

Kingsborough Community College

Faculty and Staff Survey Committee
Recommendation Report

Spring 2023

Prepared by:

Office of Institutional Effectiveness
Kingsborough Community College

and

Gordon Alley-Young, Ph.D.
Dean of Faculty
Office of the Senior VP for Academic Affairs and Provost
Kingsborough Community College

Overview

The 2022 Faculty and Staff Satisfaction Survey addressed six important domains of experience at Kingsborough. Respondents were also asked to provide additional comments throughout the survey. A diverse committee of 11 faculty and staff members convened to thoroughly review respondent feedback and suggest recommendations to remediate the most pertinent issues. The full list of Committee members is given in Appendix A.

Committee members were broken out into small groups and assigned one of the four topics below. Each topic was addressed in the survey by a quantitative question (or questions) on the survey, as well as an open-ended question. The committee members received a summary of the quantitative items as well as written comments for their section. The groups were asked to review the comments, identify the common themes, and then provide suggestions of areas for improvement or next steps for the issues, themes, and commonalities they identified.

As a next step, survey results were presented to the College community in March of 2023 Faculty and staff were given an overview of the quantitative results from the survey, which had been previously shared via email, and were then given an overview of the common themes identified by the committee. They were then asked to provide additional feedback and suggestions on how the College could best address the themes.

The themes and feedback was then reviewed by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and combined into one list of themes and recommendations, which is provided in the section below.

Suggestions and Next Steps

1. Promoting Mission-Driven Work

Survey respondents were presented with a copy of the College's mission statement and asked to elaborate on how they felt that their work aligns (or does not align) to KCC's mission or helps (or does not help) to advance the college's mission. Though the responses largely addressed a feeling of close alignment with the College's mission, some responses did also address barriers that exist. The barriers to mission-driven work largely involved a lack of communication and collaboration between areas of the College, and between student-serving areas and College leadership.

The common themes, and the committee's recommendations for how to address them, include:

- a. *Create a more Collegial Workplace that Encourages Camaraderie and Breaks Down Silos*
 - i. To enhance camaraderie among faculty and staff, KCC should look at hosting a series of "colleague meets colleague" mixers or other social events where faculty and staff will have the opportunity to build community and foster a more collegial work environment.
 - ii. Unit directors and department chairs should identify any possible short term and long running tensions in the workplace or within the working relationship of staff that encourage passive role versus active participation, overlooks difference, ignores specifics, and downplays concerns.
 - iii. Explore possible opportunities to create stronger connections between individuals that work collaboratively on larger College-wide projects. This could also be employed to connect people who do similar work at KCC but do not work in the same unit or department.
- b. *Ensure that Students are Directed to the Appropriate Support Service that Addresses their Concern*
 - i. KCC should create a communications and marketing campaign around student support services in order to provide faculty and staff with a clear understanding of where to send students when they're approached with a question. Funneling students to the correct office the first time will reduce the feelings of disassociation on campus.

2. Improving Two-way Communication and Transparency in Decision Making

Survey respondents were asked to provide suggestions they had for how leadership at any level could most effectively communicate important information to the College community. One major theme that arose is that

though the communication methods implemented as a result of the last survey are a positive step forward, they do not open up the possibility for a conversation and lead to the perception that important information is delivered after the fact. More timely communication and opportunities for open forums would decrease the possibility of rumors spreading and the feeling that decisions are made without input from necessary parties.

Suggestions for improving communication and leadership include:

- a. *Increase Transparency in Decision-making Processes Through Timely Communication*
 - i. To increase transparency around decision-making, senior leadership should increase the lead-time in communicating potential policy changes prior to making a final decision to allow for faculty and staff feedback. This would increase the feelings of contribution and involvement on campus.
 - ii. Consider more opportunities for communication that fosters feelings of participation and inclusion through receptive listening.
- b. Streamline communications to ensure that important information is not lost in the shuffle
 - i. Diversify the methods of communicating information to the College community by making better use of the new website, rather than an overreliance on email.
 - ii. Ensure that monthly updates and other communications from offices are meaningful and provide actionable information for the College community.
- c. *Involve Faculty on Possible Changes to Teaching Related Policies*
 - i. KCC should look at ways of consulting faculty on potential instructional changes through more formal channels, such as through instituting a Faculty Council/Senate
- d. *Incorporate more live or in-person opportunities to share important updates/changes and gather input*
 - i. Unit directors and department chairs can work to identify or design specific ways to foster safe spaces for voicing concerns or gather input by collaborating within their departments and offices.
 - ii. Explore the possibility of standardizing an internal unit/department survey to identify shortcomings.

3. *Supporting Instructors in and out of the Classroom*

Survey respondents were asked to provide suggestions on how the college can best support the continued growth and success of faculty members in terms of research, pedagogy, or as a member of the campus community. One of the major themes in the comments was the changing nature of the instructional environment and the need for technology that can keep up with the changes.

Suggestions for continuing to support instructors in their classroom environments include:

- a. *Continue to provide up-to-date and innovative opportunities for professional development*
 - i. In order to satisfy the desire for more professional development opportunities, KCEL/KCTL can explore offering extended evening hours to broaden the reach of programming and engage more faculty.
 - ii. Leverage KCTL and other resources to promote the discussion of efficient and up-to-date teaching pedagogies.
- b. *Improve awareness of and comfort with the Learning Management System*
 - i. Frustrations concerning Blackboard were common in the feedback, suggesting a need for additional conversation and potential training around its use. The College can launch efforts to increase conversation around use of the LMS, including:

1. Host open discussions of the LMS (as a College or by department) where faculty can express what they feel is working, what they don't understand, and gather some best practices of other faculty members.
 2. Incorporating use of the LMS into discussions of pedagogical best practices (e.g., in KCTL workshops and FIGs)
- c. *Enhance communication between faculty and advisement through Starfish and other methods of communication*
- i. Though issues with Starfish were a very common theme in the open-ended responses, it is an important tool in ensuring that faculty have the ability to connect students to necessary resources. In service of furthering the use of Starfish among faculty, Advisement can develop a "greatest hits" tour to explain how to use the system so that it is a benefit rather than a hindrance and help increase buy-in.
 - ii. Inform advisors to be aware of students' schedules so as not to schedule advising appointments when the student is in class.
 - iii. Hold seminars or open forums for faculty and advisement to discuss best practices and how to best work together to meet the needs of students.
- d. *Increased support from IT on how to best use the technology in the classroom*
- i. Update current hardware and software available to faculty both on-and-off campus
 - ii. Encourage IT to host a series of workshops with faculty to gauge the needs with hardware, software (off-campus and on-campus), understanding classroom computer setup, white board and connectivity, Blackboard and Starfish information.
 - iii. Provide a complete contact extension/email list to faculty and staff.

4. *Supporting Career Growth and Success in Faculty*

Survey respondents were asked to provide suggestions on how the college can best support the continued growth and success of faculty members in terms of research, pedagogy, or as a member of the campus community. The major feedback in this area was related to clarity and communication regarding expectations of and opportunities for faculty.

Below are some suggestions and next steps to address these issues based on the committee's discussion, as well as the written comments.

- a. *Greater Transparency in Reappointment/Tenure/Promotion*
- i. In order to enhance the clarity among Faculty regarding reappointment, tenure, and promotion, KCC should look to provide workshops every semester which will discuss Faculty expectations.
 - ii. Provide an opportunity for file review for faculty going up for personnel actions.
 - iii. Create an email address designated only for RTP inquiries.
 - iv. Design training on RTP for Chairperson Develop and share a sample publication of "the dos and don'ts".
- b. *Establish General Guidelines for Travel/Conference Funding*
- i. In the midst of high demand for additional funding for professional development during a budget crunch, departments should look to develop and share guideless for prioritizing funding for travel, with the highest consideration given to those that are presenting.
- c. *Improve the Academic Environment on Campus*
- i. Increase Faculty understanding of College and departmental academic policies and bylaws through open forums.
 - ii. Develop workshops on academic freedom with Faculty, Chairs, and Administration.

APPENDIX A: List of Committee Members

1. Richard Fruscione, Associate Professor and Chairperson for the Department of Allied Health, Mental Health and Human Services
2. Jason Leggett, *Assistant Professor, History, Philosophy & Political Science*
3. Helen Margaret-Nasser, Director of SU&IC/Student Publications/Holocaust Center
4. Cynthia Olvina, Administrative Specialist, Academic Affairs
5. Hallory Paul, Communications Specialist, Office of Communications & Marketing
6. Melisa Jn Pierre, Lecturer, Communications & Performing Arts
7. Peter Santiago, Associate Director/Counselor, Access-Ability Services
8. Malcolm Smith, *Senior College Laboratory Technician, Communications and Performing Arts*
9. Loretta Brancaccio-Taras, Director, Center for e-Learning and Professor, Dept. Biological Sciences
10. Christine Vaz, *Assistant Professor, Nursing*
11. David Zilberman, Lecturer, Biological Sciences