



2018 Employee Campus Climate Survey: Qualitative Results

Spring 2018

Executive Summary

El Camino College administered a campus climate survey to employees in Spring 2018 in its continued efforts to cultivate a welcoming and inclusive campus environment for all faculty, staff and administrators. This report summarizes the results from the section of the campus climate survey asking employees to identify areas in which they believe the College is doing well, as well as areas in which they believe the College could improve. Of the 639 employees who completed the survey, 503 (79%) provided one or more responses with respect to El Camino College's strengths, while 474 (75%) employees provided one or more areas in which they believed the College could improve. Key findings include:

- The most commonly identified strengths of the college include: the nature of the work employees do, employees and students they work with, the general campus and its distance from their homes, and the warm and friendly environment of the College.
- The most common areas for improvement include better compensation for their work, a safer, cleaner and accessible working environment, better communication and transparency from the College, professional development opportunities, and a greater sense of value and belonging.

Introduction

As part of the campus climate survey, open-ended questions asked employees to identify El Camino College's strengths and areas for improvement:

- Please list up to three things that ECC is doing well ('WELL').
- Please list up to three things that ECC can do to improve ('IMPROVE').

Methodology

The comments were analyzed qualitatively through content analysis. This involves identifying common themes that emerge from an initial analysis of a subset of comments from both the student and employee campus climate survey. This approach was taken to determine themes that could be comparable across the two groups. Sub-categories for each theme were also developed to explore variations that exist within each theme. These themes and sub-categories were then used to code the rest of the open-ended responses. It is important to note that one response can uncover more than one theme.

Students and employees identified a wide range of areas they believed are strengths of the College, along with areas for improvement. The following sections report the five most common themes of the responses with respect to areas in which employees believe El Camino College is doing well and where they see opportunities for improvement.

Results

What is El Camino College Doing Well?

Of the 639 employees who completed the survey, 503 (79%) provided one or more responses with respect to the ways in which El Camino College was doing well: 32 employees listed one response, 49 employees listed two responses, and 422 listed three responses. These responses were aggregated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the employees' perceptions about the College's strengths, for a total of 1,396 responses. Many of the responses yielded multiple themes and subcategories. A summary of each of the five most common themes is provided in Table 1.

The common themes that emerged point to employees' satisfaction of the nature of the work they do – serving and working with students and collaborating with colleagues both within and across departments. The population of students and employees on campus further enriches the quality of their work; students are motivated and appreciative, and their colleagues share a sense of responsibility and goals focused on serving students toward success. Other strengths include pay and benefits, location of the campus, and the warm and friendly college environment that offers opportunities to participate in a number of events and activities held on campus.

Table 1. Top Five Strengths

	Theme (% of Total Responses¹)	Summary
1	Work (20%): Benefits & Service-Oriented Nature of Work	El Camino College enables employees to thrive in the nature of the work they do and enjoy the various benefits of working at ECC. <i>Employees are happy with various aspects of the work they do at El Camino College. They especially enjoy being in the position to serve and work with students and colleagues. They also appreciate their job security (e.g. pay), competitive benefits, flexibility in their work schedule, and the summer work schedule. Other benefits of working at El Camino College include the flexibility and autonomous nature of their work that enables them to be innovative in their job or in teaching.</i>
2	Employees (14%): Friendly & Collaborative Employees	El Camino College employs faculty and staff that are friendly and share common goals and sense of responsibility. <i>El Camino College employs supportive and friendly staff, both within and across departments. Staff members collaborate creating an enjoyable and welcoming experience. This is enhanced by a shared sense of responsibility towards achieving the College's mission. A few also report the support they receive from their unions as a strength of the college.</i>
3	Students (14%): Respectful & Motivated Students	El Camino College students are respectful, motivated and enjoyable to work for/with.

¹ This report only focuses on the top five themes; therefore, the percentages of total responses do not add up to 100%.

Theme (% of Total Responses ¹)	Summary
	<i>Employees emphasize students as being a strength of the College. Students at the College are motivated and respectful, and employees feel rewarded when witnessing them successfully attain their goals and working to improve their lives.</i>
4 Campus (11%): Location & Aesthetics of Campus	<p>El Camino College campus is conveniently located and provides a welcoming environment.</p> <p><i>Employees enjoy the proximity of the campus from their homes, and the campus environment (e.g., landscape, open). Some are excited by the modernization of the college's facilities.</i></p>
5 Campus Life & Culture (8%): Warm & Friendly Campus Climate	<p>El Camino College is a warm and friendly environment that fosters a sense of belonging.</p> <p><i>El Camino College encourages employees and students to participate in and enjoy various activities and events held on campus (e.g., Warrior Pride, team building activities). This fosters a sense of community between colleagues and students. Some employees also report feeling valued by students as well as administrators.</i></p>

Other themes that emerged from employees' comments about the College's strengths (for a sum of 24% across the themes) include:

- College's efforts to achieve its mission of having a positive impact on students and its surrounding community
- Diversity of students and employees
- Leadership and support of supervisors and administrators
- Quality and opportunities afforded by academic programs and student support programs and resources

What Can El Camino College Do To Improve?

Of the 639 employees who completed the survey, 474 provided one or more responses to the 'IMPROVE' question for a 75% response rate. Sixty-two employees listed one area for improvement, 74 employees listed two areas for improvement, and 338 employees identified three areas for improvement, for a total of 1,224 responses. Table 2 summarizes the five most common themes that emerged from employees' responses.

Three of the themes identified as strengths are also identified as areas for improvement: Work, Campus, and Campus Life & Culture. Although employees are satisfied with the roles and responsibilities of the work that they do (i.e., interacting with or serving students and colleagues), they would like opportunities for increased pay or promotion. With respect to the campus, employees identify a desire for a space designated for employees where they can eat, rest, collaborate and socialize; they also believe there is a need for workspace that is ergonomically friendly and offers privacy for specific groups of employees who work with students or confidential information. An area of campus life and culture employees believe needs improvement pertains to fostering a sense of value

and belonging, where more events or activities can focus on recognizing different employees and encouraging them to interact and build relationships across campus.

Two other areas of improvement point to a need for better communication/transparency and increased professional development, both of which point to a desire to increase their knowledge of the college and various areas that can help improve the effectiveness of the work they do on campus.

Table 2. Top Five Areas for Improvement

	Theme (% of Total Responses²)	Summary
1	Work (18%): Greater Compensation & Career Advancement Opportunities	El Camino College employees seek higher compensation for their work, as well as opportunities for career advancement. <i>Although one of the greatest strengths of El Camino College is the opportunity it affords the employees to do what they enjoy, many employees express a desire for increased pay and job security/promotion. The latter was particularly of concern for employees holding adjunct faculty positions and part-time/temporary staff. Other identified areas for improvement include a more flexible work schedule, better benefits (particularly for adjunct), and better distribution of work responsibilities or expectations (e.g., serving on committees, better accountability to ensure all employees fulfill their responsibilities).</i>
2	Campus (17%): Safer, Ergonomic Workspace & Employee Space	El Camino College employees would like a safer, cleaner, more accessible and ergonomic workspace, as well as a dedicated area on campus where employees can congregate. <i>Employees indicate that the quality of their work would improve with a more accessible and ergonomic workspace. Some of the employees also mention the need for a more private workspace given the nature of their work (e.g., counseling students, working with confidential information). Many employees also indicate a need for a communal space/staff & faculty lounge where they can eat, rest, and interact with colleagues, as well as cleaner facilities and rooms with better temperature control. Safety is also a concern for employees, who would like to see greater presence of campus police and improved disaster preparation (e.g., active shooter drill, natural disaster).</i>
3	Communication/ Transparency (10%): Greater Interdepartmental & Leadership Transparency	El Camino College employees believe there is a need for better communication and transparency across the various departments and programs to ensure all employees are informed about the College. <i>Employees seek greater transparency with the College and its leadership, particularly with respect to college guidelines & processes, as well as decisions made by the College (e.g., distribution of College funds) that have an impact on employees and students. Many of the employees would also like to see greater interdepartmental communication to foster common knowledge among all employees, including adjunct faculty.</i>

² This report only focuses on the top five themes; therefore, the percentages of total responses do not add up to 100%.

Theme (% of Total Responses ²)	Summary
4 Professional Development (8%): More Professional Development for All	<p>El Camino College employees seek opportunities for professional growth through increased professional development opportunities for all part-time and full-time staff, faculty and administrators.</p> <p><i>Employees are constantly seeking training/professional development opportunities and would like to see those opportunities expanded to staff (both part-time and full-time), adjunct faculty and management. They believe professional development could address topics around customer service, diversity and biases, pedagogy, and technology use. Few also indicated a need for all employees to develop a knowledge of the College (e.g., its culture, programs and resources offered on campus, campus policies and procedures).</i></p>
Campus Life & Culture (6%): More Employee Recognition & Socialization Events	<p>El Camino College employees desire a greater sense of value and belonging, which could be accomplished through more events that recognize them for their work and activities that encourage interactions between employees.</p> <p><i>Some employees seek a culture of respect and value between and across employees of all levels and believe this could be achieved through more events recognizing and acknowledging their roles and accomplishments. Some also believe that holding two professional development day events (once in the fall, once in the spring) is not sufficient in encouraging collegial interactions and would like to see the College host additional events or programs (such as wellness programs) that allow employees to know colleagues outside of their own department or program.</i></p>

Other notable comments about areas for improvement include topics around (for a sum of 24% across the themes):

- More resource accessibility for students (e.g., available resources for specific student groups) and employees (e.g., support for mothers, new hires)
- Updated technology and software
- Effective management of employees

Recommendations

- El Camino College employees expressed interest in having more career advancement opportunities at the college. The college should work on creating more professional development workshops similar to the “Getting the Job” workshops that are currently offered to adjunct faculty.
- Creating a communication campaign that coincides with the release of the updated “Making Decisions at El Camino” guide would educate employees of the college’s decision-making processes. This would assist in increasing the transparency staff and faculty are seeking.
- Besides Fall and Spring Professional development days, the College should work to develop new programs or events throughout the year that are aimed at allowing employees to interact with colleagues outside of their own department or program.

Conclusion

Employees are generally satisfied with the nature of the work that they do. They enjoy serving and working with students who are motivated and friendly, and with colleagues who share a common sense of responsibility and mission of serving students. Many find the location of the campus to be conveniently close to their homes and believe the campus offers a welcoming environment. Events and activities held on campus reinforce the College's efforts to make the campus welcoming to both students and employees. Areas for improvement identified by employees include promotion and higher pay, greater opportunities for professional development, and more events and activities that recognize employees and promote team building.

Several initiatives have begun to address some of the employees' concerns. For example, the College's new Applauding Warrior PRIDE, a campus-wide employee recognition program, was recently implemented in an effort to recognize more employees and their contributions to the mission and core values of the College. Employees' feedback will continue to help inform the College in its effort to make a positive difference in not only the students but also its employees, who are considered as being foundational in promoting and ensuring student success and achievement.