Grand Rapids Community College
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE)

by

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In November 2011, the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) survey was administered to 694 employees at Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC). Of those 694 employees, 364 (52.4%) completed and returned the instrument for analysis. The purpose of the survey was to obtain the perceptions of personnel concerning the college climate and to provide data to assist GRCC in promoting more open and constructive communication among faculty, staff, and administrators. Researchers at the National Initiative for Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness (NILIE) and representatives of GRCC collaborated to administer a survey that would capture the opinions of personnel throughout the college.

In the PACE model, the leadership of an institution motivates the Institutional Structure, Supervisory Relationships, Teamwork, and Student Focus climate factors toward an outcome of student success and institutional effectiveness.

Figure 1.   The PACE Model

Climate Factors

Driver   *Outcome*

Leadership → Institutional Structure / Supervisory Relationships / Teamwork / Student Focus → Student Success
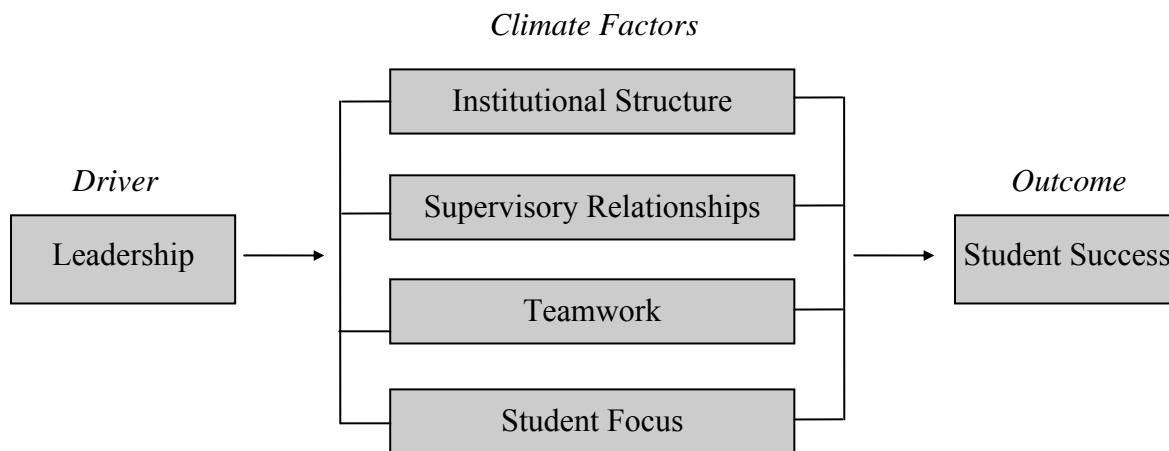
NILIE has synthesized from the literature four leadership or organizational systems ranging from coercive to collaborative. According to Likert (1967), the Collaborative System, which he termed System 4, generally produced better results in terms of productivity, job satisfaction, communication, and overall organizational climate. The other systems were Consultative (System 3), Competitive (System 2) and Coercive (System 1). In agreement with Likert, NILIE has concluded that Collaborative (System 4) is the climate to be sought as opposed to existing naturally in the environment. Likert discovered that most of the organizations he studied functioned at the Competitive or Consultative levels. This has been NILIE's experience as well, with most college climates falling into the Consultative system across the four factors of the climate instrument.

Of the more than 120 studies completed by NILIE, few institutions have been found to achieve a fully Collaborative (System 4) environment, although scores in some categories may fall in this range for some classifications of employees. Thus, if the Collaborative System is the ideal, then this environment is the one to be sought through planning, collaboration, and organizational development.

Employees completed a 46-item PACE instrument organized into four climate factors as follows: Institutional Structure, Supervisory Relationships, Teamwork, and Student Focus. They also completed a Customized section designed specifically for Grand Rapids Community College. Respondents were asked to rate the four factors on a five-point Likert-type scale. The instrument was specifically designed to compare the existing climate at GRCC to a range of four managerial systems found to exist in colleges and to a Norm Base of 60 community colleges across North America. The information generated from the instrument has been developed into a research report that can be used for planning and decision-making in order to improve the existing college climate.

The PACE instrument administered at GRCC included 56 total items. Respondents were asked to rate items on a five-point satisfaction scale from a low of "1" to a high of "5." Of the 56 items, none fell within the least favorable category identified as the Coercive range (rated between 1 and 2) or within the Competitive range (rated between 2 and 3). Forty-four fell within the Consultative range (rated between 3 and 4), and twelve composite ratings fell within the Collaborative range (rated between 4 and 5).

At GRCC, the overall results from the PACE instrument indicate a healthy campus climate, yielding an overall 3.73 mean score or high Consultative system. The Student Focus category received the highest mean score (4.03), whereas the Institutional Structure category received the lowest mean score (3.38). When respondents were classified according to Personnel Classification at GRCC, the composite ratings were as follows: Administrative (3.93), Administrative Support (3.77), Faculty (3.69), and Technical/Campus Operations (3.62).

Of the 46 standard PACE questions, the top mean scores have been identified at Grand Rapids Community College.

- The extent to which I feel my job is relevant to this institution's mission, 4.34 (#8)

- The extent to which students receive an excellent education at this institution, 4.30 (#31)

- The extent to which my supervisor expresses confidence in my work, 4.20 (#2)

- The extent to which this institution prepares students for further learning, 4.17 (#37)

- The extent to which this institution prepares students for a career, 4.12 (#35)

- The extent to which professional development and training opportunities are available, 4.11 (#46)

- The extent to which student ethnic and cultural diversity are important at this institution, 4.08 (#18)

- The extent to which my supervisor is open to the ideas, opinions, and beliefs of everyone, 4.07 (#9)

- The extent to which students are satisfied with their educational experience at this institution, 4.02 (#42)

- The extent to which I am given the opportunity to be creative in my work, 4.00 (#39)

Of the 46 standard PACE questions, the top mean scores have been identified as areas in need of improvement at Grand Rapids Community College.

- The extent to which I am able to appropriately influence the direction of this institution, 3.02 (#15)

- The extent to which decisions are made at the appropriate level at this institution, 3.10 (#4)

- The extent to which a spirit of cooperation exists at this institution, 3.15 (#25)

- The extent to which this institution is appropriately organized, 3.16 (#32)

- The extent to which information is shared within this institution, 3.19 (#10)

- The extent to which open and ethical communication is practiced at this institution, 3.22 (#16)

- The extent to which I have the opportunity for advancement within this institution, 3.30 (#38)

- The extent to which institutional teams use problem-solving techniques, 3.35 (#11)

- The extent to which my work is guided by clearly defined administrative processes, 3.38 (#44)

- The extent to which this institution has been successful in positively motivating my performance, 3.42 (#22)

Respondents were also given an opportunity to provide comments about the most favorable aspects and the least favorable aspects of GRCC. The responses provide insight and anecdotal evidence that support the survey questions.

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LEADERSHIP RESEARCH

The term culture refers to a total communication and behavioral pattern within an organization. Yukl (2002) defines organizational culture as "the shared values and beliefs of members about the activities of the organization and interpersonal relationships" (p. 108). Schein (2004) observes that culture "points us to phenomena that are below the surface, that are powerful in their impact but invisible and to a considerable degree unconscious. In that sense culture is to a group what personality is to an individual" (p. 8). Culture as a concept, then, is deeply embedded in an organization and relatively difficult to change; yet it has real day-to-day consequences in the life of the organization. According to Baker and Associates (1992), culture is manifest through symbols, rituals, and behavioral norms, and new members of an organization need to be socialized in the culture in order for the whole to function effectively.

Climate refers to the prevailing condition that affects satisfaction (e.g., morale and feelings) and productivity (e.g., task completion or goal attainment) at a particular point in time. Essentially then, climate is a subset of an organization's culture, emerging from the assumptions made about the underlying value system and finding expression through members' attitudes and actions (Baker & Associates, 1992).

The way that various individuals behave in an organization influences the climate that exists within that organization. If individuals perceive accepted patterns of behavior as motivating and rewarding their performance, they tend to see a positive environment. Conversely, if they experience patterns of behavior that are self-serving, autocratic, or punishing, then they see a negative climate. The importance of these elements as determiners of quality and productivity and the degree of satisfaction that employees receive from the performance of their jobs have been well documented in the research literature for more than 40 years (Baker & Associates, 1992).

NILIE's present research examines the value of delegating and empowering others within the organization through an effective management and leadership process. Yukl (2002) defined leadership as "the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how it can be done effectively, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish the shared objectives" (p. 7). The concept of leadership has been studied for many years in a variety of work settings, and there is no one theory of management and leadership that is universally accepted (Baker & Associates, 1992). However, organizational research conducted to date shows a strong relationship between leadership processes and other aspects of the organizational culture. Intensive efforts to conceptualize and measure organizational climate began in the 1960s with Rensis Likert's work at the University of Michigan. A framework of measuring organizational climate was developed by Likert (1967) and has been adapted by others, including McClelland and Atkinson, as reported in Baker and Glass (1993).

The first adaptation of Likert's climate concepts research to higher education organizations was employed at the various campuses of Miami-Dade Community College, Florida, in 1986. A modified version of the Likert profile of organizations was used in a case study of Miami-Dade Community College and reported by Roueche and Baker (1987).

Results of the Miami-Dade study indicated that Likert's four-system theory worked well when applied to a higher education setting. It showed promise not only for measuring climate and responses to leadership style but also for articulating ways both leadership effectiveness and organizational climate could be improved within the institution. Since the Miami-Dade research project, more than 120 institutions have participated in climate studies conducted by NILIE at North Carolina State University. Various versions of the PACE instrument were field-tested through NILIE's efforts, and several doctoral dissertations.

From Likert's original work and research methods, NILIE identified four leadership models and organizational systems ranging from Coercion to Collaboration. The Collaborative System, referred to as System 4, is generally seen as the ideal climate to be achieved, since it appears to produce better results in terms of productivity, job satisfaction, communication, and overall organizational effectiveness (Likert, 1967). The various NILIE research studies have verified that the Collaborative System is the climate to be sought. NILIE's research supports the conclusion that most organizations function between the Competitive (System 2) and Consultative (System 3) levels across the four climate factors of the instrument (i.e., Institutional Structure, Supervisory Relationships, Teamwork, and Student Focus).

Coercion represents the least desirable climate and constitutes a structured, task-oriented, and highly authoritative leadership management style. This leadership style assumes that followers are inherently lazy, and to make them productive, the manager must keep after them constantly. Interestingly, a few employees in almost all organizations evaluated by NILIE hold this view of the organizational climate. However, as a rule, their numbers are too few to have much effect on the overall institutional averages.

In contrast, a Collaborative model is characterized by leadership behaviors that are change-oriented, where appropriate decisions have been delegated to organizational teams, and leaders seek to achieve trust and confidence in the followers. The followers reciprocate with positive views of the leaders. This model is based on the assumption that work is a source of satisfaction and will be performed voluntarily with self-direction and self-control because people have a basic need to achieve and be productive. It also assumes that the nature of work calls for people to come together in teams and groups in order to accomplish complex tasks. This leadership environment is particularly descriptive of the climate necessary for productivity in a higher education environment, especially in the face of present and near future challenges such as new technologies, demands for accountability and the desire to accurately measure learning outcomes.

As the perceptions of the staff, faculty, and administrators approach the characteristics of the Collaborative environment, better results are achieved in terms of productivity and cost management. Employees are absent from work less often and tend to remain employed in the organization for a longer period of time. The Collaborative model also produces a better organizational climate characterized by excellent communication, higher peer-group loyalty, high confidence and trust, and favorable attitudes toward supervisors (Likert, 1967). In addition, various researchers (Blanchard, 1985; Stewart, 1982; Yukl, 2002) suggest that adapting leadership styles to fit particular situations according to the employees' characteristics and developmental stages and other intervening variables may be appropriate for enhancing productivity. Table 1 is a model of NILIE's four-systems framework based on Likert's original work and modified through NILIE's research conducted between 1992 and the present.

Table 1.   NILIE Four Systems Model

System 1	System 2	System 3	System 4
Coercive	**Competitive**	**Consultative**	**Collaborative**
Leaders are seen as having no confidence or trust in employees and seldom involve them in any aspect of the decision-making process.	Leaders are seen as having condescending confidence and trust in employees. Employees are occasionally involved in some aspects of the decision-making process.	Leaders are seen as having substantial but not complete confidence and trust in employees. Employees are significantly involved in the decision-making process.	Leaders are seen as having demonstrated confidence and trust in employees. Employees are involved in appropriate aspects of the decision-making process.
Decisions are made at the top and issued downward.	Some decision-making processes take place in the lower levels, but control is at the top.	More decisions are made at the lower levels, and leaders consult with followers regarding decisions.	Decision making is widely dispersed throughout the organization and is well integrated across levels.
Lower levels in the organization oppose the goals established by the upper levels.	Lower levels in the organization cooperate in accomplishing selected goals of the organization.	Lower levels in the organization begin to deal more with morale and exercise cooperation toward accomplishment of goals.	Collaboration is employed throughout the organization.
Influence primarily takes place through fear and punishment.	Some influence is experienced through the rewards process and some through fear and punishment.	Influence is through the rewards process. Occasional punishment and some collaboration occur.	Employees are influenced through participation and involvement in developing economic rewards, setting goals, improving methods, and appraising progress toward goals.

In addition to Likert, other researchers have discovered a strong relationship between the climate of an organization and the leadership styles of the managers and leaders in the organization. Astin and Astin (2000) note that the purposes of leadership are based in these values:

- To create a supportive environment where people can grow, thrive, and live in peace with one another;

- To promote harmony with nature and thereby provide sustainability for future generations; and

- To create communities of reciprocal care and shared responsibility where every person matters and each person's welfare and dignity is respected and supported (p. 11).

Studies of leadership effectiveness abound in the literature. Managers and leaders who plan change strategies for their organizations based on the results of a NILIE climate survey are encouraged to review theories and concepts, such as those listed below, when planning for the future.

- The path-goal theory of House (1971, 1996) in which leader behavior is expressed in terms of the leader's influence in clarifying paths or routes followers travel toward work achievement and personal goal attainment.

- The Vroom/Yetton model for decision procedures used by leaders in which the selected procedure affects the quality of the decision and the level of acceptance by people who are expected to implement the decision (Vroom & Yetton, 1973 as discussed in Yukl, 2002).

- Situational leadership theories (see Northouse, 2004; Yukl, 2002).

- Transformational leadership theory (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985; Astin & Astin, 2000).

- Emotional intelligence theories (Goleman, 1995; Goleman, McKee & Boyatzis, 2002)

In the context of the modern community college, there is much interest in organizational climate studies and their relation to current thinking about leadership. The times require different assumptions regarding leader-follower relations and the choice of appropriate leadership strategies that lead to achievement of organizational goals. This report may help Grand Rapids Community College understand and improve the overall climate by examining perceptions and estimates of quality and excellence across personnel groups. This report may also provide benchmarks and empirical data that can be systematically integrated into effective planning models and change strategies for Grand Rapids Community College.

METHOD

Population

In November 2011, the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) survey was administered to the staff, faculty, and administrators of Grand Rapids Community College. Of the 694 employees administered the instrument, 364 (52.4%) completed and returned the instrument for analysis. Of those 364 employees, 172 (47.3%) completed the open-ended comments section. The purpose of the survey was to obtain the perceptions of personnel concerning the college climate and to provide data to assist GRCC in promoting more open and constructive communication among faculty, staff, and administrators. Researchers at the National Initiative for Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness (NILIE) and the Human Resources Office of GRCC collaborated to administer a survey that would capture the opinions of personnel throughout the college.

Employees of GRCC were invited to participate in the survey through an email that contained the survey link and instructions. Follow-up emails were sent during the response period to encourage participation. The survey was up for three weeks. Completed surveys were submitted online and the data compiled by NILIE. The data were analyzed using the statistical package SAS, version 9.1.

Instrumentation

The PACE instrument is divided into four climate factors: Institutional Structure, Supervisory Relationships, Teamwork, and Student Focus. A Customized section developed by Grand Rapids Community College was also included in the administration of the instrument. A total of 56 items were included in the PACE survey, as well as a series of questions ascertaining the demographic status of respondents.

Respondents were asked to rate the various climate factors through their specific statements on a five-point scale from a low of "1" to a high of "5." The mean scores for all items were obtained and compared. Items with lower scores were considered to be high priority issues for the institution. In this way, the areas in need of improvement were ranked in order of priority, thereby assisting in the process of developing plans to improve the overall performance of the institution.

After completing the standard survey items, respondents were given an opportunity to provide comments about the most favorable aspects of GRCC and the least favorable aspects. The responses provide insight and anecdotal evidence to support the survey questions.

Reliability and Validity

In previous studies, the overall PACE instrument has shown a coefficient of internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha) of 0.98. Cronbach's alpha coefficient provides an internal estimate of the instrument's reliability. The high coefficient means that participants responded the same way to similar items. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of internal consistency from July 2009 to July 2011 are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Alpha Coefficients by Climate Category for PACEs Completed from July 2009 to July 2011 (n=14,635)

Climate Category	Alpha Coefficient
Institutional Structure	0.95
Supervisory Relationships	0.95
Teamwork	0.93
Student Focus	0.91
Overall (1-46)	**0.98**

Establishing instrument validity is a fundamental component of ensuring the research effort is assessing the intended phenomenon. To that end, NILIE has worked hard to demonstrate the validity of the PACE instrument through both content and construct validity. Content validity has been established through a rigorous review of the instrument's questions by scholars and professionals in higher education to ensure that the instrument's items capture the essential aspects of institutional effectiveness.

Building on this foundation of content validity, the PACE instrument has been thoroughly tested to ensure construct (climate factors) validity through two separate factor analysis studies (Tiu, 2001; Caison, 2005). Factor analysis is a quantitative technique for determining the intercorrelations between the various items of an instrument. These intercorrelations confirm the underlying relationships between the variables and allow the researcher to determine that the instrument is functioning properly to assess the intended constructs. To ensure the continued validity of the PACE instrument, the instrument is routinely evaluated for both content and construct validity. The recent revision of the PACE instrument reflects the findings of Tiu and Caison.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data were analyzed in five ways. First, a descriptive analysis of the respondents' demographics is presented, followed by an overall analysis of the item and climate factor means and standard deviations. Where appropriate, comparisons are made with matching data from GRCC's 2009 PACE by conducting *t*-tests to identify items significantly different from the previous PACE administration. Similar analyses were applied to the items and climate factors by Personnel Classification and generated priorities for change for each Personnel Classification. Also, comparative analyses of factor means by demographic variables were conducted. The item and factor means of this PACE were correspondingly compared with the NILIE Norm Base, with significant differences between means again being identified through *t*-tests. Finally, a qualitative analysis was conducted on the open-ended comments provided by the survey respondents.

Respondent Characteristics

Of the 694 GRCC employees administered the survey, 364 (52.4%) completed the PACE survey. Survey respondents classified themselves into Personnel Classifications. Refer to Table 3 and Figure 2. Caution should be used when making inferences from the data, particularly for subgroups with return rates of less than 60%.

Table 3.   Response by Self-Selected Personnel Classification

Personnel Classification	Population	Surveys Returned for Analysis	Percent of Population Represented
Administrative	87	48	55.2%
Administrative Support	195	79	40.5%
Faculty	283	167	59.0%
Technical/Campus Operations	129	68	52.7%
Did not respond		2	
Total	694	364	52.4%

Figure 2.   Proportion of Total Responses by Personnel Classification
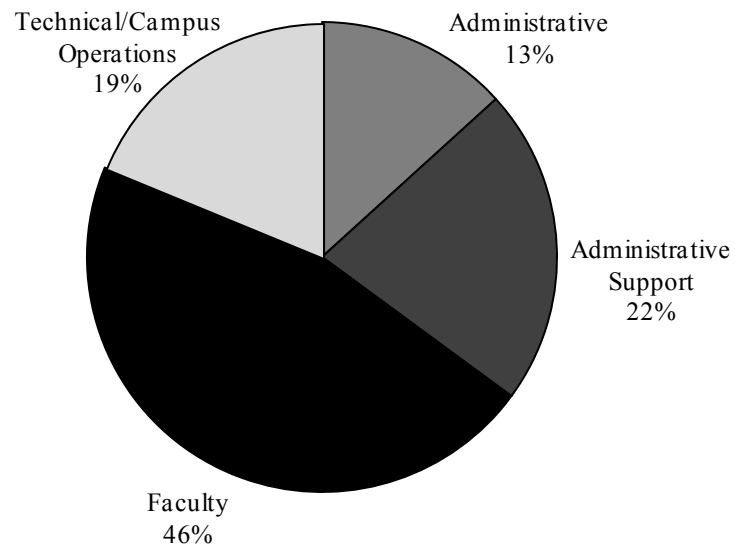
2 individuals did not respond to the Personnel Classification demographic variable.

Table 4 reports the number of respondents across the different demographic classifications and the percentage of the overall responses that each group represents. This table also compares the results of the previous administration of the PACE survey with this latest administration.

Table 4.   Proportion of Responses Across Demographic Classifications

Demographic Variable	2009 # of Responses	2009 % of Responses	2011 # of Responses	2011 % of Responses
What is your personnel classification:				
Administrative	49	15.1%	48	13.2%
Administrative Support	60	18.5%	79	21.7%
Faculty	152	46.9%	167	45.9%
Technical/Campus Operations	53	16.4%	68	18.7%
Did not respond	10	3.1%	2	0.6%
For which division do you work:				
Academic and Student Affairs	188	58.0%	196	53.9%
Finance & Administration	23	7.1%	50	13.7%
Information Technology	19	5.9%	29	8.0%
President's Office (includes College Advancement, Communication, & General Counsel)	N/A	N/A	13	3.6%
Presidents Office	1	0.3%	N/A	N/A
Organizational Development	24	7.4%	N/A	N/A
College Advancement	11	3.4%	N/A	N/A
Did not respond	58	17.9%	76	20.9%
To which employee group do you belong:				
Meet and Confer	111	34.3%	132	36.3%
CEBA	22	6.8%	24	6.6%
ESP	46	14.2%	62	17.0%
Faculty/Job Training/Preschool	124	38.3%	131	36.0%
Campus Police	7	2.2%	5	1.4%
Executive	1	0.3%	0	0.0%
Did not respond	13	4.0%	10	2.8%
What is your length of employment:				
Less than 1 year	17	5.2%	36	9.9%
1-4 years	60	18.5%	69	19.0%
5-9 years	85	26.2%	62	17.0%
10-14 years	50	15.4%	83	22.8%
15 or more years	102	31.5%	108	29.7%
Did not respond	10	3.1%	6	1.7%

N/A Question worded differently in 2011 survey administration

Table 4.   Continued.

Demographic Variable	2009 # of Responses	2009 % of Responses	2011 # of Responses	2011 % of Responses
Please select the race/ethnicity that best describes you:				
Hispanic or Latino, of any race	16	4.9%	24	6.6%
American Indian or Alaska Native, not Hispanic or Latino	2	0.6%	1	0.3%
Asian, not Hispanic or Latino	1	0.3%	2	0.6%
Black, not Hispanic or Latino	14	4.3%	31	8.5%
White, not Hispanic or Latino	253	78.1%	275	75.6%
Other (including Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander and Two or more races, not Hispanic or Latino)	20	6.2%	11	3.0%
Did not respond	18	5.6%	20	5.5%
What gender are you:				
Male	125	38.6%	152	41.8%
Female	171	52.8%	199	54.7%
Did not respond	28	8.6%	13	3.6%

Comparative Analysis: Overall

The results from the PACE survey indicate that personnel perceive the composite climate at GRCC to fall toward the upper-range of the Consultative management style. The scale range describes the four systems of management style defined by Likert and adapted by Baker and the NILIE team in their previous in-depth case studies. The four systems are Coercive management style (i.e., a mean score rating between 1.0 and 2.0), Competitive management style (i.e., a mean score rating between 2.0 and 3.0), Consultative management style (i.e., a mean score rating between 3.0 and 4.0), and Collaborative management style (i.e., a mean score rating between 4.0 and 5.0). As previously stated, the Collaborative management style is related to greater productivity, group decision making, and the establishment of higher performance goals when compared to the other three styles. Thus, the Collaborative system is a system to be sought through planning and organizational learning.

As indicated in Table 5, the Student Focus climate factor received the highest composite rating (4.03), which represented a lower-range Collaborative management environment. The Institutional Structure climate factor received the lowest mean score (3.38) within the middle area of the Consultative management area. Overall, employees rated the management style in the upper-range of the Consultative management area. (See also Figure 3). When compared to the 2009 GRCC mean scores, the GRCC 2011 mean scores increased.

Table 5.   Grand Rapids Community College Climate as Rated by All Employees

Factor	2009 GRCC	2011 GRCC
Institutional Structure	3.44	3.38
Supervisory Relationships	3.69	3.84
Teamwork	3.62	3.78
Student Focus	3.91	4.03
Custom	3.68	3.78
Overall*	3.65	3.73

* Overall does not include the customized section developed specifically for GRCC.

Figure 3. Grand Rapids Community College Climate as Rated by All Employees Combined Using Composite Averages
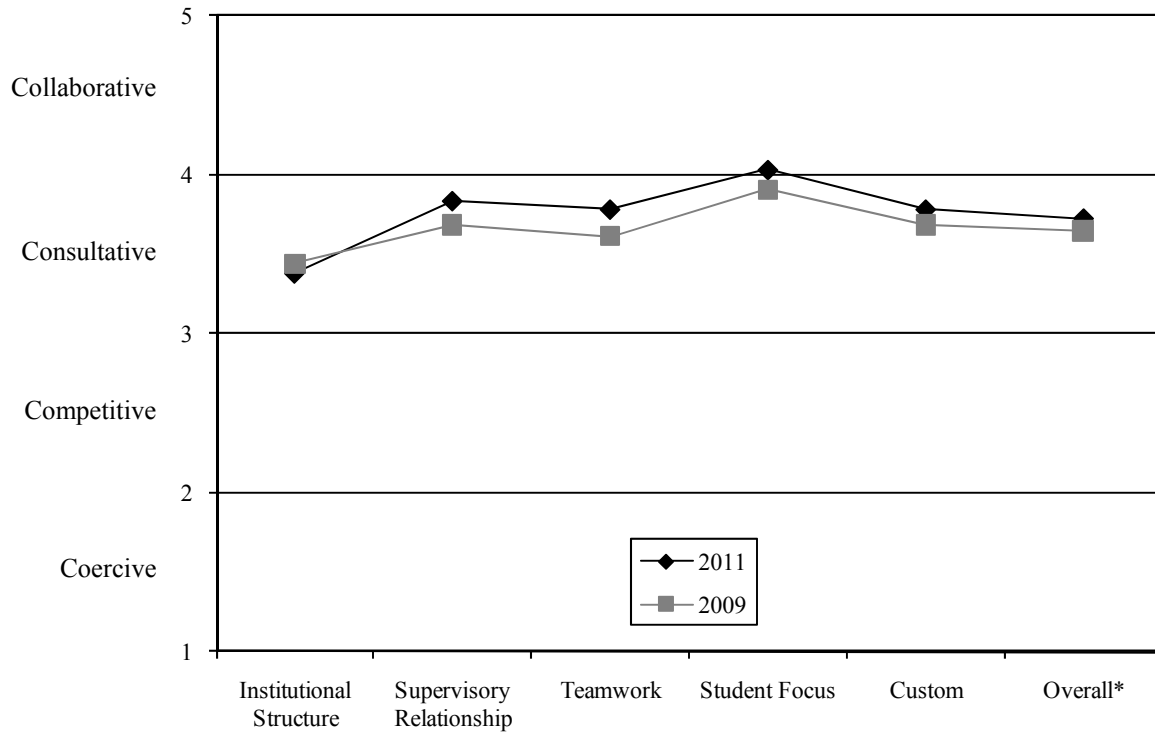
In reviewing each of the items separately, the data shows that of the 56 mean scores, no items fell within the Coercive management style (i.e., a mean score rating between 1.0 and 2.0) or the Competitive management style (i.e., a mean score rating between 2.0 and 3.0). Forty-four fell within a Consultative management style (i.e., a mean score rating between 3.0 and 4.0), and 12 fell within a Collaborative management style (i.e., a mean score rating between 4.0 and 5.0).

The preponderance of Consultative (n=44) scores indicates that the institution has a relatively high level of perceived productivity and satisfaction. Overall results from the survey yielded a mean institutional climate score of 3.73 as indicated in Figure 3.

Tables 6 through 10 report the mean scores of all personnel for each of the 56 items included in the survey instrument. The mean scores and standard deviations presented in this table estimate what the personnel participating in the study at GRCC perceive the climate to be at this particular time in the institution's development. The standard deviation (SD) demonstrates the variation in responses to a given question.

* Overall does not include the customized section developed specifically for GRCC.

Table 6.   Comparative Mean Responses: Institutional Structure

	Institutional Structure	2009 Mean (SD)	2011 Mean (SD)
1	The extent to which the actions of this institution reflect its mission	3.84 (0.81)	3.60 (0.97)*
4	The extent to which decisions are made at the appropriate level at this institution	3.18 (1.07)	3.10 (1.16)
5	The extent to which the institution effectively promotes diversity in the workplace	3.84 (0.95)	3.87 (0.98)
6	The extent to which administrative leadership is focused on meeting the needs of students	3.82 (0.97)	3.53 (1.13)*
10	The extent to which information is shared within the institution	3.23 (1.14)	3.19 (1.13)
11	The extent to which institutional teams use problem-solving techniques	3.31 (0.97)	3.35 (0.94)
15	The extent to which I am able to appropriately influence the direction of this institution	3.19 (1.07)	3.02 (1.14)*
16	The extent to which open and ethical communication is practiced at this institution	3.37 (1.06)	3.22 (1.14)
22	The extent to which this institution has been successful in positively motivating my performance	3.41 (1.15)	3.42 (1.12)
25	The extent to which a spirit of cooperation exists at this institution	3.40 (1.07)	3.15 (1.15)*
29	The extent to which institution-wide policies guide my work	3.62 (0.88)	3.64 (0.89)
32	The extent to which this institution is appropriately organized	3.13 (1.11)	3.16 (1.09)
38	The extent to which I have the opportunity for advancement within this institution	3.26 (1.19)	3.30 (1.18)
41	The extent to which I receive adequate information regarding important activities at this institution	3.75 (0.96)	3.69 (0.96)
44	The extent to which my work is guided by clearly defined administrative processes	3.29 (1.06)	3.38 (1.08)
	Mean Total	**3.44 (0.77)**	**3.38 (0.79)**

* T-test results indicate a significant difference between the 2009 mean and the 2011 mean ($\alpha=0.05$)

Table 7.   Comparative Mean Responses: Supervisory Relationships

	Supervisory Relationships	2009 Mean (SD)	2011 Mean (SD)
2	The extent to which my supervisor expresses confidence in my work	4.02 (1.05)	4.20 (0.96)*
9	The extent to which my supervisor is open to the ideas, opinions, and beliefs of everyone	3.95 (1.12)	4.07 (1.10)
12	The extent to which positive work expectations are communicated to me	3.55 (1.01)	3.69 (0.99)
13	The extent to which unacceptable behaviors are identified and communicated to me	3.45 (1.06)	3.66 (0.92)*
20	The extent to which I receive timely feedback for my work	3.56 (0.99)	3.71 (0.97)*
21	The extent to which I receive appropriate feedback for my work	3.55 (1.04)	3.75 (0.95)*
26	The extent to which my supervisor actively seeks my ideas	3.65 (1.18)	3.76 (1.15)
27	The extent to which my supervisor seriously considers my ideas	3.72 (1.15)	3.82 (1.14)
30	The extent to which work outcomes are clarified for me	3.49 (1.00)	3.69 (0.92)*
34	The extent to which my supervisor helps me to improve my work	3.60 (1.10)	3.77 (1.08)*
39	The extent to which I am given the opportunity to be creative in my work	3.89 (1.07)	4.00 (0.97)
45	The extent to which I have the opportunity to express my ideas in appropriate forums	3.63 (1.02)	3.59 (1.01)
46	The extent to which professional development and training opportunities are available	3.89 (1.04)	4.11 (0.90)*
	Mean Total	**3.69 (0.83)**	**3.84 (0.79)***

* T-test results indicate a significant difference between the 2009 mean and the 2011 mean (α=0.05)

Table 8.   Comparative Mean Responses: Teamwork

Teamwork	2009 Mean (SD)	2011 Mean (SD)
3 The extent to which there is a spirit of cooperation within my work team	3.64 (1.13)	3.73 (1.16)
14 The extent to which my primary work team uses problem-solving techniques	3.56 (1.02)	3.80 (0.98)*
24 The extent to which there is an opportunity for all ideas to be exchanged within my work team	3.68 (1.04)	3.83 (1.02)
33 The extent to which my work team provides an environment for free and open expression of ideas, opinions, and beliefs	3.65 (1.12)	3.75 (1.08)
36 The extent to which my work team coordinates its efforts with appropriate individuals	3.65 (0.90)	3.78 (0.95)
43 The extent to which a spirit of cooperation exists in my department	3.57 (1.18)	3.79 (1.14)*
Mean Total	**3.62 (0.90)**	**3.78 (0.90)***

Table 9.   Comparative Mean Responses: Student Focus

Student Focus	2009 Mean (SD)	2011 Mean (SD)
7 The extent to which student needs are central to what we do	3.88 (0.93)	3.75 (1.06)
8 The extent to which I feel my job is relevant to this institution's mission	4.29 (0.87)	4.34 (0.80)
17 The extent to which faculty meet the needs of students	3.81 (0.86)	3.99 (0.79)*
18 The extent to which student ethnic and cultural diversity are important at this institution	3.92 (0.81)	4.08 (0.90)*
19 The extent to which students' competencies are enhanced	3.78 (0.77)	3.90 (0.78)
23 The extent to which non-teaching professional personnel meet the needs of the students	3.87 (0.83)	3.99 (0.87)
28 The extent to which classified personnel meet the needs of the students	3.64 (0.80)	3.76 (0.81)
31 The extent to which students receive an excellent education at this institution	4.10 (0.73)	4.30 (0.68)*
35 The extent to which this institution prepares students for a career	3.92 (0.78)	4.12 (0.73)*
37 The extent to which this institution prepares students for further learning	4.01 (0.73)	4.17 (0.70)*
40 The extent to which students are assisted with their personal development	3.79 (0.80)	3.89 (0.78)
42 The extent to which students are satisfied with their educational experience at this institution	3.89 (0.69)	4.02 (0.63)*
Mean Total	**3.91 (0.55)**	**4.03 (0.52)***
Overall	**3.65 (0.66)**	**3.73 (0.64)**

* T-test results indicate a significant difference between the 2009 mean and the 2011 mean (α=0.05)

Table 10. Comparative Mean Responses: Customized

	Customized	2009 Mean (SD)	2011 Mean (SD)
47	The extent to which I am empowered to pursue my ideas without formal permission	3.63 (1.08)	3.59 (1.07)
48	The extent to which I take on new and challenging projects as part of my job	3.88 (0.94)	3.96 (0.87)
49	The extent to which I have tried new things that did not work out, but I still plan to try again	3.90 (0.83)	3.97 (0.77)
50	The extent to which I work with others outside of GRCC to solve problems related to my work	3.73 (0.88)	3.91 (0.86)*
51	The extent to which I am supported to explore my natural curiosity as part of my daily work	3.63 (1.06)	3.71 (1.01)
52	The extent to which I feel respected when I share an unpopular belief or opinion	3.27 (1.16)	3.29 (1.11)
53	The extent to which I have participated on a cross-functional team while at GRCC	3.78 (0.96)	4.01 (0.87)*
54	The extent to which I have implemented ideas that were shared with me by students	3.81 (0.79)	4.03 (0.75)*
55	The extent to which I have the opportunity to hear many points of view before making a decision	3.62 (0.92)	3.77 (0.91)*
56	The extent to which I have sufficient opportunities to experiment with new ways of doing things in my job	3.76 (1.01)	3.81 (1.04)
	Mean Total	**3.68 (0.76)**	**3.78 (0.70)**

* T-test results indicate a significant difference between the 2009 mean and the 2011 mean (α=0.05)

Comparative Analysis: Personnel Classification

Figure 4 reports composite ratings according to the four climate factors and the customized questions for employees in Personnel Classifications. In general, the Administrative employees rated the four normative factors most favorable (3.93), whereas the employees from Technical/Campus Operations rated the four normative factors least favorable (3.62). See also Table 11.

Figures 5 through 9 show the ratings of each employee group for each of the 56 climate items. The data summary for each figure precedes the corresponding figure. This information provides a closer look at the institutional climate ratings and should be examined carefully when prioritizing areas for change among the employee groups.

Figure 4.   Mean Climate Scores as Rated by Personnel Classifications at Grand Rapids Community College.
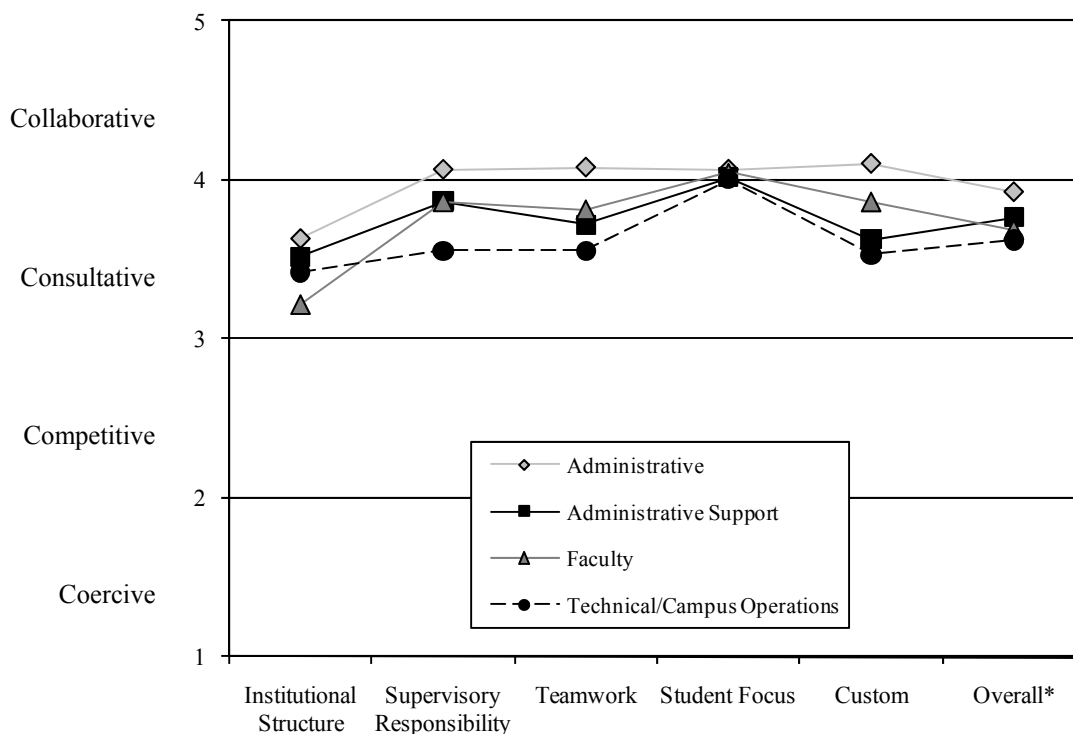
* The overall mean does not reflect the mean scores of the customized items developed specifically for GRCC.

Table 11. Mean Climate Scores as Rated by Personnel Classifications and by Year of Administration

	Institutional Structure	Supervisory Relationships	Teamwork	Student Focus	Custom	Overall*
Administrative						
2009	3.39	3.63	3.58	3.93	3.61	3.61
2011	3.63	4.07	4.08	4.07	4.10	3.93
Administrative Support						
2009	3.55	3.83	3.65	3.92	3.65	3.74
2011	3.52	3.87	3.72	4.02	3.63	3.77
Faculty						
2009	3.45	3.77	3.75	3.92	3.84	3.70
2011	3.22	3.86	3.81	4.04	3.86	3.69
Technical/Campus Operations						
2009	3.41	3.35	3.30	3.88	3.40	3.50
2011	3.42	3.56	3.55	4.00	3.53	3.62

* The overall mean does not reflect the mean scores of the customized items developed specifically for GRCC.

| Institutional Structure	Administrative	Administrative Support	Faculty	Technical/ Campus Operations
1 The extent to which the actions of this institution reflect its mission	4.06	3.75	3.37	3.69
4 The extent to which decisions are made at the appropriate level at this institution	3.31	3.40	2.84	3.21
5 The extent to which the institution effectively promotes diversity in the workplace	3.90	3.92	3.77	4.05
6 The extent to which administrative leadership is focused on meeting the needs of students	4.00	3.89	3.12	3.86
10 The extent to which information is shared within this institution	3.46	3.18	3.16	3.08
11 The extent to which institutional teams use problem-solving techniques	3.44	3.52	3.23	3.38
15 The extent to which I am able to appropriately influence the direction of this institution	3.36	3.11	2.89	2.93
16 The extent to which open and ethical communication is practiced at this institution	3.54	3.40	2.99	3.31
22 The extent to which this institution has been successful in positively motivating my performance	3.58	3.54	3.37	3.26
25 The extent to which a spirit of cooperation exists at this institution	3.46	3.34	2.86	3.42
29 The extent to which institution-wide policies guide my work	3.94	3.75	3.51	3.60
32 The extent to which this institution is appropriately organized	3.29	3.38	2.98	3.27
38 The extent to which I have the opportunity for advancement within this institution	3.49	3.17	3.43	3.02
41 The extent to which I receive adequate information regarding important activities at this institution	3.83	3.80	3.60	3.66
44 The extent to which my work is guided by clearly defined administrative processes	3.77	3.53	3.21	3.34

Figure 5.   Mean Scores of the Institutional Structure Climate Factor as Rated by Personnel Classifications at Grand Rapids Community College
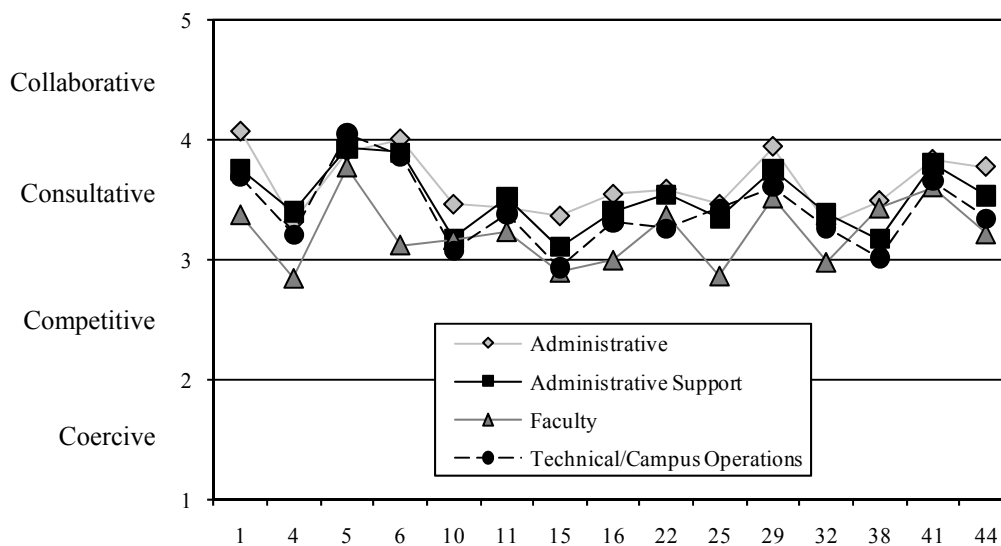
Supervisory Relationships		Administrative	Administrative Support	Faculty	Technical/ Campus Operations
2	The extent to which my supervisor expresses confidence in my work	4.31	4.15	4.27	3.99
9	The extent to which my supervisor is open to the ideas, opinions, and beliefs of everyone	4.23	4.10	4.12	3.78
12	The extent to which positive work expectations are communicated to me	3.98	3.86	3.62	3.46
13	The extent to which unacceptable behaviors are identified and communicated to me	3.92	3.71	3.59	3.56
20	The extent to which I receive timely feedback for my work	3.90	3.75	3.75	3.43
21	The extent to which I receive appropriate feedback for my work	3.94	3.82	3.78	3.48
26	The extent to which my supervisor actively seeks my ideas	4.21	3.81	3.76	3.33
27	The extent to which my supervisor seriously considers my ideas	4.20	3.84	3.84	3.47
30	The extent to which work outcomes are clarified for me	3.90	3.76	3.70	3.45
34	The extent to which my supervisor helps me to improve my work	4.02	3.72	3.82	3.54
39	The extent to which I am given the opportunity to be creative in my work	4.17	3.91	4.14	3.61
45	The extent to which I have the opportunity to express my ideas in appropriate forums	3.88	3.59	3.60	3.34
46	The extent to which professional development and training opportunities are available	4.19	4.18	4.20	3.75

Figure 6. Mean Scores of the Supervisory Relationships Climate Factor as Rated by Personnel Classifications at Grand Rapids Community College
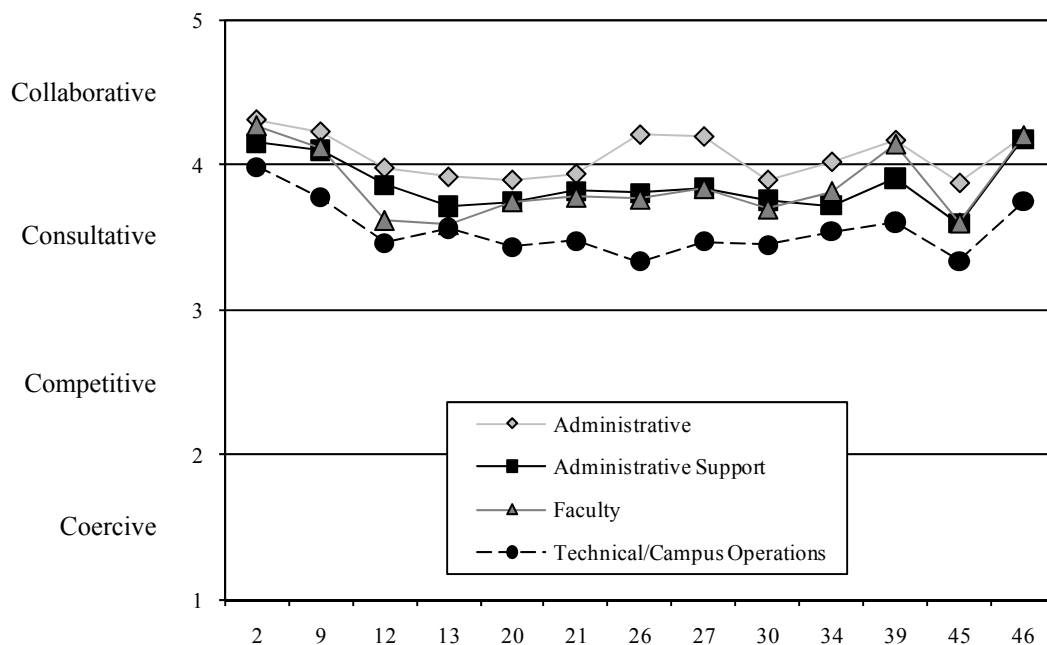
Teamwork		Administrative	Administrative Support	Faculty	Technical/ Campus Operations
3	The extent to which there is a spirit of cooperation within my work team	4.00	3.67	3.73	3.59
14	The extent to which my primary work team uses problem-solving techniques	4.02	3.83	3.83	3.55
24	The extent to which there is an opportunity for all ideas to be exchanged within my work team	4.19	3.78	3.88	3.50
33	The extent to which my work team provides an environment for free and open expression of ideas, opinions, and beliefs	4.13	3.76	3.75	3.49
36	The extent to which my work team coordinates its efforts with appropriate individuals and teams	4.15	3.65	3.81	3.59
43	The extent to which a spirit of cooperation exists in my department	4.02	3.62	3.87	3.59

Figure 7.   Mean Scores of the Teamwork Climate Factor as Rated by Personnel Classifications at Grand Rapids Community College
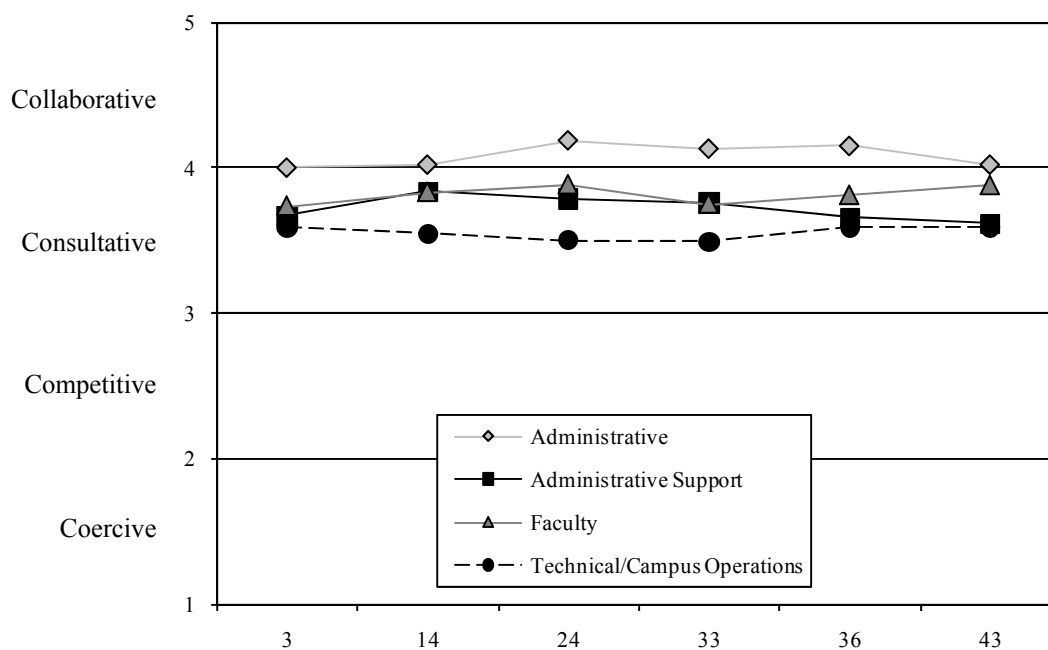
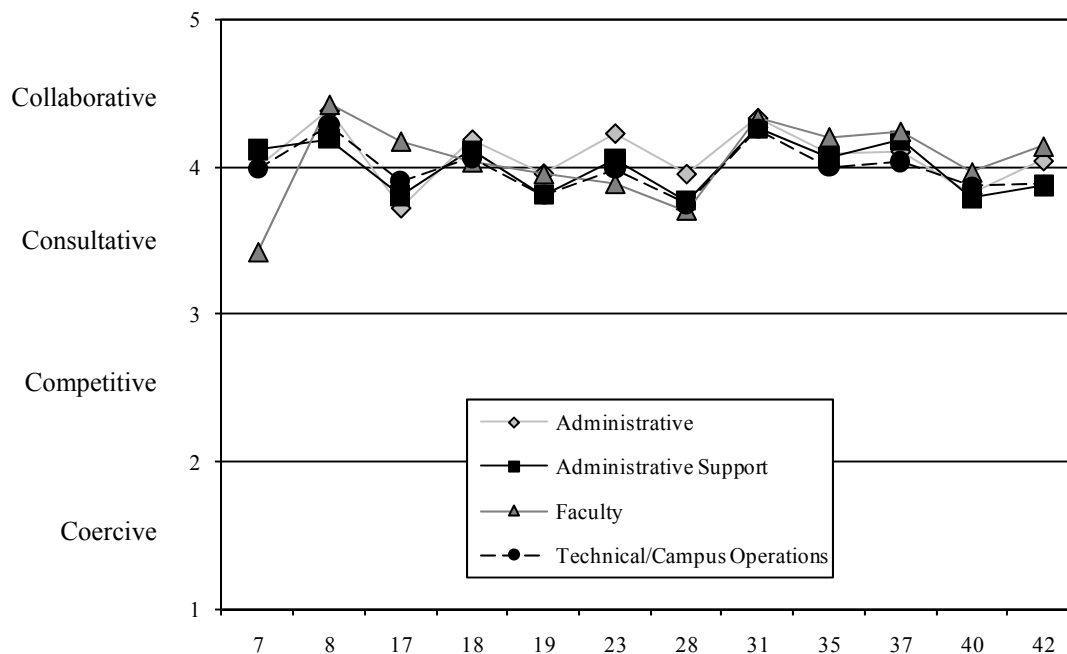| **Student Focus**	Administrative	Administrative Support	Faculty	Technical/ Campus Operations
7 The extent to which student needs are central to what we do	4.00	4.12	3.42	3.98
8 The extent to which I feel my job is relevant to this institution's mission	4.38	4.19	4.42	4.28
17 The extent to which faculty meet the needs of the students	3.72	3.81	4.17	3.90
18 The extent to which student ethnic and cultural diversity are important at this institution	4.19	4.11	4.03	4.06
19 The extent to which students' competencies are enhanced	3.96	3.81	3.95	3.81
23 The extent to which non-teaching professional personnel meet the needs of the students	4.23	4.05	3.88	3.98
28 The extent to which classified personnel meet the needs of the students	3.95	3.77	3.70	3.74
31 The extent to which students receive an excellent education at this institution	4.33	4.26	4.33	4.26
35 The extent to which this institution prepares students for a career	4.08	4.06	4.20	4.00
37 The extent to which this institution prepares students for further learning	4.11	4.18	4.24	4.03
40 The extent to which students are assisted with their personal development	3.82	3.79	3.96	3.87
42 The extent to which students are satisfied with their educational experience at this institution	4.04	3.87	4.14	3.88

Figure 8. Mean Scores of the Student Focus Climate Factor as Rated by Personnel Classifications at Grand Rapids Community College

Customized		Administrative	Administrative Support	Faculty	Technical/ Campus Operations
47	The extent to which I am empowered to pursue my ideas without formal permission	3.85	3.45	3.65	3.43
48	The extent to which I take on new and challenging projects as part of my job	4.30	3.77	4.08	3.67
49	The extent to which I have tried new things that did not work out, but I still plan to try again	4.25	3.87	4.01	3.73
50	The extent to which I work with others outside of GRCC to solve problems related to my work	4.18	3.81	3.89	3.84
51	The extent to which I am supported to explore my natural curiosity as part of my daily work	3.96	3.57	3.80	3.44
52	The extent to which I feel respected when I share an unpopular belief or opinion	3.62	3.34	3.23	3.14
53	The extent to which I have participated on a cross-functional team while at GRCC	4.44	3.92	4.12	3.42
54	The extent to which I have implemented ideas that were shared with me by students	4.22	3.73	4.18	3.56
55	The extent to which I have the opportunity to hear many points of view before making a decision	4.21	3.58	3.79	3.60
56	The extent to which I have sufficient opportunities to experiment with new ways of doing things in my job	4.08	3.62	3.93	3.53

Figure 9. Mean Scores of the Customized Climate Factor as Rated by Personnel Classifications at Grand Rapids Community College
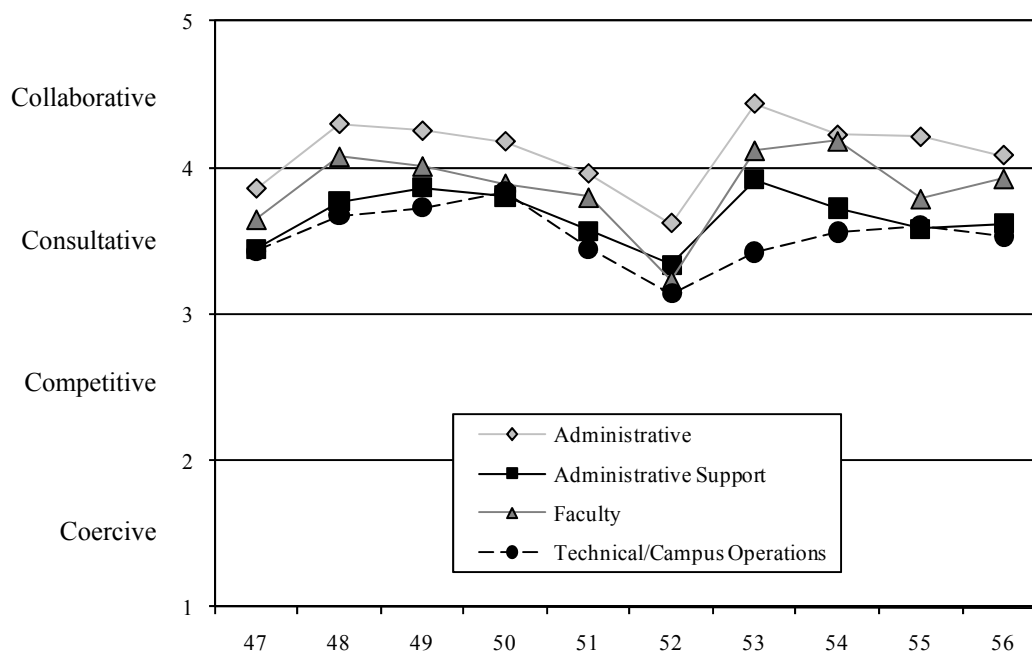
Tables 12 through 15 contain the top priorities for discussion for each Personnel Classification among the standard PACE items and the top priorities for discussion from the customized items developed specifically for Grand Rapids Community College.

Table 12. Priorities for Change: Administrative

	Area to Change	Mean
32	The extent to which this institution is appropriately organized	3.29
4	The extent to which decisions are made at the appropriate level at this institution	3.31
15	The extent to which I am able to appropriately influence the direction of this institution	3.36
11	The extent to which institutional teams use problem-solving techniques	3.44
10	The extent to which information is shared within this institution	3.46
25	The extent to which a spirit of cooperation exists at this institution	3.46
38	The extent to which I have the opportunity for advancement within this institution	3.49
16	The extent to which open and ethical communication is practiced at this institution	3.54
22	The extent to which this institution has been successful in positively motivating my performance	3.58
17	The extent to which faculty meet the needs of the students	3.72
	Area to Change—Customized	**Mean**
52	The extent to which I feel respected when I share an unpopular belief or opinion	3.62
47	The extent to which I am empowered to pursue my ideas without formal permission	3.85
51	The extent to which I am supported to explore my natural curiosity as part of my daily work	3.96

Table 13. Priorities for Change: Administrative Support

	Area to Change	Mean
15	The extent to which I am able to appropriately influence the direction of this institution	3.11
38	The extent to which I have the opportunity for advancement within this institution	3.17
10	The extent to which information is shared within this institution	3.18
25	The extent to which a spirit of cooperation exists at this institution	3.34
32	The extent to which this institution is appropriately organized	3.38
4	The extent to which decisions are made at the appropriate level at this institution	3.40
16	The extent to which open and ethical communication is practiced at this institution	3.40
11	The extent to which institutional teams use problem-solving techniques	3.52
44	The extent to which my work is guided by clearly defined administrative processes	3.53
22	The extent to which this institution has been successful in positively motivating my performance	3.54
	Area to Change—Customized	
52	The extent to which I feel respected when I share an unpopular belief or opinion	3.34
47	The extent to which I am empowered to pursue my ideas without formal permission	3.45
51	The extent to which I am supported to explore my natural curiosity as part of my daily work	3.57

Table 14.   Priorities for Change: Faculty

	Area to Change	Mean
4	The extent to which decisions are made at the appropriate level at this institution	2.84
25	The extent to which a spirit of cooperation exists at this institution	2.86
15	The extent to which I am able to appropriately influence the direction of this institution	2.89
32	The extent to which this institution is appropriately organized	2.98
16	The extent to which open and ethical communication is practiced at this institution	2.99
6	The extent to which administrative leadership is focused on meeting the needs of students	3.12
10	The extent to which information is shared within this institution	3.16
44	The extent to which my work is guided by clearly defined administrative processes	3.21
11	The extent to which institutional teams use problem-solving techniques	3.23
22	The extent to which this institution has been successful in positively motivating my performance	3.37
1	The extent to which the action of this institution reflect its mission	3.37
	Area to Change—Customized	**Mean**
52	The extent to which I feel respected when I share an unpopular belief or opinion	3.23
47	The extent to which I am empowered to pursue my ideas without formal permission	3.65
55	The extent to which I have the opportunity to hear many points of view before making a decision	3.79

Table 15.   Priorities for Change: Technical/Campus Operations

	Area to Change	Mean
15	The extent to which I am able to appropriately influence the direction of this institution	2.93
38	The extent to which I have the opportunity for advancement within this institution	3.02
10	The extent to which information is shared within this institution	3.08
4	The extent to which decisions are made at the appropriate level at this institution	3.21
22	The extent to which this institution has been successful in positively motivating my performance	3.26
32	The extent to which this institution is appropriately organized	3.27
16	The extent to which open and ethical communication is practiced at this institution	3.31
26	The extent to which my supervisor actively seeks my ideas	3.33
45	The extent to which I have the opportunity to express my ideas in appropriate forums	3.34
44	The extent to which my work is guided by clearly defined administrative processes	3.34
	Area to Change—Customized	**Mean**
52	The extent to which I feel respected when I share an unpopular belief or opinion	3.14
53	The extent to which I have participated on a cross-functional team while at GRCC	3.42
47	The extent to which I am empowered to pursue my ideas without formal permission	3.43

Comparative Analysis: Demographic Classifications

As depicted in Table 16, Administrative employees rated the climate highest within its demographic group (3.93). In terms of length of employment, those individuals with 1-4 years of employment rated the climate highest (3.95). Employees of Technical/Campus Operations rated the climate lowest within its demographic group (3.62), while respondents with 15 or more years of employment rated the climate with a composite rating of 3.62.

Table 16. Mean Climate Scores as Rated by Personnel in Various Demographic Classifications

	Institutional Structure	Supervisory Relationships	Teamwork	Student Focus	Customized	Overall*
What is your personnel classification:						
Administrative	3.63	4.07	4.08	4.07	4.10	3.93
Administrative Support	3.52	3.87	3.72	4.02	3.63	3.77
Faculty	3.22	3.86	3.81	4.04	3.86	3.69
Technical/Campus Operations	3.42	3.56	3.55	4.00	3.53	3.62
For which division do you work:						
Academic and Student Affairs	3.30	3.89	3.83	4.01	3.84	3.72
Finance & Administration	3.64	3.79	3.63	4.11	3.71	3.79
Information Technology	3.26	3.56	3.55	3.92	3.51	3.55
President's Office (includes College Advancement, Communication, & General Counsel)	3.43	3.93	3.81	4.00	3.82	3.77
To which employee group do you belong:						
Meet and Confer	3.61	3.92	3.90	4.07	3.89	3.85
CEBA	3.56	3.55	3.48	4.08	3.49	3.67
ESP	3.42	3.95	3.71	3.94	3.63	3.74
Faculty/Job Training/Preschool	3.07	3.75	3.74	4.01	3.80	3.59
Campus Police	3.50	3.77	3.54	4.05	3.59	3.73
What is your length of employment:						
Less than 1 year	3.76	4.00	3.86	4.14	3.90	3.94
1-4 years	3.71	4.06	3.93	4.13	3.96	3.95
5-9 years	3.30	3.70	3.72	3.99	3.81	3.64
10-14 years	3.22	3.87	3.84	3.97	3.69	3.67
15 or more years	3.21	3.72	3.68	4.01	3.72	3.62

* The overall mean does not reflect the mean scores of the customized items developed specifically for Grand Rapids Community College.

Table 16.   Continued

	Institutional Structure	Supervisory Relationships	Teamwork	Student Focus	Customized	Overall*
Please select the race/ethnicity that best describes you:						
Hispanic or Latino, of any race	3.64	3.88	3.73	4.02	3.68	3.81
Black, not Hispanic or Latino	3.37	3.68	3.59	3.95	3.64	3.63
White, not Hispanic or Latino	3.38	3.85	3.82	4.06	3.82	3.74
Other (including Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Two or more races, not Hispanic or Latino)	3.37	3.98	3.78	3.82	3.79	3.71
What gender are you:						
Male	3.30	3.78	3.77	4.04	3.80	3.68
Female	3.46	3.91	3.81	4.02	3.80	3.78

* The overall mean does not reflect the mean scores of the customized items developed specifically for Grand Rapids Community College.

Comparative Analysis: Norm Base

Table 17 and Figure 10 show how GRCC compares with the NILIE PACE Norm Base, which includes approximately 60 different climate studies conducted at two year institutions since 2009. These studies include small, medium, and large institutions. Institutions range in size from 1,200 credit students on one campus to 22,000 credit students enrolled on multiple campuses. The Norm Base is updated each year to include the prior 2-year period. Normative data are not available for the Customized climate factor area developed specifically for GRCC. Table 17 and Figure 10 also show how the current administration of the PACE survey at GRCC compares with the 2009 administration based on the four PACE climate factors (i.e., Institutional Structure, Supervisory Relationships, Teamwork, and Student Focus) maintained by NILIE.

Table 17. Grand Rapids Community College Climate compared with the NILIE PACE Norm Base

	GRCC 2009	GRCC 2011	Norm Base*
Institutional Structure	3.44	3.38	3.38
Supervisory Relationships	3.69	3.84	3.70
Teamwork	3.62	3.78	3.73
Student Focus	3.91	4.03	3.94
Overall	3.65	3.73	3.66

Figure 10. Grand Rapids Community College Climate Compared with the NILIE PACE Norm Base
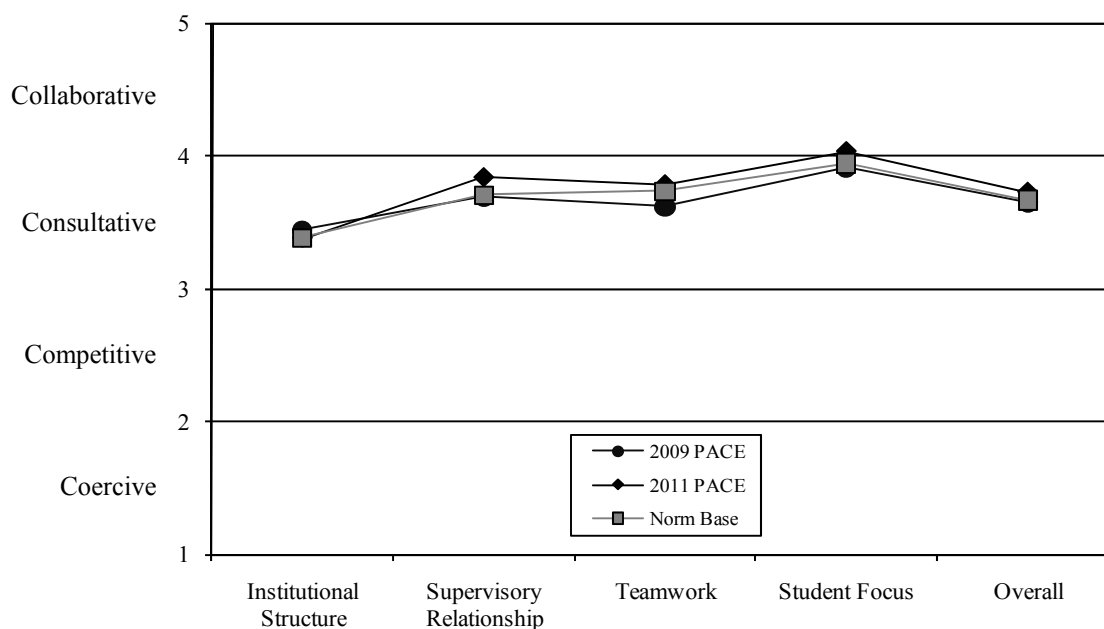
* Normative data are not available for the customized climate factor developed specifically for GRCC. Thus, the customized items are not included in the calculation of the overall mean.

Tables 18-21 shows how GRCC compares question by question to the PACE Norm Base maintained by NILIE.

Table 18. Institutional Structure Mean Scores Compared to the NILIE Norm Base

	Institutional Structure	GRCC Mean	Norm Base
1	The extent to which the actions of this institution reflect its mission	3.60*	3.78
4	The extent to which decisions are made at the appropriate level at this institution	3.10	3.17
5	The extent to which the institution effectively promotes diversity in the workplace	3.87	3.77
6	The extent to which administrative leadership is focused on meeting the needs of students	3.53	3.63
10	The extent to which information is shared within the institution	3.19	3.11
11	The extent to which institutional teams use problem-solving techniques	3.35	3.31
15	The extent to which I am able to appropriately influence the direction of this institution	3.02	3.10
16	The extent to which open and ethical communication is practiced at this institution	3.22	3.24
22	The extent to which this institution has been successful in positively motivating my performance	3.42	3.36
25	The extent to which a spirit of cooperation exists at this institution	3.15	3.28
29	The extent to which institution-wide policies guide my work	3.64	3.58
32	The extent to which this institution is appropriately organized	3.16	3.22
38	The extent to which I have the opportunity for advancement within this institution	3.30*	3.08
41	The extent to which I receive adequate information regarding important activities at this institution	3.69	3.61
44	The extent to which my work is guided by clearly defined administrative processes	3.38	3.39
	Mean Total	**3.38**	**3.38**

* T-test results indicate a significant difference between the mean and the Norm Base mean ($\alpha=0.05$)

Table 19.   Supervisory Relationships Mean Scores Compared to the NILIE Norm Base

	Supervisory Relationships	GRCC Mean	Norm Base
2	The extent to which my supervisor expresses confidence in my work	4.20*	4.09
9	The extent to which my supervisor is open to the ideas, opinions, and beliefs of everyone	4.07	3.97
12	The extent to which positive work expectations are communicated to me	3.69	3.60
13	The extent to which unacceptable behaviors are identified and communicated to me	3.66*	3.56
20	The extent to which I receive timely feedback for my work	3.71*	3.57
21	The extent to which I receive appropriate feedback for my work	3.75*	3.60
26	The extent to which my supervisor actively seeks my ideas	3.76	3.65
27	The extent to which my supervisor seriously considers my ideas	3.82	3.72
30	The extent to which work outcomes are clarified for me	3.69*	3.54
34	The extent to which my supervisor helps me to improve my work	3.77	3.66
39	The extent to which I am given the opportunity to be creative in my work	4.00	3.92
45	The extent to which I have the opportunity to express my ideas in appropriate forums	3.59	3.56
46	The extent to which professional development and training opportunities are available	4.11*	3.64
	Mean Total	**3.84***	**3.70**

Table 20.   Teamwork Mean Scores Compared to the NILIE Norm Base

	Teamwork	GRCC Mean	Norm Base
3	The extent to which there is a spirit of cooperation within my work team	3.73	3.83
14	The extent to which my primary work team uses problem-solving techniques	3.80	3.72
24	The extent to which there is an opportunity for all ideas to be exchanged within my work team	3.83*	3.68
33	The extent to which my work team provides an environment for free and open expression	3.75	3.72
36	The extent to which my work team coordinates its efforts with appropriate individuals	3.78	3.73
43	The extent to which a spirit of cooperation exists in my department	3.79	3.73
	Mean Total	**3.78**	**3.73**

* T-test results indicate a significant difference between the mean and the Norm Base mean (α=0.05)

Table 21. Student Focus Mean Scores Compared to the NILIE Norm Base

	Student Focus	GRCC Mean	Norm Base
7	The extent to which student needs are central to what we do	3.75	3.80
8	The extent to which I feel my job is relevant to this institution's mission	4.34	4.33
17	The extent to which faculty meet the needs of students	3.99	3.92
18	The extent to which student ethnic and cultural diversity are important at this institution	4.08*	3.94
19	The extent to which students' competencies are enhanced	3.90	3.85
23	The extent to which non-teaching professional personnel meet the needs of the students	3.99*	3.85
28	The extent to which classified personnel meet the needs of the students	3.76	3.81
31	The extent to which students receive an excellent education at this institution	4.30*	4.07
35	The extent to which this institution prepares students for a career	4.12*	4.04
37	The extent to which this institution prepares students for further learning	4.17*	4.04
40	The extent to which students are assisted with their personal development	3.89*	3.80
42	The extent to which students are satisfied with their educational experience	4.02*	3.89
	Mean Total	**4.03***	**3.94**
	Overall Total	**3.73**	**3.66**

* T-test results indicate a significant difference between the mean and the Norm Base mean (α=0.05)

Qualitative Analysis

Respondents were given an opportunity to write comments about areas of the institution they found most favorable and least favorable. Of the 364 Grand Rapids Community College employees who completed the PACE survey, 47.3% (172 respondents) provided written comments. In analyzing the written data there is a degree of researcher interpretation in categorizing the individual comments, however, reliability is ensured by coding all responses back to the questions on the PACE survey.

Figure 11 provides a summary of the GRCC comments. This summary is based on Herzberg's (1982) two-factor model of motivation. NILIE has modified the model to represent the PACE factors by classifying the comments into the most appropriate PACE climate factors. This approach illustrates how each factor contributes to the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the respondents. Please note that when asked for opinions, it is common for respondents to write a greater number of negative comments than positive comments.

The greatest numbers of comments across all factors fell within the Institutional Structure and Supervisory Relationships climate factors. Please refer to Tables 22 and 23 for sample comments categorized by climate factor and the actual number of responses provided by GRCC employees. This sample of open-ended comments reflects employee responses as coded back to the questions of the PACE survey. Please note that comments are quoted exactly as written except in instances where the integrity of the report is compromised.

Figure 11.   Grand Rapids Community College Comment Response Rates
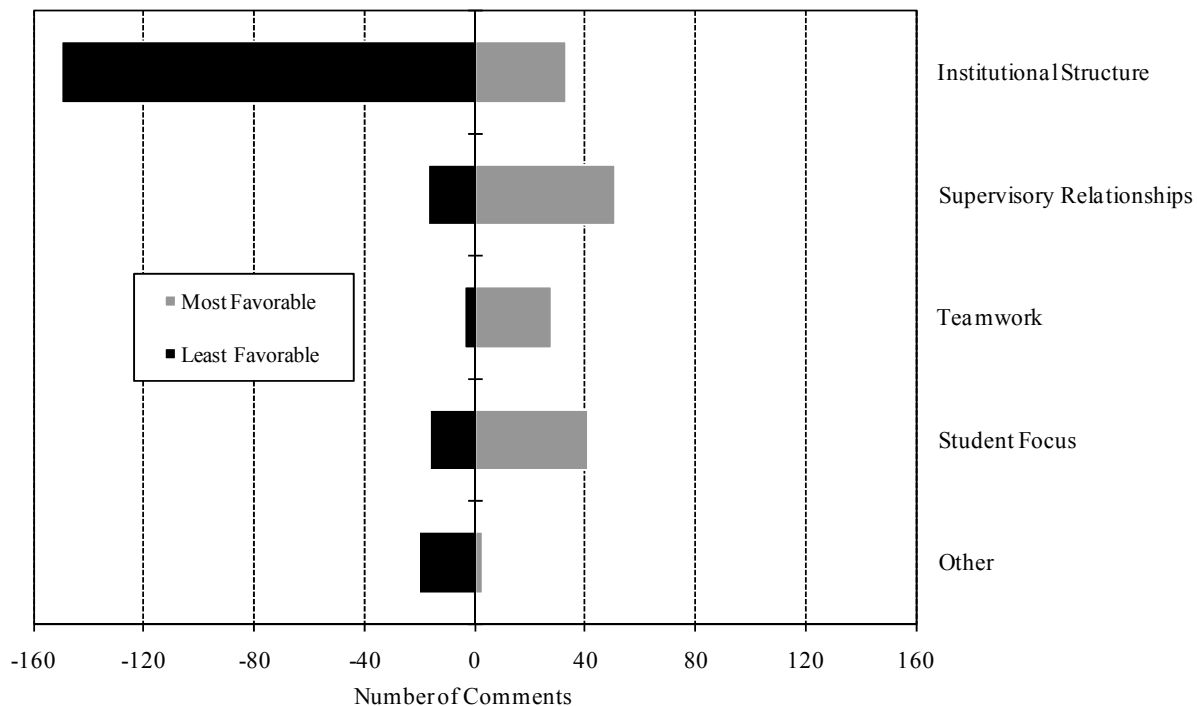
Note: Adapted from Herzberg, F. (1982). The managerial choice: To be efficient and to be human (2nd ed.). Salt Lake City, UT: Olympus Publishing Company

Table 22. Most Favorable Responses—Sample Comments and Actual Number of Responses at Grand Rapids Community College

Factor	Themes
Institutional Structure (n=33)	*Communication between different groups is outstanding.*
	I receive the support from other areas within the institution to promote and enforce the new processes that are instated because of my ideas.
	I appreciate that GRCC is a family-friendly organization that seems to consistently adhere to their stated mission, vision, and values.
	I appreciate the support I receive from GRCC individuals I do not work directly with.
	Team effort and innovation is high at GRCC. It is a wonderful place to work and to learn.
	The college has always placed a high importance on diversity. This has been an area where the college consistently does well.
	Institutionally, we are starting to put in more policies that in turn help build students' chances for success (pre-requisites etc).
	This is an inclusive institution and I feel most people are proud to work and be a part of GRCC.
	We have some excellent people at this college. I have worked for and with several community colleges and I think that we are an exceptional institution.
	My work is important to the institution. I have a voice, I'm listened to, and I'm challenged.
	I love that we are open to try our ideas, and new methods. The fact that you can try and try again is refreshing and most helpful when you want to do your best for the overall goal. Being open to individuals' trials is one of the institutions strengths.
Supervisory Relationship (n=50)	*Faculty have flexibility in how to use technology in the classroom.*
	I am always given the opportunity to present new ideas and if they are cost effective and will contribute to the overall efficiency of the department they are implemented in a timely manner.
	I am very satisfied with the deans of my school and their support of my colleagues' and my work. I know my dean will actively advocate for my ideas and the work of this department.

Table 22.   *Continued*

Factor	Themes
	I have a great supervisor and plenty of freedom and encouragement to do my teaching well.
	I have an extremely supportive supervisor who provides helpful feedback and supports my work.
	I have generally found I have the support of my immediate supervisor and have the freedom to do my job without interference and with proper direction if I request it.
	I feel the educational opportunities and support offered to faculty are very beneficial.
	I find that my department head is very willing to let my colleagues and me experiment with teaching styles and with projects. My dean and assistant dean are also open-minded in this area.
	I enjoy the freedom my immediate supervisor gives me both in regards to my schedule and in finding the most appropriate way to do a job.
	It is nice to be able to receive training/classes on and off campus for further development.
	Our department leadership provides ample opportunities for training, growth and input.
	My supervisor respects and acknowledges my work. I am allowed to work independently and free to make decisions regarding my work processes in the office. My supervisor keeps staff well informed about current issues at the college.
	There is plenty of room for professional growth at the institution, and I have been positively encouraged to pursue the things that I am interested in.
	My Program Director is open to new ideas and ways of doing things, which is a great environment in which to problem-solve. In addition, my Associate Dean has been very personally supportive of me and seems to value my opinions and ideas. He often expresses appreciation for my contributions.

Table 22.	*Continued*
Factor	**Themes**
Teamwork (n=28)	*I believe the team I work with is very good at problem solving and helping each other out.*
	I feel very confident and proud of the department I work in at GRCC. We are a great team, always willing to assist one another.
	My colleagues in my academic department are typically very good at what they do. They're willing to share expertise and advice regarding classroom and laboratory topics. They are a wealth of expertise and experience.
	My department is very supportive and I enjoy working with them.
	My immediate colleagues and supervisor are a joy to work with and very helpful.
	My work group is a great place to work because of communication, openness and freedom.
	Our department gets along very well and is supportive of one another.
	My specific department teams have a great dynamic and work well together.
	This department has a high level of cooperation and communication.
	The team I work with is very supportive and cooperative. They work hard on continuous improvement to benefit students.
	My work group works very well together. We communicate well, exchange information with each other and cooperate in scheduling very well.
	Within my very small work group, we are able to collaborate and share ideas very effectively.
Student Focus (n= 41)	*For the most part, most faculty and staff focus on the students and go above and beyond to help students.*
	I believe enhancing learning opportunities for students is a priority for the college, and I am pleased I am a part of that.
	I believe student success and achievement are extremely important to this institution. It is difficult to meet the ever-increasing needs for students to be successful. I believe this institution is doing the best it can to make sure the majority are taken care of.
	I believe the GRCC still is a great institution for preparing students for both employment and a 4 year institution.

Table 22.   *Continued*

Factor	Themes
	I am proud to work at GRCC because I think we offer fabulous program and a good value for our students.
	I think the majority of college employees really care about students and give 100 percent to help students succeed.
	Most staff and faculty place student learning as the most important focus of their work. Great value and meaning is gained by helping our students succeed.
	We have some of the finest Occupational Programs in the region. Most Faculty are very committed to student success.
	I believe our students do well when they transfer to other institutions.
	A high quality education is available here at a very reasonable price, for students who are willing to work at obtaining it.
	Our focus is geared to providing a solid learning environment and opportunities for growth for a wide range of students, either geared to a career or vocation, or to prepare for transfer to a four-year institution.
	Students and their needs to be successful are our main purpose for being here and it is expressed in all levels of the institution.
	Students are served well at GRCC. They receive an outstanding education. We have outstanding faculty and staff who care about their success.
	The Disability Services department does their best to help hundreds of students succeed, in spite of their disabilities.
	This is a great school for local students to attend. The quality of the programs and services offered are exceptional. The websites are perfect. The scope of our offerings is huge.
	We as a department go above and beyond for the students at this campus. We take pride in that and continue to show that the students are our number one priority.
Other (n=3)	Technology
	The college is very good about adding the latest technology in most areas.
	Budget
	Our move to more conservative fiscal practices was needed and I believe that the Faculty and Staff understand the seriousness of our financial situation.

Table 23. Least Favorable Reponses—Sample Comments and Actual Number of Responses at Grand Rapids Community College

Factor	Themes
Institutional Structure (n=150)	*New positions or promotions of hire are purely based on nepotism. People are either handed jobs or the hiring process is skewed towards the person of choice. There is a serious lack of consistency when vetting potential employees for new positions.*
	Classifications of some jobs on campus are incorrect in my opinion.
	College finances are not as transparent and available as they should be.
	GRCC is a complex institution and is trying to be all things to all people. It should determine what it is good at and stay the course. We cannot continue to try to reinvent ourselves every few years. We have a core business of educating students. We will need to hone our work so we don't take on hundreds of new projects each year.
	GRCC's top administration is hierarchal, not collaborative and empowering. There's more support for businesses than for us. The focus is on buildings and money, not on people and quality.
	There is great divergence and disconnect between various parts of the college. I do not feel like we are all on the same page.
	Truly innovative ideas at the institution are not supported and several administrative processes are barriers to innovation and slow employees' ability to quickly make changes that will benefit the institution.
	I am greatly saddened by the obvious divide that exists between administration and faculty. This strongly influences morale and ability to appropriately communicate toward student success.
	Although my team works well together, our workload continues to increase as external regulatory and accountability requirements continue to increase.
	I am very dissatisfied with the way this administration has approached contract negotiations and their continual resistance to negotiate fairly. I feel this administration is unfairly portraying our faculty to the board of administration and to the community as being overpaid and underworked.

Table 23.   *Continued*

Factor	Themes
	I feel that my work for this institution is not valued and have been mistreated when it comes to the advancement.
	There are times of year (e.g., during peak registration periods) when the work load in my area feels unmanageable.
	I fear that the school is losing its mission as providing a liberal arts education and instead is starting to focus on remedial courses.
	I feel that the college as a whole is less interested in input from non-administration than in the past. It seems that the hierarchy is focused on so much that it makes it difficult for people to do their jobs sometimes.
	I feel that the new limitations created for promotions show leadership does not want to promote individuals from within and do not value the experience that individuals have attained through working at GRCC.
	I feel the chance for advancement at this college holds back people with advanced degrees from pursuing faculty positions once they are hired in a support staff role.
	I find it somewhat frustrating that some decisions are made without consulting with the staff that will actually be doing the work or have already been doing the work.
	I have very little chance to meet or discuss important things with faculty from other disciplines.
	I wish when applying for a position that the interview teams do not have their favorites picked before the actual interviews take place.
	I think that and upper level managers need to speak and take consideration from the employees who actually do the work before they implement a rule or a program. We are the ones who work with the students on a daily basis and we know what they and we need.
	I wish we could get this contract settled. I want to move forward in my career here, but I am stuck at this point. Our faculty negotiating team seems to be more concerned about the people who have been here for a while than people like me.

Table 23.   *Continued*

Factor	Themes
Supervisory Relationship (n=17)	*I sometimes feel my supervisor does not deal with the issues of this building. it seems he does not want to be the bad guy.*
	In terms of professional development, my team works on the Lakeshore and we have limited ability to travel to the main campus as our services have to be available Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm. It would be very beneficial to my team to have professional development activities offered at the Lakeshore campus.
	There is not an effective evaluation system for most of the employees at this institution. My supervisor has very little knowledge of my performance, hence cannot evaluate my performance.
	While there are opportunities for advancement within the organizations, supervisors do not always help employees prepare themselves for those opportunities.
	Department heads are given entirely too much power over faculty and curriculum, and assistant deans have turned into bean counters.
Teamwork (n=4)	*The department in which I work is extremely dysfunctional. We have different standards and expectations for different people. There is no sense of teamwork.*
	There is a general lack of trust, acceptance and team work within my work team. There is very little unity.
Student Focus (n= 16)	*College needs to improve in the areas of retention and graduation rates.*
	Faculty overload causes reduced quality in the classroom.
	I am pleased with the student success agenda. However, I am concerned with our reliance on outdated teaching methodologies which do not maximize learning for our students.
	I am unable to meet students' needs and to answer their questions. I do not have an office space to meet with the students nor do I have office hours for them to meet with me and ask questions. It should be clear that all faculty (including preschool) need office hours and an office space to meet with the students.
	Most students do not know what services are offered to them or how which of our offices to go to request assistance.
	Too many faculty have been here too long and are not updating classes and programs to stay current for students. They do the least amount of effort to get by.

Table 23.	*Continued*
Factor	**Themes**
	I would like to see more culture/diversity sensitivity to minority students in my department. Faculty communication skills, grading and support for minority students is openly not the same as with non-minority students.

Other
(n=20)

Leadership

Leadership is not focused on the future. It is not engaged in the risk taking behaviors expected of the entrepreneurial spirit we profess to embrace and teach.

In general, it seems like the upper administration are in constant meetings together, making them less accessible at times and causing them to hear the same updates/messages multiple times.

Compensation & Benefits

I understand the current fiscal climate and the budget shortfalls the institution faces. However, penalizing employees who have worked the longest at the institution and still continue to be productive by freezing wages is counterproductive.

Facilities

I think we could do a much better job keeping our classrooms, offices, and buildings clean and maintained.

My only real complaint is that several of the buildings are in need of renovation.

CONCLUSION

One of the primary purposes of the PACE instrument is to provide insight that will assist in efforts to improve the climate at an institution or system of institutions. To accomplish this goal, the mean scores for each of the items were arranged in ascending order, from the lowest to the highest values. The distance between each item mean and the ideal situation, represented by a score of 4.50 on any item, can be identified as a measure of the extent to which individuals and groups can be motivated through leadership to improve the climate within the institution. Thus, the gap between the scores on what is and what could be for each item is the zone of possible change within the institution. Those items with the highest values are viewed as areas of satisfaction or excellence within the climate. Conversely, those items with the lowest values are the areas of least satisfaction or in need of improvement.

Overall the following have been identified as the top performance areas at Grand Rapids Community College. Six of these items represent the Student Focus climate factor (items #8, #18, #31, #35, #37, and #42), and four represent the Supervisory Relationships climate factor (items #2, #9, #39, and #46).

- The extent to which I feel my job is relevant to this institution's mission, 4.34 (#8)

- The extent to which students receive an excellent education at this institution, 4.30 (#31)

- The extent to which my supervisor expresses confidence in my work, 4.20 (#2)

- The extent to which this institution prepares students for further learning, 4.17 (#37)

- The extent to which this institution prepares students for a career, 4.12 (#35)

- The extent to which professional development and training opportunities are available, 4.11 (#46)

- The extent to which student ethnic and cultural diversity are important at this institution, 4.08 (#18)

- The extent to which my supervisor is open to the ideas, opinions, and beliefs of everyone, 4.07 (#9)

- The extent to which students are satisfied with their educational experience at this institution, 4.02 (#42)

- The extent to which I am given the opportunity to be creative in my work, 4.00 (#39)

Overall the following have been identified as the top performance areas within the Customized Climate factor at Grand Rapids Community College.

- The extent to which I have implemented ideas that were shared with me by students, 4.03 (#54)

- The extent to which I have participated on a cross-functional team while at GRCC, 4.01 (#53)

- The extent to which I have tried new things that did not work out, but I still plan to try again, 3.97 (#49)

Overall the following have been identified as areas in need of improvement at Grand Rapids Community College. All of these items represent the Institutional Structure climate factor.

- The extent to which I am able to appropriately influence the direction of this institution, 3.02 (#15)

- The extent to which decisions are made at the appropriate level at this institution, 3.10 (#4)

- The extent to which a spirit of cooperation exists at this institution, 3.15 (#25)

- The extent to which this institution is appropriately organized, 3.16 (#32)

- The extent to which information is shared within this institution, 3.19 (#10)

- The extent to which open and ethical communication is practiced at this institution, 3.22 (#16)

- The extent to which I have the opportunity for advancement within this institution, 3.30 (#38)

- The extent to which institutional teams use problem-solving techniques, 3.35 (#11)

- The extent to which my work is guided by clearly defined administrative processes, 3.38 (#44)

- The extent to which this institution has been successful in positively motivating my performance, 3.42 (#22)

Overall the following have been identified as the areas in need of improvement within the Customized Climate factor at Grand Rapids Community College.

- The extent to which I feel respected when I share an unpopular belief or opinion, 3.29 (#52)

- The extent to which I am empowered to pursue my ideas without formal permission, 3.59 (#47)

- The extent to which I am supported to explore my natural curiosity as part of my daily work, 3.71 (#51)

The most favorable areas cited in the open-ended questions pertain to the Student Focus climate factor, and specifically the institution's performance in meeting the needs of the students. The least favorable aspects cited in the open-ended responses are consistent with the survey mean scores in that they reinforce a desire to call attention to specific issues regarding the Institutional Structure, specifically the way decisions are made within the institution.

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