



NATIONAL INITIATIVE FOR LEADERSHIP & INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

**Golden West College
Huntington Beach, CA**

Institutional Structure Subscale

by

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**The National Initiative for Leadership
& Institutional Effectiveness**

North Carolina State University

November 2014



National Initiative for Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness

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INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE REPORT

The National Initiative for Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness (NILIE) conducts research on campus climate using specialized surveys, the results of which provide valuable indicators of college leaders' styles and the institution's overall capacity to fulfill its mission and goals and ensure student success. The Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) is the primary instrument utilized to assess campus climate. The purpose of the PACE survey is to promote open and constructive communication and establish priorities for change by assessing employee perceptions related to four climate factors: institutional structure, supervisory relationship, teamwork, and student focus.

The Institutional Structure climate factor focuses on the mission, leadership, structural organization, decision-making, and communication within the institution. Supervisory Relationship provides insight into the relationship between employee and their supervisors and employees' ability to be creative and express ideas related to their work. Cooperation and effective coordination within work teams is explored within the Teamwork climate factor. The Student Focus climate factor considers the centrality of students to the actions of the institution as well as the extent to which students are prepared for post-institution endeavors. Together, the unique focus of each climate factor provides a comprehensive picture of campus climate at an institution.

As institutions of higher education seek to improve and meet external demands, issues specifically related to the Institutional Structure climate factor often create challenges. Research suggests that organizations function best when they are effectively coordinated, labor and control is appropriately divided, and structural design adapts to current circumstances (Bolman & Deal, 2013). However, PACE survey data consistently reveals that community colleges have relatively negative perceptions of campus climate related to these areas, which are connected to the Institutional Structure climate factor. The Institutional Structure report is designed to provide insight into employee perceptions of institutional structure climate, specifically related to the institution's mission, leadership, decision-making, organization, and communication. Gaining insight into these areas is particularly helpful considering the unique structural organization found in institutions of higher education.

Mintzberg (1979) described the structure of institutions of higher education as a professional bureaucracy, in which a highly specialized workforce conducts decentralized work according to standards often determined by external bodies. Within a professional bureaucracy, two hierarchies often emerge: one democratic, from the bottom up; and one bureaucratic, from the top down (Mintzberg). As a result of the decentralized structure and highly specialized workforce within a professional bureaucracy, institutions of higher education may face problems of coordination between units and staff, difficulty in innovation due to an inflexible structure, slow change processes, and complex relationships, particularly with regard to authority, decision-making, and control of work.

Institutions of higher education have also been described as loosely coupled organizations (Weick, 1976), where functions and units might be momentarily attached and responsive to one another, but each retains its own identity and is often minimally interdependent. While loosely coupled organizations have benefits such as a lower probability that every environmental change will necessitate a response or greater ability to sense necessary adaptations (Weick), they are not without problems. Institutions of higher education that are loosely coupled may experience difficulty in diffusing new policies or procedures, improving weak or problematic functions, and in streamlining processes so that each autonomous unit is not duplicating the work of other units.

Understanding the climate around institutional structure within a community college is more important now than ever. Over the last decade, community colleges have faced a challenging environment defined by resource constraints, greater demands for services and unprecedented enrollment pressure (Boggs, 2004). Hill and Jones (2001) suggest that organizational renewal and better understanding of an institution's mission and mode of operation might assist community colleges in surviving and overcoming these challenges. Furthermore, Ayers (2002) identified organizational structure, empowerment, interdependence/communication, and shared vision—all components of the Institutional Structure climate factor—as variables which might provide community college leaders with an understanding of how to foster positive campus climate and effectively respond to internal and external challenges.

The National Initiative for Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness recognizes the need to understand more about institutional structure and provides a tool that institutional leaders can use to gain insight into climate around institutional structure at their campus. The collected data will be analyzed using a six-factor framework derived from the current Institutional Structure climate factor and higher education organizational structure literature. The Institutional Structure subscale six-factor framework includes:

- Mission
- Leadership
- Decision-Making and Influence
- Policies and Structural Organization
- Teams and Cooperation
- Communication and Information Sharing

METHOD

In November 2014, the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) survey was administered to the staff, faculty, and administrators of Golden West College (GWC). The instrument was administered to 835 employees. In addition to the standard PACE Survey, each of these employees was asked to respond to an Institutional Structure subscale. The purpose of the Institutional Structure subscale was to obtain the perceptions of employees concerning their institutional experiences with the campus climate around institutional structure. Researchers at the National Initiative for Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness (NILIE) and representatives of GWC collaborated to administer a survey that would capture the opinions of personnel throughout the college.

Instrumentation

The Institutional Structure subscale is divided into six climate factors: Mission, Leadership, Decision-Making and Influence, Policies and Structural Organization, Teams and Cooperation, and Communication and Information Sharing. A total of 37 items were included in the Institutional Structure subscale. Respondents were asked to rate the various climate factors through their specific statements on a five-point scale from a low of “1” to a high of “5.” The mean scores for all items were obtained and compared. Items with lower scores were considered to be high priority issues for the institution.

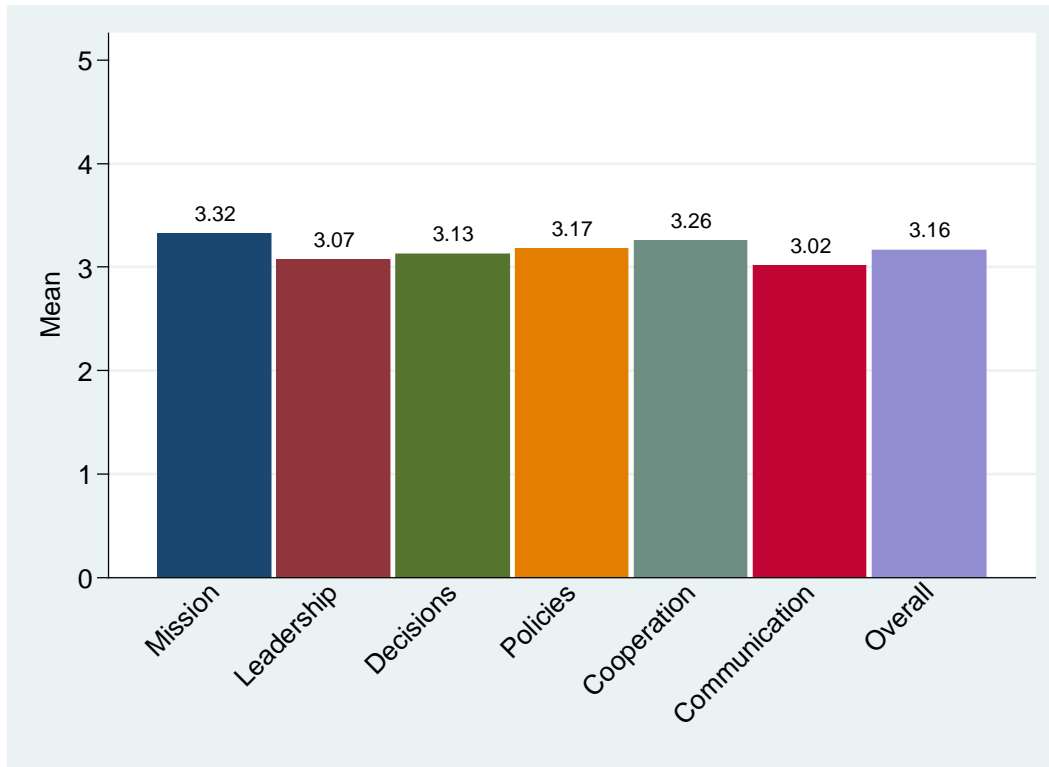
DATA ANALYSIS

Employees responded to questions about the institutional structure climate at GWC using a Likert scale of 1.0 (extremely dissatisfied) to 5.0 (extremely satisfied). As indicated in Table 1, the Mission climate factor received the highest composite rating on the Institutional Structure subscale (3.32) and the Communication climate factor received the lowest mean score (3.02).

Table 1. GWC Institutional Structure Climate as Rated by All Employees

Factor	2014 Mean
Mission	3.32
Leadership	3.07
Decision-Making and Influence (Decisions)	3.13
Policies and Structural Organization (Policies)	3.17
Teams and Cooperation (Cooperation)	3.26
Communication and Information Sharing (Communication)	3.02
Overall	3.16

Figure 1. Golden West College Institutional Structure Climate as Rated by All Employees Combined Using Composite Averages



Tables 2 through 7 report the mean scores of all personnel for each of the 37 items included in the survey instrument. The mean scores and standard deviations presented in this table estimate what the personnel participating in the study at GWC perceive the institutional structure climate to be at this particular time in the institution's development. The standard deviation (SD) demonstrates the variation in responses to a given question.

Table 2. Comparative Mean Responses: Institutional Structure and Mission

Mission	2014 Mean (SD)
1 The extent to which employees in this institution share a common definition of its mission	3.32 (1.15)
2 The extent to which employees are supportive of the mission of this institution	3.48 (1.08)
3 The extent to which employees take action to fulfill the mission of this institution	3.45 (1.09)
4 The extent to which there is consensus among employees about the goals of the institution	3.27 (1.14)
5 The extent to which the curriculum at this institution reflects its mission	3.66 (0.99)
6 The extent to which budgetary decisions at this institution are aligned with the mission of the institution	2.75 (1.27)
Mean Total	3.32 (1.00)

Table 3. Comparative Mean Responses: Institutional Structure and Leadership

Leadership	2014 Mean (SD)
7 The extent to which leaders of this institution communicate a clear sense of purpose	3.08 (1.33)
8 The extent to which leaders of this institution effectively interact with internal constituents	2.95 (1.33)
9 The extent to which leaders of this institution effectively interact with external constituents	3.19 (1.16)
10 The extent to which leaders of this institution effectively address crises	3.09 (1.29)
11 The extent to which leaders of this institution carefully plan resource allocation	2.82 (1.31)
12 The extent to which leaders of this institution recognize employee achievement	3.21 (1.29)
Mean Total	3.07 (1.17)

Table 4. Comparative Mean Responses: Institutional Structure and Decision-Making and Influence

Decision-Making and Influence		2014 Mean (SD)
13	The extent to which employees have an opportunity to provide feedback about this institution	3.32 (1.14)
14	The extent to which leaders use employee feedback to improve this institution	2.93 (1.24)
15	The extent to which this institution considers employee feedback in decision-making	2.90 (1.23)
16	The extent to which employees participate in decision-making	2.98 (1.24)
17	The extent to which employees are made aware of the outcome of decisions	3.24 (1.22)
18	The extent to which this institution involves faculty in decision-making	3.35 (1.10)
19	The extent to which this institution involves staff in decision-making	3.15 (1.15)
20	The extent to which this institution involves its employees in planning for the future	3.07 (1.25)
Mean Total		3.13 (1.07)

Table 5. Comparative Mean Responses: Institutional Structure and Policies and Structural Organization

Policies and Structural Organization		2014 Mean (SD)
21	The extent to which institutional policies allow for collaboration	3.32 (1.17)
22	The extent to which the structure of this institution allows for collaboration	3.19 (1.22)
23	The extent to which the structure of this institution fosters innovation	3.08 (1.23)
24	The extent to which this institution follows clear processes for recognizing employee achievement	3.23 (1.16)
25	The extent to which institutional policies govern activities at this institution	3.30 (1.10)
26	The extent to which activities between units in this institution are streamlined	2.87 (1.21)
Mean Total		3.17 (1.07)

Table 6. Comparative Mean Responses: Institutional Structure and Teams and Cooperation

Teams and Cooperation		2014 Mean (SD)
27	The extent to which employee roles within units are clearly defined	3.43 (1.07)
28	The extent to which there is effective collaboration among employees	3.26 (1.14)
29	The extent to which units effectively collaborate across the institution	3.05 (1.14)
30	The extent to which employee expertise is considered when forming teams	3.13 (1.20)
31	The extent to which teams utilize expertise to accomplish tasks	3.28 (1.17)
32	The extent to which teams accomplish tasks	3.37 (1.11)
Mean Total		3.26 (1.01)

Table 7. Comparative Mean Responses: Institutional Structure and Communication and Information Sharing

Communication and Information Sharing		2014 Mean (SD)
33	The extent to which there is good communication between the faculty and the administration at this institution	2.92 (1.22)
34	The extent to which there is good communication between staff and the administration at this institution	2.95 (1.21)
35	The extent to which campus climate encourages differences of opinion to be aired openly	2.95 (1.26)
36	The extent to which the administration at this institution shares information with employees in a timely manner	2.97 (1.30)
37	The extent to which the information shared by the administration at this institution is useful	3.26 (1.15)
Mean Total		3.02 (1.09)
Overall		3.16 (1.00)

Comparative Analysis: Personnel Classification

Figure 2 reports composite ratings according to the six climate factors for employees in Personnel Classifications. In general, Faculty rated the six normative factors most favorable (3.16), whereas employees classified as Administrator/Manager rated the six normative factors least favorable (3.06).

Figures 3 through 8 show the ratings of each employee group for each of the 37 climate items. The data summary for each figure precedes the corresponding figure. This information provides a closer look at the institutional structure climate ratings and should be examined carefully when prioritizing areas for change among the employee groups.

Figure 2. Mean Institutional Structure Climate Scores as Rated by Personnel Classifications at Golden West College

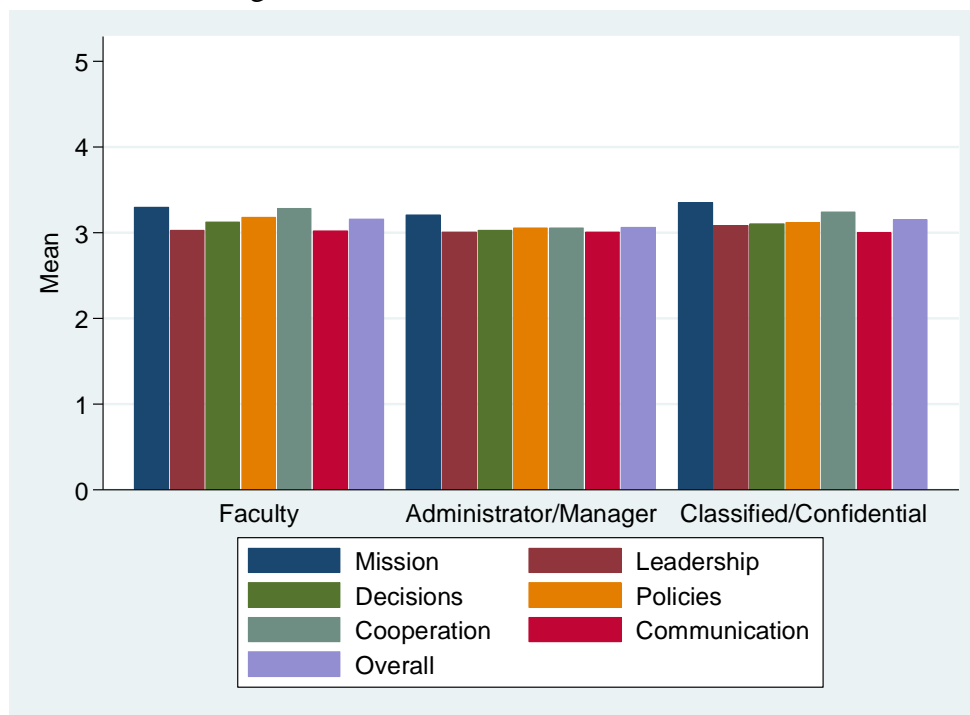
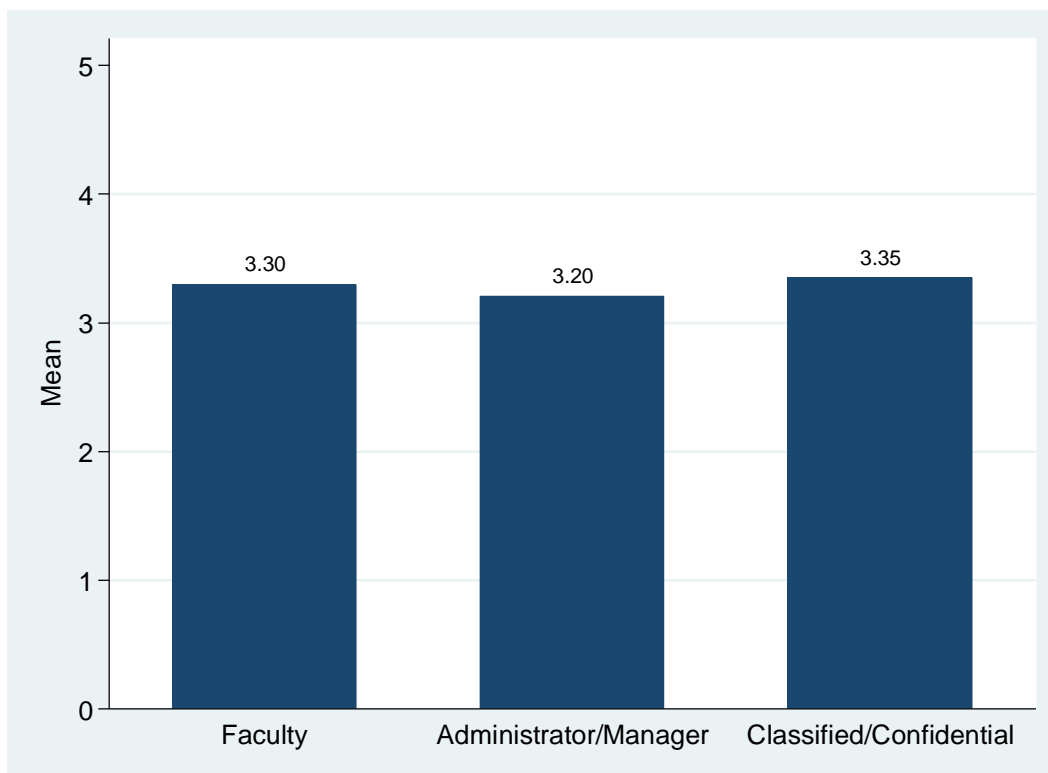


Table 8. Mean Climate Scores as Rated by Personnel Classifications

	Mission	Leadership	Decision-Making & Influence	Policies & Structural Organization	Teams & Cooperation	Communication & Information Sharing	Overall
Faculty	3.30	3.03	3.13	3.18	3.28	3.02	3.16
Administrator/Manager	3.20	3.01	3.03	3.06	3.06	3.01	3.06
Classified/Confidential	3.35	3.08	3.10	3.12	3.24	3.00	3.15

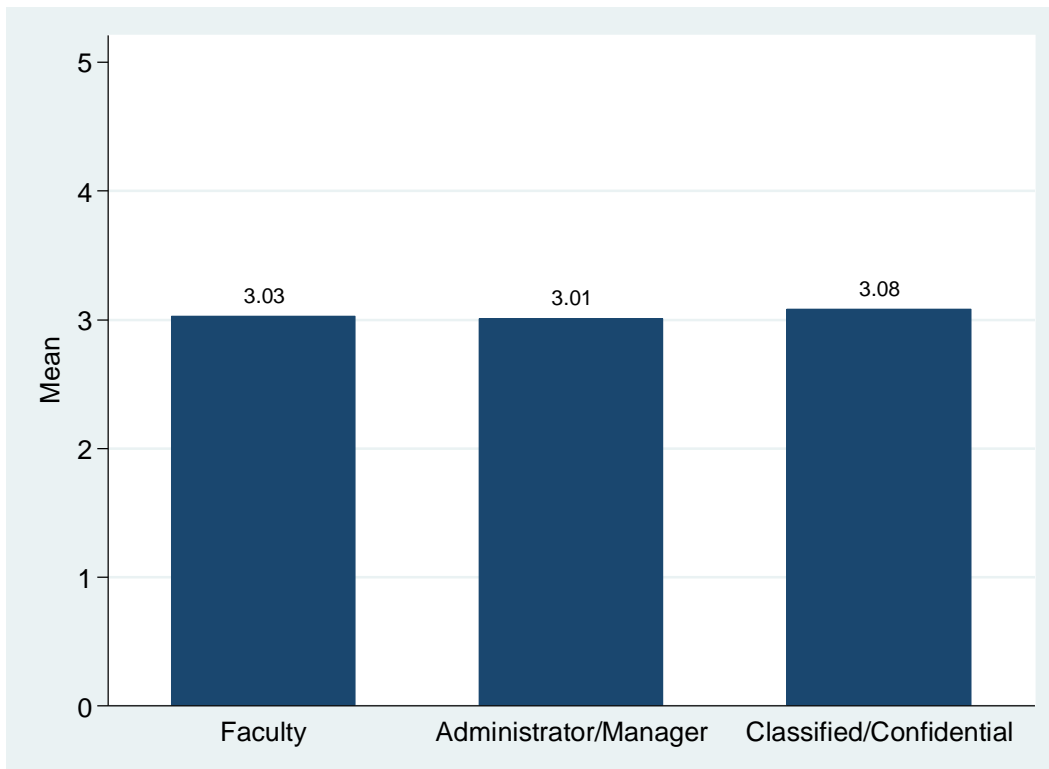
Mission		Faculty	Administrator/ Manager	Classified/ Confidential
1	The extent to which employees in this institution share a common definition of its mission	3.26	3.23	3.40
2	The extent to which employees are supportive of the mission of this institution	3.43	3.36	3.53
3	The extent to which employees take action to fulfill the mission of this institution	3.41	3.27	3.53
4	The extent to which there is consensus among employees about the goals of the institution	3.23	3.27	3.29
5	The extent to which the curriculum at this institution reflects its mission	3.61	3.41	3.77
6	The extent to which budgetary decisions at this institution are aligned with the mission of the institution	2.79	2.62	2.65

Figure 3. Mean Scores of the Mission Climate Factor as Rated by Personnel Classifications at Golden West College



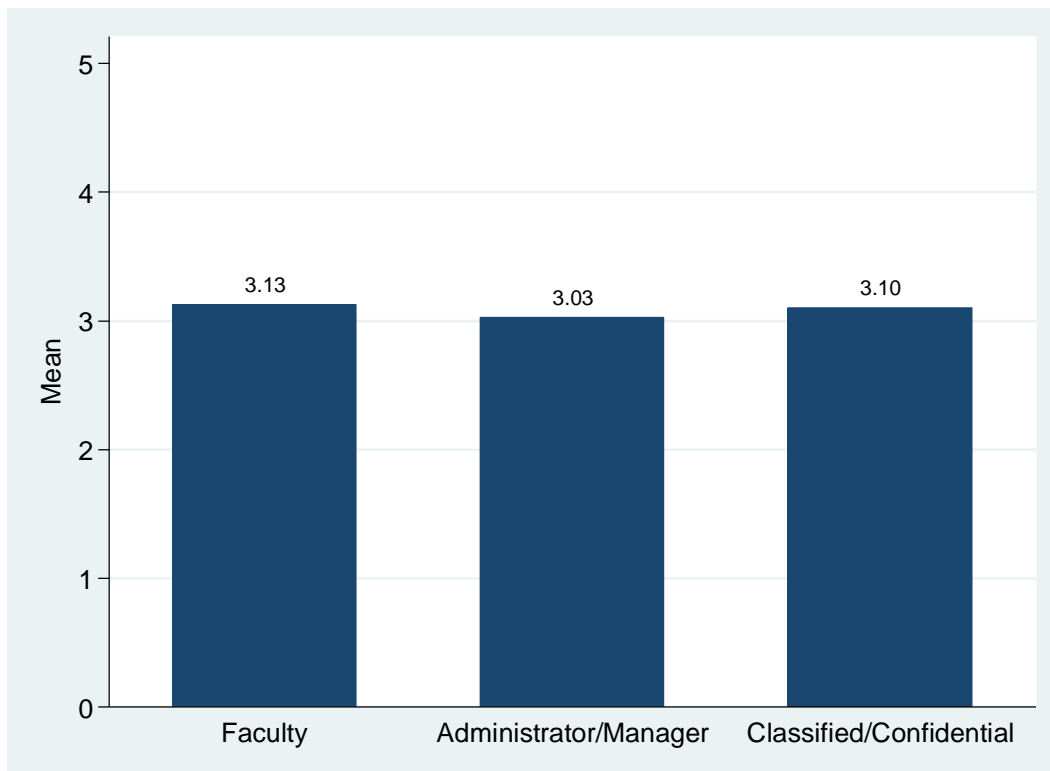
Leadership		Faculty	Administrator/ Manager	Classified/ Confidential
7	The extent to which leaders of this institution communicate a clear sense of purpose	3.04	2.91	3.12
8	The extent to which leaders of this institution effectively interact with internal constituents	2.88	3.09	2.95
9	The extent to which leaders of this institution effectively interact with external constituents	3.11	3.24	3.25
10	The extent to which leaders of this institution effectively address crises	3.06	3.10	3.08
11	The extent to which leaders of this institution carefully plan resource allocation	2.80	2.77	2.78
12	The extent to which leaders of this institution recognize employee achievement	3.15	2.95	3.30

Figure 4. Mean Scores of the Leadership Climate Factor as Rated by Personnel Classifications at Golden West College



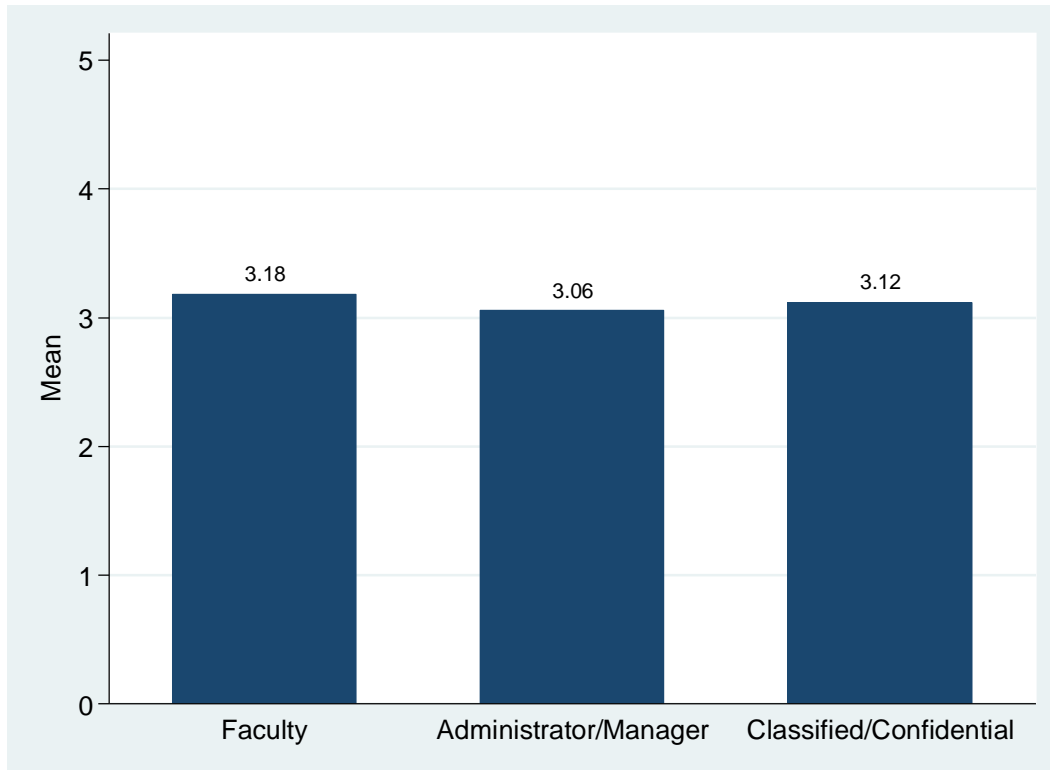
Decision-Making and Influence		Faculty	Administrator/ Manager	Classified/ Confidential
13	The extent to which employees have an opportunity to provide feedback about this institution	3.29	3.24	3.36
14	The extent to which leaders use employee feedback to improve this institution	2.90	2.91	2.92
15	The extent to which this institution considers employee feedback in decision-making	2.87	2.86	2.92
16	The extent to which employees participate in decision-making	2.95	2.95	2.99
17	The extent to which employees are made aware of the outcome of decisions	3.29	3.00	3.16
18	The extent to which this institution involves faculty in decision-making	3.36	3.14	3.37
19	The extent to which this institution involves staff in decision-making	3.14	3.05	3.12
20	The extent to which this institution involves its employees in planning for the future	3.08	2.95	3.05

Figure 5. Mean Scores of the Decision-Making and Influence Climate Factor as Rated by Personnel Classifications at Golden West College



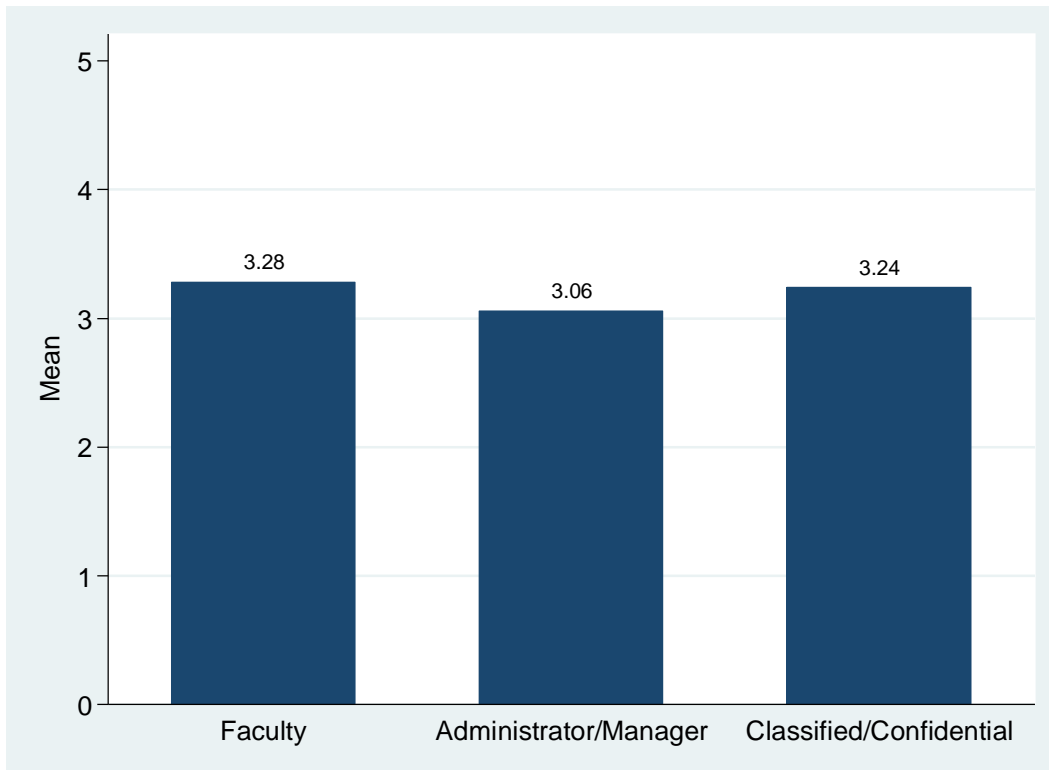
Policies and Structural Organization		Faculty	Administrator/ Manager	Classified/ Confidential
21	The extent to which institutional policies allow for collaboration	3.33	3.24	3.27
22	The extent to which the structure of this institution allows for collaboration	3.20	3.10	3.14
23	The extent to which the structure of this institution fosters innovation	3.05	2.95	3.07
24	The extent to which this institution follows clear processes for recognizing employee achievement	3.26	3.14	3.16
25	The extent to which institutional policies govern activities at this institution	3.34	3.18	3.22
26	The extent to which activities between units in this institution are streamlined	2.83	2.67	2.93

Figure 6. Mean Scores of the Policies and Structural Organization Climate Factor as Rated by Personnel Classifications at Golden West College



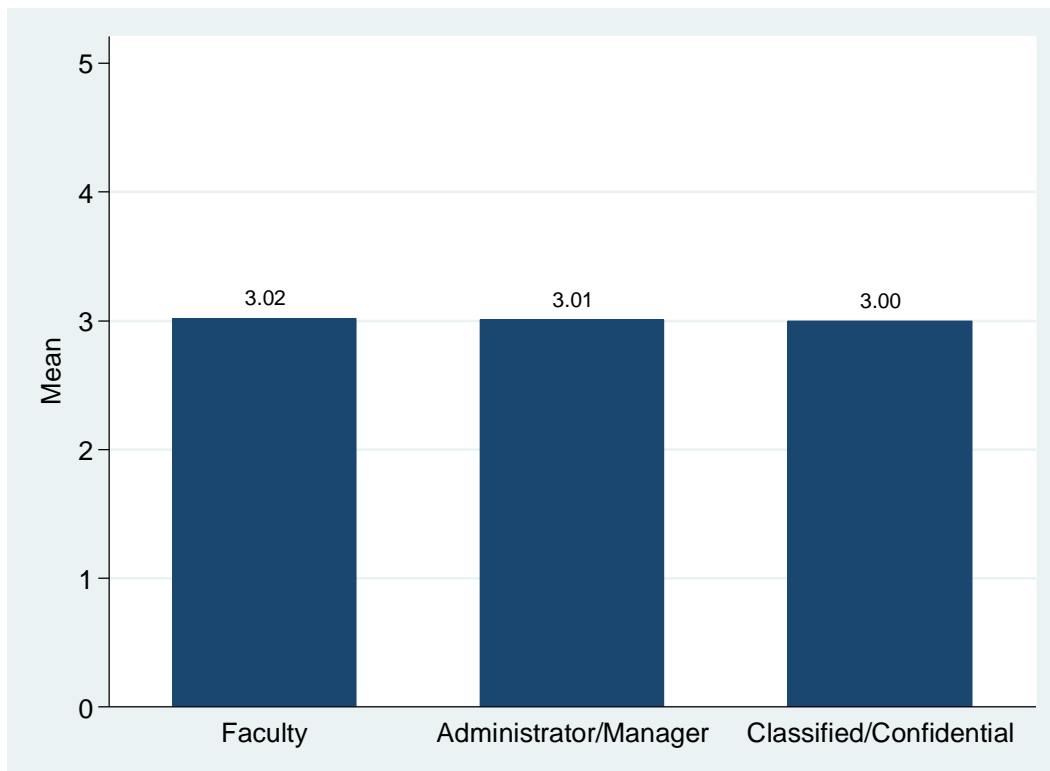
Teams and Cooperation		Faculty	Administrator/ Manager	Classified/ Confidential
27	The extent to which employee roles within units are clearly defined	3.42	3.14	3.51
28	The extent to which there is effective collaboration among employees	3.32	3.14	3.17
29	The extent to which units effectively collaborate across the institution	3.08	3.00	2.99
30	The extent to which employee expertise is considered when forming teams	3.15	2.91	3.12
31	The extent to which teams utilize expertise to accomplish tasks	3.30	3.05	3.27
32	The extent to which teams accomplish tasks	3.39	3.05	3.41

Figure 7. Mean Scores of the Teams and Cooperation Climate Factor as Rated by Personnel Classifications at Golden West College



Communication and Information Sharing		Faculty	Administrator/ Manager	Classified/ Confidential
33	The extent to which there is good communication between the faculty and the administration at this institution	2.87	3.00	2.96
34	The extent to which there is good communication between staff and the administration at this institution	2.92	2.90	3.00
35	The extent to which campus climate encourages differences of opinion to be aired openly	2.95	2.95	2.92
36	The extent to which the administration at this institution shares information with employees in a timely manner	3.00	3.05	2.89
37	The extent to which the information shared by the administration at this institution is useful	3.29	3.09	3.25

Figure 8. Mean Scores of the Communication and Information Sharing Climate Factor as Rated by Personnel Classifications at Golden West College



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