

QUALITY OF RELATIONS

Background

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) (pronounced “sessie”) was distributed in 93 colleges across the United States in spring 2003. Mt. San Antonio College (Mt. SAC) was one of the participating colleges. Some 1,103 Mt. SAC students’ surveys were returned.

CCSSE is a survey that examines different aspects of students’ educational activities (e.g., ask questions in class). These educational activities have been shown to be related to student success. The survey was developed based on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) at Indiana University. The project is supported by grants from The Pew Charitable Trusts and the Lumina Foundation for Education.

The following excerpt from the main report will outline one of many aspects of the survey useful for accreditation and planning purposes. The main report can be found at <http://research.mtsac.edu/factbook.html> under Student Engagement Survey.

Critical Assessment

As a College, Mt. SAC needs to decide two factors with all results/items in this report:

1. Which of the items are relevant to Mt. SAC and its students?
2. Of those items that are relevant, what are the percentage benchmarks for deciding if the results are acceptable or not. For example, if 60% or more of the students are satisfied with their learning experiences, does that mean that Mt. SAC should be proud of that outcome or should interventions be suggested?

Quality of Relations

How do students’ view the quality of their relations with groups on campus (Kuh, 2001)? Students felt that they had a strong, supportive relationship with instructors (82%) and other students (75%) (table 1a). The highest, unsupportive, relationship was noted with administrators (21%). These low findings with administrators could be due to the fact that most students only see administrators when there is an issue/crisis.

Seventy-five percent of the students indicated that their friends were extremely or somewhat supportive of them attending Mt. SAC (table 1b). When asked how supportive their immediate family was of them attending Mt. SAC, 79% said they were extremely or somewhat supportive (table 1c).

Table 1a. Relationship

Rating (survey question #8)	Other students	Instructors	Administrators
Supportive	75%	82%	60%
Neutral	16%	12%	19%
unsupportive	9%	6%	21%

Table 1b. Supportive friends

How supportive are your friends of your attending **this college**? (survey question #13)

46%	Extremely	28%	Somewhat
20%	Quite a bit	5%	Not very

Table 1c. Supportive family

How supportive is your immediate family of your attending **this college**? (survey question #14)

62%	Extremely	17%	Somewhat
17%	Quite a bit	4%	Not very

The most salient findings to each department of the College should be celebrated if it is a success and addressed with an intervention process if it is a barrier to success for students. Formative evaluation should be done throughout the next year to determine if the intervention is successful.

Reference

Kuh, G.D. (2001). *The National Survey of Student Engagement: Conceptual framework and overview of psychometric properties*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research and Planning. (pp. 1-24 from CCSSE binder results)

