



NATIONAL INITIATIVE FOR LEADERSHIP & INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

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# Northeast Lakeview College San Antonio, Texas

## Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) Qualitative Report

by

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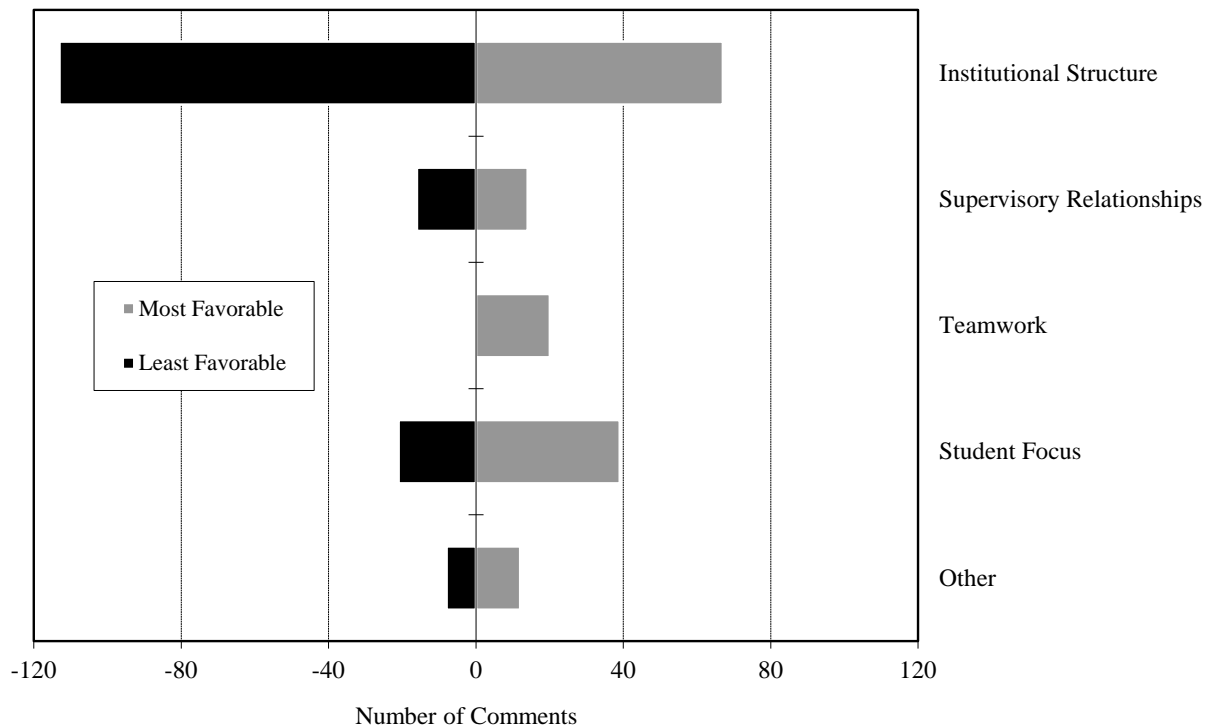
## Qualitative Analysis

Respondents were given an opportunity to write comments about areas of the institution they found most favorable and least favorable. Of the 201 Northeast Lakeview College employees who completed the PACE survey, 62.7% (126 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.

**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

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Themes</b>
Institutional Structure (n=63)	<p><i>I believe that, overall, our leadership has improved over the last year at our College. The overall morale seems to be improving as well. I believe it is representative of strong leadership at the highest levels of the College.</i></p> <p><i>The overall idea of the mission, models, and strategic planning put forth reflects good intentions and lays the ground work for redirection and improvement.</i></p> <p><i>The community of the College is strong and healthy.</i></p> <p><i>The change in leadership (President) has definitely made this a better environment to work in for all parties.</i></p> <p><i>The College sends out weekly information about what is going on at our location and we also receive emails from the district about board meetings. Communication here is great, but not so good within the department.</i></p> <p><i>There is open communication and transparency.</i></p> <p><i>The communication between the faculty is most favorable.</i></p> <p><i>The open door policy for administrators is consistent across campus.</i></p> <p><i>It's good that I have the freedom to try different ideas in the classroom and elsewhere. I am not too bound to teach to the test, as long as what I am planning doesn't cost the school money or ask anything of other people.</i></p> <p><i>NLC is an excellent and positively motivating place to work.</i></p> <p><i>The instructors communicate with the staff on changes or concerns.</i></p> <p><i>NLC is a good work environment.</i></p> <p><i>I am able to advance in this institution.</i></p> <p><i>The ability to use my talent in the area where I work and other areas is most favorable.</i></p> <p><i>NLC is a friendly place to work, and the people are all well adapted to their environment. I have had the opportunity to engage with many students, faculty and staff and find that the students are active learners for the most part.</i></p> <p><i>NLC has the best people. They began early with the institution and represent our founding culture and want to continue with it. It has been difficult with all the changes. We all like each other and continually strive for the very best. We need to have fun each day while continuing the excellence we have begun. Our change in leadership has greatly helped our morale and energy at NLC.</i></p>

**Table 1.** Continued

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Themes</b>
	<p><i>The atmosphere of the institution is warm and friendly throughout the classroom environment and with the staff.</i></p> <p><i>This institution performs at its highest level of professionalism. I enjoy working here and being accepted as a professional employee. I believe we are appreciated for the work we do.</i></p> <p><i>The schedule flexibility and working with a supervisor who encourages cooperation and allows me to do my job is most favorable.</i></p> <p><i>Wonderful faculty and staff who care for students and each other is favorable.</i></p> <p><i>The student success division participates in activities, which include all staff, and boosts morale.</i></p> <p><i>A good spirit of cooperation is most favorable.</i></p> <p><i>I enjoy the cross college collaboration.</i></p> <p><i>There is a spirit of cooperation that exists at NLC.</i></p> <p><i>This is a new and exciting time as we seek accreditation.</i></p>
Supervisory Relationships (n=17)	<p><i>I am able to communicate my opinions and ideas openly, which in return creates a very happy working environment.</i></p> <p><i>Opportunities to be creative are most favorable.</i></p> <p><i>I get excellent support and guidance from my supervisor, including timely feedback on my work.</i></p> <p><i>I enjoy the feeling of having a voice in College decisions.</i></p> <p><i>The most favorable aspect is that one can further their education, which should help further their career.</i></p> <p><i>I like the freedom to teach as it suits my own personal teaching style.</i></p> <p><i>We get to be cross trained in different departments, which can help with future positions.</i></p>
Teamwork (n=21)	<p><i>Teamwork in my department is excellent! From the moment I was hired, staff and faculty members began reaching out to provide guidance and support even before I asked.</i></p> <p><i>There is a strong work ethic and support provided by my supervisor and office team.</i></p> <p><i>Co-workers are very collegial, cooperative, and welcoming.</i></p> <p><i>My work team environment has the most impact on my decision to stay with the institution.</i></p>

**Table 1.** Continued

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Themes</b>
	<p><i>My work team and division is very cooperative and creative. They are the most motivating element of the institution outside of student interaction.</i></p> <p><i>I really enjoy working with the people in my individual division. We get along great and can freely express ourselves. We help each other a lot too.</i></p> <p><i>My division is great. We often collaborate, respect each other, and work hard.</i></p> <p><i>Our division tends to work together very well. Staff and faculty know what needs to be done and they often go above and beyond what is required when accomplishing these tasks.</i></p>
Student Focus (n=39)	<p><i>Student success is most favorable. There is true cooperation here, especially with student organization, and a desire to see students match their goals of securing a degree.</i></p> <p><i>Alamo Colleges is becoming a place where students can grow and then leave knowing they have the tools for a university.</i></p> <p><i>The administration at this institution is focused on students.</i></p> <p><i>I believe students get a quality education at the Alamo Colleges.</i></p> <p><i>I believe that, overall, this institution has done a great job at providing students with higher education training, work experience, and various other avenues to help promote involvement within the campus and the community, career preparation and employment opportunities. The campus also encourages graduation and completion and aides in a smooth transferability with partner universities.</i></p> <p><i>I feel this institution is student centered and places a great emphasis on student success.</i></p> <p><i>The student-to-faculty ratio is agreeable in regards to teaching towards individual needs.</i></p> <p><i>Most of the faculty on this campus work very hard to meet student needs.</i></p> <p><i>Overall, I believe that the students receive an excellent education. They enjoy the campus and the faculty.</i></p> <p><i>The Student Success division is focused and organized around providing our students with the best opportunities to meet their academic goals.</i></p> <p><i>The most favorable area is working with my department. We all want student success. We all care about our students and help each other out.</i></p> <p><i>The faculty are dedicated to student success and are truly passionate about students achieving a first-class education.</i></p> <p><i>NLC has a plethora of resources for students with disabilities to receive academic help.</i></p>

Table 1.

**Continued**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Themes</b>
	<p><i>We are very focused on student success. We champion those that achieve high marks and encourage others to follow.</i></p> <p><i>This institution is doing an excellent job with students and their learning is a priority.</i></p> <p><i>Student success is the greatest priority.</i></p>
<p>Other (n=12)</p>	<p><u><i>Facilities</i></u></p> <p><i>The campus is nice.</i></p> <p><i>There are gorgeously maintained lawns and facilities.</i></p> <p><i>NLC has outstanding facilities and technology.</i></p> <p><u><i>Benefits</i></u></p> <p><i>NLC has great benefits, time off, and work/life balance.</i></p> <p><i>The time off we get throughout the year is most favorable.</i></p>



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

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Themes</b>
Institutional Structure (n=114)	<p><i>I believe that, overall, the College is on the right track of implementing and promoting its mission, vision, and value statements; however, there are still some areas that need to be worked on. It's important that we continuously demonstrate the Alamo way with our employees and students to really improve our effectiveness. We can't lead by example if we don't practice the example.</i></p> <p><i>The vision for the College is unclear. The development of the online learning college is great, but I am not sure if the structural frameworks are in place or transparent to their necessary support teams.</i></p> <p><i>Most of the areas I find least favorable tend to be those that involve individual people and institutional structures and processes. There clearly seems to be a disconnect or mismatch between district-level decisions and the real effect it places on the individual campuses and the faculty and staff within the Alamo Colleges.</i></p> <p><i>Sometimes administrative decisions are made without the input of students and/or staff who are directly affected by them.</i></p> <p><i>Lack of consistency in leadership is most unfavorable.</i></p> <p><i>We need a strong VP and President at NLC. We need someone who will advocate for faculty and students, not just advocate for someone who will pass down all directives and initiatives from the District and Chancellor.</i></p> <p><i>District decision-making and shared governance is most unfavorable.</i></p> <p><i>The institution is not operated in a fair, expansive manner. The leaders have a bullying attitude and try to always maintain control and not allow advancement. This is why many have low morale and supervisors don't make it a priority because they want to always maintain control in a hostile environment. Others are waiting to leave when a better opportunity presents itself.</i></p> <p><i>The leadership is highly ineffective. The ship floats because those below make it float, and do so without recognition or credit. Particular areas are worse than others. I have minimal complaints about academic success. Top down leadership only works if those at the top are completely on their game. That is not the case at NLC or the Alamo Colleges in general. The entire system would benefit from more college autonomy and shared governance. A leader capitalizes on talent, instead of quieting it.</i></p> <p><i>The leadership is set in their ways, not flexible, and not transparent. Some of the vice presidents are bullies on this campus because they have worked here so long.</i></p>

**Table 2.**  
**Factor**

Continued  
**Themes**

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*There is so much turnover in student services and in our leadership team that I find it difficult to know who to call when I am trying to help a student.*

*Communication between departments, administrations, or even facilities is the biggest concern at our particular campus. There is a serious lack of communication that makes things difficult.*

*I believe there is a lack of transparency in the decision-making process. This is not due to a lack of communication forms, but rather a continuing attitude that information is on a need-to-know basis and those need-to-know decisions are based on personal preferences. This lack of transparency leads to distrust and a lack of acceptance of decisions. I believe that most employees would accept administrative decisions if they were informed of the process and felt that those processes were legitimate.*

*The communication at the institution needs improvement within the realm of the administrative team.*

*It can be difficult to communicate with certain areas outside my department.*

*There are many things that occur on campus that are not vocalized to employees (mostly from administration). Many employees that I have spoken to, including myself, feel like the presidential search process has not been as transparent as we would like. There have been questions asked and we are told that they will have to check to see if the answer can be given. An answer is never received. This makes employees feel detached from the process and that the administration and district do not want our input. There are also many decisions made at a District level that affect our work at the college level. We are very rarely consulted or even made of aware of the changes until we have issues and have to call multiple people to get answers.*

*Seeking input from all levels (i.e., administration, staff, faculty, temp, work study) is most unfavorable.*

*There needs to be more "T" in teamwork. As said before many times, communication is still a problem. Communication needs to come all the way down so even the night employees are all on the same page.*

*I feel that the district interferes with our operations too much.*

*Low morale due to top down management is most unfavorable. Ideas and opinions are heard, but never with an intent to listen or implement ideas from staff of low levels. There is an accusatory tone from all upper management that blames and shames employees as opposed to empowering and supporting employees.*

*High turnover in divisions causes low morale and fear in those divisions.*

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**Table 2.** Continued

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Themes</b>
	<p><i>Demands on workload being considered in strategic planning is most unfavorable.</i></p> <p><i>Campus morale remains fairly low. Most of the faculty are working incredibly hard. Even though there was a restructuring of committee work, it didn't actually make much difference in the workload.</i></p> <p><i>One thing I have noticed is that not everyone is valued or viewed the same way as professionals. Many supervisors and even administrators evaluate some employees based off their personal feelings towards them and do not separate their work contribution from personal feelings. No matter how good a job some employees do, they have not been praised as much as they should due to perceptions of particular employees.</i></p> <p><i>NLC is a growing institution which has been fraught with much change and bad decision-making for a while. We have a great core of people who really care about the institution, but we also need more personnel as we all still perform more tasks than one job. The majority of our duties lie in the "unless otherwise assigned" category of our job description. We also need our administration to look beyond our duties and foster growth for their workers. We are too initiative heavy. We need to take time to reflect in order to forward in a more positive direction. The administration is too busy with the future to address current needs. They create unnecessary bureaucracy with processes that are not needed or need to be changed.</i></p> <p><i>The available staff and resources are discouraging. We continue to get more work, but we are not given additional staff to meet our needs. I am forced to give my staff additional duties without compensation. Part time employees receive extremely low pay and yet they are asked to perform at high levels.</i></p> <p><i>There are very talented people working at NLC whose ideas and contributions are overlooked. Micromanagement and lack of autonomy and trust are killing the spirit of bright, passionate people. Incompetence and cronyism are evident in the lack of knowledge and basic skills in some middle management. Certain faculty are racist, sexist and harass students and others working here. Some faculty are wonderful and care deeply about their students while others are allowed to continuously get SOBIs, abysmal PGRs and poor student reviews. NLC could be a wonderful place to work, but management is suffocating any ideas and professional growth from those working here. I care about NLC, but do not see a future here, which is unfortunate because I have positive working relationships with many people on campus.</i></p> <p><i>Too many committees and meetings and not enough support is most unfavorable.</i></p> <p><i>There is a clear tension between the advising area and the academic departments that has not been addressed by the leadership.</i></p>

**Table 2.** Continued

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Themes</b>
	<p><i>I hate the divide between advisers and faculty. We should be able to freely communicate between each other. I keep hearing that one person in a leadership position actively blocks these interactions. We should work together to promote student success.</i></p> <p><i>NLC is a small campus with the opportunity to create close faculty and staff relationships. However, that relationship does not currently exist due to the leadership getting in the way of true cross-college collaboration. Student Success and Academic Success would have more success if the faculty and staff worked together directly and not by way of the executive team.</i></p> <p><i>The divide between Academic Success and Student Success is huge and in reality these two areas should be working together to help students. From the Academic Success side, faculty are afraid to bring up issues that affect Student Success services because of retribution. Commonly when I have heard issues brought up, like students being poorly advised, the standard response is that Student Services can't do anything about that. It affects our PGR and retention when students are given poor advising and put in the wrong classes for their path.</i></p> <p><i>There is a serious disconnect between advising services and faculty that needs to be addressed!</i></p> <p><i>The teamwork environment has been challenging. It is one of the most unprofessional atmospheres I have ever worked in. There are bad attitudes, inappropriate language and people purposefully trying to prevent productivity. Ignoring requests, not following through on important tasks and not communicating any issues are other areas of concern. I don't understand why it has been tolerated, even with numerous statements and complaints put in writing by more than one individual. Individuals should have been written up based on the severity of the complaints, but they received a win-win agreement instead.</i></p> <p><i>There is still a strong presence of silos within the College as everyone sticks to their own area. This college is very divided, nothing is confidential, and there is a lack of professionalism and respect for all.</i></p> <p><i>Policies and procedures are not consistently abided by all departments, such as policies regarding sick and medical leave.</i></p> <p><i>We have too many committees and forms. Everything is made very difficult and over-complicated here.</i></p> <p><i>There is no sense of trust with leadership. The intimidation factor is really high in two areas at this campus. Some reorganization with the administration would be highly recommended before a new president arrives because he or she will have problems with the tenured leadership.</i></p>

**Table 2.** Continued

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Themes</b>
	<p><i>Leadership change is most unfavorable. We need a steady leadership team.</i></p> <p><i>We don't have a culture of hiring from within among faculty at our College. In the last five years, we've only hired one adjunct with at least one year of experience at our own College as a regular faculty member. I doubt they are knowingly taking us for granted, but it feels like our regular faculty are either undervaluing our own adjuncts or they are failing to provide meaningful guidance or feedback to support their professional development.</i></p> <p><i>I do not like that employees have to apply to other positions inside the same school, and this is the only way to be promoted. At certain times part time employees are not allowed to apply for a job posted because the job is a full-time position. I also do not like that an employee working a part time job on this campus is not allowed to teach adjunct classes like the employees used to be able to. It feels like part time employees get little chance here to make a career in the Alamo Colleges District.</i></p> <p><i>This institution is all about the circle of people when it comes to promotions. I do not have trust in the overall administration. The hiring process at NLC is not favorable to the outer circle. NLC could use some organizational shifting to balance out the hiring process to be favorable to all.</i></p> <p><i>We have lost many good people due to the lack of advancement opportunities. We should care about the valuable institutional knowledge and not let it disappear with the lack of opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>Part time employees are given the least consideration when full time positions are available. The preference is bringing another full time employee from another campus or someone from the outside to fill a position in which a part time employee has been doing the job for as long as they have been employed with the Alamo Colleges District. Those who do the least amount of work get rewarded the most.</i></p> <p><i>I feel left out of the department. Too much information makes it hard to know what is relevant and what activities are available.</i></p>
Supervisory Relationships (n=16)	<p><i>I do not get any professional development opportunities. At times I feel like I am a substitute for an area that is understaffed with high turnover. Other departments' shortfalls should not dictate whether or not I am able to attend campus meetings or professional development.</i></p> <p><i>Employees are frightened of retaliation based on speaking their opinion or disagreeing with their supervisor.</i></p> <p><i>No appreciation is most unfavorable. There is no feedback until you've done something wrong.</i></p> <p><i>Not enough training is done for front-line personnel.</i></p>

**Table 2.** Continued

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Themes</b>
	<p><i>We do not get enough training sessions.</i></p> <p><i>Workshops and other professional development opportunities are offered at times when I can't attend.</i></p>
Student Focus (n=21)	<p><i>There is too much emphasis and support for one or two diverse groups at our College. I would like to see resources support students of all cultures and colors and more support for students who are economically disadvantaged.</i></p> <p><i>Our graduation and transfer process is still very confusing and difficult. We emphasize graduation and then put barriers in the way for that to happen. I have personally worked with excellent students, and I have been frustrated by the problems and challenges they have had regarding their exit.</i></p> <p><i>The whole College, academics as well as student support services, needs to be involved and support student events across the College.</i></p> <p><i>The institution should not cancel upper division courses strictly due to low enrollment.</i></p> <p><i>Faculty are judged by numbers (PGR, retention, SLOs, etc.), which has led faculty to start to water down their classes so they don't look bad. People who have great numbers are celebrated when in reality they might just be giving inflated grades or offering easier classes. There is no encouragement to push our students to do their best and think critically. I feel everyone wants good numbers regardless of how we get there. We are cheating our students out of a good education.</i></p> <p><i>It is not clear to me that non-teaching staff meet the needs of some of the students. I feel there is more that can be done when it comes to accommodations.</i></p> <p><i>Successful completion of course prerequisites will improve student success. The drive to increase graduation rates too often skips prerequisite courses, which puts students in courses they are not ready for.</i></p> <p><i>Our College is slow with rolling out new student orientations, making it difficult to attract new students and grow our institution.</i></p>
Other (n=8)	<p><u><i>Compensation</i></u></p> <p><i>There is no longevity base pay at the Alamo Colleges. We have a lot of turnover, and raises are not compatible with the cost of living. Fresh out of college, highly educated employees find no incentive to continue employment at an institution that will equalize the pay in every position and not consider their years of service.</i></p>

**Table 2.** Continued

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Themes</b>
	<p data-bbox="391 279 1373 394"><i>Faculty should be recognized and paid for the workload hours of the classes they teach. Lab class pay is less per hour than lecture, undervaluing the important teaching that takes place in a lab environment.</i></p> <p data-bbox="391 394 505 432"><u>Parking</u></p> <p data-bbox="391 432 1417 590"><i>Parking for faculty, especially adjuncts that arrive at all times of the day and night, have trouble finding any parking here at NLC. Full time faculty generally arrive in the early morning and have fewer problems, but adjuncts have a difficult time.</i></p>