



## 2005 SUPPORT SERVICES SURVEY RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

January 2006

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Survey designed by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee  
and administered September/October 2005



# 2005 SUPPORT SERVICES SURVEY

## Results and Analysis

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#### *Introduction*

The Support Services Survey allows South Plains College employees an opportunity to provide input into various administrative support services. The Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Committee designed the survey in consultation with the directors of the surveyed administrative areas. Administrative personnel assisted in the development of the survey statements during the 2005 spring semester. Previously, some of the survey statements had appeared on the biennial Employee Survey. These statements were removed when the IE Committee redesigned the Employee Survey during the 2003-04 academic year. At that time, the IE Committee recommended that an expanded survey be developed to evaluate administrative support services and provide quality data for planning and effectiveness purposes.

The Support Services Survey consists of 35 satisfaction statements related to Purchasing, Copy Center, Telephone System, College Relations, Physical Plant, Human Resources, Business Office, Development Office, Information Technology, Food Service and Bookstore. Respondents are asked to score the statements on a 1-5 scale of strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Respondents were given a neutral option (3) if they had no opinion or had never accessed the particular service.

As in previous surveys, employees were given an option to provide written responses to three questions: 1) List three things you would never want to change regarding administrative support services at the College. 2) List three things you would like to see improved or changed. 3) I wished you would have asked about; I would have said.

#### *Survey Administration and Response*

The 2005 Support Services Survey was administered online from September 13, 2005 to October 26, 2005. A total of 313 employees participated in the survey, representing 57.3% of the total college workforce of 546 employed in September 2005.

The percentage of respondents closely represented the different employee categories. Faculty (N=130) represented 41.5% of the respondents; classified personnel (N=86) 27.4%; professional non-faculty personnel (N=67) 21.4%; and administrators (N=20) 6.4%. Ten employees chose not to indicate their employee classification.

#### *Data Calculation and Results*

Arithmetic means were calculated for each scaled statement. Statements left unanswered were not included in the calculations. Additionally, the degree of agreement with the statements was calculated as a percentage of the respondents selecting one of the scale choices: strongly agree, agree, neither agree/disagree; disagree and strongly disagree.

Survey statements were worded such that lower means (disagree or strongly disagree) and the relative percentage of disagreement with the statement indicate areas where improvement is needed. The relative percentage of neutrality to a statement can be interpreted as indicating areas where the respondents have not had opportunity to use or benefit from the support service, or have yet to form an opinion about the statement.

Mean calculations for all statements can be found in Attachment A. The degree of statement agreement calculated as a percentage of total respondents can be found in Attachments B and C.

## *Analysis of Data Results*

Analysis of the means and response percentages provides an indication of strengths and opportunities for improvement for each of the support services areas. For the purpose of analysis, composite means have been calculated for each of the service areas and are reported below.

Service Area	Overall Composite Mean
Purchasing	3.74
Copy Center	4.15
Telephone System	3.92
College Relations	3.51
Physical Plant	3.93
Human Resources	3.84
Business Office	3.96
Development Office	3.69
Information Technology	3.95
Food Service	3.81
Bookstore	3.96

The application of a minimum performance benchmark is one method for determining strengths and areas for improvement. For service quality purposes, administrative personnel for each of the service areas have the option of setting minimum benchmarks for both the statement means and the percentage agreement.

## *Analysis of Written Comments*

Employees were given the opportunity to respond to three open-ended questions designed to identify strengths and areas for improvement. A total of 149 respondents (49%) responded to one or more of the three comment questions and provided 512 comments. Employees took the opportunity to comment on a broad range of topics and organizational elements. Comments were grouped into common themes and were ranked according to frequency.

The following provides a brief analysis of the comments for each question. These elements can be viewed as what is presently “most important” to employees in regard to administrative support services and the college’s overall organizational climate. The frequency of comments specific to a particular support service area is not reported here. In order to maintain confidentiality, these comments have been reported directly to administrative and supervisory personnel within that area. Comments of a general nature that are not directly related to a particular service area are summarized and reported below.

Frequency, expressed as “N”, is indicated below in parenthesis and is reported as a percentage of the total number of employees providing written comments.

### *Support Services Strengths*

Employees were asked to list three things they would never want to change regarding administrative support services. A total of 95 respondents provided 208 comments to this question. The top four elements are discussed below:

**1. Internal Customer Focus: (N=48; 32.2% %)** This element accounted for 23.2% of the comments for this question and was characterized by how internal customers are treated and the internal customer service provided by various departments and offices. A willingness to listen, quick response, efficiency, can-do attitudes, respect, cooperative spirit, departments working well together, accessibility to personnel, courteous responses, and helpfulness are among the comments that can be clustered under this broad heading.

**2. Collaborative Organizational Climate: (N=36; 24.2%)** Comments regarding a supportive work environment accounted for 17.4% of the comments in this area. Professionalism, friendly atmosphere, working together as a team, loyalty to the institution, and positive attitudes characterized this element.

**3. Student Focus: (N=32, 21.5%)** As in previous employee surveys, dedication to students and remaining student-centered emerged as a common theme, accounting for 15.5% of the comments. This element was characterized by caring about students, putting the student first, meeting student needs, service to students, and treating students professionally.

**4. Benefits: (N=22, 14.8%)** Employee benefits were noted in 10.6% of the comments and included a broad range of benefits from internet access to half-price lunches to paid holidays.

### *Opportunities for improvement*

Employees were asked to list three things they would like to see improved or changed. A total of 133 respondents provided 245 comments that were grouped into common themes. Suggestions for improvement that relate to a specific support service area are not reported here and have been distributed directly to the administrative and supervisory personnel within that area. Suggestions for improvement were far-ranging among respondents. However, four general areas for improvement not related to a specific support service emerged.

**1. Compensation (N=25, 16.8%)** As in previous surveys, higher salaries and wages were cited as an area for continued improvement, accounting for 10.2% of the total comments. Overload pay, raises, longevity pay, compensation for work responsibility and educational accomplishments were among the comments.

**2. Communications (N=20, 13.4%)** While internal customer focus was cited as a strength, interdepartmental and intradepartmental communications emerged as an area for improvement. Better communication between departments and campuses were among the comments received, accounting for 8.1% of the improvement comments.

**3. Hiring procedures (N=13, 8.7%)** Comments related to hiring procedures accounted for 5.3% of the comments in this area. The interviewing process, announcement of position openings, consistency, and opportunities for apply for all positions characterized this element.

**4. Parking (N=10, 6.7%)** Parking improvements appeared in 4.1% of the suggestions for improvement with reserved parking for faculty and staff suggested in a number of comments.

### *Open-ended Comments*

58 employees (38.9%) responded to the question: I wish you would have asked about, and I would have said. Comments were grouped into common themes and those related to specific to a particular service area have been reported to the appropriate supervisory personnel. Elements that drew at least three or more comments not related to a specific support service area included compensation, hiring procedures, and parking.

### *Summary and Recommendations*

The results of the 2005 Support Services Survey provide administrative personnel in the survey areas evaluation data and input from South Plains College employees that may be used in quality improvement and planning. The data suggests that, for the most part, employees are generally satisfied with the administrative support services they receive. Specific actions taken to improve service areas will be made by the administrative personnel within that area as part of the annual planning process.

It should be noted that a number of statements drew a relatively high percentage of neutral (3) responses. Seventeen of the 35 statements received 25% or higher neutral responses. This would indicate, in a general sense, that one-fourth or more of the respondents either did not have opportunity to use the service or had no opinion regarding the statement. In developing the survey, the IE

Committee chose to exclude the option of providing a “not applicable (0)” response option based on the premise that all employees should have some “degree of perception” regarding the support service. The IE Committee may want to reconsider including a “not applicable (0)” response option when the survey is administered in Spring 2007.

In summary, the Support Services Survey provides administrative planners with data from internal clients and customers that aids in identifying continuous quality improvements initiatives. Future administration of the survey will allow planners to chart progress in improving processes and maintaining quality of services.