the following:

- Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course

Sacramento City College

Fifteen areas have been identified as strengths. In descending order of importance, the top ten strengths are:

- The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent
- I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts
- Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their fields
- I am able to experience intellectual growth here
- There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus
- Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students
- Library resources and services are adequate
- Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours
- Computer labs are adequate and accessible
- Policies and procedures regarding registration and course selection are clear and well-publicized

Fifteen areas have been identified as possible sources of challenge. In descending order of importance, the top ten areas are:

- Classes are scheduled at times that are convenient for me
- My academic advisor is knowledgeable about the transfer requirements of other schools
- The campus is safe and secure for all students
- The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate
- My academic advisor is knowledgeable about my program requirements
- Parking lots are well-lighted and secure
- Adequate financial aid is available for most students
- This school does whatever it can to help me reach my educational goals
- Security staff respond quickly in emergencies
- My academic advisor helps me set goals to work toward

Since the 2004 Survey, there have been improvements in satisfaction on five areas assessed by the inventory. These are in descending order of improvement:

- The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate
- Parking lots are well-lighted and secure
- Financial aid awards are announced to students in time to be helpful in college planning
- College's commitment to commuters
- Academic support services adequately meet the needs of students

Between the two time periods, there are no declines in the level of student satisfaction on any of the areas surveyed.

A note of caution is needed in interpreting the survey results from SCC. Although each college was requested to survey an equal number of students according to a stratified random sampling design, the return rate from SCC was at least 16 to 25 percent lower than those from the other three colleges. A closer review of the student profile for the two time periods reveals that in 2008 there are a higher proportion of transfer students and a lower proportion of occupational-related students compared with the 2004 sample. In addition, the 2008 sample includes a higher percentage of students who report that SCC is their second or third choice college. These differences in student profile and the smaller sample size may in some way affect the overall results at SCC.

General Comparisons to Levels of Satisfaction in Previous Years

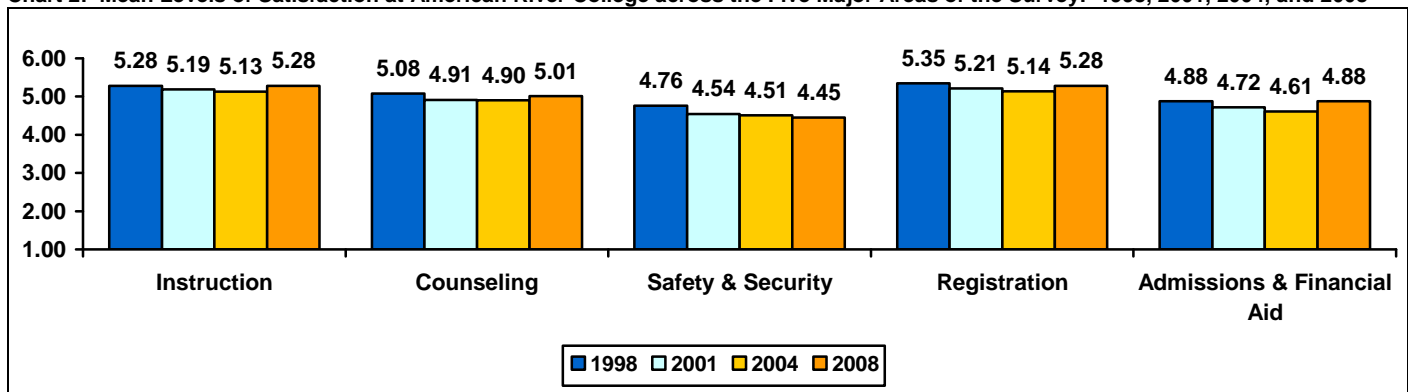
The 2004 report provided a comparison of student satisfaction with previous survey administrations on five major composite areas. These composite areas are:

- Instructional Effectiveness
- Academic Advising/Counseling
- Safety and Security
- Registration Effectiveness
- Admissions and Financial Aid

The charts below added the 2008 results so that comparisons can be made with the surveys administered in 1998, 2001, and 2004.

At American River College, the results in Chart 2 appear to indicate that the downward trend from 1998 to 2004 is reversing although the difference in satisfaction levels between 2004 and 2008 only reached significance (based on statistical tests) for “Admissions & Financial Aid.” Nevertheless, the trend is optimistic, and the slight decrease in mean satisfaction level for “Safety & Security” between 2004 and 2008 is not significant.

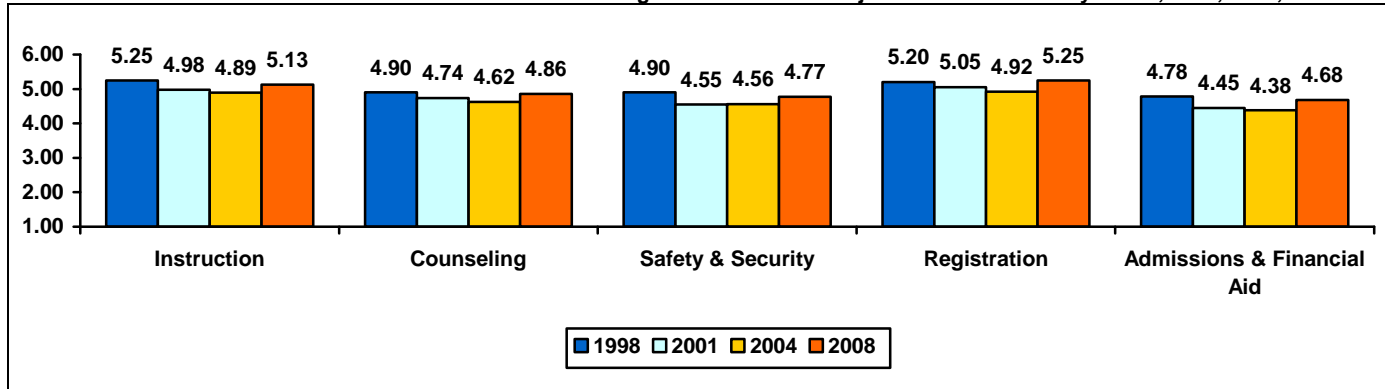
Chart 2: Mean Levels of Satisfaction at American River College across the Five Major Areas of the Survey: 1998, 2001, 2004, and 2008



* Mean Satisfaction Scores: 1 = Not Satisfied at All; 2 = Not Very Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Dissatisfied; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat Satisfied; 6 = Satisfied; and 7 = Very Satisfied. There is also a selection called “Not Available/Not Used.”

At Cosumnes River College, Chart 3 seems to show a similar positive trend. In this case, the increases in satisfaction levels from 2004 to 2008 are all significant.

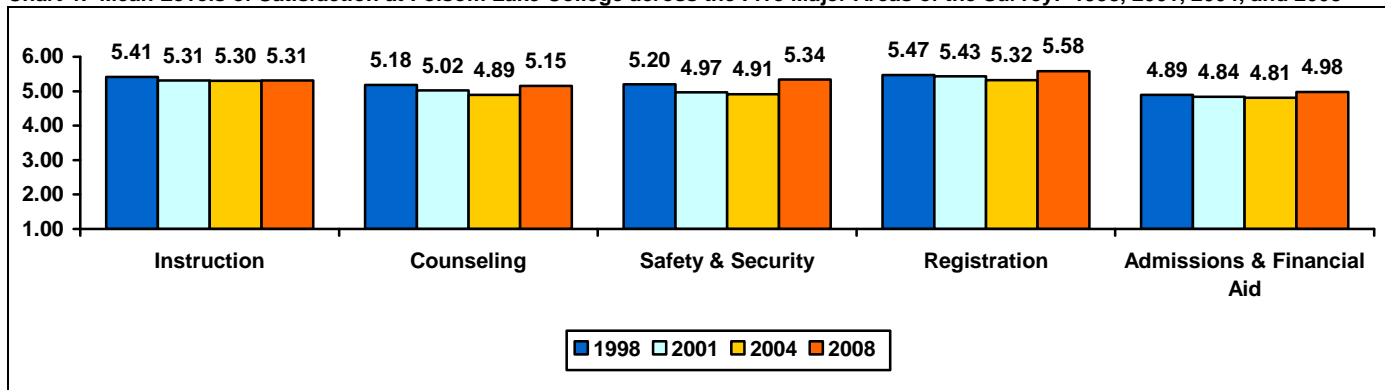
Chart 3: Mean Levels of Satisfaction at Cosumnes River College across the Five Major Areas of the Survey: 1998, 2001, 2004, and 2008



* Mean Satisfaction Scores: 1 = Not Satisfied at All; 2 = Not Very Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Dissatisfied; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat Satisfied; 6 = Satisfied; and 7 = Very Satisfied. There is also a selection called "Not Available/Not Used."

Chart 4 shows overall improvements in mean levels of student satisfaction at Folsom Lake College since 2004. The increases are in "Counseling," "Safety & Security," and "Registration" while staying about the same for "Instruction" and "Admissions & Financial Aid."

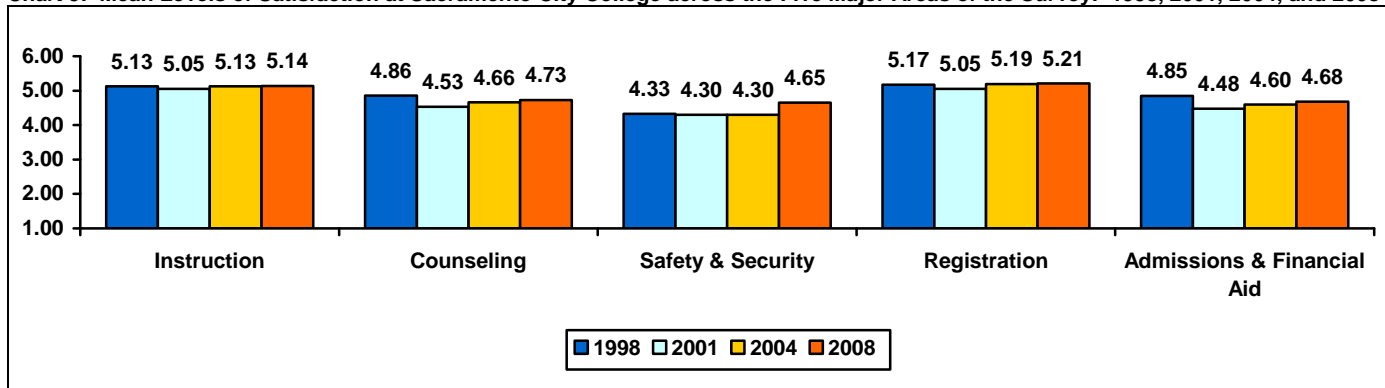
Chart 4: Mean Levels of Satisfaction at Folsom Lake College across the Five Major Areas of the Survey: 1998, 2001, 2004, and 2008



* Mean Satisfaction Scores: 1 = Not Satisfied at All; 2 = Not Very Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Dissatisfied; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat Satisfied; 6 = Satisfied; and 7 = Very Satisfied. There is also a selection called "Not Available/Not Used."

At Sacramento City College (Chart 5 below), the mean level of satisfaction has increased since 2004 in "Safety and Security," while staying about the same for the other composite areas.

Chart 5: Mean Levels of Satisfaction at Sacramento City College across the Five Major Areas of the Survey: 1998, 2001, 2004, and 2008

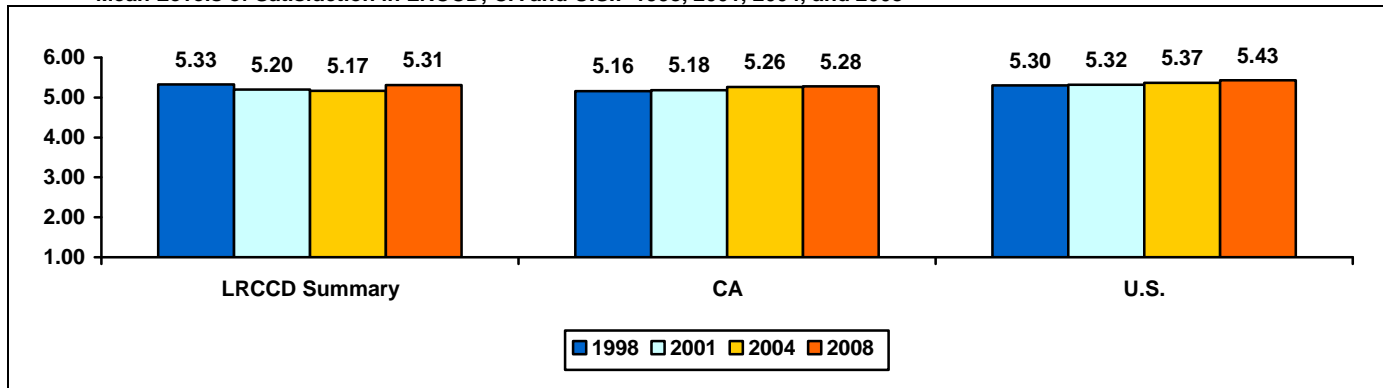


* Mean Satisfaction Scores: 1 = Not Satisfied at All; 2 = Not Very Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Dissatisfied; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat Satisfied; 6 = Satisfied; and 7 = Very Satisfied. There is also a selection called "Not Available/Not Used."

Responsiveness to Diverse Populations

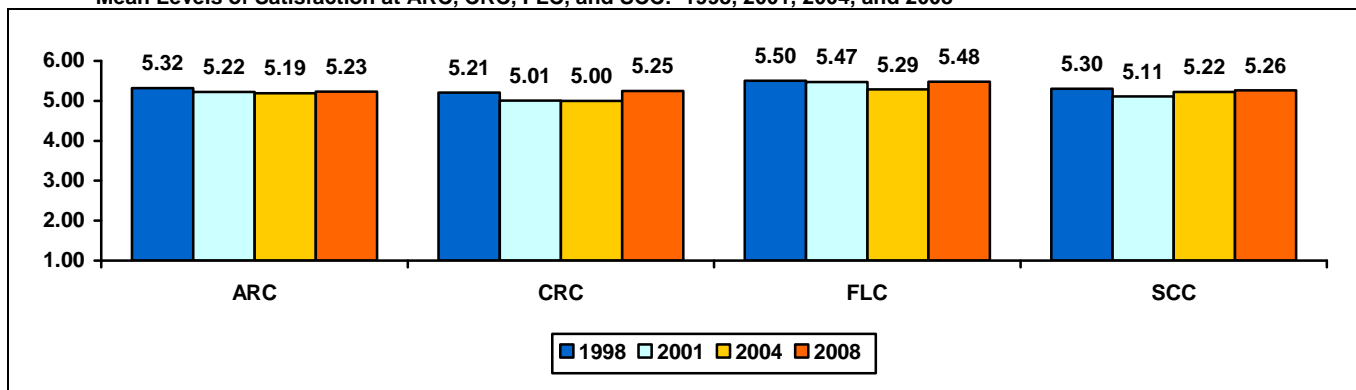
On the survey items asking students to rate their perception of the institution's commitment to various groups of non-traditional students, the results for LRCCD in 2008 (see Chart 6 below) appear to be about the same as that of 1998, reversing the declines that occurred in 2001 and 2004. In comparison with the national results, however, student respondents at LRCCD report somewhat lower satisfaction but the results are comparable with other California colleges.

Chart 6: Responsiveness to Diverse Populations --
Mean Levels of Satisfaction in LRCCD, CA and U.S.: 1998, 2001, 2004, and 2008



At the colleges, the mean level of satisfaction seems to be moving in a positive direction (Chart 7 below). At CRC and FLC, there have been increases since 2004, while the satisfaction level at ARC and SCC has remained about the same.

Chart 7: Responsiveness to Diverse Populations --
Mean Levels of Satisfaction at ARC, CRC, FLC, and SCC: 1998, 2001, 2004, and 2008



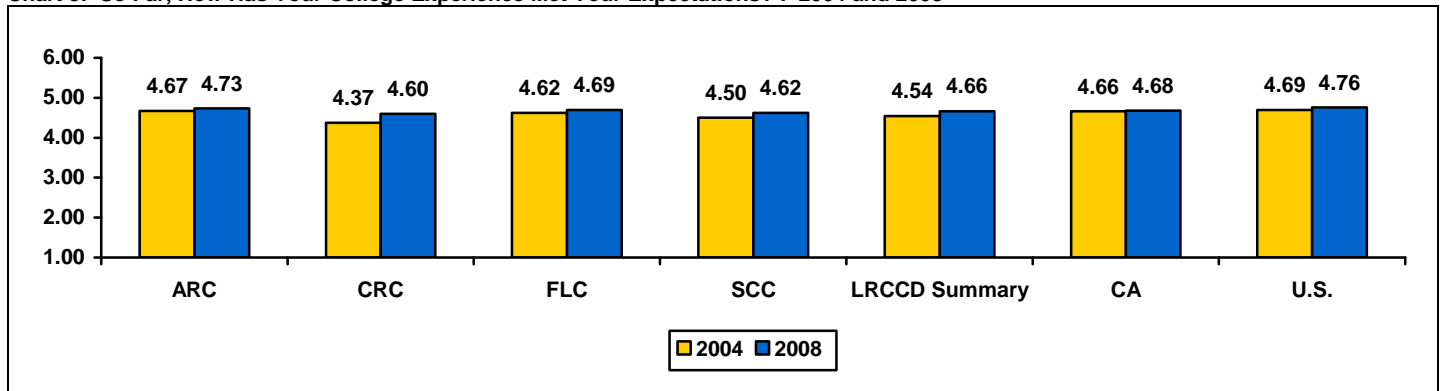
* Mean Satisfaction Scores: 1 = Not Satisfied at All; 2 = Not Very Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Dissatisfied; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat Satisfied; 6 = Satisfied; and 7 = Very Satisfied. There is also a selection called "Not Available/Not Used."

Summary Satisfaction

Three summary questions are asked of all students who complete the survey. The charts below display the average response of respondents in 2004 and in 2008 at each college, the district, California colleges, and community colleges nationally.

Chart 8 below shows a positive change since 2004 at the four colleges in how well the college experience has met student expectations. The mean scores in 2008 have slightly moved beyond the mid-range toward the response of "Better than I expected," for all colleges, with the change at CRC and for the district being significant. The 2008 district results are comparable with the California colleges but lower than those of community colleges nationally.

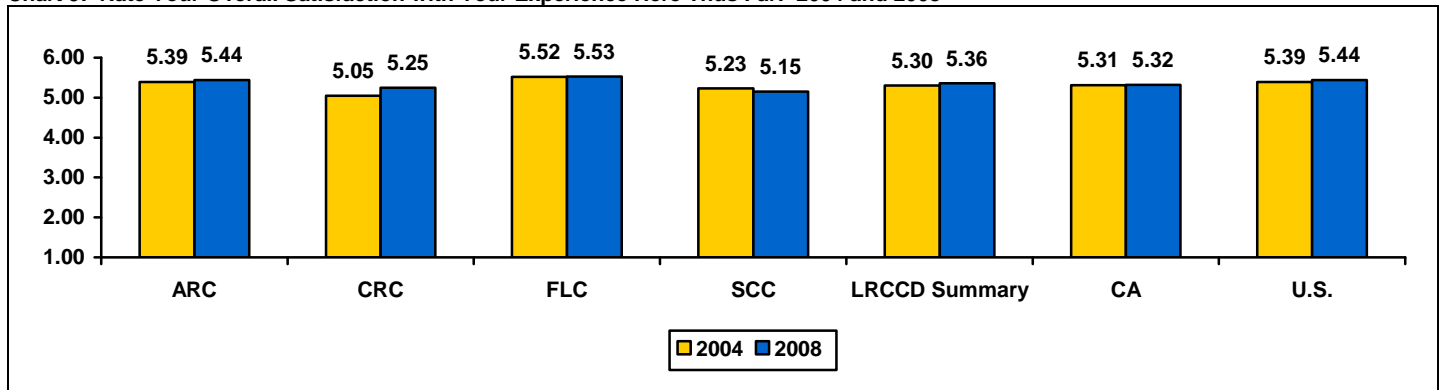
Chart 8: So Far, How Has Your College Experience Met Your Expectations? : 2004 and 2008



* Response Scores: 1 = Much Worse than I Expected; 2 = Quite a Bit Worse than I Expected; 3 = Worse than I Expected; 4 = About What I Expected; 5 = Better than I Expected; 6 = Quite a Bit Better than I Expected; 7 = Much Better than What I Expected.

Chart 9 summarizes the results in 2004 and 2008 of responses to the question of student’s overall satisfaction with their college experience thus far. The mean scores are in the range of “Somewhat satisfied” to “Satisfied,” with the increase in satisfaction significant at CRC while staying about the same at the other colleges. Again, the results for the district in 2008 are similar with those of the California community colleges while lower compared with community colleges nationally.

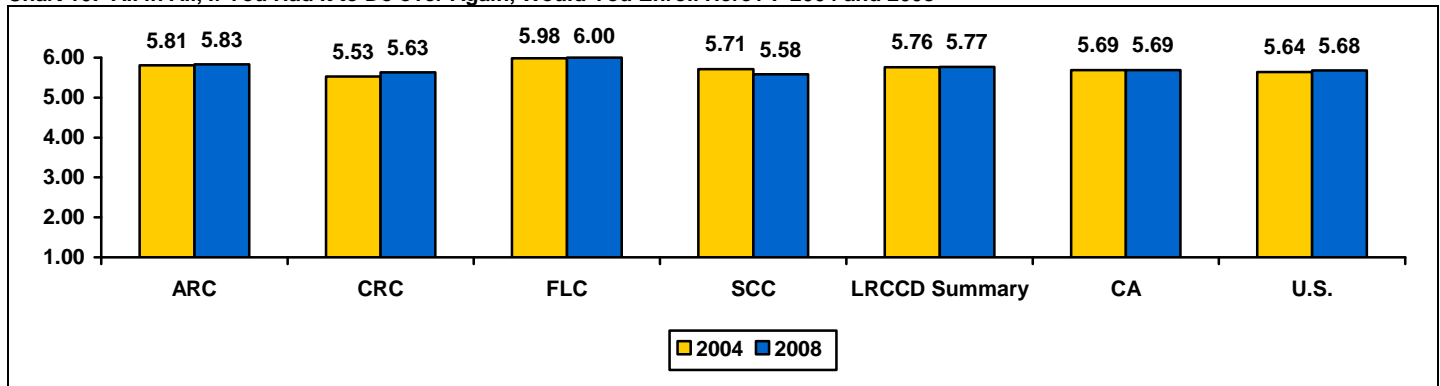
Chart 9: Rate Your Overall Satisfaction with Your Experience Here Thus Far: 2004 and 2008



* Response Scores: 1 = Not Satisfied at All; 2 = Not Very Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Dissatisfied; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat Satisfied; 6 = Satisfied; 7 = Very Satisfied.

Chart 10 shows the results in 2004 and 2008 of student responses to the question of whether they would enroll at the same college if they had to do it over again. The mean scores are comparable for both time periods, with students leaning toward the response choice of “Probably Yes.” The results for the district are higher than both the California community colleges and community colleges nationally.

Chart 10: All in All, If You Had It to Do over Again, Would You Enroll Here? : 2004 and 2008



* Response Scores: 1 = Definitely Not; 2 = Probably Not; 3 = Maybe Not; 4 = I Don't Know; 5 = Maybe Yes; 6 = Probably Yes; 7 = Definitely Yes.

Conclusions

Overall, the results from the 2008 Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory have been positive. Of the 11 composite areas assessed by the survey, students rate seven areas as being "important" and the remaining four as being "somewhat important." Students' mean satisfaction scores indicate that they are "somewhat satisfied" with six of these composite areas and close to "somewhat satisfied" with the remaining five. Additionally, students are "somewhat satisfied" with the colleges' responsiveness to diverse populations. On the average, there appears to be no indication of student dissatisfaction with any of the composite areas.

The survey results also point to many strengths at the four colleges. These include students' satisfaction with the quality of instruction, faculty who are knowledgeable in their fields, access to faculty after class and during office hours, adequacy of library resources and services, and the opportunities to experience intellectual growth. Further, the students are satisfied with the "good variety of courses provided" at ARC, CRC, and SCC. In contrast, students at FLC are satisfied with campus safety and security.

In addition to identifying strengths, the survey results also suggest possible areas of concern. These are areas in which there is a wide gap between students' rating of importance of the area and their satisfaction level. At all four colleges, the following areas may be sources of concern: scheduling of classes, the knowledge level of academic advisors with transfer and program requirements, emergency response by security staff, and students' perception of college's response in helping them to reach their educational goals. At ARC, CRC, and SCC, two other possible areas of concern are campus safety/security and adequacy of parking spaces while at FLC, it may be the variety of courses provided. Registration for classes with few conflicts may be an area of concern at ARC and FLC but it is an area of strength at CRC and SCC.

Since 2004 when the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory was last conducted, there have been improvements in a wide range of specific areas surveyed. At ARC, students' level of satisfaction is higher with faculty. Areas noted are faculty understanding of students' life circumstances, their response to student differences in classroom instruction, and availability after class and during office hours. The level of satisfaction is also higher with the convenience of paying school bills, the timeliness of financial aid award announcements, the helpfulness of financial aid counselors and admissions staff, and with up-to-date lab equipment. At CRC, student satisfaction level is higher in 2008 for specific areas such as the accessibility and adequacy of computer labs and up-to-date lab equipment, quality of instruction in the vocational/technical programs, clear and well-publicized policies and procedures for registration and course selection, the amount of student parking space on campus, and adequate financial aid. At FLC, numerous campus facilities have seen improvements in student satisfaction levels. Examples are adequacy of student parking space on campus, sufficient number of study areas, the student center, accessibility and adequacy of computer labs, and up-to-date lab equipment. Also receiving a higher level of student satisfaction at FLC is the college's commitment to students with disabilities as well as the availability of tutoring services. Despite parking and campus safety being identified as possible areas of concern at SCC (as noted in a paragraph above), satisfaction levels with these two areas have indeed risen since 2004. Also showing improvements at SCC are timeliness of financial aid award announcements, adequacy of academic support services, and perceptions of the college's commitment to commuters.

In 2004, results from the survey appear to show a downward trend in student satisfaction with five major composite areas of importance. These areas are "Instructional Effectiveness," "Academic Advising/Counseling," "Safety and Security," "Registration Effectiveness," and "Admissions and Financial Aid." Although the increases in mean satisfaction scores between 2004 and 2008 appear to vary by composite area and by college, there are overall positive signs that the declines appear to be reversing. This pattern can be seen also with student perception of the college's commitment to various groups of non-traditional students.

These positive results are further reflected in student responses to the summary questions of whether their expectations have been met, their overall level of satisfaction, and whether they would enroll again at the same college if they had to do it over again. In fact, for the last question, students at LRCCD are more likely to report that they would enroll again at the same college than students nationally or at the other California community colleges.

The improvement in student satisfaction and the range of college strengths that have been identified are reasons for celebration and point to the many effective strategies which have been implemented at the colleges. Those areas that have been noted as possible challenges can be further explored by campus review teams to better understand the dynamics underlying the concerns and plans developed to address them. These efforts and activities can then be assessed in the next round of student surveys, scheduled for 2011. With an ongoing cycle of data gathering, assessment, action, and then re-assessment, it supports the district's commitment to institutional improvement based upon evidence and provides valuable data in addressing the accreditation standards set by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and College.

This Report on the *Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory Conducted in Spring 2008* was written by Flora Yen, Director, Office of Institutional Research (IR). The author gratefully acknowledges the work of Minh La, IT Analyst II for Institutional Research, who provided the stratified random sample of classes for this survey; Betty Glycer-Culver, Research Analyst, who coordinated the survey administration from the district office, the College Research Offices which administered the survey at each of the colleges; the students who assisted with survey administration in the classrooms, and Peg Scott who managed the survey administration for American River College. A special note of thanks goes to the many students who participated in the survey throughout the district and the faculty members who agreed to have the survey conducted in their classes. For additional copies of this report, please call (916) 568-3131 or send an email message to IR@losrios.edu. Visit our website at <http://irweb.losrios.edu>. Each college's summary breakout report is also available in the College Research Offices.

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APPENDIX

Table 1: Glossary of Terms to Help Students Answer the Questions on the Survey

Term Used on The Survey	Equals the following LRCCD Term
Academic Advisor	Counselor in Counseling Center or in EOPS, DSPS, Cal Works or Athletic offices
Academic Support Services	Learning Resources (such as Library Services, Tutoring Services, etc.)
Admissions Counselor	College Representative/Counselor Who Helps You Make Decisions About Attending Our College
Faculty	Instructor/Professor
Financial Aid Counselor	Financial Aid Staff
Enrollment Status	When you take the majority of your classes: Day = Up to 4:30 PM Evening = After 4:30 PM Weekend = Saturday & Sunday
Full-Time	Taking 12 Units or More
Part-Time	Taking less than 12 Units

Table 2: Demography as Reported by Respondents on the 2008 Survey

	ARC	CRC	FLC	SCC	District Summary
Gender					
Female	65.14%	56.12%	60.71%	51.58%	58.70%
Male	34.86%	43.88%	39.29%	48.42%	41.30%
Ethnicity					
African American	5.14%	7.16%	0.51%	12.46%	5.88%
Native American	3.43%	0.77%	2.31%	1.07%	1.91%
Asian	12.29%	31.71%	7.20%	24.20%	18.64%
Hispanic	9.43%	12.79%	7.46%	14.59%	10.84%
White	50.29%	34.27%	68.64%	30.60%	46.99%
Other	8.29%	7.67%	6.43%	6.05%	7.16%
Preferred not to respond	11.14%	5.63%	7.46%	11.03%	8.58%
Age					
18 and under	7.76%	11.20%	22.22%	10.21%	13.17%
19 to 24	49.43%	54.96%	54.26%	63.73%	55.17%
25 to 34	24.71%	15.78%	11.37%	15.14%	16.64%
35 to 44	10.92%	9.41%	6.20%	5.63%	8.14%
45 and over	7.18%	8.65%	5.94%	5.28%	6.87%
Full-Time vs. Part-Time					
Full-time	47.43%	57.29%	61.86%	58.87%	56.41%
Part-time	52.57%	42.71%	38.14%	41.13%	43.59%
Primary Time of Attendance					
Day	59.82%	77.43%	66.67%	77.74%	70.18%
Evening	39.59%	21.78%	33.06%	20.44%	29.01%
Weekend	0.59%	0.79%	0.27%	1.82%	0.81%

Table 2 (continued)

Demography of Respondents	ARC	CRC	FLC	SCC	District Summary
Years in Attendance					
1 year or less	42.29%	40.10%	47.31%	44.06%	43.43%
2 years	31.14%	33.16%	31.97%	28.32%	31.36%
3 years	16.57%	15.42%	13.04%	14.34%	14.83%
4 or more years	10.00%	11.31%	7.67%	13.29%	10.38%
Employment					
Full-time, off-campus	38.79%	25.32%	32.73%	30.18%	31.66%
Part-time, off-campus	34.77%	39.13%	45.88%	38.25%	39.73%
Full-time, on-campus	0.29%	0.77%	0.52%	1.05%	0.64%
Part-time on-campus	4.02%	3.32%	1.03%	4.21%	3.05%
Not employed	22.13%	31.46%	19.85%	26.32%	24.93%
Goal					
Associate degree	24.93%	23.26%	21.24%	22.70%	23.00%
Vocational/tech. program	2.32%	1.55%	0.26%	0.35%	1.14%
Transfer	57.10%	55.81%	65.03%	58.16%	59.14%
Certification (initial/renewal)	4.06%	4.13%	2.07%	1.06%	2.93%
Self improvement	2.32%	5.17%	3.11%	8.16%	4.50%
Job-related retraining	2.90%	3.36%	2.85%	1.77%	2.79%
Other	6.38%	6.72%	5.44%	7.80%	6.50%
Current GPA (Self Reported)					
No credits earned	8.70%	8.92%	8.92%	10.56%	9.20%
1.99 or below	2.61%	2.89%	1.84%	3.52%	2.66%
2.0 to 2.49	9.28%	12.86%	11.02%	12.68%	11.43%
2.5 to 2.99	20.29%	24.93%	20.21%	23.94%	22.29%
3.0 to 3.49	32.46%	24.93%	31.50%	27.46%	29.12%
3.5 and above	26.67%	25.46%	26.51%	21.83%	25.31%
Place of Residence					
Residence hall*	0.57%	0.00%	0.00%	0.35%	0.21%
Own house	20.63%	19.69%	15.05%	12.98%	17.29%
Rented room or apartment	38.11%	18.93%	21.43%	35.09%	27.59%
Parent's home	33.24%	54.48%	57.65%	44.91%	48.20%
Other	7.45%	6.91%	5.87%	6.67%	6.70%
College as Choice					
1 st Choice	67.72%	64.78%	77.44%	59.86%	68.01%
2 nd Choice	25.07%	25.45%	16.67%	27.82%	23.40%
3 rd Choice or lower	7.20%	9.77%	5.90%	12.32%	8.58%
Residential Classification					
In-state	97.99%	96.68%	99.49%	96.48%	97.74%
Out-of-state	0.86%	1.28%	0.00%	1.06%	0.78%
International	1.15%	2.05%	0.51%	2.46%	1.49%
Physical or Diagnosed Learning Disability	7.47%	5.36%	7.97%	8.04%	7.14%

* Presumably local university students who enrolled in LRCCD.

Note: Due to rounding of numbers, the total may not add up exactly to 100%.

Table 3: Results for the 2008 Composite Areas: LRCCD, California and U.S. Community Colleges That Administered the Survey

	Mean Level of Importance Mean Level of Satisfaction Gap Between the Two						
	ARC	CRC	FLC	SCC	District Summary	California	U.S.
1. Instructional Effectiveness	6.26 5.28 0.98	6.15 5.13 1.02	6.33 5.31 1.02	6.17 5.14 1.03	6.23 5.22 1.01	6.14 5.21 0.93	6.16 5.38 0.78
2. Academic Advising/Counseling	6.26 5.01 1.25	6.18 4.86 1.32	6.32 5.15 1.17	6.19 4.73 1.46	6.24 4.95 1.29	6.15 4.97 1.18	6.11 5.19 0.92
3. Safety & Security	6.33 4.45 1.88	6.19 4.77 1.42	6.22 5.34 0.88	6.18 4.65 1.53	6.23 4.82 1.41	6.08 4.64 1.44	5.98 4.97 1.01
4. Registration Effectiveness	6.21 5.28 0.93	6.14 5.25 0.89	6.33 5.58 0.75	6.15 5.21 0.94	6.21 5.34 0.87	6.16 5.19 0.97	6.14 5.39 0.75
5. Admissions & Financial Aid	6.10 4.88 1.22	5.91 4.68 1.23	6.11 4.98 1.13	6.04 4.68 1.36	6.04 4.81 1.23	6.00 4.86 1.14	6.01 5.10 0.91
6. Academic Services/ Learning Resources	6.09 5.31 0.78	6.05 5.20 0.85	6.19 5.75 0.44	6.11 5.21 0.90	6.11 5.38 0.73	6.05 5.23 0.82	6.03 5.42 0.61
7. Campus Climate	5.90 4.99 0.91	5.83 4.91 0.92	5.98 5.33 0.65	5.85 4.83 1.02	5.89 5.03 0.86	5.90 5.02 0.88	5.95 5.27 0.68
8. Campus Support Services	5.44 4.80 0.64	5.45 4.69 0.76	5.49 4.91 0.58	5.34 4.67 0.67	5.43 4.76 0.67	5.51 4.83 0.68	5.44 4.94 0.50
9. Concern for the Individual	6.13 5.01 1.12	6.01 4.87 1.14	6.18 5.18 1.00	6.05 4.88 1.17	6.10 4.99 1.11	6.04 4.97 1.07	6.07 5.21 0.86
10. Service Excellence	5.87 4.92 0.95	5.83 4.89 0.94	6.02 5.36 0.66	5.86 4.85 1.01	5.90 5.02 0.88	5.90 4.99 0.91	5.94 5.23 0.71
11. Student Centeredness	5.87 5.10 0.77	5.80 5.01 0.79	5.99 5.39 0.60	5.86 4.93 0.93	5.88 5.12 0.76	5.88 5.09 0.79	5.96 5.34 0.62
Satisfaction with College Responsiveness to Diverse Populations (no comparable importance measure)	5.23	5.25	5.48	5.26	5.31	5.28	5.43

Importance Scores: 1=Not Important at All; 2=Not Very Important; 3=Somewhat Unimportant; 4=Neutral; 5=Somewhat Important; 6=Important; and 7=Very Important. There is also a selection called "Does Not Apply."

Satisfaction Scores: 1=Not Satisfied at All; 2=Not Very Satisfied; 3=Somewhat Dissatisfied; 4=Neutral; 5=Somewhat Satisfied; 6=Satisfied; and 7=Very Satisfied. There is also a selection called "Not Available/Not Used."

Gap scores: The mean importance rating minus the mean satisfaction rating. Gaps that are 1.25 or higher may be worth noting as possible areas of concern. They appear in bold print.