

Feedback on Classified Professional Development Day

On October 14, 2016, College of Marin classified staff participated in professional development activities from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. All campus departments were closed during this time to accommodate attendance. In addition to an opening session led by the President and Senior Vice President for Student Learning and Student Services and lunch, the event included a choice of 5 sessions repeated in morning and afternoon. Topics of those sessions included:

- Cultivating an Inclusive Campus
- Mindful Stress Reduction and Self Care Strategies
- Collaborating in the Cloud: Making Office 365 Work for You
- COM Safe Space: Supporting LGBTIQQ Students
- Student Panel
- Effectively Serving, Working, and Partnering with Five Generations of Students and Staff!

At the end of the last session, participants completed an evaluation form to rate the sessions they attended, suggest future professional development activities, and offer their views about working at COM. Following is a thematic summary of evaluation results.

Overall, sessions were rated positively with the Mindfulness session drawing the largest attendance by far. In fact, the most common requests for future activities involved what someone referred to as “self-care workshops.” These include practices such as mindfulness, yoga, pilates, dance, meditation, art and music. Other future topics proposed included information technology trainings, interpersonal relations and support such as cultural competence and understanding the disabled, and practical issues such as running effective meetings and emergency preparedness. Communication, conflict resolution, team building and additional opportunities to get to know others on campus were mentioned as well.

Best Things About Working at COM

Overwhelmingly, respondents said the best thing about working at COM is the people. COM employees, they said, are friendly, welcoming and helpful. Secondarily, the beauty of the physical environment. Additionally, the opportunity to help students and make a difference.

What COM Should Improve

When it comes to what the College should improve, there was far less agreement than in responses to the other questions. By-and-large, the recommendations fell into four categories: physical environment, technology and workflow, interpersonal relations, and opportunities to interact. The physical environment included items such as IVC landscaping and signage and cleanliness and HVAC in some buildings. Technology and workflow included automation, using up-to-date applications, and streamlining and communicating processes and procedures for efficiency and simplicity. Interpersonal relations included issues such as more frequent and more effective communication and collaboration between departments and employee types. In addition, conflict resolution and problem-solving, accountability around carrying out responsibilities and team building. Staff enjoyed the opportunity to interact during this professional development time and some would like to see more opportunities for such interaction in order to understand each other’s challenges, know who to contact when needed, bridge gaps between employee types and build community.