

CAMPUS CLIMATE SURVEY, 2004  
Faculty and Staff Opinions of the Campus Environment

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# **Background**

## ***Purpose***

Campus climate surveys are conducted regularly on campuses across the nation. Such surveys typically measure perceptions of the campus, feelings of acceptance and belonging, and diversity. Spring 2004 marked the second time such a study was conducted at Cypress College. Like the earlier study in Fall 2000, its purpose was to gain a better understanding of employees' personal satisfaction with the general working environment at the college.

## ***Method and Instrument***

The survey was distributed to faculty, staff and managers during a three-week period in February and March 2004. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. Employees received an "allusers" e-mail inviting them to participate in the web-based survey. The invitation included the web address for the survey, and a general description of the scope and purpose of the study. Subsequent reminders were also sent via e-mail and announced in some committee meetings.

The survey contains items that focus on general climate, diversity (particularly related to gender and ethnicity), participation and satisfaction with communication and decision-making, and campus priorities for outreach, retention and student success. A full copy of the survey is available in Appendix A.

## ***Survey Participants***

The entire population of Cypress College faculty, staff and managers (approximately 740 individuals) was invited to participate in the survey. Of these employees, 247 completed the web survey, resulting in a response rate of 33%. (This response rate matches that of the 2000 study, which had a 33% response rate and 331 participants.)

Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents across various demographic categories. Compared to the 2000 climate study, the current study saw greater participation among women, classified staff, and full-time employees. Comparisons between the demographic characteristics of the 2000 and 2004 study also suggest that important shifts have occurred. Participants in the 2004 study are older, more diverse, and have been employed at the college longer than were those in the 2000 study.

**Table 1: Participant Demographics**

Survey Item	N	Percent	Survey Item	N	Percent
<b>Gender</b>			<b>Position Type</b>		
Male	90	36.9%	Full-time	225	91.1%
Female	154	63.1%	Part-time	22	8.9%
Total	244	100.0%	Total	247	100.0%
<b>Age</b>			<b>Employee Group</b>		
18 to 24	5	2.0%	Faculty Credit	120	48.6%
25 to 34	28	11.4%	Classified	97	39.3%
35 to 44	49	19.9%	Confidential	3	1.2%
45 to 54	88	35.8%	Manager	27	10.9%
55 or Older	76	30.9%	Total	247	100.0%
Total	246	100.0%			
<b>Ethnicity</b>			<b>Length of Employment</b>		
African-American	8	3.3%	2 years or less	24	9.8%
Asian or Pacific Islander	13	5.4%	3 to 5 years	57	23.2%
Hispanic/Latino	39	16.3%	6 to 10 years	51	20.7%
Native American or Alaskan Native	3	1.3%	11 or more years	114	46.3%
White	145	60.4%	Total	246	100.0%
Other	32	13.3%			
Total	240	100.0%			

## Results

### ***General College Atmosphere***

The first eleven items faculty and staff were asked to answer on the questionnaire represent various aspects of the college atmosphere or environment presented along a five-point continuum.

Generally, a response of one indicates the employee felt the college reflected a more positive feeling (such as ‘relaxed’ or ‘supportive’) and a response of five indicates the employee felt the college reflected a more negative feeling (such as ‘tense’ or ‘unsupportive’). Ratings of one or two are considered positive while ratings of four or five are considered negative. A response of three is considered neutral.

Overall, Cypress College faculty and staff members viewed the campus atmosphere favorably. A majority (51% or more) of Cypress College employees assigned positive ratings to each of the eleven descriptors. Over 71% agreed that the campus was friendly, 66% felt it was comfortable, and 65% felt the campus had a climate of tolerance. Table 2 presents the eleven college atmosphere items and the proportion of positive responses (ratings of 1 or 2).

**Table 2: Proportion of Respondents in Each Employee Group Who Felt the College Atmosphere Was Positive (Ratings of 1 or 2)**

	<b>Faculty n=120</b>	<b>Classified n=97</b>	<b>Adm./Mgr. n=27</b>	<b>Overall n=247</b>
Relaxed	55.0%	43.8%	63.0%	<b>51.2%</b>
Supportive	57.5%	55.8%	74.1%	<b>59.2%</b>
Friendly	70.0%	69.5%	81.5%	<b>71.4%</b>
Cooperative	58.3%	48.4%	77.8%	<b>57.1%</b>
Respectful	67.5%	51.6%	77.8%	<b>62.9%</b>
Tolerant	67.5%	56.8%	81.5%	<b>65.3%</b>
Comfortable	69.2%	58.5%	77.8%	<b>66.4%</b>
Open	58.8%	46.3%	70.4%	<b>55.3%</b>
Harmonious	53.3%	49.5%	74.1%	<b>54.7%</b>
Interested	52.9%	49.5%	80.8%	<b>55.1%</b>
Sincere	57.1%	44.1%	80.8%	<b>55.2%</b>

Survey items 1-11.

## ***Gender Equity and Responsiveness to Diversity***

### **Gender**

Three survey items (18, 25, and 28) tapped respondents’ experiences with gender equity. Overall, a quarter of the respondents felt some responsibility to be a spokesperson for their own gender, while at Cypress College (Table 3). When asked whether women have equal opportunities with men for recognition, respect and advancement at the college, almost four-fifths (78%) responded “yes, definitely” or “yes, generally.” The percentage of women who responded similarly was significantly lower (73%).

The third item on this topic (#28) asked whether the college is committed to the curtailment of sexual harassment. Over 89% responded “yes, aggressively” or “yes, for the most part.” There were no significant differences in responses from men and women. The college has made great strides since Fall 2000, when 68% responded affirmatively. The significant gains made in perceptions of the college commitment in this regard may be attributed to the recent training about sexual harassment provided to staff, faculty and managers.

**Table 3: Proportion of Respondents Who Agreed with Each Item Regarding Gender Equity**

	<b>Male n=90</b>	<b>Female n=154</b>	<b>Overall n=247</b>
While at Cypress College, I feel some responsibility to be a spokesperson for my gender.	21.1%	28.3%	<b>25.3%</b>
Do women have equal opportunities with men for recognition, respect and advancement at the college?	86.7%	73.0%	<b>78.0%</b>
Is the college committed to the curtailment of sexual harassment?	90.0%	89.5%	<b>89.4%</b>

Survey items 18, 25, and 28.

### **Responsiveness to Diversity**

Thirteen survey items focused on employees’ perceptions of how responsive the college is to its diverse students and staff. Unless otherwise noted, items were presented with a 5-point scale (1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3= neutral, 4=disagree, and 5=strongly disagree).

Overall, the majority (50% or higher) felt comfortable when participating in campus activities that focus on cultures other than their own (53.9%), were satisfied with the diversity of the faculty (50%) and the staff (58.4%), and felt that the college is responsive to the diverse needs of the changing demographics of its students (66.5%) and its staff and administration (54.1%).

To gain insight into the experiences of members of ethnic minorities on campus, we compared the responses of Whites with those of respondents who identified themselves as an ethnicity other than White. This approach is not ideal, because it collapses the responses of members of different ethnicities (e.g., African Americans, Asians, Hispanics, and others) into a single “non-White” group. However, with so few members of some ethnicities, it was not appropriate to analyze the responses of each unique ethnicity. Collapsing ethnic categories into a dichotomy resulted in a 60% (White) to 40% (non-White) comparison.

The responses of Whites and non-Whites are presented in Table 4 in order to identify general patterns of experiences. Items for which responses differed significantly between Whites and non-Whites are marked with an asterisk (\*).

**Table 4: Proportion of Respondents Who Agreed with Each Item Regarding Diversity**

	<b>White n=145</b>	<b>Non-White n=102</b>	<b>Overall n=247</b>
At Cypress College, I feel most comfortable when I socialize with people from the same ethnic/racial background as mine.	9.7%	13.9%	<b>11.4%</b>
At Cypress College, I feel comfortable when I participate in campus activities that focus on cultures other than my own.	61.4%	43.0%*	<b>53.9%</b>
I am satisfied with the diversity of the ethnic backgrounds of the faculty.	56.9%	40.0%*	<b>50.0%</b>
I am satisfied with the diversity of the ethnic backgrounds of staff at Cypress College.	63.9%	50.5%*	<b>58.4%</b>
I am satisfied with the diversity of ethnic backgrounds of the faculty and administrators at Cypress College.	52.1%	32.7%*	<b>44.1%</b>
While at Cypress College, I feel some responsibility to be a spokesperson for my race/ethnic group.	8.4%	25.0%*	<b>15.2%</b>
There is a lot of superficial friendliness on this campus among people of different backgrounds, but underneath there is tension.	16.6%	30.7%*	<b>22.4%</b>
Prejudice among faculty and staff is a problem on campus.	6.9%	9.0%*	<b>7.8%</b>
Prejudice among students is a problem on campus.	10.4%	16.3%	<b>12.8%</b>
Cypress College is responsive to the diverse needs of the changing demographics of our students.	75.7%	53.1%*	<b>66.5%</b>
Cypress College is responsive to the diverse needs of the changing demographics of our staff and administration.	61.1%	44.0%*	<b>54.1%</b>
Cypress College is responsive to the diverse needs of the changing demographics of our faculty.	54.9%	40.0%*	<b>48.8%</b>
Do members of ethnic minorities have equal opportunities for recognition, respect and advancement at the college?	78.6%	63.0%	<b>72.2%</b>
In practice, how much of a commitment do you believe the college has to increasing the numbers and percentages of ethnic minorities in classified, faculty and administrative positions?	70.1%	48.5%*	<b>61.2%</b>

\* Indicates a statistically significant difference between the two groups (White and non-Whites).

Survey items 12 – 17, 19 – 24, 26 – 27.

Further analyses revealed one significant shift in employees’ perceptions over time. Compared to 2000, more participants in the 2004 study felt that there was superficial friendliness and below-



surface tension on campus (item 19). This difference reflects real change in employees' experiences. That is, it is statistically significant, even after accounting for variance due to differences in the proportions of various ethnic groups in the two samples.

### ***Decision-Making, Team Spirit, and General Job Satisfaction***

Ten survey items focused on participation in decision-making and job satisfaction. Overall, fewer than half the respondents felt optimistic about what can be achieved through consensus-based decision-making and shared governance (45.9%), and that students are asked for their ideas when important decisions are made on campus (44.3%). Roughly half felt that they have the opportunity to participate meaningfully in shared governance (51.8%) and that a sense of team spirit exists at the college (53.7%). At least three-fifths of respondents felt that their present position satisfies their professional goals and aspirations (60.3%), they are given sufficient authority to implement their decisions (66%), and the students we serve contribute to their job satisfaction (69.1%). More than three-quarters of the respondents felt aware of appropriate and effective channels for making suggestions heard at the institutional level (76.1%), and that opportunities are available for them to suggest improvements at the department or unit level (87.4%).

To gain further insight, we compared the responses of the three primary employee groups (faculty, classified staff, and administrators/managers). Table 5 presents items and responses related to participation and job satisfaction. Items for which responses differed significantly between employee groups are marked with an asterisk (\*).

**Table 5: Percent of Respondents who Affirmed Items on Decision-Making, Team Spirit, and General Job Satisfaction**

	<b>Faculty n=120</b>	<b>Classified n=97</b>	<b>Adm./Mgr n=27</b>	<b>Overall n=247</b>
I am given sufficient authority to implement my decisions.	71.7%	57.7%	74.1%	<b>66.0%</b>
Upper administration puts too much pressure on me to accomplish too many objectives and priorities.	21.7%	22.7%	26.9%	<b>22.8%</b>
I am optimistic about what can be achieved through consensus-based decision-making and shared governance.	45.4%	43.3%	59.3%	<b>45.9%</b>
I have the opportunity to participate meaningfully in shared governance at Cypress College.	55.0%	41.2%	74.1%	<b>51.8%*</b>
At this point in my career, I feel my present position satisfies my professional goals and aspirations.	74.2%	45.4%	55.6%	<b>60.3%*</b>
Students are asked for their ideas when important decisions are made on campus.	44.2%	36.1%	73.1%	<b>44.3%*</b>
A sense of team spirit exists at Cypress College.	49.2%	49.5%	88.5%	<b>53.7%*</b>
Are opportunities available for you to make suggestions for improvements at your department or unit level? <sup>a</sup>	90.0%	81.4%	96.3%	<b>87.4%*</b>
Are you aware of appropriate and effective channels for making your suggestions heard at the institutional level? <sup>b</sup>	80.0%	66.0%	96.3%	<b>76.1%*</b>
Generally the students that we serve contribute to my job satisfaction.	79.2%	61.5%	55.6%	<b>69.1%*</b>

\* Indicates a statistically significant difference between two or more employee groups.  
Survey items 29 - 38.

<sup>a</sup> Response options were on a 4-point scale (often, occasionally, seldom, or never). Percentages in the table reflect respondents who marked "often" or "occasionally."

<sup>b</sup> Response options were on a 4-point scale (yes-very aware, yes-somewhat aware, vaguely aware, or no). Percentages in the table reflect respondents who marked "yes-very aware" or "yes-somewhat aware."

Additional analyses reveal significant shifts in employees' perceptions over time. Compared to respondents in 2000, participants in the 2004 study were less likely to feel they had sufficient authority to implement their decisions (item 29) and were significantly less optimistic about what can be achieved through consensus-based decision-making (item 31). These data reflect real changes in employees' experiences. The differences remain, even after accounting for variance due to different proportions of faculty, staff and managers in the two samples.

## **Recruitment, Retention and Success**

### **Recruitment**

Over 44% of respondents agreed that recruitment of students from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups should be a priority at Cypress College. Significantly higher proportions of managers agreed with this statement than faculty and classified staff members; there were no significant differences between White and non-White respondents.

### **Retention**

Almost half of all respondents agreed that retention of students from specific racial/ethnic groups should be a priority at Cypress College. However, significantly smaller proportions of classified staff and non-Whites agreed with this statement. More respondents (64.5%) agreed that the college should focus on retaining students who are initially unprepared for college level work. This item was more broadly supported across employee and ethnic groups.

**Table 6: Proportion of Respondents Who Agreed with Items about Student Recruitment and Retention**

	<b>Faculty n=120</b>	<b>Classi- fied n=97</b>	<b>Mgr n=27</b>	<b>White n=145</b>	<b>Non- White n=102</b>	<b>Overall n=247</b>
Recruitment of students from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups should be a priority at Cypress College.	45.0%	35.4%	77.8% <sup>c</sup>	46.5%	42.2%	<b>44.7%</b>
Retention of students from specific racial/ethnic groups should be a priority at Cypress College.	55.0%	38.1% <sup>d</sup>	70.4%	54.5%	43.1% <sup>e</sup>	<b>49.8%</b>
Retention of students who are initially unprepared for college level work should be a priority at Cypress College.	63.3%	63.2%	77.8%	69.9%	56.9%	<b>64.5%</b>

<sup>c</sup> Significantly higher than faculty and classified staff

<sup>d</sup> Significantly lower than faculty and managers

<sup>e</sup> Significantly lower than Whites

Survey items 39 - 41.

### **Success**

An overwhelming majority (84%) of respondents agreed that the college staff has a unified commitment to student success. Of these, 21% responded “definitely, all of us” and another 63% responded “most of us.”

# Appendix A: Survey

# Cypress College

## Campus Climate Survey

### of Faculty and Staff

**Campus climate refers to the way that students, faculty, and staff perceive the campus. This survey represents a major component of the college's effort to assess its campus climate. We are interested in your sincere responses to the questions that follow. Your responses will remain anonymous. The results will be presented in summary form only.**

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#### I. Climate

People look at colleges in many different ways. Usually there is an overall campus atmosphere or climate, which may be described in various ways. Describe your feeling about the "campus climate" at Cypress College by marking one choice for each of the following dimensions.

1. relaxed      tense
2. supportive      unsupportive
3. friendly      hostile
4. cooperative      competitive
5. respectful      unrespectful
6. tolerant      intolerant
7. comfortable      uncomfortable
8. open      closed
9. harmonious      much conflict

10. interested      indifferent

11. sincere      artificial

## II. Diversity

Based on your experiences at Cypress College, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12. At Cypress College, I feel most comfortable when I socialize with people from the same ethnic/racial background as mine.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. At Cypress College, I feel comfortable when I participate in campus activities that focus on cultures other than my own.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. I am satisfied with the diversity of the ethnic backgrounds of the faculty.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. I am satisfied with the diversity of the ethnic backgrounds of staff at Cypress College.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. I am satisfied with the diversity of the ethnic backgrounds of the faculty and administrators at Cypress College.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. While at Cypress College, I feel some responsibility to be a spokesperson for my racial/ethnic group.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. While at Cypress College, I feel some responsibility to be a spokesperson for my gender.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. There is a lot of superficial friendliness on this campus among people of different backgrounds, but underneath there is tension.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. Prejudice among faculty and staff is a problem on campus.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. Prejudice among students is a problem on campus.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. Cypress College is responsive to the diverse needs of the changing demographics of our students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. Cypress College is responsive to the diverse needs of the changing demographics of our staff and administration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. Cypress College is responsive to the diverse needs of the changing demographics of our faculty.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

25. Do women have equal opportunities with men for recognition, respect, and advancement at the college?

- Yes, definitely
- Yes, generally

- Not always
- No
- I don't know

**26.** Do members of ethnic minorities have equal opportunities for recognition, respect, and advancement at the college?

- Yes, definitely
- Yes, generally
- Not always
- No
- I don't know

**27.** In practice, how much of a commitment do you believe the college has to increasing the numbers and percentages of ethnic minorities in classified, faculty, and administrative positions?

- Very strong commitment
- Fairly strong commitment
- Limited commitment
- No commitment
- I don't know

**28.** Is the college committed to the curtailment of sexual harassment?

- Yes, aggressively
- Yes, for the most part
- Commitment not evident
- I don't know

### III. Participation and Satisfaction

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
29. I am given sufficient authority to implement my decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30. Upper administration puts too much pressure on me to accomplish too many objectives and priorities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31. I am optimistic about what can be achieved through consensus-based decision-making and shared governance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32. I have the opportunity to participate meaningfully in shared governance at Cypress College.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
33. At this point in my career, I feel my present position satisfies my professional goals and aspirations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

34. Students are asked for their ideas when important decisions are made on campus.

35. A sense of team spirit exists at Cypress College.

**36.** Are opportunities available for you to make suggestions for improvements at your department or unit level?

- Often
- Occasionally
- Seldom
- Never

**37.** Are you aware of appropriate and effective channels for making your suggestions heard at the institutional level?

- Yes, very aware
- Yes, somewhat aware
- Vaguely aware
- No

**38.** Generally, the students that we serve...

- Contribute to the satisfaction I get from doing my job
- Sometime contribute and sometimes are detrimental to the satisfaction I get from doing my job
- Do not affect my job satisfaction
- Deter from the satisfaction I get from doing my job
- No opinion

## IV. Outreach, Retention and Success

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
39. Recruitment of students from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups should be a priority at Cypress College.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
40. Retention of students from specific racial/ethnic groups should be a priority at Cypress College.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
41. Retention of students who are initially unprepared for college level work should be a priority at Cypress College.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**42.** Generally, do you think that the college staff has a unified commitment to student success?

- Definitely, all of us
- Most of us
- Some of us

- Very few of us
  - None of us
- 

## V. Demographics

Gender

- Male
- Female

Age

- Under 18 years
- 18 - 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 - 44
- 45 - 54
- 55 or older

Type of position:

- Full-time
- Part-time

Employee Group

- Faculty (credit)
- Classified
- Confidential
- Administrative/Manager

For how many years have you been employed at Cypress College?

- Less than one
- 1 - 2
- 3 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 or more

With which of the following groups do you most identify?

- African-American/Black
- Asian-American or Pacific Islander
- Hispanic/Latino
- Native American or Alaskan Native
- White
- Other

Do you have a verified disability?

- No
- Yes, visual or hearing impairment



- 
- Yes, mobility impairment  
Yes, other type

In which of the following administrative areas do you work?

- 
- Executive Vice President – Instruction and Student Support Services
- Vice President Educational Support and Planning (M & O, Media Services, Computing, etc...)
- Director, Budget and Finance (Bursar, Bookstore, etc...)
- President’s Area (President’s office, Staff Development, Foundation, etc...)
- Other

What is the one thing you are most proud of as an employee of Cypress College?

What one thing do you think most needs improvement at Cypress College?

Do you have any other suggestions or comments?

Submit Survey

