

To: The Campus Community

From: Peter Dlugos, Vice President of Research, Planning, Assessment & Quality

Re: 2009 PACE Survey Results

Date: March 29, 2010

In December 2009 the Center for Institutional Effectiveness, in conjunction with NILIE (the National Initiative for Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness), administered the PACE survey (Personal Assessment of the College Environment) by email to all employees of the College. PACE is a nationally-normed higher education climate assessment instrument. Attached to this memo is the PACE Executive Summary that was prepared by the NILIE staff, and the full report is available for your viewing in the SharePoint Institutional Research Document Library:

<http://bcc-sharepoint/cie/ir/IR%20Document%20Library/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

This memo is designed to supplement the Executive Summary and place the College's first administration of PACE in an institutional context. In addition to identifying institutional strengths and priorities for change, it will describe how PACE fits into the new assessment and planning framework being adopted by the College, and specifically how the 2009 results will be used in the current strategic planning process.

Use in Planning and Assessment

The impetus to administer PACE came from several sources. First, there is an accreditation requirement that we periodically assess governance and leadership—as well as institutional integrity—and PACE is an appropriate and valid measure of each. Second, as the Strategic Planning Committee researched the internal landscape of the College in preparation for forming strategic goals, it realized that there is currently little quantitative data on employee satisfaction and campus climate. Third, as the Committee began to form the current strategic plan, and did so in a way that would help the College meet nationally recognized standards of performance excellence, it made the decision to have one of the five planning “Success Factors” and goal categories focus on our people—the Faculty/Staff/Administration Success Factor. Strategic Goal #2, “A fully engaged and empowered faculty, staff, and administration committed to realizing the College’s mission,” is supported by Year 1 objectives that direct the College to do further research, study our human resources and staff development processes, and identify measurable outcomes that the College can work toward. Two of the Key Performance Indicators on our

2010-2011 institutional “dashboard” are from PACE—the Overall score, and the Teamwork score (see below.) In addition to the external benchmarking possibilities afforded by PACE, subsequent administrations will allow us to do internal trend analyses as well, and to allocate resources as needed to achieve our goals in this most critical of areas.

Overall Performance

Our PACE scores suggest that Bergen’s climate is healthy, but nonetheless below average on the major dimensions of campus climate.¹ For an institution that strives to be well above average, if not excellent, the survey results indicate a number of opportunities for improvement.

On the PACE model, there are four “climate factors:”

Climate Factor	BCC Mean	PACE Norm Base Mean
Institutional Structure	3.12	3.31
Supervisory Relationships	3.53	3.66
Teamwork	3.53	3.70
Student Focus	3.84	3.88
Overall	3.47	3.61

These factors in turn shape the overall institutional outcome of Student Success. The College’s performance on each of these factors, as well as its overall performance, falls within one of four levels, listed here from most desirable to least desirable:

- **Collaborative** Organizational Systems (scores of 4.00 to 5.00)
- **Consultative** Organizational Systems (scores of 3.00 to 4.00)
- **Competitive** Organizational Systems (scores of 2.00 to 3.00)
- **Coercive** Organizational Systems (scores of 1.00 to 2.00)

In the following analysis, scores approaching or above 4.00 are considered strengths, and scores below 3.00 are highlighted as areas for improvement.

¹ A T-test performed by the NILIE staff indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the College’s mean and the PACE Norm Base mean in three of the four climate factors (Institutional Structure, Supervisory Relationships, and Teamwork), as well as Overall. In the fourth climate factor, Student Focus, the College’s mean is only slightly below the Norm Base mean. However, because the Norm Base is comprised of a wide range of institutions (both two- and four-year colleges, and of all sizes and demographic profiles), it is not clear how much weight should be given to these comparative results. A comparison group of large, diverse, suburban two-year colleges would be more helpful for external benchmarking purposes. Short of that, attention should probably focus on the ranking of the College’s scores in the range from Coercive to Collaborative, and on using these data as internal benchmarks during the next administration of PACE.

Institutional Strengths

The College scored highest in the “Student Focus” Climate Factor: seven of the top ten Bergen scores are on items from this climate factor. Bergen’s overall mean scores are in the highest category, Collaborative (scores of 4.00 to 5.00), on the following four questions:

- Question 8 “The extent to which I feel my job is relevant to the institution’s mission” (4.11)
- Question 18 “The extent to which student ethnic and cultural diversity are important at this institution” (4.14)
- Question 31 “The extent to which students receive an excellent education at this institution” (4.09)
- Question 37 “The extent to which this institution prepares students for further learning” (4.00)

The College also scored very well on the two questions that explicitly relate to diversity. In addition to Question 18 above, the College scored highly on Question 5, “The extent to which the institution effectively promotes diversity in the workplace” (3.77).

Areas for Improvement and Priorities for Change

While a majority of Bergen’s scores fall within the “Consultative” range (3.00—4.00), the College’s overall scores on the Institutional Structure (3.12) and Customized questions (3.23) are close to the “Competitive” range (2.00—3.00), and many of the individual items are in the 2.00—3.00 range.

The NILIE staff has identified the ten lowest scores by employee category and labeled them “Priorities for Change.” The following PACE seven items, all from the Institutional Structure category, are on the Priorities for Change list for all four employee groups:

- Question 4 “The extent to which decisions are made at the appropriate level at this institution (2.75)
- Question 10 “The extent to which information is shared within this institution” (2.77)
- Question 25 “The extent to which a spirit of cooperation exists at this institution (2.82)
- Question 16 “The extent to which open and ethical communication is practiced at this institution (2.85)
- Question 32 “The extent to which this institution is appropriately organized (2.88)
- Question 15 “ The extent to which I am able to appropriately influence the direction of this institution (2.92)
- Question 11 “ The extent to which institutional teams use problem-solving techniques (2.93)

On the customized items, the NILIE staff identified the three lowest item scores by employee category. The following two items are also on the Priorities for Change list for all four employee groups:

- Question 47 “The extent to which the College has an equitable employee recognition and awards program that is based on job performance” (2.75)
- Question 49 “The extent to which I am satisfied with the relationship between faculty/staff and administration” (2.79)

In short, there appears to be broad consensus on key areas for improvement across the college.

Next Steps

How can we improve in these areas—what actions should we take? The Strategic Planning Committee felt that these questions should be answered by a cross-functional leadership team that includes representatives from all of the shared governance bodies and administration, and that is broadly representative of the campus. Accordingly, our Strategic Plan contains the following Year 1 Objective (2.1): “Analyze results of PACE Survey and recommend actions to take.” Our Chief Human Resources Officer, Jim Miller, will shortly convene a team to engage in further analysis and do additional research, as needed, to identify promising next steps. In the spirit of continuous improvement, PACE will be administered again next fall, and we will continue the assessment-planning feedback loop to ensure that we maintain those areas in which we are strong, and make gains in those areas where improvement is needed.