

ACC Employee Climate Survey 2020

Themes identified in 1,100 employee comments responding to Question #11:
What is the most important issue affecting ACC employees this year?

The comments analyzed here complement the findings of the quantitative analysis of the Employee Climate Survey reported separately and provide some additional context and rationale behind the quantitative responses.

The most important finding of both analyses, as well as the results of prior year employee climate surveys concerns communication. Communication affects each issue surfaced in survey respondent comments, and can potentially improve perceptions regarding topics as diverse as pay and adapting to change.

Topics Mentioned Most Often by Survey Respondents

Key Topic	Number of Comments	Percentage
Pay, Cost of Living	241	22%
College Administration	161	15%
Procedures/Practices	157	14%
Supervision	142	13%
Physical Facilities	129	12%
Faculty Issues	108	10%
Students	104	9%
Organizational Culture	99	9%
Communication	96	9%
Staffing	82	7%
Professional Development & Career Advancement	77	7%
Adapting to Change & Reorganizations	77	7%
Equity, Inclusion	68	6%
Technology Resources	55	5%
Other Topics	45	4%
Commuting & Traffic	33	3%
Total Respondents Providing Comments	1,100	--

Pay

Pay not keeping up with Austin metro cost of living, exacerbated by commuting - Interest in larger cost of living increases, transportation solutions

Adjunct faculty pay is too low - Health insurance and job security are critical

College Administration and Culture

College Administration is top heavy and decisions are made without subject matter input from employees; Organizational culture characterized by low morale and lack of communication

- Seeking administrators who model ACC values and demonstrate servant leadership
- Create a more respectful, caring relationship between administration and faculty, between faculty and staff, between administration and staff
- Create structures that facilitate information sharing from administrators to lower level employees, across departments, and upward from front-line subject matter experts to administrators
- Include front-line subject matter experts in decision making

Supervisor bullying and tolerance of harassment, and the creation of hostile work environments in some departments including those at the Service Center

- For employees: Better communication about new initiatives and policies, Involvement in departmental decision making, Constructive job feedback
- For supervisors: Training programs, Upward evaluation programs

Procedures and practices inconsistent, bureaucratic, constantly changing

- Challenges
 - Limiting access to bookstores, cashiering, Testing Center
 - Adjunct faculty staffing process
 - Employee hiring process
 - Purchasing process
 - IT infrastructure and processes
 - Cleaning and maintenance at campuses
- Recommendations
 - Improve communications through chain of command and across departments and campuses
 - Include front-line subject matter experts in decision making

Physical Facilities Challenges

- Regionalization resulting in limited access to bookstores, cashiers, testing centers for students and staff
- Need for office and instructional space
- Lack of parking
- Need for healthy, affordable food options
- Resources allocated to new facilities while older campus maintenance is neglected
- Need for more organized police force at open campuses

Faculty, Staff, and Students

Faculty

- Heavy workloads - need for more full-time faculty positions
- Adjunct faculty dissatisfied with treatment – need for more job security and review of practice whereby adjuncts are bumped from course sections to provide overloads for full-timers

Students

- Need to be focus of all we do always
- Population is growing more diverse in many ways and all groups require support
- Campuses in underserved communities are important resources
- Increasing numbers of dual credit students bring more underprepared students

Staff

- Heavy workloads – need for more staff, better processes for attracting and retaining good employees
- Too many contractors resulting in loss of institutional knowledge and opportunities for employee career advancement

Equity and inclusion need to be integrated into ACC practices and supported at the executive level

- Some employees experiencing discrimination due to age, gender, race/ethnicity or reverse discrimination

Professional development and career pathways are needed

- Faculty pedagogical training, team building, customer service, advanced computer skills, coaching program for supervisors, training to maintain satisfactory job performance, onboarding program for new employees and part-time employees, mentoring program for new staff and faculty

Change and Change Management

Tremendous growth and trends in higher education result in need for change management

- Include front-line employees in decision making
- Allow adequate time to implement changes
- Communicate rationale and plans for change throughout the institution.
- Provide training all changes.
- Require departments to jointly plan and implement strategies to support changes.
- Avoid pitfalls of too much change and too little support: extra work for lower level employees, confusion for employee and students, challenges to quality and to normal business operations, erosion of trust

Need to support new ERP system to replace antiquated systems and workflows and implementation of more streamlined systems in HR and other areas