

## **Section I: Introduction**

At the request of the college, Phyllis Lundy, President of Lundy Professional Development Resources, Inc., facilitated five employee focus groups during the week of March 24, 2014, to collect feedback from employees on issues related to the results of the November, 2013, LCCC Employee Campus Climate Survey. Focus group participants were asked to answer four questions, the first three at the request of the president, and the fourth added by the facilitator (see below).

1. What does "effective communication" mean to the campus/individual?
2. What are specific examples of when communication wasn't effective on campus?
3. What are the recommendations for how these examples could have been improved through effective communication?
4. What other information would you like to share about communication at LCCC?

Since the email that participants received, notifying them of the opportunity to provide feedback, invited them to "talk about the issues raised in the climate survey," participants were also invited to share information about any topic related to the Campus Climate Survey.

Additionally, the facilitator provided several other avenues for employees to share information, specifically in individual face-to-face sessions, in small group sessions, by telephone, and through email and mail. Respondents availed themselves of all of these options.

The focus groups ranged in size from four to ten participants. A total of 58 employees provided input. One student submitted a letter, which has been scanned and emailed along with this report as "LCCC Student Letter 001, 002, 003."

The facilitator took notes during the focus groups, and compiled and organized the information from all sources, including specific examples that would not identify any one respondent, but excluding specific examples that would have identified the respondent. Direct quotes in the report were taken from written materials submitted by employees.

## **Section II: Executive Summary**

In Section III, Part A, of this report, respondents provide their definitions of effective communication. In Part B, they shared thoughts on what aspects of communication are working well.

The comments from respondents in Section III, Part C, focus on the following areas where communication could be improved: the absence of collaborative decision making; inconsistent communication; hiring practices; communication around the new HR policies and the climate survey; accessing information; communication with satellite campuses; fear of speaking up; safety policies and procedures; information overload; and public communication of negative opinions.

In Section III, Part D, the comments focus on other topics of concern, such as: the consequences of decisions; change; recent Administration hires; shared governance; and effect on students. Morale and trust were also addressed as respondents felt these two areas had been impacted by the communication issues.

Section III, Part E, contains additional recommendations for improvement.

### **Section III: Employee Comments**

#### **A. What Is Effective Communication?**

- "Effective communication starts with the administration taking a leadership role and modeling good communication for the campus. In a healthy organization, the president would inform employees (using a campus-wide email) far in advance of a change that is being proposed, provide a clear rationale for the change, and create opportunities for rigorous discussion before moving forward with the change." (quote from a faculty member)
- "Effective communication is important to the overall effectiveness of an institution. It is important that communication take place at all levels from the students on up to the president. At my level it is important for my management and those above them to make sure that when important decisions are made that all of the stakeholders that will be affected by the decisions are consulted and their subject matter expertise considered." (quote from a faculty member)
- "Effective Communication means that there are channels for information exchange that are used regularly and consistently. "Exchange" means that elements at the college make information available to the impacted stakeholders, and that those impacted stakeholders accept the responsibility to become informed and to respond if a response is required. Effective communication also means that information is shared in a timely manner; early dissemination prevents the rumor mill from gaining ground and also communicates a respect for the importance of the information as well as respect for those most likely to be impacted." (quote from a faculty member)
- "Effective communication is a two way street--we all have a responsibility to be clear, timely, and purposeful in what we say, and an equally important responsibility to be purposeful when we listen." (quote from a faculty member)
- Effective communication is knowing in a timely manner about things that directly or indirectly affect my job or the campus in general.
- Effective communication is having a chance for input about things that directly or indirectly affect my job.
- Effective communication is knowing whether a decision is a done deal or a proposal, and if I have any input.
- Effective communication prevents misunderstandings, hurt feelings, and gets us all on the same boat. It helps us understand and carry out the mission. It serves to inform us and prevents rumors from getting started.

## **B. Communication: What's Working**

- Many employees report that the communication among team members with their peers in other groups, and between departments works very well.
- Departments who have staff meetings, division meetings, where information is freely shared, and leadership is open to new and different ideas and opinions, are doing well.
- Some employees have deans and/or supervisors who communicate very well, and feel they are informed timely.
- The general meeting at the start of the semester is a good improvement, as are the KPI's.
- The president acknowledged past successes at the most recent start-of-semester meeting.
- "Earlier this semester the President released a short video updating those who watched it about important happenings at the College--this was awesome, and I would encourage us to do this regularly." (quote from a faculty member)

## **C. Specific Examples of When Communication Wasn't Working and Recommendations for Improvement**

### 1. Non-Collaborative Decision Making:

- Although the president promised a collaborative decision-making style, when making decisions Administration often does not involve employees--whose terms of employment, work product, programs or students are going to be affected by those decisions--early enough in the decision-making process to avoid unnecessary negative consequences.
- The new policy that all sections must have 12 students in order to be conducted came up suddenly and was not discussed ahead of time with faculty. Instructors and students did not know this was happening. Students had already signed up and were counting on the classes. Courses were cancelled at the last minute, preventing some students from being able to finish their degrees on schedule. Students had already invested money to travel to the college for classes, only to find out they had been cancelled.
- "Class offerings have been systematically dismantled through administrative changes. Those changes have damaged multiple academic programs and made it virtually impossible for students to graduate in a third discipline, through significant restructuring of the way courses are taught and faculty members are compensated, and through successive semesters of class cancellations. Multiple students have been able to accrue sufficient hours of coursework in their discipline to graduate with a degree in the discipline only through the willingness of faculty members to conduct multiple independent studies in a single semester. Classes have been cancelled weeks before semesters have begun. Some of those classes were single section offerings. Student scholarship monies have been stripped from departments with no forewarning." (quote from faculty member)
- After returning to the college last fall, faculty was informed by the VP of Instruction that the college would now be offering 6, 8, 12, 14, and 16-week courses. This idea was never discussed with faculty, and when faculty asked to have further discussions, they were told that it was a done deal.

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- The deans meet and make changes in instruction without involving faculty. One example is the Online Course Evaluation form created by the deans last semester. Rather than communicating to faculty at the beginning of the process and getting faculty involved in making changes, the form was created behind closed doors by the deans and sent out to faculty with a brief message saying the form was going to be used to evaluate online instruction starting in the spring. The faculty could have provided insight as the process evolved. One employee commented that he/she provided feedback, but did not hear anything back.
- Most faculty were not informed about the Fast Tracks program, and only found out about it after seeing the advertisement in the newspaper promoting the plan.
- The faculty job description was created without faculty input.
- Holistic advising has been implemented without any credible evidence that this is the solution to the problem of poor student success rates. There has not been a full and open discussion or consideration of alternatives.
- No staff, faculty, students or other college community members were included in the development of the new HR policies.
- The Staff Senate recommended their choices for "peer-nominated and peer-selected staff" of the year; none of the staff they recommended were chosen when the President's Cabinet decided who would receive the award.
- Employees who wanted to have input on the new mission statement were turned down. Employees reportedly were not notified when the mission statement came out.
- Work hours of exempt employees have been changed or standardized within a group without prior consultation, which affects the ability of some of those employees to provide the services that are needed in off-hours.
- Employees report sitting on a committee for two months' worth of meetings, but no change actually was implemented, and no follow-up has taken place in the months since. Employees were glad to be involved, but ended up feeling like it was a waste of time.
- The maintenance budget was centralized, with no input requested. It is now hard to efficiently manage spending for maintenance because managers don't know how much money they have, and wonder if their funds will run out before the end of the year.
- Money was pulled out of the service learning budget; those responsible for managing the budget did not know until after the fact.
- Adjunct pay was reduced by 30% with no notice in the middle of the term. Adjuncts became disgruntled, both about the pay cut and about the manner in which it was implemented; some stopped teaching for the college. It's been difficult to find qualified replacements, so that other faculty members have had to teach extra classes, bringing them into course overload.
- The campus was not involved in the decision to select and prioritize the current list of capital building projects.
- Decisions are often made without input from the parties affected by those decisions. "Announcements" are made, with no opportunity for discussion.
- Examples were provided of important decisions being taken by Administration, but not communicated to the affected parties until as long as six months after the fact.
- Some decisions are not communicated directly at all; affected parties find out through the grapevine or not at all.

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- Decisions get communicated “down” with no opportunity for responses “up.” Employees are told: “Here is how we are doing things now; make it happen at your level.”
- When feedback or input is requested, it is usually near the end of the decision-making process.
- Most decisions, on which feedback may be requested late in the process, seem to go forward as is, and do not reflect consideration of the suggestions or ideas put forward in the feedback.
- When requested feedback on decisions is offered by employees, it is often not acknowledged. Rarely does someone who has provided feedback get a response of any kind.
- Many employees have simply stopped responding to requests for input or feedback, since they have not seen evidence that their feedback was sincerely requested, acknowledged, or considered.
- Many respondents said, “If you don’t really want the feedback, and don’t intend to consider it, then don’t ask.”
- The perception among employees is that the request for input from leadership is pro-forma (asked for just to be able to say the step of soliciting feedback was taken), and not genuine, for the following reasons:
  - Input is not requested early in the process.
  - Input (on sometimes quite complex issues) is often asked for during a busy time, or with a short response deadline, when it is hard for people to respond in time.
  - Written input is usually not acknowledged.
  - Verbal and written input, when acknowledged, is often responded to by discounting the idea and/or the person providing it.
  - Decisions rarely reflect that input was considered valuable enough to affect or alter the decision.
  - Decisions are announced without any reference to having considered requested input.
  - The above occurrences have become a pattern, rather than a couple of isolated instances.

### Recommendations - Non-Collaborative Decision Making:

- The president and other administrators need to let employees know as far in advance as possible of the changes that are being proposed by sending a campus wide email explaining the proposed change, including a clear rationale for the change, and opening it up for a real discussion.
- Provide advance notification of decisions that are being considered, so that employees can plan ahead for the time needed to review and comment.
- Be sure to include the “why” when changes are being made.
- Allow time for employees to meet in small discussion groups to evaluate and respond to proposed changes. Plan multiple meeting times to accommodate busy schedules.
- Provide upfront information as soon as possible when a class might have to be cancelled due to low enrollment, rather than waiting until the day/week before the start of the class. Provide alternatives to those registered so they don’t feel abandoned.
- Regarding the Fast Tracks program implementation, faculty would have appreciated receiving an email early on explaining the program, knowing the rationale for implementing it, and an opportunity for discussion.

2. Inconsistent Communication:

- Administration thinks that when information is shared in a top-down manner, the information is moving all the way through the organization; oftentimes that is not the case. In some departments, the communication from above flows down the chain of command timely and with accuracy, while in other departments, the information provided is incorrect, filtered, incomplete, after-the-fact, or not communicated at all. The information gets stuck in bottlenecks or trickles down at different rates.
- The inconsistency trickles down to students, who receive different information depending on which school they ask or who they go to.
- Administrators (President, VP, Deans) will state, "Research shows that...", but when asked for specifics, cannot cite any specific original source references. Decisions are being made on unsubstantiated research claims, rather than being truly data-driven. When questioned or asked for specifics, administrators display combative body language - angry facial expressions, arms crossed - and respond in angry tones, saying things such as, "It's a done deal."
- Job candidates are given conflicting information about job requirements and qualifications.
- Employees report not being given advance notice when moving into a new position or when changing locations. One group only found out they were changing locations from facilities employees who happened to mention it in passing.
- For some employees, there is not a direct line from Administration, so they do not hear what others are hearing.
- Some employees have been switched to hourly wages, but still don't know what their hourly rate is.
- Changes to start times for student courses were made in the fall; many who interact with the students didn't know this was happening.
- The criteria for faculty consideration after probation were changed without consultation or notification. The rules changed in the middle of the game. One faculty member only found out about this when it was brought up in the focus group.
- Some regular, full-time employees report having been on the job for over a year without having had orientation, on-boarding or a job description.
- Some employees report that they have been in their jobs more than a year but still do not have a job description. One five-year employee has been told he now has a job description, but hasn't seen it yet. The employee was told it was in HR; HR says no.
- Part-time employees need the same proper orientation, information and inclusion as regular full-time employees, but don't receive it.
- An adjunct instructor reported never having received the campus climate survey, even after inquiring about it and being assured it would be sent.
- Human resources is seen as being less open and available to employees as it has gotten larger.
- It can take weeks to get a response to email requests or inquiries from the vice president's office, which interferes with the ability to do the job.
- Some employees report that deans and administrators are slow to make decisions that affect programs and students, so that employees and students are left up in the air until the last minute.

- Many examples were provided of employees being told one thing, only to find out the reality was different than they had been told, when it was too late to find workable alternatives. These examples include changes to programs, classes, contracts, schedules, pay rates, and position duties.

Recommendations - Inconsistent Communication:

- Ensure that top-down communication actually gets down to all employees.
- Provide guidelines and standards for organizational communication and training on how to use communication channels.
- Every office should have regular staff meetings for dissemination of information.
- If someone cannot answer an email request or inquiry in full, due to time constraints or other factors, he or she should respond with a simple note acknowledging receipt and when to expect an answer.
- Provide consistent orientation, on-boarding and training for new employees.
- Train managers in how to engage with and communicate with their employees. Train employees in how to communicate with their managers.

3. Hiring Practices:

- Respondents noted that hiring practices across the campus are not consistent, and that the college's own hiring policies are often not followed.
- Many respondents who have served on hiring committees report that the final hire was someone who was not their top candidate or even in their short list of top candidates. Committee members are not informed as to how and why the decision to hire was made. Participants wonder why they are spending valuable time reviewing candidates if their input has no impact on the final decision.
- Hiring seems to be up to the hiring committee chairperson and the president.
- There is no standardization of how hiring committees are being run.
- There has been a lot of turnover, so lots of time is being spent participating on hiring committees.
- Statements made by administration that they favor promotion from within, do not coincide with what has actually happened, as many positions have been filled by outside candidates. In some cases, open positions were not posted nor were qualified internal candidates notified in advance about an open position, so internal candidates did not have a chance to apply.
- Two interim deans were appointed without informing faculty in each respective division and giving them an opportunity to apply for the positions. A dean was reportedly hired with no notice to faculty; two Board members were told that the position was offered to everyone, but that was not the case.
- The existing position approval process is not being followed. Administration appointed an interim dean even though a close family member is now his subordinate.
- While decreasing the number of adjunct faculty hires, staff and administration hires have increased.
- The addition of a four-year degree requirement for some jobs does not seem warranted given the duties required by the job.
- Associates' degrees are now not seen as valuable enough to qualify people for their own jobs, even though the Associates' degree is what this college provides.

Recommendations – Hiring Practices:

- The vice president should sit in on hiring committees for candidates who will directly report to them.
- Hiring committees should be composed of those colleagues who will be working closely with the candidate under consideration.
- Open positions should be posted and internal candidates given an opportunity to apply and be given serious consideration.
- Provide notice of, and justification for, newly created positions.

4. HR Policy Changes:

- Employees were given only three weeks' notification about 20+ HR policy changes, when the changes had been in process with the attorneys for several months before the notification.
- The time given for reviewing and commenting on the new HR policies, although extended, still did not give enough time for thoughtful review, discussion, questions, and deliberation on possible unintended negative consequences.
- At forums held to discuss these changes, employee's perceptions and concerns were brushed aside, rather than addressed in a respectful manner.
- One employee weighed in that the HR policy changes are to be expected after 25 years, and that LCCC has the best benefits in the state.
- There are many benefits for employees in the new HR policies; employees may not be aware of them.
- Employees question why so many policy changes need to be instituted all at once.
- The new policy that a legacy employee who accepts a different position at the college will then become an at-will employee seems to be a discouragement for legacy employees to apply for promotions.
- The "at-will" issue is such a big one, that it has been hard for employees to focus on the other policy changes.
- Respondents state they have not heard a rationale for the college moving employees to at-will status.
- Employees appreciate the team atmosphere and think that the emphasis on the division between legacy and at will, and those who have to punch time clocks and those who don't, will detract from the team spirit.
- The policy to have classified staff punch in on time clocks caught employees off guard. They were not told ahead of time that this would be happening. Employees were not told the rationale behind the change. One director told employees it was their own fault, so it ended up feeling punitive.
- Not enough notice was given when people had to "pay back" their time or give back vacation days at the end of the year. Some people gave up vacation time, only to find out after the fact that starting in the new year, vacation could not be front-loaded, but rather had to be accrued. Others had to scramble to find a way to pay back their time, right as the holidays approached. The faculty offered to share their accrued time with classified staff, which staff appreciated when they heard about it, but that was not allowed.
- Classified staff were told that some would receive money back for extra hours they had put in. This has not happened.
- Respondents wonder why the college required its classified staff to pay back for their time, instead of finding another way to remedy the situation.

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- Because employees did not know that the lawyers wrote the new policies, it was assumed they were written by Administration, whose motives were then questioned.
- Supervisors don't follow the discipline policies in place now or give feedback in an appropriate manner.
- There is a concern about whether the Board will take the time to seriously evaluate the new HR policies.

Recommendations - HR Policy Changes: Employees feel they and the college would have benefited from the following:

- Most employees agree that some policies needed to change; those same employees would have liked to have known the "why" behind the specific changes. "We got the change, but not the change management."
- Being presented with the legal reasons and/or rationale (the "why") behind the proposed changes.
- Knowing who initiated the changes, and knowing who wrote them.
- Being brought in and asked for feedback earlier in the change process.
- Having the opportunity for discussions along the way.
- Being given more time to read, understand and think through the ramifications of the policies.
- Being presented with the benefits, to employees and to the college and its students, of these changes.
- Having an easy way to compare the new policies with the old policies.
- Seeing that feedback on the policy changes was taken into account when the final policies are implemented, either because changes were made, or because the rationale for not making a change is fully explained.
- Training on the new HR policies.

### 5. Climate Survey:

- The president told the Board that the climate survey results were largely positive. After many attempts, the newspaper had to use FOIA to get the survey results; when published, the majority of the comments (approximately 87%) were quite negative. The president said the issue that needed to be addressed was "peer bullying"; however, that conclusion is not visible in either question responses or non-redacted comments.
- "The president participated in disingenuous communication of the morale survey results before the board, as reported in the *Wyoming Tribune Eagle*. The survey results were not, as the president stated, "overall positive." The administration attempted to suppress the release of the written comments of the survey, to the point of a formal request having to be filed by the student newspaper to obtain access to the comments. Prior to that request and the subsequent release of the comments in a redacted format, the overall statistical results were sufficient to refute the claims of positive results by the president." (quote from faculty member)
- The Administration is seen as attempting to keep the comments hidden, only releasing them when it was forced to do so, and as attempting to spin and discredit them once they were released.
- When the comments were published, the president reportedly discounted the survey in public, saying that it was not large enough to pay attention to.

- The reason given for certain sections of the comments being redacted was that it was to protect the identity of the respondent. Respondents whose comments were censored in the published survey results said their redacted comments were not written in a way that would have identified who they were; rather, they were redacted to protect the identity of the people who were mentioned in the comment.
- In one respondent's opinion, releasing the survey's anonymous comments did not uphold the college's indication that the comments would be protected, and created unnecessary and unsubstantiated conversation, which was not effective or productive. This respondent would prefer that for future surveys, respondents not be anonymous and be willing to stand behind any comments they have made.

6. Information No Longer Available or Hard to Access/Locate:

- The organizational chart has disappeared.
- Employees used to have a list of who reports to whom; now they don't and it is hard to locate people.
- While there is a file on the college Intranet for the President's Cabinet minutes, the last date that has minutes is from January, 2012. Staff received the minutes after that as campus email for a while, and those stopped late spring/early summer 2013. Minutes from the Student Services Leadership Team are no longer being sent.
- Eagle's Eye is hard to navigate.
- Apparently, the only copy of the budget is in the library; most employees do not know it is there.
- Concern was raised that the push for online classes and online dissemination of information does not take into account that statewide Wyoming infrastructure doesn't yet support that.
- The college recently moved to scheduling classes at staggered start dates in all semesters. In the past, employees were provided with a scheduling matrix for summer due to that semester's having such complex scheduling. This academic year, employees requested matrices for fall and spring since the college had moved to staggered scheduling for those semesters as well. After a failed attempt at creating a summer matrix by his office, the vice president told employees that there would be no matrix from this point forward because it was too rigid and antiquated. Staff cannot schedule classes in a coherent manner without this tool. Ultimately, it will end up being a disservice to students when they cannot build coherent schedules either.

Recommendations - Information No Longer Available or Hard to Access/Locate:

- Ensure there is consistency on how and when minutes from meetings are distributed.
- Inform employees when information has been published, e.g., President's Cabinet meeting minutes, LLT minutes, so that employees can inform themselves and ask clarifying questions.
- If information is to be located on Eagle's Eye, improve that site so that it is easier to navigate.
- Reinstitute the scheduling matrices.
- Many respondents expressed the desire to receive information on decisions via mass email.

7. Communication with Satellite Campuses:

- Respondents at a satellite campus agree with the comments made by the employees at LCCC. They add that because they are remotely located, the lack of communication is even more detrimental to their ability to function well.
- The lack of advance consultation on decisions results in policies that do not fit their circumstances and the needs of their students.
- An employee at a satellite campus with the same job title as someone on the main campus, may in fact have different job responsibilities, due to the campus being smaller or the student population having different needs. It's not "one size fits all."

Recommendations - Communication with Satellite Campuses:

- Those making decisions should visit the college's satellite campuses and meet with employees (and students) there to understand their needs.

8. Fear of Speaking Up:

- The emails that went out to employees about these focus groups stated that the report would be sent directly to the Board of Trustees. The president then requested that the report be sent directly to him instead. When employees heard that the report would be sent directly to the president, many expressed that this attempt at a last-minute switch is another example of why employees don't consider the environment safe for speaking up, and don't feel their comments will be fairly heard.
- Many respondents said that other employees will not participate in these focus groups or talk to the consultant because they don't feel secure in voicing concerns, and/or have indicated that they have been indirectly discouraged from participating.
- Some who have spoken up at open forums to suggest ideas, ask questions or bring up concerns report that the responses were dismissive, and that there were negative repercussions afterwards.
- Many respondents are fearful that if they come forward to state their concerns, their jobs will be in jeopardy, or they will be labeled as a "problem child."
- One respondent felt that it wasn't safe to express satisfaction with the way things are changing, and called for support of the Cabinet and president.

9. Safety Policies & Procedures:

- Safety policies and procedures that were in place before the new administration came on board have not been consistently followed during and for some time after the transition. Specifically, employees stopped hearing about the CARE team, the CARE website was not being updated, CARE reports were not being filed, and the "code word" process was not communicated to all Campus Safety officials.

10. Information Overload:

- Employees say that they receive a lot of information in pieces or that is fragmented, out-of-context or contradictory, and find it hard to prioritize what is important, what is true, and/or will impact them.
- It is hard to make sense of all the committees and who is on them. Some employees have been told they are not allowed to be on a committee.

11. Public Communication of Negative Opinions of LCCC:

- On more than one occasion, the president has talked publicly about how badly screwed up LCCC was before he came on board.
- At the first start-of-semester meeting, the president said that everyone knows what a mess Student Services is.
- People in high-level positions have been heard to repeat that LCCC is a lousy institution or was lousy before they got here. One vice president has used the term "mediocre" to describe LCCC multiple times; the president has used the word "average."

**D. Other Topics of Discussion Related to the Campus Climate Survey**

1. Consequences of Decisions:

- Too many theories, which look good on paper, are implemented with no regard to the real-world consequences. There is not enough focus beforehand on what will happen to the staff and/or students when policy hits reality.
- The emphasis in the mission on "completion" is antithetical to teaching, learning, and the purpose of a two-year program.
- In one Department, a key decision that affects both students and employees has been put off for over a year, possibly due to a personality conflict between the Assistant Director and a supervisor.

2. Change:

- Respondents say that they are not against change, and are able to cope with change, and find it insulting when Administration states that resistance to change in general on the part of employees is the main problem.
- The benefits and/or necessity for some recent changes have not been substantiated and the changes are turning out to not be productive for employees, for students, or for the college.

3. Recent Hires in Administration:

- An internal audit conducted several years ago by an independent consulting firm strongly recommended that the college reduce the size of Administration and staff, and increase the number of faculty. Many believed a top priority of the Board was reducing the number of administrators; however, the number of administrators and staff has increased.
- New hires in Administration have not made a favorable impression on many of the respondents.
- Some new Administration hires have not yet taken the time to get to know their employees, have not held team meetings, and in some cases have not learned their employees' correct names.
- The perception is that new administrators' top priority is to implement changes, build resumes and move along. One is quoted as having said, "Don't worry about it, none of us is going to be around here long, anyway."
- Many administrators and deans are routinely not in their offices.
- Administrators show up late for meetings, leave early, and often devote their time in meetings to texting and working on laptops or tablets, rather than attending to the meeting's purpose or to the other attendees.

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- The times that deans cancel meetings or stand up students and faculty occur far too often.
- The reaction by new administrators to being questioned or disagreed with has been observed to be to "write up" that person.
- Some new hires in Administration are micromanaging, while others are failing to lead or manage at all, rather than effectively interacting with and communicating with their employees.

### Recommendations: Recent Hires in Administration:

- The president and vice presidents are rarely seen by most employees and should make themselves more visible and available.
- If the administration would take the opportunity at events to mingle with employees, they would learn more about their employees and build trust.

### 4. Shared Governance:

- Some employees mentioned that the College Council has not fulfilled its original intent, which was shared governance. They meet only every six-eight weeks, for only two hours at a time, and are seen to mostly rubber stamp things that have already been approved.
- When one representative brought back information from a constituent group, the president and co-chair reportedly laughed and did not take it seriously. The president reportedly responded to one concern by saying, "Some things are not worth discussing."
- Some College Council members did not know about policy changes being considered until they were asked to vote on them.
- The Council is seen as being stacked with Administrators.

### 5. Effect on Students:

- The focus of the Administration seems to be on how to protect the integrity of the policies rather than on how to help the students.
- Policies that affect the students, but don't serve the students, are created by people who are too many layers above the students.
- The number of frustrated and disgruntled students is increasing:
  - Not able to get the classes they need.
  - Alienated by bureaucratic office processes.
  - Often can't get the information they need.
  - Too many instructors who don't teach substance.

### 6. Morale:

- The majority of respondents stated that they love LCCC, the students, and their work, but find it increasingly difficult to feel good about coming to work due to the circumstances described in this report.
- Most respondents, across all sectors, report that morale has never been lower than it is now. People who have always been very positive and hopeful are now feeling very negative and hopeless.
- Dedicated, service-oriented, and hard-working employees are looking for employment elsewhere, are planning to retire earlier than planned, or have already retired earlier than they wanted to, due to unhappiness and finding the current situation untenable.

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- Dedicated employees who have supported the college financially are no longer doing so, because they no longer in good conscience feel they can support the direction the college is taking.
- Long-term employees, who are not brought in early in the decision-making process to share their expertise, feel discounted, and as if Administration thinks of them as irrelevant.
- Institutional knowledge is not being acknowledged or validated.
- Employees feel that if you are not part of the "spine," you don't matter.
- Some employees have been treated in such a way as to wonder if the administration is trying to get them to leave.
- Morale issues are not left over from previous administrations, as has been indicated by the president when speaking to employee groups; these issues are the result of the recent administrative actions and practices which have systematically devalued the institution and its employees.

### Recommendations - Morale:

- We need to open up the discussion to include what other issues in addition to poor communication are causing low morale on campus, the effects these issues are having on employees, and by extension our students, and how we can correct the problems before even more serious damage is done to the college.

### 7. Lack of Trust:

- The president led employees to believe that decision-making would be transparent, inclusive, collaborative and data-driven, which has not turned out to be the case.
- The patterns respondents have noticed of lack of upfront communication, and making decisions without taking into account feedback, contribute to distrust of the motives of the Administration.
- Employees are not sure what the intentions of Administration truly are. One respondent said that even if the intentions are pure, the impact of their actions and policies is often detrimental.
- Administrators are viewed as attempting to implement what may have worked for them at a prior location, rather than taking the time to understand LCCC, its constituents, and its needs.
- Respondents think that when input is asked for only at the end of a process, or at the last minute, that the request is perfunctory and merely lip service. Employees think that Administration does not really want or value employee feedback.
- Employees have found out about changes in their employment status when, for example, the sign on their door changed. Employees wonder if one day their own name will be off the door.
- Emails are sent from the level of dean and above that dismiss legitimate employee concerns rather than addressing them.
- The president did not accurately represent to the Board the circumstances of the hiring of one interim dean.
- The president did not accurately represent to faculty at large about directives from the Board regarding policies currently being discussed.
- One dean reportedly attempted to justify lying by arguing that he works with a different kind of truth than the "everyday version."

- The vice president and the deans tell different groups of people different stories, and different “facts” about the same issues.
- Enrollment is down; the president is saying publicly that enrollment is up.
- Some employees report that the president has been very willing to listen, but that the resulting actions don’t always match the words.

#### **E. Other Recommendations for Improvement**

- Re-verbalize the mission of the college to all employees, and ensure all are on board.
- Institute a solid performance management system.
- It is all our jobs to communicate well – both administration and employees need to improve.
- Provide more informal opportunities for employees to have face-to-face communication.
- More cross-department communication and consideration would help us know how something we do affects other groups.
- Ensure that the changes that are being made are also being evaluated and results measured so that we know what’s worked and what hasn’t.
- We should write enforceable policies and procedures, follow them, and keep them up-to-date. We have a tendency to paint ourselves into corners with strongly worded policies. We then occasionally find ourselves in positions in which behaving reasonably would require us to violate our policies and procedures.