In December 2008, the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) survey was administered to 496 employees at Las Positas College (LPC). Of those 496 employees, 153 (30.8%) returned the instrument for analysis. LPC responses were compared to a Norm Base of 65 other climate studies. The entire 55-page report is available for download from the Institutional Research and Planning web-site. The first Research Brief, “Overall Ratings and Comparison to Norm Base” showed the overall results indicate a healthy campus climate and that LPC ratings were higher than the Norm Base. The second Research Brief in the series showed that, while groups differ by classification, there is general agreement as to the relative strength of each factor with the notable expectation of the Customized Factor. Administrative employees consistently have the highest ratings and Full-time Faculty consistently have the lowest ratings. Future areas of focus for the College should be issues related to Institutional Structure as well as the Customized Factors. The third Brief in the series showed that there is much overlap among groups in terms of top areas of priority (survey items that received low means). By a large margin the highest area of priority for Classified, Full-time and to a lesser extent Part-time Faculty is not having enough time to fulfill shared governance or non-instructional obligations.

**Summary Points**
- Employees with less than 1 year of employment rated the climate highest (4.05), while respondents with 15 or more years of employment rated the climate lowest
- The Custom factor is rated low by all groups except those employed for under 1 year
- The most favorable areas cited in the open-ended questions pertain to the Student Focus climate factor, and specifically the institution’s performance in meeting the needs of the students
- The least favorable aspects cited in the open-ended responses are consistent with the survey mean scores in that they reinforce a desire to call attention to specific issues regarding the Institutional Structure

**PACE Model, Survey Instrument**
The standard PACE instrument contains 46 items and the College added 8 customized questions regarding campus climate. 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.” Areas of “priority” are the areas that received the lowest mean rating by a group (Classified, Administrative, Full-time Faculty and Part-time Faculty.)

**Comparative Analysis: Length of Employment**
In terms of length of employment those individuals with less than 1 year of employment rated the climate highest (4.05), while respondents with 15 or more years of employment rated the climate lowest with a composite rating of 3.38. In fact, there is a clear relationship between the length of employment and a lower rating of the factors.

**Table 1. Mean Climate Scores as Rated by Length of Employment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Supervisory Relationships</th>
<th>Institutional Structure</th>
<th>Teamwork</th>
<th>Student Focus</th>
<th>Custom</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 1 year</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>4.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-4 Years</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>3.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>3.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-15 years</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15+ years</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 shows that each group has a roughly similar pattern of rating each factor. The outlier to this seems to be staff employed for under 1 year. Their perceptions still follow a similar pattern as the other groups however their composite ratings do not vary as much from factor to factor. As with other analysis, Student Focus Factor is rated the highest by all groups and Institutional Structure is rated the lowest. Another consistent finding is that the Custom factor is rated low by
all groups except those employed for under 1 year. Supervisory Relationships show a greater amount of variation by year of classification (a difference of .95 between the highest and lowest) than by personal classification (.46 difference between highest and lowest group). In fact, the range of means by years of employment are all greater then by personnel classification suggesting that years of employment might be a greater factor in determining satisfaction than personnel classification.

![Figure 1: Mean Climate Scores as Rated by Length of Employment](image)

**Qualitative Analysis**

Figure 2 provides a summary of the narrative comments. Respondents were given an opportunity to write comments about areas of the institution they found most favorable and least favorable. Of the 153 Las Positas College employees who completed the PACE survey, 53.6% (82 respondents) provided written comments.

NILIE researchers classified the comments to correspond to the most appropriate PACE climate factors. 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 Student Focus and Institutional Structure climate factors. The most favorable areas cited in the open-ended questions pertain to the Student Focus climate factor, and specifically the institution’s performance in meeting the needs of the students. The least favorable aspects cited in the open-ended responses are consistent with the survey mean scores in that they reinforce a desire to call attention to specific issues regarding the Institutional Structure, specifically opportunities for advancement and the way information is shared within the institution.

![Figure 2:Comment Response Rates](image)

The fifth and final PACE-related Research Brief will cover responses to questions regarding the Town Meeting. The entire 55-page report is available for download from the Institutional Research and Planning web-site.