

Academic Council Survey Results

I. Summary

Purpose of the Survey

In the Fall of 2010, Prince George's Community College faculty members were invited to participate in an electronic survey to gather information that will be used to assess the extent to which the Academic Council (AC) is meeting the objectives it established for itself in May 2008:

1. Improve communication among the areas represented by the Council
2. Streamline processes and timelines for establishing academic program policies and procedures.
3. Meet Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) concerns about the role of Academic Affairs in governance.

This document provides a summary of the results of the survey.

Demographics (Questions 1-3)

- 236 individuals chose to take the survey. Every question was not answered by every individual. Response percentages are based on total completing the question.
- "Faculty Organization" (45%) and "Academic Affairs Faculty" (63%) were the areas of affiliation most frequently selected.
- A majority of the respondents identified themselves as "full-time" faculty (64%).
- Reported years of service as a faculty member ranged from 1 to 43, with an average length of service of 13 years and a median/mode of ten years. The group broke roughly into thirds: six years or less; seven to fifteen years; over fifteen years.

Contact with and Understanding of Academic Council (Questions 4-8)

- Six percent of the respondents reported having served on AC; 34 percent had visited the web site; 28 percent had attended a meeting.
- When asked why they had not attended, respondents most frequently indicated that they were too busy (34%), had other obligations (49%) or were not aware that the meetings were open (30%).
- In general a majority of respondents had either no ("not at all") or a vague ("somewhat") understanding of the purpose and work of AC.
- The statement most frequently receiving a "very much" response was "I have received messages from the AC". (44%)

Role of Academic Council in Improving Communication (Questions 9-11)

- "I'm not sure" was the response provided by a majority when asked about AC's ability to improve communication either in general or with specific areas of the college.
- When asked to elaborate on their answer, of those who did, again a majority (54%) expressed a lack understanding of AC and/or the college's organization as a whole.

Effectiveness of Academic Council (Questions 12-13)

- Over 80 percent agreed that AC was at least “somewhat” or “very much” able to deal with matters in a timely and effective fashion.
- When asked to elaborate, again a majority of those who did (54%) indicated that they did not know exactly what AC did.

Governance Concerns Raised by MSCHE (Questions 14-15)

- A majority of respondents (54%) were “very much” aware of the concerns raised by MSCHE during its 2005 decennial visit. Another 32percent were “somewhat” aware.
- At least 50 percent of those responding felt that the AC has either “somewhat” or “very much” addressed those concerns. Specifically, they felt that AC:
 - will make the academic programs stronger (91%)
 - strengthens the ability of faculty and academic administrators to develop and lead the college’s academic program (86%)
 - gives faculty a stronger role in college governance (84%)
- Although still garnering at least 50 percent of the “very much” or “somewhat” responses, by far the highest percentage of “not at all” responses were to questions concerning their understanding of the relationship of AC to the college’s governance structure in general (31%) and to the College Wide Forum specifically (50%).
- When asked to comment directly as to whether or not the AC helps the college meet MSCHE concerns, 21 individuals responded. Of these, 38 percent indicated that they did not know enough to evaluate and 33 percent indicated that AC was making a positive contribution.
 - The remaining comments centered on the relationship between the AC and CWF. These comments were few (six in all) and were fairly evenly split between desiring a closer relationship between the two and not.

II. Detailed Results

Note: Although 236 responses were obtained, every question was not answered by each respondent. Response percentages are based on the total number of individuals answering a particular question. Also, several questions invited specific comments and/or follow-up. The comments received were grouped and representative examples of levels of agreement/disagreement are included below.

1. Area(s) of Affiliation:

- Faculty Organization 45%
- Academic Affairs Faculty 63%
- Student Services Faculty 4%
- WDCE Faculty 5%
- Distance Learning 23%
- Department Chair 8%

2. Faculty Status:

- Full-time 64%
- Adjunct 36%

3. Years of service as a PGCC Faculty Member:

- 3 or less 17%
- 4 to 6 17%
- 7 to 10 20%
- 11 to 15 15%
- 16 to 20 13%
- 21 to 25 6%
- More than 25 11%

4. Are you or have you ever been a member of the Academic Council?

- Yes 6%
- No 94%

5. Have you ever visited the Academic Council web site?

- Yes 34%
- No 66%

6. Have you ever attended meeting of the Academic Council?

- Yes 28%
- No 72%

7. If you have not attended a meeting of the Academic Council please select the reason(s) why:

- I do not believe the issues addressed are relevant to me 5%
- I am too busy with other tasks 34%
- I have other obligations scheduled during the meeting times. 49%
- I was not aware that the meetings were open to the campus 30%
- Other (*nine written responses*) 15%
 - I am a recent hire.
 - Visitors are not always allowed to speak.
 - CWF, Academic Council, Faculty Senate – where is the power; which meetings should be attended?
 - I had been discouraged by other faculty who did go and felt their views were not wanted.

8. Please indicate the degree to which each of the following statements applies to you:

Item	Not at All (1)	Somewhat (2)	Very much (3)	Calculated average*
a. I understand the purpose of the AC	21%	55%	24%	2.04
b. I know who represents me on the AC	43%	28%	29%	1.86
c. I have received messages from the AC	18%	38%	44%	2.26
d. I have read agenda or minutes from AC meetings	38%	38%	25%	1.87
e. My AC representative has communicated the happenings of AC	37%	36%	29%	1.92

*Using weights assigned after the fact (1-3)

9. In general, the Academic Council has improved communication related to academic programming at PGCC?

- Yes 27%
- No 10%
- Not sure 64%

10. The Academic Council has improved communication between my area and ...

Area	Yes	No	I'm not sure
Academic Affairs	27%	8%	65%
the Faculty Organization	24%	5%	71%
the Chairs' Council	14%	8%	79%
the Student Governance Board	4%	9%	87%
Student Services	7%	8%	86%
WDCE	5%	7%	88%

11. Please share any opinions about whether or not the AC has improved communication among the areas represented on the Council. (26 comments)

- I am not sure/cannot determine 54%
 - I do not know who they are.
 - I am a new adjunct and not familiar with the college's organizations.
 - I have no way to gauge; I've nothing to compare it to.

- Yes 19%
 - Another layer has been added, but it has generated communication among the different areas of the college.
 - Particularly at Chair's Council; less so with the faculty organization.
 - AC is vital to governance and provides an important arena.
 - Communication is much improved.
 - Yes, from the top down.

- No 19%
 - No, and communication continues to be an issue.
 - There is still an unfortunate divide between workforce program goals and academic transfer program goals.
 - It would be more effective if my AC rep. made an effort to communicate with me in person, phone, or email.
 - AC operates in a somewhat insular fashion. It does important work, but does not effectively transmit the information.

- Other 8%
 - Present AC reports at division meetings.
 - Philosophy of Education and General Education Standards

12. Please respond to the following statements:

Item	Not at All (1)	Somewhat (2)	Very much (3)	Calculated average*
a. If I have a concern related to the academic program, I believe the AC can deal with it effectively.	18%	64%	19%	2.01
b. I believe the AC deals with matters in a timely fashion.	14%	67%	19%	2.05
c. I believe that the AC has improved the speed with which academic matters are dealt.	18%	61%	22%	2.04

*Using weights assigned after the fact (1-3)

13. Please share any opinions about whether or not the AC has streamlined processes and timelines for establishing academic program policies and procedures. (24 comments)

- I am not sure/cannot determine 54%
 - I do not know what the AC does or doesn't do. I don't have time to search for minutes.
 - Not familiar enough with AC to respond.
 - I am too new to be able to evaluate this.

- Yes 29%
 - The issues are brought to the table in a timely manner.
 - I believe AC has streamlined processes and policies in student services.
 - The people who know the most about the academic matter are not able to make the policy.

- No 0

- Other 17%
 - I believe the survey to be rather flawed. How would any of the regular faculty know for sure unless they knew how it was before.
 - Still not clear on the overall purpose of the AC.
 - Please refrain from more busy work; stop distracting faculty with statistics gathering.
 - Speed is not a mark of achievement. What is needed is a wide based discussion without time constraints.

14. Meet the MSCHE concerns about the role of Academic Affairs in governance. The key assessment of this objective will be the response from MSCHE. However, we will appreciate your responses to the following statements:

Item	Not at All (1)	Somewhat (2)	Very much (3)	Calculated average*
a. The AC will make the academic programs at PGCC stronger.	9%	59%	32%	2.23
b. The AC gives faculty a stronger role in college governance.	16%	57%	27%	2.12
c. I understand how the AC fits into the college's governance structure.	31%	53%	18%	1.88
d. I understand the relationship between the AC and the CWF.	50%	38%	13%	1.64
e. The AC strengthens the ability of the faculty and academic administrators to develop and lead the college's academic program.	14%	59%	28%	2.14
f. I am aware that, during its last review of PGCC, the MSCHE directed the college to examine its governance system and ensure that the academic program is "designed, maintained, and updated by faculty and other professionals who are academically prepared and qualified."	15%	32%	54%	2.38

*Using weights assigned after the fact (1-3)

15. Please share any opinions about whether or not the AC helps the college meet MSCHE concerns about the role of Academic Affairs in governance. (21 comments)

- *I am not sure/cannot determine* 38%
 - I am too new to evaluate.
 - Unaware of AC before today.
 - I have not seen any reports that indicate AC is meeting MSCHE concerns.
 - Not enough communication from AC to answer this question.
 - I am not familiar with the MSCHE report so I cannot say.

- *"Helps"* 33%
 - Gives us a stronger system of governance throughout the varied areas of the college community.
 - The work AC is doing on the assessment of student success and curriculum mapping is very important to meeting MSCHE concerns and standards.
 - Good start but needs to be more transparent and actually seek support from constituency groups, not just endorsement for policies already made.
 - Helps, but we are far from governance by the masses. Still too much top down decision making.
 - AC gives some faculty a bigger role in governance. However, it seems to be more for chairs and less so for regular faculty. May be due to a lack of clear and constant information flow from Senate or other faculty groups.
 - Decisions made are more likely to be better now since those who have direct experience in the matters are making the decisions.

- *Comments directly addressing the relationship between AC and CWF* 29%
 - It appears as if the AC does not understand that it needs to have a relationship with the CWF. The AC seems to be doing all it can to remain a stand-alone entity whereas the CWF believes there should be one governance body and not two. The CWF does not wish to control the AC in any way, but does want them merged so that the ideal of one governance structure is achieved.
 - Reps of AC and CWF should present reports at monthly division meetings.
 - I believe that the AC should fall under the umbrella of the CWF.
 - Yes it does help. The CWF is NOT the place for decision making about academic matters.
 - While the AC provides the faculty with the opportunity to have a stronger voice in matters dealing with academic programs and issues, I believe there is a huge disconnect between the AC and the CWF, as well as the non-academic areas of the college. AC sits by itself and is separate from college wide governance. In my opinion, the college should have one all-inclusive, unified system of governance, of which the AC should be a key component.
 - The AC is the only real governance body dealing with the crucial areas of academics and should not be co-opted by the Forum governance. This would return the college to the top down pattern with little faculty voice on matters of curriculum and programs.