

CENTRAL OREGON COMMUNITY COLLEGE
“GREAT COLLEGES TO WORK FOR” COLLEGE EMPLOYEE CLIMATE SURVEY
2021 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The College participated in the [Great Colleges to Work For](#) (GCTWF) survey in spring 2019, spring 2020 and again in spring 2021 as a way to gather insight on the quality of the workplace experience for employees. The effort supports implementation and assessment of the [2018-23 Strategic Plan](#) Institutional Efficiency (IE) initiative related to the College providing a supportive and productive workplace. Survey results will inform IE assessment progress as well as provide the institution with feedback on areas of strength and those needing attention.

It is important to note several differences between the 2019, 2020 and 2021 surveys:

- The 2019 survey was sent to a representative sample from across the College while the 2020 and 2021 surveys were sent to all benefitted employees.
- The College experienced a change in presidents in July 2019 and many of the GCTWF questions focus on senior leadership.
- The College pre-loaded employee type (full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, classified, and administrators) to the 2020 and 2021 surveys to more accurately reflect which employee groups responded.
- GCTWF revised the survey to improve language and better address diversity, equity and inclusion practices. The survey transitioned from 15 to 10 categories and asking 60 statements to all employees to 55 all-employee statements and five faculty-statements.

Given these differences, the IE Goal Work Group recommends using the 2020 results as benchmarks to compare the 2021 results.

About the 2021 Great Colleges to Work For Survey

COCC administered the survey in March 2021 to 400 employees and 228 (57%) responded. Of those,

- 45% of faculty, 54% of classified and 78% of administrators responded;
- 58% have been at the College for ten or fewer years; and
- 63% are currently working on campus less than 50% of the time.

Employees were asked to consider their typical workday and respond to 55 statements on a scale of “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree” in the following categories, with each category made up of five to seven questions:

Collaboration
Communication

Confidence in Senior Leadership
Mission & Pride

Performance Management
 Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging
 Faculty & Staff Well Being

Job Satisfaction & Support
 Professional Development
 Supervisor/Department Chair

Results to GCTWF and COCC’s ten customized questions are reported based on the percent of employees agreeing with each statement and categorized as follows: Acute (0 – 44%); Warrants Attention (45 – 50%); Fair to Mediocre (55 – 64%); Good (65 – 74%); Very Good to Excellent (75 – 100%).

Employees also responded to three open-ended questions: 1) What do you appreciate most about working at this institution; 2) What would make COCC a better place to work? And 3) If we had to focus on one priority to improve the quality of the workplace and the strength of our culture, what would it be?

Results: Overall Takeaways

Each of the ten categories has a summative percent of employees providing positive (Good/Very Good to Excellent) and negative (Acute/Warrants Attention). Overall, every category in which a prior year comparator was available saw an upward trend in positive responses. The percent of positive scores for each category is:

Category	% Positive	Summary
Mission & Pride	82%	Very Good to Excellent
Faculty & Staff Well Being	82%	Very Good to Excellent
Supervisor/Department Chair	79%	Very Good to Excellent
Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging	76%	Very Good to Excellent
Job Satisfaction & Support	76%	Very Good to Excellent
Collaboration	65%	Good
Professional Development	63%	Fair to Mediocre
Communication	62%	Fair to Mediocre
Confidence in Senior Leadership	61%	Fair to Mediocre
Performance Management	48%	Warrants Attention

In 2020, COCC only had two categories in which it fell into the “Very Good to Excellent” category.

Interestingly, when looking at the data by employee years at the institution, newer employees tend to respond more positively and as the years of service increase, the positive responses gradually decline. in positive response rates. The respondents that declined to answer “years at the institution” were by far the most negative.

Results: Areas to Celebrate

Mission and Pride

There is a strong sense by respondents they understand how their job contributes to the institution's missions (91%), and feel that their department is a good place to work (90%). In addition, many feel the institution actively contributes to the community (84%).

Faculty and Staff Well-Being

Over the past year, the College's emphasis to ensure the well-being of faculty and staff, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, was evident. Many felt their supervisor/department chair supported work/life balance (88%), especially Classified, and felt the institution's policies and practices provided flexibility (78%).

Supervisor/Department Chair Effectiveness

An increasing number of employees positively responded that feedback from their supervisor/department chair is helpful (79%), and feel their supervisor/department chair makes expectations clear (77%).

Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging

This was a new category in 2021 and confirmed the positive feedback from the 2020 and 2021 custom statements. Employees expressed that COCC welcomes diversity in all forms (89%), values diversity (79%), has clear and effective processes for addressing discrimination (76%), and that they feel a sense of belonging (74%). The lowest rated question in this category was regarding COCC's emphasis on having diverse faculty and staff (64%).

Job Satisfaction

Overall, job satisfaction remains strong (76%), especially where employees feel the work they do is meaningful (90%), that they are given the responsibility and freedom to do their job (90%), that the institution's benefits met their needs (84%), and that the job makes good use of their skills and abilities (83%).

Results: Areas Needing Attention

Professional Development

The summative percent (63%) for this category is one percent shy of being in the "fair to mediocre" category. Additionally, 82% of respondents indicated that they are given the opportunity to develop their skills at COCC. Nonetheless, feedback on key questions may help the College grow in this regard. The primary area of concern is COCC's onboarding process and whether it prepares new faculty and staff to be effective (36% positive responses). All employee groups rated the area low and this rating stayed fairly consistent no matter the employee's length of time at the institution.

Second to onboarding is employee understanding the necessary requirements to advance their career (62% positive responses), with administrators rating this as “warrants attention” and the classified employees rated it as “fair to mediocre.”

Confidence in Senior Leadership

This category showed improvement between 2020 (58% positive responses) and 2021 (61%). The highest scored questions indicated that 69% of employees felt senior leadership had the “knowledge, skills, and experience necessary for institutional success” with 64% indicating that leadership shows genuine interest in staff well-being. That said, the most significant areas of concern are whether leadership openly communicates about important matters (58%) and provides a clear direction for the institution’s future (46%).

Interestingly, recent pandemic-related surveys indicates that employees felt leadership provides timely communications (91%) and that leadership shows care and concern for faculty and staff (86%).

Performance Management

As in prior years, performance management continues to be a challenge for COCC. All questions in the performance management category were scored in the “fair to mediocre” or “acute” categories, with recognition and awards programs are meaningful the lowest (37%), followed by the review process accurately measuring job performance (46%) and department promotions are based on a person’s performance (47%).

Feedback Based on Employee Groups

The GCTWF survey provides anonymous responses based on employee type (faculty, classified or administrator), giving the College an opportunity to address specific concerns of the different groups. Highlights of employee-group responses below.

Commonalities: It is important to note that areas in which all employees responded positively, or those identified as needing attention, all saw a positive increase compared to last year’s results. With this, areas in which all employee groups responded positively are:

- Job satisfaction and support for work/life balance,
- Pride in working at COCC, along with a contribution to community,
- Support for supervisors and department chairs,
- The College’s commitment to diversity and inclusion, and
- Communication pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additionally, all three employee groups expressed shared concern for the following, noting that these were also echoed in the employee responses to the open-ended question of “what would make COCC a better place to work?”:

- College’s employee review process as an accurate measure of performance,

- Desire for senior leadership to provide clear direction for the College’s future,
- COCC’s awards and recognition programs lack meaning,
- Issues of low performance not addressed,
- Options for working from home post-COVID,
- Paid fairly for the work performed, and
- The onboarding process for faculty and staff.

Faculty Feedback: Faculty responded most positively to communication and policies regarding COVID-19, lack of demeaning or derogatory remarks in their departments, the responsibility and freedom to do their job, job satisfaction, and contribution to institutional mission. At the same time, their areas of concern are participation in changes prior to implementation, open communication between employee groups, opportunities to participate in institutional planning, and a sense of being on the same team across the institution.

Classified Feedback: Most of the largest gains in positive feedback from year to year were seen with classified staff. The most notable of these were a 31-point increase for respectfully discussing issues for better results, 21-point jump for the belief that the institution is run well, and an 18-point increase in supervisor consistency and fairness. Areas of concern for classified staff mirrored those listed for all employees, with an emphasis on professional development and performance management. It is important to note, that, though these are still areas of concern, there was an upward trend in positive responses.

Administrator Feedback: Administrators stayed fairly consistent with their responses from year prior. Areas receiving the most positive feedback were in regards to work being meaningful, connection to the institution, that their department is a good place to work, and supervisor interest in staff well-being. Areas of concern were regarding promotions not related to an individual’s performance, pay, and being on the same team.

Reflection on Results

Key themes from the GCTWF survey, coupled with employee feedback on COVID-related surveys, provides the College with strong insights as to where it is doing well as an institution and areas needing more attention. The themes remained relatively the same during the first three years of the survey, noting that both strengths and opportunities are trending in a positive direction.

As to strengths, it is clear that employees take pride in their work and in COCC, department-level supervision and leadership is strong, and employees recognize the College’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. As in prior years, areas needing attention include COCC’s performance evaluation system, awards and recognitions, new employee onboarding, pay, and a desire to learn more about the College’s future directions. All told, this information provides the entirety of the College – faculty, staff, and leadership alike – with information that can inform how to best expend institutional energy in the immediate years.

GCTWF also serves as a tool to help the College assess the COCC Strategic Plan's [Institutional Efficiency](#) (IE) goal area, specifically in regards to its focus on creating a healthy and productive workplace. Survey feedback also helps inform which activities the IE goal area can prioritize for the coming year.

Future Directions

Due to a change in presidential leadership, as well as changes resulting from the pandemic, the College administered the GCTWF survey three years in a row. However, following guidance from the GCTWF organization, COCC's Office of Human Resources will now administer the survey every three years. Doing so allows the College the time needed to make changes to improve overall employee satisfaction and for employees to recognize the impacts of those changes.

It is important to stress that responsibility for responding to the GCTWF survey cannot rest solely with institutional leadership. While COCC's Senior Leadership Team can certainly lead efforts, it will take a collective effort from all employees to make lasting, positive change. As such, we encourage all employees to actively participate in and suggest strategies to help improve in needed areas, so that together, we can become an even greater College.