

Are Employees Prepared to Support Student Equity?

Fall 2017 Survey Results

Compared to Fall 2015 Baseline

Introduction

College of Marin (COM) is committed to providing students from all backgrounds equitable opportunities to succeed. As part of this commitment, our [Strategic Plan 2015-2018](#) includes an objective and action steps to prepare employees to meet the needs of a diverse student population. These efforts align with the Chancellor's Office initiatives to mitigate disparities at community colleges statewide.

To gauge progress on whether COM is prepared to address student equity, PRIE administered a survey to all COM employees in Fall 2015. A corresponding target to achieve a higher level of institutional preparedness was then established. Institutional preparedness in this context is defined by opportunities to learn about different identity groups and employee participation in related training opportunities. A follow-up survey was administered in Fall 2017 after the action steps to achieve the objective were implemented. Based on the results of these two surveys, the College is improving. We have met the target for this objective. While we have achieved this step, there is continued work to do in preparing employees to work with a diverse and changing student body.

History and Methodology

In October 2015, PRIE administered a [survey](#) to all employees. The survey included thirteen questions to measure the extent to which the College offers training and employees participate in activities that provide an inclusive and equitable environment to students. The questions asked about professional development offerings and employee participation. 182 employees responded: 35% were classified staff; 55% were faculty; and 10% were administrators. Their responses to the two questions in the tables below were used to establish a baseline against which to measure future survey results. In November 2017, the same survey was sent to all employees. 167 College employees responded: 44% were classified staff; 48% were faculty; and 8% were administrators. Results are below.

Survey Results for the Strategic Plan Objective Performance Indicator

A larger percent of employees said they participate in COM trainings or other events to support equity for students. In 2015, 29% "often" participated. That proportion has grown to 46% in 2017. Fewer respondents said they "rarely" or "never" participated, from 28% in 2015 to 15% in 2017.

Question 5. To what extent do you participate in COM trainings or other events to ensure your ability to support equity for students at the College?

	2015 % (n=181)	2017 % (n=166)	Percentage Point Difference
Never	7.2	3.0	-4.2
Rarely	21.0	12.1	-8.9
Sometimes	40.9	38.0	-2.9
Often	28.7	45.8	17.1
Don't Know	2.2	1.2	-1.0

The percent of employees who said that COM offers opportunities to gain knowledge about different identity groups also increased, but to a lesser extent. In 2015, 13% said COM “often” does, which increased to 23% in 2017. There was a smaller increase in those who said COM “sometimes” provides opportunities, from 40% in 2015 to 44% in 2017.

Question 4. COM offers opportunities to gain knowledge about what "I do not know" about different identity groups with whom I am less familiar.

	2015 % (n=180)	2017 % (n=167)	Percentage Point Difference
Never	9.4	4.8	-4.6
Rarely	17.8	18.0	0.2
Sometimes	40.0	43.7	3.7
Often	13.3	22.8	9.5
Don't Know	19.4	10.8	-8.6

These two metrics show that we have met the target for this strategic plan objective.

Additional Survey Results

Additional survey results suggest that the College is better prepared to address student equity issues. The following show some modest improvement since 2015.

- A greater proportion of faculty reported that they include an accommodation statement in their syllabi.
- Employees reported that they more frequently discuss cultural and social commonalities and differences within their departments.
- Referrals to several programs and services have increased by more than five percentage points since 2015.

Conversely, there has not been as much improvement in how department practices consider the diversity of students’ needs. At the classroom level, there been little change in how frequently students are presented information about underrepresented populations and their experiences. A summary of survey responses follows this narrative.

The survey also included an open-ended question where employees could share what has helped them understand historically underrepresented populations as well as what professional development would be helpful. Employees’ personal and academic experiences, and directly working with students has helped. Keeping up on current events and being engaged in the external community have as well. Employees referenced New Employee Orientation, Umoja events, student panels, COMmon Read, the October 2017 Flex day, serving on COM committees, other COM-sponsored trainings, and external resources as methods by which they’ve come to better understand issues that impact diverse populations.

Suggestions for helpful professional development followed some general themes. Most commonly, employees requested more information about existing student support services and programs. Employees also suggested a session that puts student equity in a larger context, presents current and projected student demographics, and describes factors that influence student success and retention. Employees also requested events and resources where they can learn more about diverse cultures, including more presentations by trainers who represent historically underrepresented groups. Partnerships with external organizations like Canal Alliance and the Anti-Defamation League were referenced. All responses to the open-ended question will be shared with those responsible for planning professional development activities for the College.

Survey Response Summaries

Question 1. In my department/program, we discuss College of Marin policies and practices that influence persistence and success of historically underrepresented/marginalized student populations.

	2015 % (n=181)	2017 % (n=167)	Percentage Point Difference
Never	12.2	8.4	-3.8
Rarely (Once a Year or Less)	24.9	19.8	-5.1
Often (More than Once Per Semester)	42.6	46.1	3.5
At Least Weekly	16.6	20.4	3.8
Don't Know	3.9	5.4	1.5

Question 2. In my department, we discuss commonalities and differences of culture and social identities.

	2015 % (n=181)	2017 % (n=166)	Percentage Point Difference
Never	14.4	9.6	-4.8
Rarely (Once a Year or Less)	23.2	18.7	-4.5
Often (More than Once Per Semester)	41.4	50.6	9.2
At Least Weekly	16.0	16.9	0.9
Don't Know	5.0	4.2	-0.8

Question 3. I have referred students to the following programs or services (check all that apply).

	2015 % (n=162)	2017 % (n=154)	Percentage Point Difference
CalWORKs	23.5	28.6	5.1
EOPS	55.6	57.8	2.2
Puente	30.9	37.0	6.1
Student Accessibility Services (SAS)	80.3	83.1	2.8
Student Financial Aid	73.5	67.5	-6.0
Umoja	13.0	33.8	20.8
Veterans	37.7	44.2	6.5
Other	24.1	30.5	6.4

Question 4. COM offers opportunities to gain knowledge about what "I do not know" about different identity groups with whom I am less familiar.

	2015 % (n=180)	2017 % (n=167)	Percentage Point Difference
Never	9.4	4.8	-4.6
Rarely	17.8	18.0	0.2
Sometimes	40.0	43.7	3.7
Often	13.3	22.8	9.5
Don't Know	19.4	10.8	-8.6

Question 5. To what extent do you participate in COM trainings or other events to ensure your ability to support equity for students at the College?

	2015 % (n=181)	2017 % (n=166)	Percentage Point Difference
Never	7.2	3.0	-4.2
Rarely	21.0	12.1	-8.9
Sometimes	40.9	38.0	-2.9
Often	28.7	45.8	17.1
Don't Know	2.2	1.2	-1.0

Question 6. My Department's practices consider the diversity of student needs at COM.

	2015 % (n=180)	2017 % (n=166)	Percentage Point Difference
Never	4.4	4.2	-0.2
Rarely	7.8	7.2	-0.6
Sometimes	20.0	15.1	-4.9
Often	62.8	65.7	2.9
Don't Know	5.0	7.8	2.8

Question 7. (Faculty only question.) How often do you discuss or present materials in class that reflect the experiences of historically underrepresented/marginalized populations?

	2015 % (n=106)	2017 % (n=82)	Percentage Point Difference
Never	6.6	9.8	3.2
Rarely	5.7	8.5	2.8
Sometimes	32.1	25.6	-6.5
Often	52.8	52.4	-0.4
Don't Know	2.8	3.7	0.9

Question 8. (Faculty only question.) I include an accommodation(s) referral statement in my syllabus for students who may have disabilities.

	2015 % (n=102)	2017 % (n=78)	Percentage Point Difference
Yes	53.9	64.1	10.2
No	32.4	24.4	-8.0
Other	13.7	11.5	-2.2