

CAMPUS CLIMATE SURVEY

Summary of Findings

Fall 2001

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OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Los Angeles City College 2001 Campus Climate Survey

*“My love affair with LACC still grows after an enduring relationship of more than 30 years.”
-Comment by LACC faculty member*

Survey Context

Faculty, staff and administrators completed the *2001 Campus Climate Survey* at flex day activities before the fall semester began. More than 170 faculty, 100 classified staff, 14 counselors, 11 managers, and 13 administrators responded to the survey.

The survey contained five major sections: The first section requested ‘Importance’ and ‘Satisfaction’ evaluations of a broad range of campus experiences. The second section requested ‘Satisfaction’ ratings for specific campus support services. The third section asked about agreement/disagreement with statements about the eight campus priorities that form the basis for the college’s new strategic plan. The fourth section asked about demographic information, while the fifth section offered respondents the opportunity to write comments and suggestions for change.

A variety of techniques were used to analyze the results. First, a mean satisfaction with each questionnaire item was calculated. A second analysis involves a ‘resource optimization matrix,’ providing another view of strengths and areas for improvement.

Also, a content analysis of the qualitative data generated from the comments section added important personal voices to the ‘statistical means’ reported from the ‘satisfaction’ scales.

Overview

The *2001 Campus Climate Survey* reveals a campus community with a strong sense of optimism and shared goals that acknowledges progress made over the past two to three years, while recognizing areas where improvement is still greatly needed. As one faculty member wrote, LACC has an “unlimited potential for growth and improvement” and another commented on “the overall spirit of optimism about the college future.” Overall, one stated, “Everything is 100% better than it was two years ago and is continually getting better.” Indeed, of the 59 “Campus Environment and Experiences” items, 39 showed a positive change from the previous survey in 1999, while only 20 showed a decline.

Strengths

The six areas generating the greatest satisfaction tend to connect with individuals’ immediate work situation (Figure 1). These findings were consistent with the *1999 Campus Climate Survey*:

- The extent to which you find your job challenging
- Your work assignment
- Level of respect you receive from your department chair or supervisor
- Opportunities to interact with students
- Your relationships with peers in your department/area/program

Students

From a variety of perspectives, the survey results note that faculty and staff derive a great sense of satisfaction from the students. In addition to the mean satisfaction expressed in the scale, the responses to the question “What are the three things you like best about LACC?” most frequently mentioned students. Faculty and staff value the opportunity to make a difference in students’ lives. As one faculty member stated in response to the question about what they like best about LACC, “Working with students who will really benefit from a college education.” Yet another said, “The opportunity to influence students’ development and direct their futures.”

Diversity

Respondents also frequently listed the diversity of students and college staff as one of the best features of LACC. Simply put, LACC has “a very nice mix of students,” according to one individual. Appreciation of the cultural diversity of the campus community, as well as the college location in a metropolitan setting, represent shared values of the faculty and staff of LACC.

Work Assignments

Faculty and staff expressed a high degree of satisfaction concerning their job assignments, with many of the items being at or near the top of the satisfaction scale. In addition, the written comments frequently mentioned appreciation of colleagues, appreciation for department collegiality, and a sense of community. Faculty made the following comments about the positive aspects of LACC:

“Excellent working environment in the department”
“The ‘family-like’ spirit among faculty, staff and administrators”
“Very wonderful department”

Areas of Dissatisfaction

Also shown in Figure 1 are the six areas in greatest need of attention:

- Conditions of the restrooms on campus
- Responsiveness when dealing with District Personnel (payroll, Personnel, etc.)
- The level of trust that exists with the campus community
- Morale on this campus
- LACC’s physical resources (e.g., facilities, equipment)
- Communication with District offices (such as payroll, personnel, educational services, business services)

Physical Environment

“Conditions of the restrooms on campus” topped the list of needed improvements, and maintenance is listed repeatedly in the comments section. Comments included the following:

“Clean bathrooms with soap and towels for students.”

“The physical appearance must be given a higher priority, landscaping, gardening, grounds maintenance, especially trouble spots like north end.”

“I really believe a clean environment is a primary element for learning.”

LACC’s physical resources (e.g., facilities, equipment) generated concerns. The written comments provided detail about specific concerns, including a number of parking improvement suggestions and the expressed need for a cafeteria. Problems of cleanliness and the general “appearance of the grounds, grass, trees, etc.” were mentioned numerous times.

Campus Morale

“Morale on this campus” is among the areas of least satisfaction. As one respondent wrote, “There are very serious morale problems.” Among the things that another respondent would change was: “The ‘we-them’ feeling and mentality of many faculty and I guess administrators have toward each other. Lack of trust.” A faculty member offered a specific suggestion toward improving administration-faculty communication:

“Administration should get direct input from faculty members when making changes that affect the department.”

Issues related to the District Office

Communication with and responsiveness of the District Office (payroll, personnel, etc.) also appeared at the top of the list of areas of least satisfaction. Repeatedly, respondents commented on processes and procedures for hiring. For example, one suggested, “Re-examine hiring process, shift decision making to departmental selection committee.” Another faculty member offered, “Direct faculty control of interview process for new hires, especially real give and take questions, day long visit plus sample class room teaching demonstrations in real time.” Processes related to purchasing and payroll also received mention as special problem areas:

“Accounts payable needs to be faster and more efficient.”

“Simplify the processing procedures for PAA, NF12, CBC, etc. It takes too many signatures and it takes so long.”

“Payroll, getting paid when you are supposed to, not months/weeks later.”

Areas of Greatest Change

While issues related to the physical environment such as “The cleanliness of your work environment” and “LACC’s physical resources (e.g., facilities, equipment)” were least satisfying to the respondents, they were also the areas that showed the greatest improvement from the 1999 survey (Figure 2). Other items related to the physical

environment such as “conditions of the restrooms” and “maintenance of equipment” also generated significantly higher levels of satisfaction in 2001 from two years ago.

Resource Optimization Matrix of Campus Environment and Experiences

A resource optimization matrix is a way to allocate resources strategically. Ideally, we should be trying to improve everything we do; realistically, we have a limited amount of time, energy and fiscal resources. So, where do we focus our energies? By combining the satisfaction scales *and* the importance scales we can create four quadrants (Figure 3). The four quadrants are as follows:

High satisfaction and high importance—Fourteen items fall into this quadrant that describes the relative “strengths” of the college. These are items that we need to continue to invest in because they are of significant importance to our community. The relative degree of that investment, however, needs to be tempered. It does make sense to communicate these successes and to acknowledge the hard work on the part of many in the institution that have enabled these achievements to happen.

High satisfaction and low importance—These items, 13 of them, are what might be called “over-investments” because while the community gives high ratings in terms of satisfy, they also acknowledge they are relatively less important. Simply put, it is better to have high satisfaction ratings than low satisfaction ratings. But in a world of difficult choices and limited resources, we need to be focusing most of our efforts elsewhere.

Low satisfaction and low importance—This quadrant contains items of relatively “low return on investment.” These ten items generate low satisfaction rating which make them a source of concern. On the other hand, their relatively lower importance ratings suggest that this is not where we can get the greatest “bang for our buck.” We should attend to these but not to the detriment of our last quadrant—weakness.

Low satisfaction and high importance—There are 21 items in the “weakness” quadrant. The college community is telling us that these items are of particular importance to them. The fact that they also generate low satisfaction ratings means that we could have a disproportionate impact on the college by improving these items. This quadrant is where we can leverage our scarce resources and, consequently, dramatically improve the overall campus climate.

Satisfaction with Campus Support Services

Section 2 of the survey asked about satisfaction with various campus support services. In 2001, as in 1999, three support services appeared at the top in terms of satisfaction:

- Campus Child Development Center
- Student Assistance Center
- Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS)

The five areas generating the least satisfaction remained the same, also, from 1999 to 2001:

- Auxiliary Food Services such as truck and vending machines
- Custodial Operations
- Payroll
- Plant Facilities
- Secretarial Services

Two areas showed marked improvement in ratings from 1999 to 2001, although they remained areas of least satisfaction: plant facilities and custodial operations have experienced substantial improvement, with need still for much additional improvement.

Figure 4 displays the mean evaluations of satisfaction for each of these areas.

College Mission and Priorities

One section of the *2001 Campus Climate Survey* was specifically oriented toward the college's strategic plan. Reflecting on the eight institutional priorities for LACC, respondents were asked to evaluate "to what extent do you agree that during the period 1999-2001 LACC has been successful in achieving these priorities?"

The main reason for including this section is to establish a baseline for the measurement of continuous improvement in the college's strategic planning efforts over the next six years. While "safe, aesthetically-pleasing campus environment" is the lowest scoring priority and "increased resources" is the highest, the real focus will be on the future improvement of these evaluations as the means to achieving our vision.

Figure 1. Areas of Most and Least Satisfaction

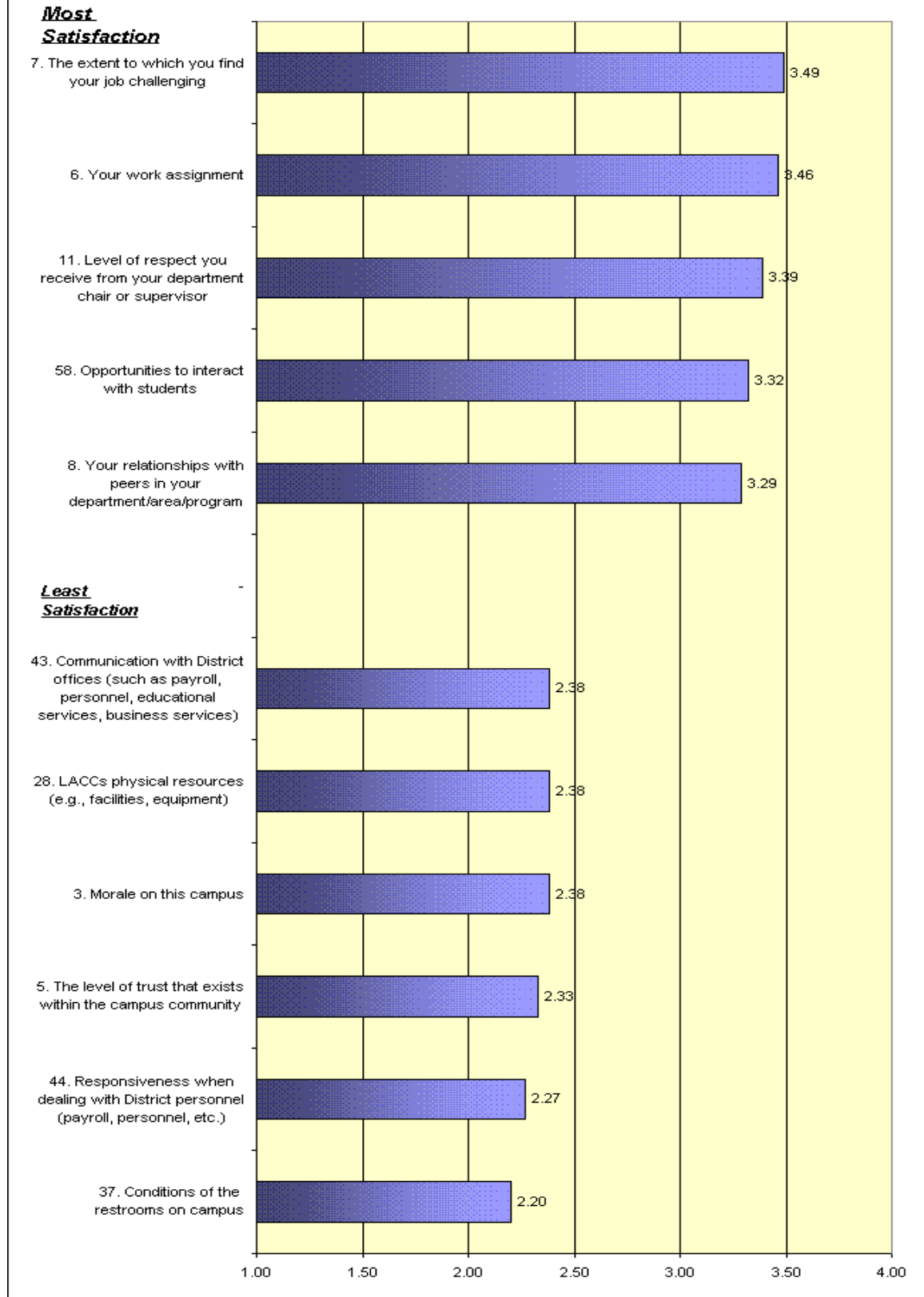


Figure 2. Areas of Greatest Change in Satisfaction: Campus Environment and Experiences

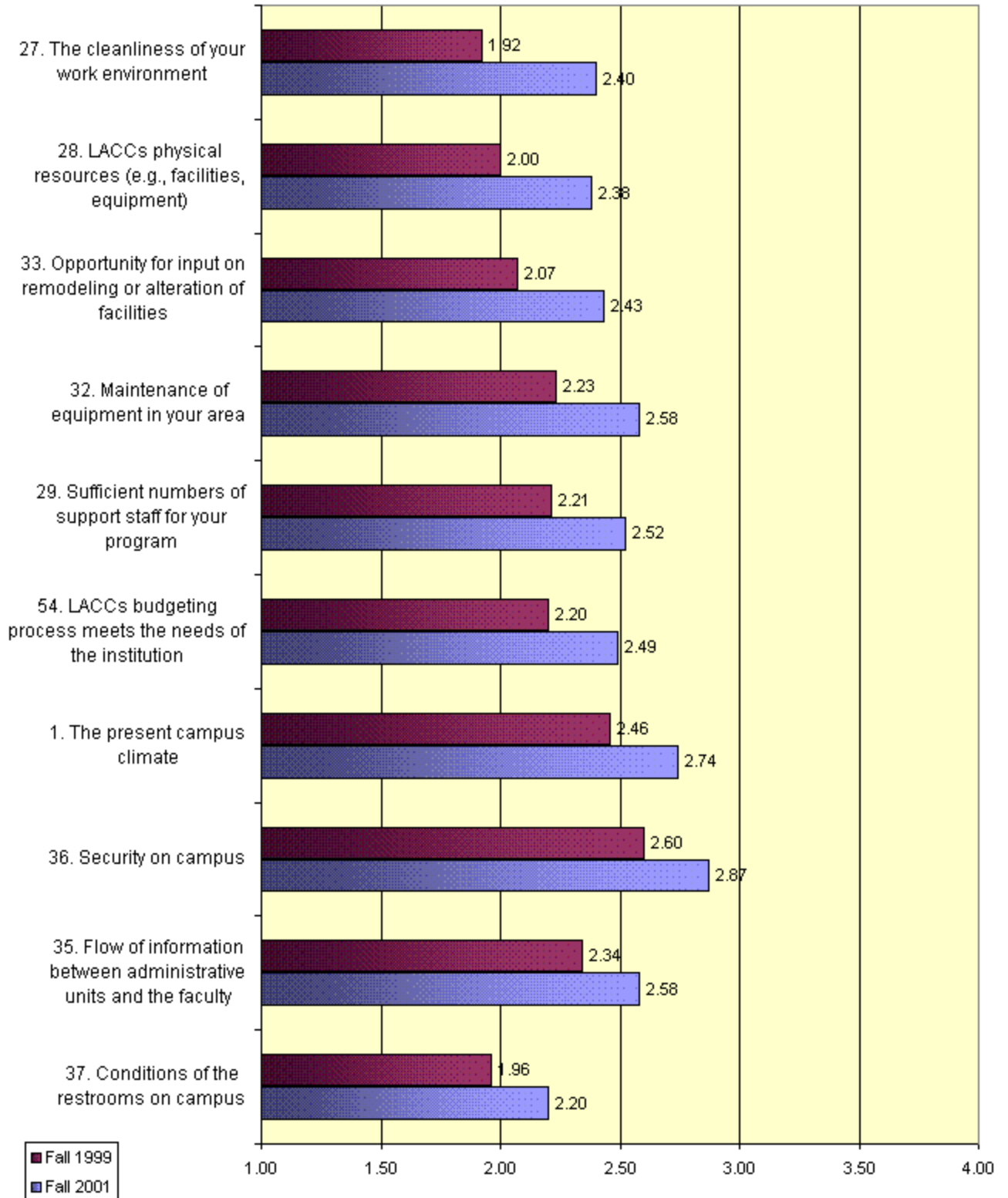


Figure 3. Resource Optimization Matrix

	<i>Importance</i>	
<i>Satisfaction</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Low</i>
	<i>Relative Strengths</i>	<i>Relative Over-Investment</i>
<i>High</i>	<p>7. The extent to which you find your job challenging (3.49, 3.68)</p> <p>6. Your work assignment (3.46, 3.88)</p> <p>11. Level of respect you receive from your department chair or supervisor (3.39, 3.76)</p> <p>58. Opportunities to interact with students (3.32, 3.81)</p> <p>8. 8. Your relationships with peers in your department/ area/ program (3.29, 3.83)</p> <p>12. Degree to which you can freely seek information or assistance from your leaders (3.17, 3.74)</p> <p>19. Opportunities to improve the skills you use to perform your job (3.09, 3.74)</p> <p>2. Your employment experience at LACC over the past three years (3.09, 3.86)</p> <p>51. Extent to which the college community/ campus has made progress or improved in the last 2 years (since last survey in Fall 1999) (3.00, 3.79)</p> <p>21. Competency level of colleagues/ co-workers (2.98, 3.73)</p> <p>38. Workload distribution (2.92, 3.73)</p> <p>31. Access to adequate training about computers and technology necessary to do your job (2.89, 3.68)</p> <p>36. Security on campus (2.87, 3.87)</p> <p>40. The amount of space you have to do your job (2.86, 3.70)</p> <p>55. The success of LACC in serving its students (2.79, 3.92)</p>	<p>16. Recognition received from peers (3.21, 3.36)</p> <p>9. Your level of participation in professional responsibilities on campus (3.20, 3.32)</p> <p>14. Level of supervisor encouragement and support for professional growth and development (3.06, 3.63)</p> <p>13. Level of college encouragement and support for professional growth & development (3.01, 3.62)</p> <p>59. Your level of participation in student-sponsored activities (2.98, 3.32)</p> <p>49. Extent to which the faculty union represents your views (2.97, 3.66)</p> <p>18. Opportunities to take a leadership role at LACC (2.97, 3.35)</p> <p>25. Opportunities to pursue innovation in curriculum (2.95, 3.58)</p> <p>24. Opportunities for creativity (2.95, 3.51)</p> <p>20. Opportunities to develop other skills that enhance your job performance at LACC (2.94, 3.43)</p> <p>48. Extent to which the Academic Senate reflects your views (2.88, 3.57)</p> <p>26. Flow of communication about campus activities and progress in meeting college goals (2.86, 3.54)</p> <p>10. The level of participation of peers in professional responsibilities on campus (2.79, 3.38)</p>
	<i>Relative Weaknesses</i>	<i>Relative Low Return on Investment</i>
<i>Low</i>	<p>57. Your students commitment to your classes (2.74, 3.90)</p> <p>1. The present campus climate (2.74, 3.79)</p> <p>47. LACC's governance process (2.64, 3.68)</p> <p>30. Availability of state of the art technology for instruction (2.63, 3.92)</p> <p>42. Your involvement in decisions that relate to your environment (2.60, 3.76)</p> <p>35. Flow of information between administrative units and the faculty (2.58, 3.71)</p> <p>32. Maintenance of equipment in your area (2.58, 3.84)</p> <p>4. Sense of cooperation among members of the overall campus community (2.58, 3.78)</p> <p>41. The extent to which resource allocation among programs/ individuals is equitable and fair (2.53, 3.70)</p> <p>29. Sufficient numbers of support staff for your program (2.52, 3.79)</p> <p>54. LACC's budgeting process meets the needs of the institution (2.49, 3.82)</p> <p>46. LACC's hiring procedures (2.47, 3.76)</p> <p>56. Your students level of preparation for your classes (2.42, 3.87)</p> <p>45. The extent to which management listens and responds to employees problems, complaints, and suggestions for improving LACC (2.41, 3.84)</p> <p>27. The cleanliness of your work environment (2.40, 3.83)</p> <p>43. Communication with District offices (such as payroll, personnel, educational services, business services) (2.38, 3.73)</p> <p>28. LACC's physical resources (e.g., facilities, equipment) (2.38, 3.81)</p> <p>3. Morale on this campus (2.38, 3.81)</p> <p>5. The level of trust that exists within the campus community (2.33, 3.77)</p> <p>44. Responsiveness when dealing with District personnel in such areas as payroll, personnel, etc. (2.27, 3.77)</p> <p>37. Conditions of the restrooms on campus (2.20, 3.88)</p>	<p>39. The extent to which job openings are advertised (2.77, 3.50)</p> <p>50. Extent to which the classified union represents your views (2.76, 3.58)</p> <p>23. Availability of personal counseling (2.74, 3.14)</p> <p>22. Availability of career guidance (2.74, 3.24)</p> <p>15. Recognition received from LACC administrators (2.67, 3.41)</p> <p>17. Support and rewards for innovation and excellence at LACC (2.66, 3.46)</p> <p>52. Extent to which the role of the faculty in campus decision-making is clear (2.64, 3.66)</p> <p>53. Extent to which the role of the classified staff in campus decision-making is clear (2.51, 3.66)</p> <p>33. Opportunity for input on remodeling or alteration of facilities (2.43, 3.59)</p> <p>34. Flow of information between departments (2.41, 3.57)</p>
<p><i>Note: Items are listed in order of satisfaction, with items of highest satisfaction at the top of each quadrant. The numbers in parentheses are the mean satisfaction and the mean importance for each item.</i></p>		

