



**NATIONAL INITIATIVE FOR LEADERSHIP
& INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

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Northeast Lakeview College
San Antonio, Texas

PACE Qualitative Report
Personal Assessment of the College Environment

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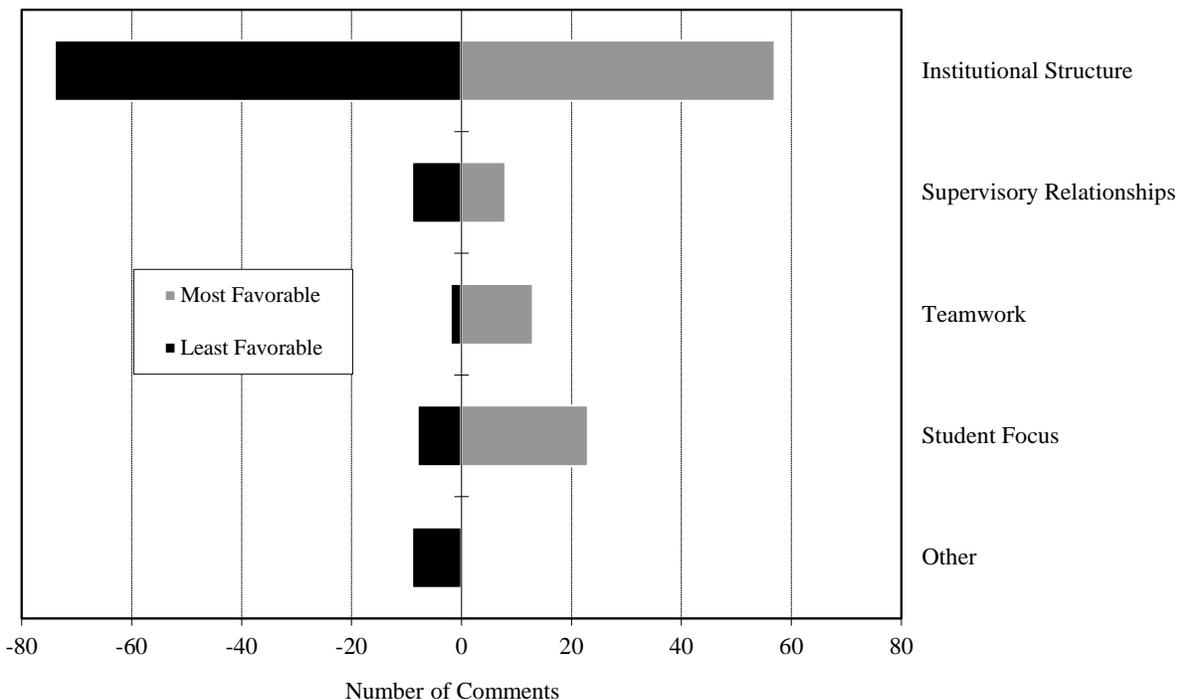
Qualitative Analysis

Respondents were given an opportunity to write comments about areas of the institution they found most favorable and least favorable. Of the 194 Northeast Lakeview College employees who completed the PACE survey, 57.7% (112 respondents) provided written comments. In analyzing the written data there is a degree of researcher interpretation in categorizing the individual comments. However, reliability is ensured by coding all responses back to the questions on the PACE survey.

Figure 1 provides a summary of the open-ended responses. This summary is based on Herzberg's (1982) two-factor model of motivation. NILIE has modified the model to represent the PACE factors by classifying the comments into the most appropriate PACE climate factors. This approach illustrates how each factor contributes to the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the respondents. Please note that when asked for opinions, it is common for respondents to write a greater number of negative comments than positive comments.

The greatest numbers of comments across all factors fell within the Institutional Structure climate factor. Please refer to Tables 1 and 2 for sample comments categorized by climate factor and the actual number of responses provided by NLC employees. This sample of open-ended comments reflects employee responses as coded back to the questions of the PACE survey. Please note that comments are quoted exactly as written except in instances where the integrity of the report is compromised. Any additional edits for clarity are indicated by [].

Figure 1. Northeast Lakeview College Comment Response Rates



Note: Adapted from Herzberg, F. (1982). *The managerial choice: To be efficient and to be human* (2nd ed.). Salt Lake City, UT: Olympus Publishing Company

Table 1. Most Favorable Responses—Sample Comments and Actual Number of Responses at Northeast Lakeview College

Factor	Themes
Institutional Structure (n=57)	<p><i>This is a growing and diverse institution designed to meet the increasing needs of the NE [Northeast] quadrant of the city. This college seems to be prepared to meet the challenges of growth.</i></p> <p><i>I believe this institution has brilliant ideas of working towards reflecting the mission and vision of the college. We want to enhance the environment and opportunities we offer to our students, faculty/staff and the community we serve so that they receive the best college experience at our institution. We want to create a culture of empowerment and inclusion where individual success is our success as well, and I believe the work that we do here allows for that.</i></p> <p><i>Admirable mission to educate students and excellent faculty to support that mission</i></p> <p><i>I appreciate the recent efforts the District is doing in getting all campuses involved in the decision-making model. It feels like our input finally matters.</i></p> <p><i>Some steps have been taken to involve faculty and staff to a greater extent in decision-making processes on our campus. This is an improvement. It is also clear that faculty and staff are doing the best they can to help our students succeed.</i></p> <p><i>Most favorable are the meetings conducted as an entire division with our higher ups. Here, we are all informed with changes and upcoming events.</i></p> <p><i>Overall, communication of institutional goals is clear. Information on budgeting and projections for future planning is clear. Data information is good.</i></p> <p><i>The new administration at this institution seems to be listening to the needs of the faculty. That is a major improvement from past administrations.</i></p> <p><i>At NLC we have a sense of family and have grown the college literally from the ground up so there is a definite sense of loyalty and dedication to the institution. Our new President has done a great job in trying to reach out to all constituents and is working hard to restore that sense of family and pride with her optimism and efforts at openness. NLC has a very safe and beautiful campus, and it is a great place to work.</i></p> <p><i>Best working environment! My higher staff are inspiring and hard working for their staff and students! They place the welfare of their students and subordinates before their very own. I also enjoy the “true” academic freedom and continued professional development provided. A jovial staff that displays a true TEAM concept. I would not have it any other way. :-)</i></p> <p><i>I believe the Alamo Colleges have made many improvements overall and care about its employees and always give all the opportunity for feedback.</i></p> <p><i>Working together to solve problems</i></p>

Table 1. Continued

Factor	Themes
	<p><i>I enjoy the people I work with and for. On a personal level they are wonderful people. And professionally I think that the people on this campus are by and large extremely qualified. I enjoy the campus. Not only from a size and layout perspective, but facilities does a great job of keeping it clean and presentable. I think the fact that we are about to be accredited and will expand leaves us all in a wonderful and rare opportunity to really shape the future of the college. This college is in a growing area, and of the Alamo Colleges, is the only one with the land to expand (and there is plenty of room to expand). We have a new president who I genuinely believe has the best interests of the institution at heart and will work hard for this college.</i></p> <p><i>I feel that the Northeast Lakeview campus is a well-kept secret that needs to be publicized to the community-at-large, in every means of communication possible. This campus should be recognized for the continuous work they are doing in this community to prepare our students to be productive citizens in a global society. I cannot think of a better place to be for students to get a firm academic foundation while deciding on their life mission and goals. NLC gives them the opportunity to dream big. It maps out a plan for them to get from here to there, wherever that may be!</i></p> <p><i>Most favorable would be the friendliness demonstrated. On the surface employees interact with one another on a collegial level. Administration is approachable and easy to communicate with. My immediate work team works incredibly well with one another as we ALWAYS cover for one another. We work as one and always work to serve the needs of the students.</i></p> <p><i>NLC does a good job of recognizing employees for their contributions to their profession and to the college.</i></p> <p><i>Northeast Lakeview College has a friendly and caring environment for our students. It is a beautiful and very new campus in which students can flourish.</i></p> <p><i>The administration listens. The students are here because they want to be here!! This is the best place I've been in since being in higher education.</i></p> <p><i>This institution strives to provide the best environment for its faculty, staff, and students.</i></p> <p><i>I think the College Services division should serve as an example of a collaborative team that is focused on the college goals. The employees in the division are empowered and encouraged to support the other departments and the goals of the college. The employees focus on the success of students, faculty, and staff.</i></p> <p><i>The collaboration with staff from like-minded departments is successful and encouraging.</i></p> <p><i>Internal departments work together and try to share new ideas.</i></p>

Table 1. Continued

Factor	Themes
	<i>The staff is great! Always helpful and volunteering for events and activities for the students. They always put students first and help in any way possible.</i>
Supervisory Relationships (n=8)	<i>It is encouraged to think outside of the box and that is appreciated.</i> <i>I cannot ask for a better supervisor.</i> <i>My freedom to be creative.</i>
Teamwork (n=13)	<i>My supervisor and fellow departmental employees work as a team and take all individuals into consideration.</i> <i>My work team works very well together and is supportive of our administrator and the team of workers. We work hard to follow policy and procedure and to enhance the environment for students at this campus</i> <i>My immediate team works together to accomplish clearly defined goals by my supervisor, who seeks our input on the goals and meshes them with what is required by the college. Not saying that we don't sometimes have conflicts, but we are able to resolve them and work together.</i> <i>My department is collaborative and always work together.</i> <i>Our division is wonderful. My supervisor is wonderful. We work well together and provide a meaningful learning experience for our students. We are centered around student success.</i>
Student Focus (n=23)	<i>I believe that the services to students is higher than previous institutions that I worked for. From interaction with students, it is clear that they feel supported and encouraged to achieve their own success at this college.</i> <i>Faculty and staff work well together and toward a common goal of providing the best educational experience for students.</i> <i>I think all the departments are doing their part to help this institution be successful in creating student success.</i> <i>I think this institution really puts students first. All teams I have interacted with are consistently trying to improve the student experience. There is a general desire to help any student who comes to our campus.</i> <i>My institution really does strive to make student success a priority, which is part of the institutional values.</i> <i>We have very educated and talented faculty that sincerely care about student success.</i> <i>Really, the most favorable thing might be the actual education delivered to the students. The institution has its fun issues, but at least the students still learn.</i>

Table 1. Continued

Factor	Themes
	<p><i>The faculty as a whole are incredibly invested in the success of our students. The faculty definitely do their best to help facilitate intellectual growth and see our students achieve to the best of their abilities.</i></p> <p><i>The front-line employees work hard for student success with or without administration feedback. Internal departments work together and try to share new ideas.</i></p>

Table 2. Least Favorable Responses —Sample Comments and Actual Number of Responses at Northeast Lakeview College

Factor	Themes
Institutional Structure (n=74)	<p><i>While things have definitely gotten better in the last few years, there still seems to be a very top-down approach to leadership on this campus. At institutions of higher ed, it is ideal for power to be bottom up.</i></p> <p><i>This institution is not prepared at all for the growth that is coming post-accreditation. The location of this school and its mission dictate that it will have 10k-15k students in 10 years. We cannot hope to grow that quickly and will turn students away.</i></p> <p><i>Because we were undergoing accreditation visits, there was considerable pressure on faculty to bury problems and avoid honest encounters with the visitors that may have disclosed challenges/shortcomings. Some faculty, as me, felt [we] were treated as children. We as one institution have created a lot of “we,” and “they” have been remiss in treating several of our members with the respect professionals deserve. The school suffers under the burden of state directives, which excluded proper funding, and the administrative trivia that may or may not be helpful - we have created a lot of what was called in the 70’s activity traps. All in all, we have a lot of sincere hard working people, but we are burning out a lot of good people with trivial pursuits.</i></p> <p><i>Decisions not made at the appropriate levels, micromanagement.</i></p> <p><i>I feel that decisions are made outside of specific work areas by administration without consulting those who are directly impacted by those decisions. Ideas/changes are discussed in meetings by Administration, and often those who are affected were neither consulted and are the last to know about changes. Furthermore, this college is creating new resources without looking at the growth potential of the resources already in place. There are areas doing great work at this institution, but they are overlooked and rarely given additional resources even though there are years of data to support student improvement and learning. It would be nice to bring everyone to the table regarding decisions made on the campus. When you have a group of employees who work hard every day and they are overlooked, it is discouraging. However, these employees continue to do great work with little resources.</i></p> <p><i>Not being able to be a part of decision making, information not being shared, upgrades not noted, and additional tasks not being acknowledged</i></p> <p><i>The higher the administration position the less likely they know what faculty do/should do, and there seems to be a dismissive attitude toward the faculty.</i></p> <p><i>I would like to see more diversity across the board...faculty, staff, and students, especially in the administrative roles.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of communication from administration to staff especially on important issues that affect staff performance.</i></p>

Table 2. Continued

Factor	Themes
	<p><i>NLC's administration fails to communicate information about short-term and long-term projects in an appropriate and timely manner. Instead, employees attend meetings and receive documents with dates that indicate that administrators decided on projects months ago, and, within minutes during the meeting, employees are expected to agree or disagree with these preempted decisions without appropriate time to consider them. Also, it's been noted on several occasions this semester that information reported from NLC's administration differs from the information received from the academic chairperson, which indicates a lack of effective communication among the leadership to the internal stakeholders of this institution.</i></p> <p><i>Sometimes decisions are made at the administrative levels and are not passed on to the faculty or staff. I am not sure if this is intentional. It could be that a decision is made and all those involved in it assume that someone else will pass on the information to others.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of communication. In my group, there is no communication, no discussions, and no input. It's very dysfunctional and continues to hurt clients over and over.</i></p> <p><i>The communication at this institution is severely lacking. We hear very little that happens in administration and the district until it has happened, and then we are looked at like we did something wrong.</i></p> <p><i>There is a problem with communication at this institution, specifically concerning policy changes, which seem to come from the top-down without regard to how these policies will actually affect students. Additionally, because of this poor communication, when a question arises, there are usually several answers given as correct, often conflicting with one another, when there is only one correct answer. It makes it difficult to best serve the needs of the students and it makes it difficult to explain policies to students when faculty, staff, and administrators are working with sometimes conflicting information.</i></p> <p><i>I believe that staff at this institution are treated unfairly. It appears that faculty opinions matter more and that faculty are more important. I also believe that everyone should be held accountable and to the same standards. Favoritism and special privileges are a problem at this institution.</i></p> <p><i>I find that there are more and more college meetings on Fridays that keep me from grading, course innovation, and other course-related issues. I understand that some of this is necessary, but in our current environment of meetings every Friday, it makes it difficult for many of us to consider innovation, course design and improvement. I believe it would help a great deal to cut these down to a minimum.</i></p> <p><i>People are not treated equally. Some people work hard while other[s] do not work at all, and nothing is ever done to correct this matter.</i></p>

Table 2. Continued

Factor	Themes
	<p><i>Most problems have to do with over scheduling of meetings and other peripheral duties at the expense of course work, preparation and grading. This is the very definition of a “whirlwind.” Also, we are constantly fielding new initiatives with no time to thoughtfully implement the ones we are buried in, and there is a constant changing measure, criteria, or expectation. Most of these problems seem to come from district. This is one of the main reasons employees and faculty feel powerless to truly affect their institutions in a positive way. Even if faculty seem to reason with district for a voice on an important issue (like curriculum or textbooks) and district seems to concede on a controversial point, they later quietly implement the very thing that was contested or debated before faculty provided input.</i></p> <p><i>The institution always speaks of opportunity to allow input, yet they never take the actual employee input especially if it’s negative. They, instead, completely ignore what the employees are requesting. Very hypocritical environment always going with what they [would] rather choose to make the numbers look good yet creating a very negative, low-morale environment. Always putting employees last.</i></p> <p><i>The institution does not do well in working with professional employees on flexing their time worked. There is very low college morale in my view. Directors in my division are not held accountable for their miss-falls; however, front-line staff are held accountable for all. The turnover rate at this institution on the staff side [are] very high, which is very troublesome. Some College Services departments seem very reluctant to work with other divisions. This is very challenging when coordinating events and collaborating across departments.</i></p> <p><i>The many task[s] that are assigned in conjunction with the regular job duties. For those that strive for continuous improvement this means a lot of time in researching new concepts and integrating them into the course work. It is tempting to not put in that effort when there is so little time to focus on getting it right from the start.</i></p> <p><i>There are deep issues of morale among staff and particularly among faculty. I feel that there is a lack of participation by faculty towards the college and unfortunately to the students. It’s maybe a response due to feeling that faculty do not have a say in how college administration or the district responds to their needs and input, but their reaction is detrimental to students. Currently, there are several student organizations that need sponsors that are not filled by faculty. The lack of participation in college wide events has also decreased in the last 5 years.</i></p> <p><i>Work load is not distributed fairly; some areas are asked to take on additional assignments because the original area didn’t follow through. There is a lot of resentment around this.</i></p>

Table 2. Continued

Factor	Themes
	<p><i>Employees are not all held to the same standard and are not all held accountable. Minimum and poor work performance is acceptable to supervisors, which causes low morale and negatively impacts our mission. The quality of customer service can be improved at this institution.</i></p> <p><i>There are too many “cliques” and backroom deals with administration. Administrators are always the exception when it comes to following policy. All faculty, staff and students must adhere to policy but administration gets a pass. Too much favoritism in administration. It’s disheartening seeing certain staff members promoted when there is no official promotion ladder for staff. The administrations have a shortcut to “promote” people they want. Usually, the person who is “promoted” is not the best person for the job, just a favorite of the administrator. All other staff members have to apply to different positions to get better pay and move up. Creating their own unofficial ladder to success, no thanks to administration or district. Also, part-time employees are treated horrible. They are not treated as internal employees when it come[s] to applying for jobs, even though many have been serving the college and district for years. They have to fight for jobs with outside applicants. Not good for morale.</i></p> <p><i>Disconnect between district and colleges. And executive leadership and faculty. Employee and faculty do not interact regularly. There seems to be a significant barrier between the two areas.</i></p> <p><i>The Divisions do not work well together. Egos and personalities get in the way of two of the major divisions. Faculty, professional and classified staff are challenged to work together because of upper level interference and the students are the ones who suffer.</i></p> <p><i>Would like to have more collaboration with the administration not at the college, but at the district policy making level.</i></p> <p><i>Some situations are dependent and accepted with certain positions. Some areas are quite extensive, but it is understood that there is not much room for advancement. Some positions have very little time or opportunity to participate in some of the other activities on campus, such as sponsoring a club or joining in on events.</i></p>
Supervisory Relationships (n=9)	<p><i>My supervisor has very limited interaction with us and does not praise or provide direction. They are very pleasant in conversation and good at what they [do], but as far as my responses to the survey goes they fall short, extremely short in the question measures.</i></p> <p><i>Currently there are not always open forums for all employees to participate.</i></p>

Table 2. Continued

Factor	Themes
	<p><i>As employees we are not given the freedom to determine how our offices should run without the intervention of higher leadership. Our WIGs/Unit plans are dictated to us. Anything I have to do as part of my daily tasks have to go through several levels of proofing and approvals. It is rare to hear “good job.” I consistently hear what I am doing wrong or where I am failing. There is no coaching/training for new managers/employees, and that can be really frustrating when something is demanded of you, but the expectation has never been set.</i></p> <p><i>Professional development and training opportunities are available only as it relates to Alamo college training for fulltime employees. Training is limited for part timers. Much too often part-timers are more qualified than their supervisors or lead and work for a number of years performing a job, yet when [a] full-time position is available in the department (often the same area which they work part-time) [they] will be overlooked and management chooses [an] employee [over] an external person. Whereas this institution appears to allow collaboration within its departments, the collaboration and employment is plagued with favoritism manipulation, [and] nepotism, which results in low employee morale (hence, poor participation campus-wide).</i></p>
Teamwork (n=2)	<p><i>Unfortunately, least favorable would be the relationship in house within our own department, where communication is lacking and the type we do receive could use improvement in the tone and manner addressed. We are all professionals in this office and should be treated as such with respect. Instead our director reacts to situations abruptly and not respectfully. Many in our office have joked around with the idea of leaving the department or have said they would rather get yelled at behind closed doors than in front of other team members/students. (Personally, I would rather NOT be yelled at all.) I can take direction and redirection and can handle crucial conversations...CONVERSATIONS.</i></p>
Student Focus (n=8)	<p><i>Our NLC campus currently increased class size from 27 to 30 students without having a discussion with the faculty before its implementation. This has created a lot of discomfort because not all subjects are alike, such as having to grade papers vs. scoring sheets through a Scantron scorer. Additionally, on-line classes went up to a max of 35. This arbitrarily imposed decision, without allowing faculty to have their opinions heard beforehand, defeats the advances the District has recently made in involving all faculty members in the decision-making model.</i></p>

Table 2. Continued

Factor	Themes
	<p><i>I am SO SAD to report that for the first time EVER I graded this institution poorly on almost every question that dealt with student success. This saddens me more than any other season at NLC -- and we have seen some terribly abusive years here. The increase in class sizes is abhorrent. Full-time faculty have been assigned one fifth of their workload over again with no compensation. This is equivalent to making staff work a 6th day of the week! Faculty have literally another whole class worth of student[s] on their rosters. How could we possibly maintain the level of student success that we have been SO PROUD of? How can the institution even consider boasting a “value” of students first? The students have been put LAST. They will get less personal attention, less feedback, less rigorous assignments, less opportunity for active learning in the classroom -- all of these are unavoidable repercussions of adding 3 to 8 extra students in EVERY section. It is abundantly clear that the “value” at NLC is “the bottom line first,” NOT STUDENTS FIRST!</i></p> <p><i>More support for students, more understanding about their needs. Don’t send them away without ensuring they understand what they need to do. When someone calls on the phone or walks in, don’t send them to the internet. Assist them. If it’s something that has to be done on the internet, then stay on the phone or keep the students with you and walk them through the process at hand. Many of them won’t remember all the steps that have been given them, or they will get confused or the steps cited might be incorrect. Try to answer the phone as much as possible and try to ensure customers aren’t stuck in a never ending rotary. Bus routes or something to help students who don’t have cars. Look into staff raises so more staff can stay where they are happy (won’t have to move in order to get more pay).</i></p>
Other (n=9)	<p><u>Budget</u></p> <p><i>I do not feel that changes being made (such as increased class size) benefit the students in their future coursework or careers. Instead, it limits the amount of meaningful feedback I am able to provide students. While I understand that a budget shortfall exists, I’d like to know what other areas outside of academics are doing to address this issue. Right now, it seems that instruction is bearing the brunt of these cuts. That is probably not totally accurate, but it is the message that is being conveyed.</i></p> <p><u>Compensation</u></p> <p><i>I am very concerned about the pay structure of staff vs faculty. Faculty are given a steady consistent increase each year whereas staff can only rely upon a cost of living increase that doesn’t occur on consistent basis.</i></p>

Table 2. Continued

Factor	Themes
	<p><i>My least favorite is the little 3% raise (at most) given to staff. This is why staff have high turn around. They are overworked and underpaid. If you want to retain staff, there needs to be room for promotion within a job. We should not have to leave our position to jump up to another pay. I actually like what I do; it's just sad I will never get to stay doing it because I need higher pay to support my family. Also the communication with the District offices is terrible. Staff have to work more with District; their attitude towards the colleges is terrible.</i></p> <p><u>Facilities</u></p> <p><i>There are many areas that need improvement. I believe we contract for housekeeping, but the contract to clean is not working and makes this an unsafe environment. Office trash not emptied, for just one example of many. Also, we waste taxpayer money. Beautiful low-maintenance landscaping was ripped up and thrown away. The replacement is ugly and less healthy for all. Constant mowing is ridiculous. We used to value nature on the campus. No word on why this was done, and no one sought input from students or employees. It is our campus, too!</i></p>