

A Report on the *Quality of Work Life Survey*
Conducted During April-May 2010

FAIRMONT™

STATE UNIVERSITY

PIERPONT™

COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Office of Institutional Research
October 2010

Executive Summary

The Quality of Work Life Survey was conducted in the April to May 2010 time frame of all employees of Pierpont Community & Technical College and Fairmont State University. This report will concentrate on the findings in the 2010 survey. A follow up report, analyzing the differences from 2007 [our baseline year] to this current year, 2010, as well as institution specific issues, when grouped in that fashion, is also being produced.

The FSU “Quality of Work Life Survey” is based on a similar survey conducted at George Mason University several times over the past 7 years, with their permission granted. This survey has as a basis the *Perceived Organizational Support* [POS] Eisenberger model/construct, which has been well-supported in research as being a key factor in influencing employee commitment to the organization. Several other factors/dimensions were included in the instrument design and arranged into several sections: Levels of Importance & Satisfaction paired items, Sources of Stress items, Levels of Agreement items, and a variety of demographic and grouping items. A complete copy of the survey instrument is available on the IR [Institutional Research] website.

The use of the service SurveyMonkey.com was chosen to facilitate this online survey. 830 initial and follow up emails to all full-time and part-time FSU employees were processed with each containing a brief description of the request for participation and the web link to the online survey. 288 individuals responded to the online survey (a response rate of 35%).

Major Findings

Section I: Importance & Satisfaction Factors

The **Top Five** (5) Items of **Importance** by mean ranking:

Item 2	Job security.
7	Health care benefits.
12	Relationship with your immediate supervisor.
8	Retirement benefits.
1	Relationship with co-workers.

Note: Item number indicated is relative to that section’s numbering scheme.

The **Bottom Five** (5) Items of **Importance** by mean ranking:

Item 17	Productivity of work-related meetings.
13	Special recognition for achievements and milestones.
16	Access to and the cost of recreational/fitness facilities.
14	Access to cultural events and/or sporting events.
15	Availability of on-campus child care.

The **Top Five** Items of **Satisfaction** by mean ranking:

Item 4	Flexibility of work hours.
1	Relationship with co-workers.
12	Relationship with your immediate supervisor.
2	Job security.
14	Access to cultural events and/or sporting events.

The **Bottom Five** Items of **Satisfaction** by mean ranking:

Item 13	Special recognition for achievements and milestones.
17	Productivity of work-related meetings.
6	Salary.
16	Access to and the cost of recreational/fitness facilities.
15	Availability of on-campus child care.

As each of the 17 items in this section received ratings of both importance and satisfaction, it is possible to determine which items showed a significant difference in their paired ratings. Although both the paired t-test and Wilcoxon signed-rank non-parametric test showed that all paired item responses showed significant difference between importance ranking and satisfaction ranking for each item, an alternative approach is to determine a difference in their relative ranking by *position* [highest to lowest] of their means and indicate which showed a “gap” in their respective ranking of 4 positions or greater [note that 3.53 was the mean absolute deviation of all 17 ranking position differences]. The items importance ranked versus satisfaction ranked positions were significantly correlated utilizing the Spearman’s Rho statistic at the 0.05 level.

Importance Rankings greater than Satisfaction Rankings [gap significant; i.e., **Higher Importance relative to Lower Satisfaction position**]:

Item 7	Health care benefits – Gap Size = 9
6	Salary – Gap Size = 7
8	Retirement benefits – Gap Size = 4

Satisfaction Rankings greater than Importance Rankings [gap significant; i.e. **Higher Satisfaction relative to Lower Importance position**]:

Item 14	Access to cultural events and/or sporting events – Gap Size = 11
4	Flexibility of work hours – Gap Size = 8
10	Opportunities to develop new skills – Gap Size = 5

Section II – Source of Stress Factors

The **Five Highest Stress** Items by mean ranking:

Item 4	Personal finances.
24	Top-down decisions contrasting with departmental expertise/knowledge.
15	Work load.
22	Institutional procedures and "red tape".
6	Availability of promotion opportunities.

The **Five Lowest Stress** Items by mean ranking:

Item 9	Discrimination (e.g. prejudice, racism, sexism)
3	Availability and cost of child care.
17	Commuting.
30	Difficult relationship with subordinate.
10	Marital friction.

Section III – Level of Agreement

The **Five Items with Highest Level of Agreement** by mean ranking:

Item 7	In general, managers in this institution are quite accommodating of family-related needs.
9	The amount of time required to perform the responsibilities of my position has increased beyond the normal work day.
8	Colleagues and supervisors support my work endeavors.
15	Considering everything, the quality of my work life is very good.
12	The institution would forgive an honest mistake on my part.

The **Five Items with Lowest Level of Agreement** [i.e., disagreement] by mean ranking:

Item 11	I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization.
5	The organization cares about and values my opinions.
16	The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life.
13	My organization shows very little concern for me.
17	The demands of my family or spouse/partner interfere with work-related activities.

Section IV – Categories/Demographics

The following are the modal categories of survey respondents for each item:

- 35.5% are in the 55 or older category
- 65.1% are Female
- 80.7% are a full-time employee
- 34.9% have worked more than 12 years at FSU and/or PC&TC
- 29.6% have worked in their current position less than 3 years
- 31.2% are full-time faculty (benefits eligible)
- 76.9% are associated primarily with FSU as compared to PC&TC
- 70.5% are married/living with a partner
- 36.0% have highest education level attained as master's degree
- 96.4% indicated an ethnic group of White

Themes from the open-ended item: *What improvements could your institution make that would add to your quality of work life? [Please be as specific as possible!!!]*

- Improved communication channels at all levels
- Pay scales to be more in line with workload and responsibilities
- Heavier workload with “lean” staffing
- Fostering a more collegial environment among faculty, staff, and students
- Improved supervisor treatment / respect for subordinates
- Need more help [specific offices]
- Improved and more private office spaces/environments
- Improved compensation, environment, and services for adjunct faculty
- Disparity of/well defined work loads
- Develop and maintain a clear mission
- Improved relationship between the institutions
- Improved treatment/respect for subordinates
- Promotion/hiring processes based on merit not favoritism
- Flexible work hours
- Job security
- Changes to on-campus costs for employees (parking, food, rec center)

End of Executive Summary

OVERVIEW

The Quality of Work Life Survey was conducted in the April to May 2010 time frame of all employees of Pierpont Community & Technical College and Fairmont State University. This report will concentrate on the findings in the 2010 survey. A follow up report, analyzing the differences from 2007 [our baseline year] to this current year, 2010, as well as institution specific issues, when grouped in that fashion, is also being produced.

It is expected that this survey [modified appropriately to fit the current environment at that time] will be repeated at regular intervals [optimally every 2-3 years] going forward to determine longitudinal trends and measure changed work life conditions/stressors.

METHODOLOGY

The FSU “Quality of Work Life [QOWL] Survey” was based on a similar survey conducted at George Mason University several times over the past 7 years, with their permission granted via email correspondence. This survey has as a basis the *Perceived Organizational Support* [POS] Dr. Robert Eisenberger model/construct, which has been well-supported in research as being a key factor in influencing employee commitment to the organization. Several other factors/dimensions were included in the instrument design and arranged into several sections: (I) Levels of Importance & Satisfaction paired items, (II) Sources of Stress items, (III) Levels of Agreement items, and (IV) a variety of demographic and grouping items.

The survey went into production during April-May 2010 with an initial email to each employee’s university email account. A follow up reminder was sent the following week to those that had not responded during the initial round and also announcing the closing date of May 5th. 830 initial and follow up emails to all full-time and part-time FSU [including Pierpont Community & Technical College] employees were processed with each containing a brief description of the request for participation and the web link to the online survey. 288 individuals responded to the online survey (a response rate of 35%).

The following are the Lickert rating scales utilized in each respective section:

Section I:

Importance: 1 – Not Important at all to 5 – Very Important
Satisfaction: 1- Very Dissatisfied to 5 – Very Satisfied

Section II:

1 – Not a source of Stress to 5 – Extreme Stress

Section III:

1 – Strongly Disagree to 5 – Strongly Agree

It was determined that both distribution based and non-parametric analysis would be utilized to determine significant differences in the various scaled [Lickert] survey items.

Separate reports/files, available on the IR [Institutional Research] website in the QOWL section, contain the statistical analyses [frequencies, descriptive statistics]; Crosstabs, chi-square, ANOVA with Post Hoc analysis (Scheffe), and the various appropriate non-parametric tests of the various survey items are available as separate reports upon request. A copy of the instrument is also available on the IR website.

Respondent’s comments to the open-ended item: *What improvements could the university make that would add to your quality of work life? [Please be as specific as possible!!!]* can also be found as a separate document/file on the IR website, in the QOWL area.

DEMOGRAPHICS/GROUPS

20. What is your age [in years]?		Response Percent	Response Count
24 or younger		7.6%	21
25-34		10.1%	28
35-44		16.7%	46
45-54		30.1%	83
55 or older		35.5%	98
<i>answered question</i>			276
<i>skipped question</i>			14

21. What is your gender?		Response Percent	Response Count
Female		65.1%	179
Male		34.9%	96
<i>answered question</i>			275
<i>skipped question</i>			15

22. Are you a full-time employee?		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		80.7%	222
No		19.3%	53
<i>answered question</i>			275
<i>skipped question</i>			15

23. How long have you worked at Fairmont State University and/or Pierpont C&TC?			Response Percent	Response Count
less than 3 years			18.9%	52
3 - 5 years			17.1%	47
6 - 8 years			14.2%	39
9 - 11 years			14.9%	41
more than 12 years			34.9%	96
			<i>answered question</i>	275
			<i>skipped question</i>	15

24. How long have you worked in your current position?			Response Percent	Response Count
less than 3 years			29.6%	81
3 - 5 years			18.6%	51
6 - 8 years			17.5%	48
9 - 11 years			15.0%	41
more than 12 years			19.3%	53
			<i>answered question</i>	274
			<i>skipped question</i>	16

25. How would you classify your position?			Response Percent	Response Count
Administration			8.0%	22
Administrative faculty			5.4%	15
Full-time faculty (benefits eligible)			31.2%	86
Part-time faculty			8.3%	23
Non-classified staff			14.9%	41
Full-time classified staff (benefits eligible)			22.5%	62
Part-time staff			9.8%	27
			<i>answered question</i>	276
			<i>skipped question</i>	14

26. You are employed with:			
		Response Percent	
		Response Count	
Fairmont State University		76.9%	206
Pierpont Community & Technical College		23.1%	62
		<i>answered question</i>	268
		<i>skipped question</i>	22

27. What is your marital status?			
		Response Percent	
		Response Count	
Married/Living with partner		70.5%	194
Separated / Divorced		10.2%	28
Single		17.5%	48
Widowed		1.8%	5
		<i>answered question</i>	275
		<i>skipped question</i>	15

28. What is the highest educational level you have attained?			
		Response Percent	
		Response Count	
High school / GED		2.2%	6
Some college		8.7%	24
Associate/Technical degree		10.2%	28
Bachelor's Degree		18.2%	50
Master's Degree		36.0%	99
Doctorate		24.7%	68
		<i>answered question</i>	275
		<i>skipped question</i>	15

29. What is your racial or ethnic group?			
		Response Percent	
		Response Count	
White		96.4%	266
African-American		1.4%	4
Latino / Hispanic		0.4%	1
Asian American / Asian		0.7%	2
Native American		0.4%	1
Other		0.7%	2
		<i>answered question</i>	276
		<i>skipped question</i>	14

RESULTS

Item No.	Importance and Satisfaction Items	Importance Rating Mean	Satisfaction Rating Mean	Mean Difference
1	Relationship with co-workers.	4.64	3.92	.71*
2	Job security.	4.69	3.77	.92*
3	Working conditions (comfort, safety).	4.55	3.65	.90*
4	Flexibility of work hours.	4.51	4.00	.51*
5	Clearly defined job expectations.	4.48	3.60	.88*
6	Salary.	4.55	2.99	1.56*
7	Health care benefits.	4.68	3.45	1.23*
8	Retirement benefits.	4.65	3.60	1.04*
9	Fair and equitable work performance evaluations.	4.50	3.36	1.14*
10	Opportunities to develop new skills.	4.43	3.64	.80*
11	Sense that your work is meaningful.	4.63	3.60	1.03*
12	Relationship with your immediate supervisor.	4.65	3.79	.87*
13	Special recognition for achievements and milestones.	3.87	3.12	.75*
14	Access to cultural events and/or sporting events.	3.55	3.66	-.11
15	Availability of on-campus child care.	2.99	2.55	.43*
16	Access to and the cost of recreational/fitness facilities.	3.81	2.94	.87*
17	Productivity of work-related meetings.	4.27	3.07	1.20*

*Significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Item No.	Level of Stress Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Keeping up with technology.	2.55	1.214
2	Rapid pace of workplace change.	2.79	1.247
3	Availability and cost of child care.	1.83	1.317
4	Personal finances.	3.37	1.328
5	Care of elderly parent.	2.36	1.522
6	Availability of promotion opportunities.	2.93	1.361
7	Availability and cost of food services.	2.22	1.320
8	Inefficient use of technology on campus.	2.69	1.311
9	Discrimination (e.g. prejudice, racism, sexism)	1.90	1.216
10	Marital friction.	1.53	.999
11	Managing household responsibilities.	2.62	1.390
12	Insufficient available information for decision-making.	2.56	1.330
13	Frequency of work-related meetings.	2.46	1.280
14	Conflict among co-workers in the work place.	2.69	1.394
15	Work load.	3.10	1.374
16	Availability of parking.	1.94	1.226
17	Commuting.	1.75	1.066
18	Ineffective communication methods.	2.85	1.390
19	Difficulties with other work units.	2.38	1.317
20	Rude or inconsiderate students.	2.46	1.318
21	Illness or death of a family member.	2.27	1.534
22	Institutional procedures and "red tape".	3.08	1.352
23	Cost of parking.	2.62	1.470
24	Top-down decisions contrasting with departmental expertise/knowledge.	3.23	1.386
25	Difficult relationship with immediate supervisor.	2.08	1.417
26	Physical health.	2.18	1.316
27	Review / promotion process.	2.61	1.402
28	Departmental budget concerns.	2.84	1.354
29	Unproductive committee work.	2.49	1.301
30	Difficult relationship with subordinate.	1.75	1.117

Recall the scale: 1 – Not a source of Stress to 5 – Extreme Stress

Item No.	Level of Agreement Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	The institution really cares about my well-being.	2.79	1.071
2	Management strongly considers my goals and values.	2.75	1.150
3	The college/university community operates from a strong sense of shared mission and goals.	2.76	1.028
4	Help is available when I have a problem.	3.40	1.002
5	The organization cares about and values my opinions.	2.67	1.121
6	I feel a strong sense of belonging to this institution.	3.11	1.193
7	In general, managers in this institution are quite accommodating of family-related needs.	3.65	1.015
8	Colleagues and supervisors support my work endeavors.	3.59	1.091
9	The amount of time required to perform the responsibilities of my position has increased beyond the normal work day.	3.60	1.284
10	I enjoy discussing this institution with people outside it.	3.40	1.124
11	I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization.	2.73	1.288
12	The institution would forgive an honest mistake on my part.	3.51	.967
13	My organization shows very little concern for me.	2.63	1.176
14	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this institution.	3.43	1.191
15	Considering everything, the quality of my work life is very good.	3.54	1.037
16	The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life.	2.66	1.243
17	The demands of my family or spouse/partner interfere with work-related activities.	2.02	.998

Recall the scale: 1 – Strongly Disagree to 5 – Strongly Agree

Group/Cohort Analysis

The following survey items showed a significant difference (0.05 level) when grouped by **Gender**:

Items
Job Security - Importance
Working conditions (comfort, safety) - Importance
Clearly defined job expectations – Importance
Health care benefits – Importance
Health care benefits – Satisfaction
Retirement benefits – Satisfaction
Fair and equitable work performance expectations – Importance
Fair and equitable work performance expectations – Satisfaction
Opportunity to develop new skills – Importance
Sense that your work is meaningful – Importance
Relationship with your immediate supervisor – Importance
Access to cultural events and/or sporting events – Satisfaction
Availability of on-campus child care – Satisfaction
Productivity of work-related meetings – Importance
Marital friction
Work load

The following survey items showed a significant difference (0.05 level) when grouped by **Age**:

Items
Relationship with co-workers – Importance
Job Security - Importance
Flexibility of work hours – Importance
Clearly defined job expectations – Importance
Health care benefits – Satisfaction
Availability of on-campus child care – Importance
Keeping up with technology
Rapid pace of work change
Availability and cost of child care
Personal finances
Inefficient use of technology on campus
Managing household responsibilities
Insufficient available information for decision-making
Frequency of work-related meetings
Conflict among co-workers in the work place
I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this institution
The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life

The demands of my family or spouse/partner interfere with work-related activities

The following survey items showed a significant difference (0.05 level) when grouped by **Full-time vs. Part-time employment status**:

Items
Working conditions (comfort, safety) – Satisfaction
Flexibility of work hours – Satisfaction
Health care benefits – Satisfaction
Retirement benefits – Satisfaction
Fair and equitable work performance evaluations – Satisfaction
Productivity of work-related meetings – Satisfaction
Keeping up with technology
Rapid pace of workplace change
Availability and cost of child care
Care of elderly parent
Marital Friction
Frequency of work related meetings
Conflict among co-workers in the work place
Work load
Difficulties with other work units
Top-down decisions contrasting with departmental expertise/knowledge
Difficult relationship with immediate supervisor
Physical health
Departmental budget concerns
Unproductive committee work
Difficult relationship with subordinate
The college/university community operates from a strong sense of shared mission and goals
The amount of time required to perform the responsibilities of my position has increased beyond the normal work day
The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life
The demands of my family or spouse/partner interfere with work-related activities

The following survey items showed a significant difference (0.05 level) when grouped by **Years Employed**:

Items
Job security - Satisfaction
Flexibility of work hours - Satisfaction
Health care benefits - Satisfaction
Retirement benefits - Satisfaction
Fair and equitable work performance evaluations - Satisfaction

Relationship with your immediate supervisor - Satisfaction
Special recognition for achievements and milestones - Satisfaction
Keeping up with technology
Rapid pace of workplace change
Personal finances
Availability of promotion opportunities
Discrimination (e.g. prejudice, racism, sexism)
Frequency of work-related meetings
Work load
Difficulties with other work units
Cost of parking
Top-down decisions contrasting with departmental expertise/knowledge
Physical health
Review /Promotion process
The institution really cares about my wellbeing
Management Strongly considers my goals and values
The college/university community operates from a strong sense of shared mission and goals
The organization cares about and values my opinions
The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life
The demands of my family or spouse/partner interfere with work-related activities

The following survey items showed a significant difference (0.05 level) when grouped by **Years in Current Position**:

Items
Fair and equitable work performance evaluations - Satisfaction
Opportunities to develop new skills - Importance
Keeping up with technology
Rapid pace of work place change
Personal finances
Availabilty of promotion opportunities
Top-down decisions contrasting with departmental expertise/knowledge
Management strongly considers my goals and values
The organization cares about and values my opinions

The following survey items showed a significant difference (0.05 level) when grouped by **Position Classification**:

Items
Job Security – Importance
Working conditions (comfort, safety) - Importance
Flexibility of work hours - Satisfaction

Clearly defined job expectations - Importance
Salary – Importance
Health care benefits - Satisfaction
Retirement benefits -Satisfaction
Fair and equitable work performance evaluations - Importance
Opportunities to develop new skills - Satisfaction
Sense that your work is meaningful - Satisfaction
Productivity of work-related meetings - Satisfaction
Keeping up with technology
Rapid pace of workplace change
Availability and cost of child care
Availability and cost of food services
Inefficient use of technology on campus
Frequency of work-related meetings
Work load
Difficulties with other work units
Cost of parking
Top-down decisions contrasting with departmental expertise/knowledge
Review /Promotion process
Departmental budget concerns
Unproductive committee work
Difficult relationship with subordinate
The institution really cares about my wellbeing
Management strongly considers my goals and values
The organization cares about and values my opinions
The amount of time required to perform the responsibilities of my position has increased beyond the normal work day
I enjoy discussing this institution with people outside it
I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization
The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life
The demands of my family or spouse/partner interfere with work-related activities

The following survey items showed a significant difference (0.05 level) when grouped by **Primarily FSU or PC&TC**:

Items
Relationship with coworkers -Satisfaction
Working conditions (comfort, safety) - Satisfaction
Salary - Satisfaction
Opportunities to develop new skills -Satisfaction
Rapid pace of workplace change
Availability of promotion opportunities

Insufficient available information for decision-making
Conflict among coworkers in the work place
Top-down decisions contrasting with departmental expertise/knowledge
Review /Promotion process
Management strongly considers my goals and values
The college/university community operates from a strong sense of shared mission and goals
The organization cares about and values my opinions

The following survey items showed a significant difference (0.05 level) when grouped by **Marital Status**:

Items
Keeping up with technology
Rapid pace of workplace change
Personal finances
Marital Friction
Rude or Inconsiderate students
Illness or death of a family member
The organization cares about and values my opinions
I enjoy discussing this institution with people outside it
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this institution

The following survey items showed a significant difference (0.05 level) when grouped by **Ethnicity [coded]**:

Items
Opportunities to develop new skills - Importance
Availability and cost of food services
Discrimination (e.g. prejudice, racism, sexism)
Marital Friction
Illness or death of a family member
Physical health
Review/promotion process
Management strongly considers my goals and values
Help available when I have a problem
The organization cares about and values my opinions
I feel a strong sense of belonging to this institution
In general, managers in this institution are quite accommodating of family related needs
Colleagues and supervisors support my work endeavors
The amount of time required to perform the responsibilities of my position has increased beyond the normal work day
I enjoy discussing this institution with people outside it

I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization

The institution would forgive an honest mistake on my part
--

I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this institution
--

Considering everything, the quality of my work life is very good
--