

STUDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT

Tunxis Community College

Spring 2005

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2005, 266 Tunxis Community College (TCC) students were administered the SACE survey. Although the sample size was small, a representative cross-section of the student body was surveyed because the administration occurred in a randomly selected group of first semester English classes, which enroll students of all types.

The purpose of the survey was to obtain the perceptions of students concerning the institutional climate and to promote more open and constructive communication among faculty, staff, and administrators. Researchers at the National Initiative for Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness (NILIE) and representatives of TCC collaborated to create a survey that would reflect opinions of all students throughout the institution.

Students completed a 63-item SACE instrument developed by George A. Baker III and the NILIE team of NC State University. The 63 items are organized into five factors or domains including Instructional Services, Communication, Administrative & Physical Services, Student Focus, Social & Cultural Services, Student Focus, and a Customized section developed specifically for TCC. Respondents were asked to rate the five climate factors on a five-point Likert-type scale. The instrument was specifically designed to compare the existing climate at TCC to a norm base and to a range of four different managerial systems found to exist in institutions. The information generated from the instrument has been developed into a research report and can be used for planning and decision-making in order to improve the existing climate.

In previous studies, the overall SACE instrument has shown a coefficient of internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha) of .97. This high coefficient indicates that the SACE provides an internal estimate of the instrument's reliability. A strong alpha coefficient means that participants responded the same way to similar items.

NILIE has synthesized from the literature four leadership or organizational systems ranging from coercive to collaborative. According to Likert, the collaborative system, which he termed System 4, generally produced better results in terms of productivity, job satisfaction, communication, and overall organizational climate (1967). Like Likert, NILIE has concluded that System 4 (collaborative) is the climate to be sought as opposed to generally existing naturally in the environment. Likert discovered that most organizations functioned at the System 2 (competitive) or System 3 (consultative) levels. This has been NILIE's experience, as well, with most institutional climates falling into the consultative system across the six original domains of the climate instrument.

At TCC, the overall results from the SACE instrument indicate a healthy campus climate, yielding a 3.94 mean score or very high consultative system, .16 higher than the national mean of

3.78. The Instructional Services category received the highest mean score (4.07), whereas the Student Services category received the lowest mean score (3.53). However, TCC mean scores on all categories were higher than the national mean.

Of the more than 90 studies completed by NILIE, few organizations have been found to have achieved a System 4 or collaborative environment, except in some aspects of some categories, and with some categories of students. Thus, the System 4 environment remains a climate to be sought through planning, collaboration, and organizational development.

The mean results from the climate survey indicate that TCC is functioning at the very high range of the System 3 (consultative) management style, with the overall average on the 58 items achieving a mean score of 3.93 on a one-to-five scale. None of the composite ratings fell within the least favorable category identified as the coercive range (System 1). Twenty-four composite ratings fell within the collaborative range (System 4), thirty-three fell within the high (>3.5) consultative range (System 3), four fell with the low (<3.5) consultative range, and one fell within the competitive range (System 2). Of the nine questions added to the survey by TCC, four fell within the collaborative range and five fell with the high consultative range.

Highest Rated Items:

Instructors attitude toward students	4.32
Instructors expertise	4.26
Quality of the library	4.25
I feel safe on campus	4.24
Opportunity to participate actively in class	4.23
Instructors clearly define course requirements	4.23
Instructors and staff are sensitive to students' gender	4.17
Quality of computer services	4.16
Quality of computer labs	4.15
Instructors clearly define grading policies	4.14
Instructors and staff are sensitive to students' ages	4.14

Lowest Rated Items:

Quality of athletic services	2.81
<i>Note: TCC does not have athletic services</i>	
Quality of physical education services	3.22
<i>Note: TCC does not have physical education services</i>	
Availability of parking spaces	3.30
Quality of counseling services	3.55
Advice I get in making educational decisions	3.58
Quality of career planning and placement services	3.60
Quality of academic advising services	3.68
Quality of laboratory services	3.70
Quality of financial aid services	3.72
Institutional is preparing me for a career	3.76

Note: While the above were the ten lowest rated items, seven of the ten fell into the high consultative range, indicating a high level of student satisfaction.

Tunxis faculty, administrators and staff are gratified by the results of this survey which show the college performing higher than the national average and achieving a high level of student satisfaction. Regardless, however, TCC is committed to continuous improvement of these outcomes through the Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness processes.

The remainder of this report is divided into the following sections:

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SACE RESULTS BY DOMAIN

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Instructional Services	237	4.1015	.51933
Student Services	232	3.5866	.69235
Adm and Physical Environment	226	3.8312	.58314
Student Focus Environment	236	3.9506	.61480
Social and Cultural Environment	244	4.0638	.67681
Overall	177	3.9353	.50961
Valid N (listwise)	177		

SACE RESULTS

(Sorted from highest rating to lowest)

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
4. Instructors attitude toward students	265	4.32	.712
3. Instructors expertise	264	4.26	.655
32. Quality of the library	263	4.25	.775
51. I feel safe on campus	260	4.24	.765
11. Opportunity to participate actively in class	264	4.23	.700
7. Instructors clearly define course requirements	261	4.23	.669
53. Instructors and staff are sensitive to students gender	262	4.17	.749
30. Quality of computer services	264	4.16	.708
29. Quality of computer labs	258	4.15	.755
8. Instructors clearly define grading policies	262	4.14	.807
52. Instructors and staff are sensitive to students of all ages	259	4.14	.785
6. Instructors clearly define course objectives	263	4.13	.727
31. Quality of the bookstore	262	4.10	.846
56. Instructors and staff are sensitive to students	259	4.09	.777
59. Specific skills identified and communicated	243	4.09	.704
13. Learning to learn	265	4.08	.740
2. Overall quality of instruction	265	4.07	.642
49. Satisfied with my learning experience	260	4.05	.673
14. Acquiring the ability to learn on my own	264	4.05	.795
57. Instructors and staff are sensitive to students	258	4.05	.793
5. Instructors use of a variety of teaching strategies	266	4.05	.781

10. Opportunity to evaluate my instructors	265	4.04		.827
62. Satisfied with the technology skills my education is providing	244	4.04		.710
55. Instructors and staff are sensitive to students	256	4.04		.799
61. Specific skills increase the effectiveness and value of my education	244	4.02		.684
33. Quality of food services	258	4.02		.933
67. Satisfied with the availability of courses	206	4.00	.808	
58. Instructors and staff are sensitive to students	253	4.00		.847
54. Instructors and staff are sensitive to different ways that students learn	262	3.99		.849
50. Ethnic and cultural diversity are important	260	3.99		.808
41. I am receiving an excellent education	263	3.98	.756	
15. Provided up-to date technology	259	3.98		.755
65. Satisfied with the availability of technology	210	3.98		.754
66. Tunxis was my first choice	209	3.97		.828
64. Satisfied with the use of technology	246	3.96		.809
60. Specific skills are taught and measured	243	3.95		.751
12. Opportunity to work in small groups	262	3.95		.847
1. Quality of instruction field of interest	261	3.95		.814
9. Availability of instructors outside of class	262	3.95		.815
40. My educational needs are important	265	3.94		.835
42. Faculty meet my educational needs	264	3.92	.810	
46. Institution is preparing me for transfer	257	3.91		.879
17. Quality of learning assistance and tutorial services	261	3.90		.821
26. Quality of classrooms	263	3.90		.870

39. Availability of places to study	262	3.89		.866
43. Support services personnel are helpful	262	3.89	.802	
63. Prepared to meet my educational and employment goals	246	3.89		.864
48. Personal skills are being enhanced	262	3.89		.789
37. Quality of campus lighting	262	3.87	.867	
44. Administrative services personnel meet my needs	258	3.86		.832
34. Availability of informal places to gather	258	3.84		.969
16. Quality of admissions and orientation services	263	3.81	.886	
22. Quality of records and registration services	260	3.81		.874
47. Assisted with my personal development	261	3.80		.804
45. Institution is preparing me for a career	263	3.76		.938
18. Quality of financial aid services	257	3.72		1.089
27. Quality of laboratories	251	3.70		.856
20. Quality of academic advising services	265	3.68		1.010
19. Quality of career planning and placement services	260	3.60		.975
25. Advice I get in making educational decisions	259	3.58		1.063
23. Quality of counseling services	258	3.55	.986	
38. Availability of public transportation	252	3.50		.877
21. Opportunity for involvement in campus activities	257	3.45		.983
36. Convenience and proximity of parking	261	3.31		1.195
35. Availability of parking spaces	263	3.30	1.285	
28. Quality of physical education services	244	3.22		1.096
24. Quality of athletic services	243	2.81		1.158
Valid N (listwise)	132			

**Difference between Tunxis and National Means
(sorted by difference, high to low)**

QUESNUM	TUNXIS	NATIONAL	DIFFRNC	
33	4.02	3.35	.67	Quality of food services
35	3.30	2.83	.47	Availability of parking spaces
32	4.25	3.84	.41	Quality of the library
31	4.10	3.74	.36	Quality of the bookstore
34	3.84	3.50	.34	Availability of informal places to gather
37	3.87	3.54	.33	Quality of campus lighting
30	4.16	3.86	.30	Quality of computer services
51	4.24	3.97	.27	I feel safe on campus
29	4.15	3.88	.27	Quality of computer labs
36	3.31	3.04	.27	Convenience and proximity of parking
10	4.04	3.78	.26	Opportunity to evaluate my instructors
39	3.89	3.63	.26	Availability of places to study
46	3.91	3.67	.24	Institution is preparing me for transfer
44	3.86	3.63	.23	Administrative services personnel meet my needs
17	3.90	3.68	.22	Quality of learning assistance and tutorial services
43	3.89	3.67	.22	Support services personnel are helpful
57	4.05	3.83	.22	Instructors and staff are sensitive to students
50	3.99	3.78	.21	Ethnic and cultural diversity are important
22	3.81	3.61	.20	Quality of records and registration services
18	3.72	3.54	.18	Quality of financial aid services
56	4.09	3.91	.18	Instructors and staff are sensitive to students
47	3.80	3.62	.18	Assisted with my personal development
58	4.00	3.82	.18	Instructors and staff are sensitive to students
40	3.94	3.76	.18	My educational needs are important
20	3.68	3.51	.17	Quality of academic advising services
53	4.17	4.00	.17	Instructors and staff are sensitive to students gender
16	3.81	3.65	.16	Quality of admissions and orientation services
54	3.99	3.83	.16	Instructors and staff are sensitive to different ways that students learn
55	4.04	3.89	.15	Instructor and staff are sensitive to students
49	4.05	3.92	.13	Satisfied with my learning experience
52	4.14	4.01	.13	Instructors and staff are sensitive to students of all ages
38	3.50	3.38	.12	Availability of public transportation
25	3.58	3.47	.11	Advice I get in making education decisions
41	3.98	3.88	.10	I am receiving an excellent education
19	3.60	3.50	.10	Quality of career planning and placement services
23	3.55	3.46	.09	Quality of counseling services
7	4.23	4.15	.08	Instructors clearly define course

				requirements
9	3.95	3.88	.07	Availability of instructors outside of class
48	3.89	3.82	.07	Personal skills are being enhanced
5	4.05	3.99	.06	Instructors use of a variety of teaching strategies
6	4.13	4.09	.04	Instructors clearly define course objectives
42	3.92	3.89	.03	Faculty meet my educational needs
4	4.32	4.30	.02	Instructors attitude toward students
15	3.98	3.96	.02	Provided up-to-date technology
13	4.08	4.06	.02	Learning to learn
11	4.23	4.22	.01	Opportunity to participate actively in class
60	3.95	3.95	.00	Specific skills are taught and measured
61	4.02	4.02	.00	Specific skills increase the effectiveness and value of my education
12	3.95	3.95	.00	Opportunity to work in small groups
59	4.09	4.09	.00	Specific skills identified and communicated
67	4.00	4.00	.00	Satisfied with the availability of courses
26	3.90	3.90	.00	Quality of classrooms
62	4.04	4.04	.00	Satisfied with the technology skills my education is providing
66	3.97	3.97	.00	Tunxis was my first choice
65	3.98	3.98	.00	Satisfied with the availability of technology
63	3.89	3.89	.00	Prepared to meet my educational and employment goals
64	3.96	3.96	.00	Satisfied with the use of technology
2	4.07	4.08	-.01	Overall quality of instruction
14	4.05	4.07	-.02	Acquiring the ability to learn on my own
45	3.76	3.78	-.02	Institution is preparing me for a career
27	3.70	3.73	-.03	Quality of laboratories
8	4.14	4.18	-.04	Instructors clearly define grading policies
21	3.45	3.49	-.04	Opportunity for involvement in campus activities
3	4.26	4.34	-.08	Instructors' experience
1	3.95	4.07	-.12	Quality of instruction field of interest
28	3.22	3.49	-.27	Quality of physical education services
24	2.81	3.30	-.49	Quality of athletic services

SACE RESPONDENTS' DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

AGE GROUP

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<=20	128	48.1	53.3	53.3
	21-30	79	29.7	32.9	86.3
	31-40	21	7.9	8.8	95.0
	41-50	10	3.8	4.2	99.2
	51-59	1	.4	.4	99.6
	>=60	1	.4	.4	100.0
	Total	240	90.2	100.0	
Missing	System	26	9.8		
Total		266	100.0		

GENDER

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	FEMALE	128	48.1	54.5	54.5
	MALE	107	40.2	45.5	100.0
	Total	235	88.3	100.0	
Missing	System	31	11.7		
Total		266	100.0		

ETHNICITY

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	AFR AM	14	5.3	6.5	6.5
	AM IND	4	1.5	1.8	8.3
	ASIAN	8	3.0	3.7	12.0
	CAUCASIAN	166	62.4	76.5	88.5
	HISPANIC	25	9.4	11.5	100.0
	Total	217	81.6	100.0	
Missing	System	49	18.4		
Total		266	100.0		

FT/PT STATUS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	PART TIME	103	38.7	42.6	42.6
	FULL TIME	139	52.3	57.4	100.0
	Total	242	91.0	100.0	
Missing	System	24	9.0		

Total	266	100.0		
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DAY/EVENING

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	DAY ONLY	120	45.1	49.8	49.8
	EVENING ONLY	40	15.0	16.6	66.4
	DAY & EVENING	81	30.5	33.6	100.0
	Total	241	90.6	100.0	
Missing	System	25	9.4		
Total		266	100.0		

ENGLISH NATIVE LANGUAGE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	YES	177	66.5	75.6	75.6
	NO	57	21.4	24.4	100.0
	Total	234	88.0	100.0	
Missing	System	32	12.0		
Total		266	100.0		

SEMESTERS OF ATTENDANCE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-2	171	64.3	71.3	71.3
	3-4	46	17.3	19.2	90.4
	5-6	13	4.9	5.4	95.8
	>=7	10	3.8	4.2	100.0
	Total	240	90.2	100.0	
Missing	System	26	9.8		
Total		266	100.0		

REASON TO WITHDRAW

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	FINANCES	72	27.1	31.6	31.6
	CHILD CARE	15	5.6	6.6	38.2
	LACK OF INTEREST	50	18.8	21.9	60.1
	LACK OF INFO	22	8.3	9.6	69.7
	WORK SCHEDULE	44	16.5	19.3	89.0
	CLASS SCHEDULE	25	9.4	11.0	100.0
	Total	228	85.7	100.0	
Missing	System	38	14.3		

Total	266	100.0	
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LONG TERM GOAL

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	TRANSFER	157	59.0	66.0	66.0
	IMPROVE JOB SKILLS	12	4.5	5.0	71.0
	PREP FOR CAREER CHNG	26	9.8	10.9	81.9
	PREP FOR JOB MRKT	20	7.5	8.4	90.3
	CAREER EXPLORATION	23	8.6	9.7	100.0
	Total	238	89.5	100.0	
Missing	System	28	10.5		
Total		266	100.0		