

College Employee Satisfaction Survey

2021 SUMMARY

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The College Employee Satisfaction Survey (CESS) is licensed by Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL). The college has administered the survey in 2015, 2018, and 2021. It is designed to assess the campus environment for college and university employees (faculty, staff, and administration). There are five sections:

1. **Campus culture and policies:** 30 standard, 2 added by HC, 1 open-ended item
2. **Institutional goals:** 10 standard, 1 custom, 2 open-ended items
3. **Involvement in planning and decision-making:** 8 standard items
4. **Work environment:** 21 standard, 3 custom, 1 open-ended item
5. **Demographics:** 3 standard, 1 custom item

The 2021 survey was active from October 25 to November 5, 2021. An anonymous link was sent to all employees, including adjuncts. Employees received periodic reminders. RNL sent results to Helena College in mid-November, including a summary, national comparison report, raw survey data, and an interpretive guide. The Dean's Cabinet reviewed and discussed the full results over a series of meetings in December 2021 and January 2022.

Overall Response Rates

- Total respondents: 54
- Including adjuncts: 42%
- Excluding adjuncts: 56% (2018: 68%)

Reports

Results from the survey are presented in three reports:

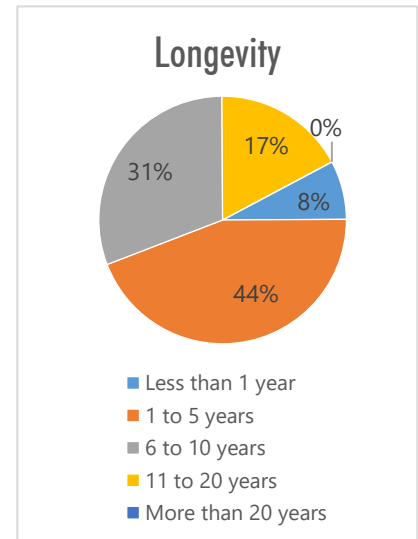
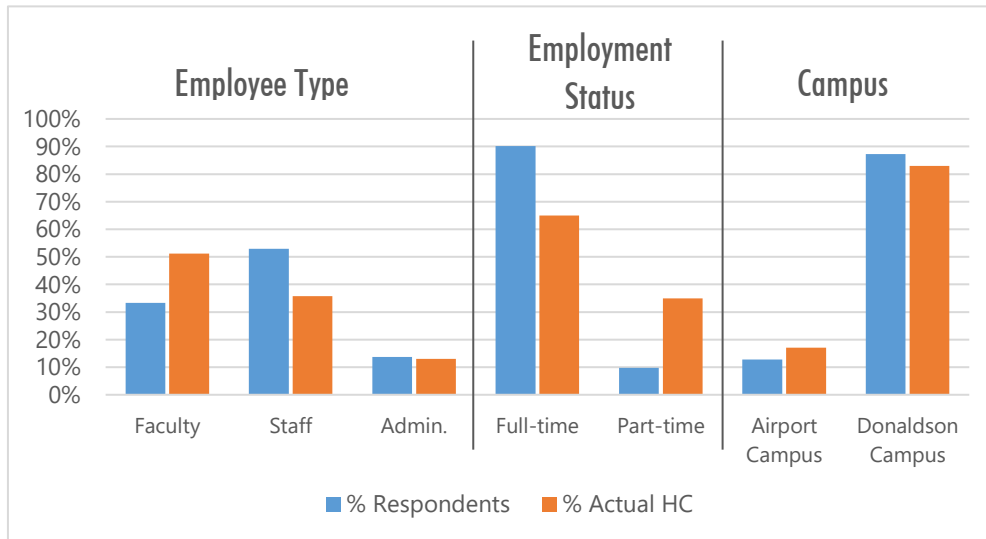
1. **HC CESS 2021 Summary Report Public:** Full summary of 2021 results, with open-ended responses removed.
2. **HC CESS 2021 Comparison Group Report Public:** Full summary of 2021 results compared to the national cohort of community colleges administering the survey in the last five years. Open-ended responses removed.
3. **HC CESS 2021 Comparison to 2018 Report Public:** Full summary of 2021 results compared with results from HC's 2018 administration of the same survey. Open-ended responses removed.

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DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

Survey responses represent a higher proportion of full-time employees and staff than the actual Helena College population. Comparatively few part-time employees responded, though this category includes adjunct instructors and temporary employees. Faculty were slightly under-sampled, while staff were slightly over-sampled. Responses are nearly evenly split between newer employees (0-5 years) and veteran employees (6 or more years).



SECTION 1: CAMPUS CULTURE & POLICIES

Respondents were presented with statements and asked to rate their importance to them as employees and their satisfaction. A five-point rating scale is used for both importance and satisfaction.

A chart was created, plotting the relative importance vs. satisfaction to rank institutional priorities.

Observations

- Satisfaction has increased overall since 2018.
 - Mean satisfaction for all items increased from 3.20 to 3.67.
 - Lowest mean satisfaction was 3.02.
- Faculty, staff, and administrators take pride in their work. Satisfaction in this area is significantly higher at Helena College than among the national comparison group.
- Significantly higher satisfaction is also seen at Helena College (compared to the national cohort) in the following areas:
 - Communication between administrations, staff, and faculty.
 - Leadership's sense of purpose and involvement of employees in planning for the future.
- The institution prioritizes students, but employees feel it lacks the resources to adequately meet the needs of students.
- Employee retention and onboarding ranked very low in satisfaction compared to the rest of the items.
- Results from the campus climate survey administered in spring 2021 indicated a need for training and communication regarding the college's harassment and discrimination policies and procedures. High satisfaction on this CESS custom question indicates the college's efforts at improvement in this area were successful.

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Strengths

- This institution treats students as its top priority.
- The leadership of this institution has a clear sense of purpose (was a challenge in 2018).
- Administrators share information regularly with faculty and staff (was a challenge in 2018).
- There is good communication between staff and the administration at this institution.
- Faculty, staff, and administrators take pride in their work.
- This institution has clear harassment and discrimination policies and procedures (HC custom question).

Challenges

- This institution does a good job of meeting the needs of students (was a strength in 2018).
- There are effective lines of communication between departments.
- There is a spirit of teamwork and cooperation at this institution.
- This institution is well-respected in the community (was a strength in 2018).
- This institution does a good job of retaining its employees (HC custom question).

Areas Where Effort/Resources Could Be Redirected

- This institution promotes excellent employee-student relationships.
- Most employees are generally supportive of the mission, purpose, and values of this institution.
- The goals and objectives of this institution are consistent with its mission and values.
- This institution involves its employees in planning for the future.
- This institution does a good job of meeting the needs of its administrators.
- Efforts to improve quality are paying off at this institution.
- The reputation of this institution continues to improve.

Assess Priorities

- The mission, purpose, and values of this institution are well-understood by most employees.
- This institution plans carefully.
- This institution does a good job of meeting the needs of its faculty and staff.
- This institution makes sufficient budgetary resources available to achieve important objectives.
- This institution makes sufficient staff resources available to achieve important objectives.
- There is good communication between the faculty and administration at this institution.
- Employee suggestions are used to improve our institution.
- This institution consistently follows clear processes for orienting and training new employees.
- This institution consistently follows clear processes for recognizing employee achievements.
- This institution has written procedures that clearly define who is responsible for each operation and service.



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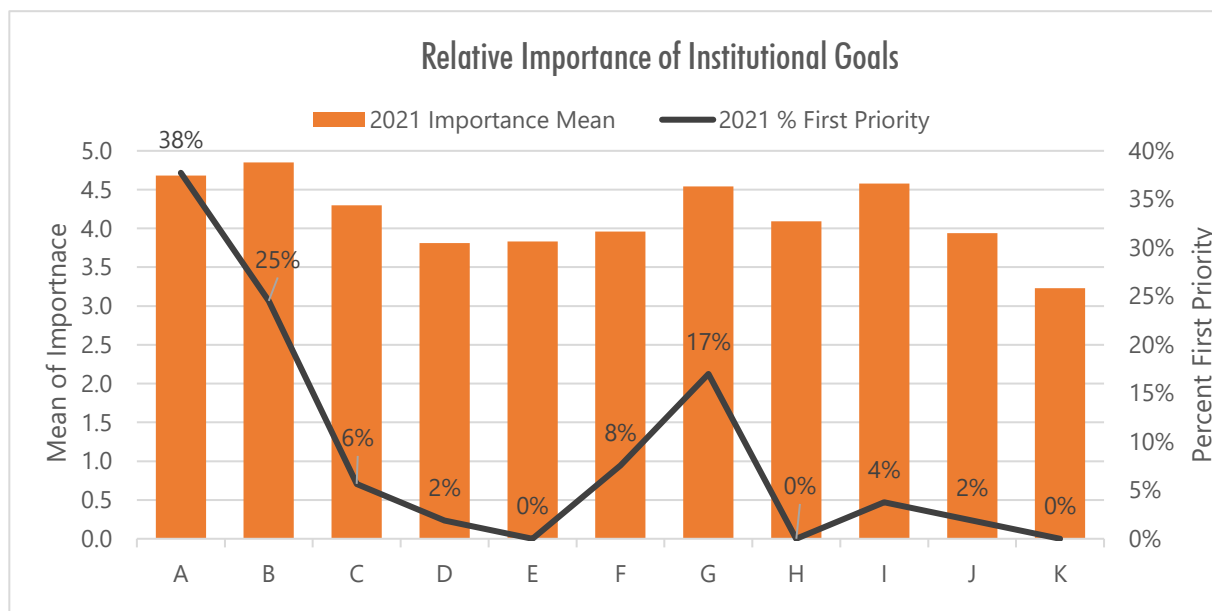
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SECTION 2: INSTITUTIONAL GOALS

Given a list of priorities, respondents rate how important it is them that the institution pursues each of the goals. A five-point rating scale is used.

Observations

- Top three goals stand out over the rest (ranked by % selected as first priority goal):
 1. Increase the enrollment of new students (A)
 2. Retain more of our current students to graduation (B, was highest first priority in 2018)
 3. Improve the quality of existing academic programs (G, was lower priority in 2018)
- Goals ranked first priority are similar to national cohort, with exception of “Improve employee morale” (I)
 - 4% of HC respondents ranked as first priority
 - 14% of national cohort ranked as first priority



Goals

A	Increase the enrollment of new students
B	Retain more of its current students to graduation
C	Improve the academic ability of entering student classes
D	Recruit students from new geographic markets
E	Increase the diversity of racial and ethnic groups represented among the student body
F	Develop new academic programs
G	Improve the quality of existing academic programs
H	Improve the appearance of campus buildings and grounds
I	Improve employee morale
J	*Improve institutional efforts and commitment toward diversity, equity, and inclusion
K	Some other goal

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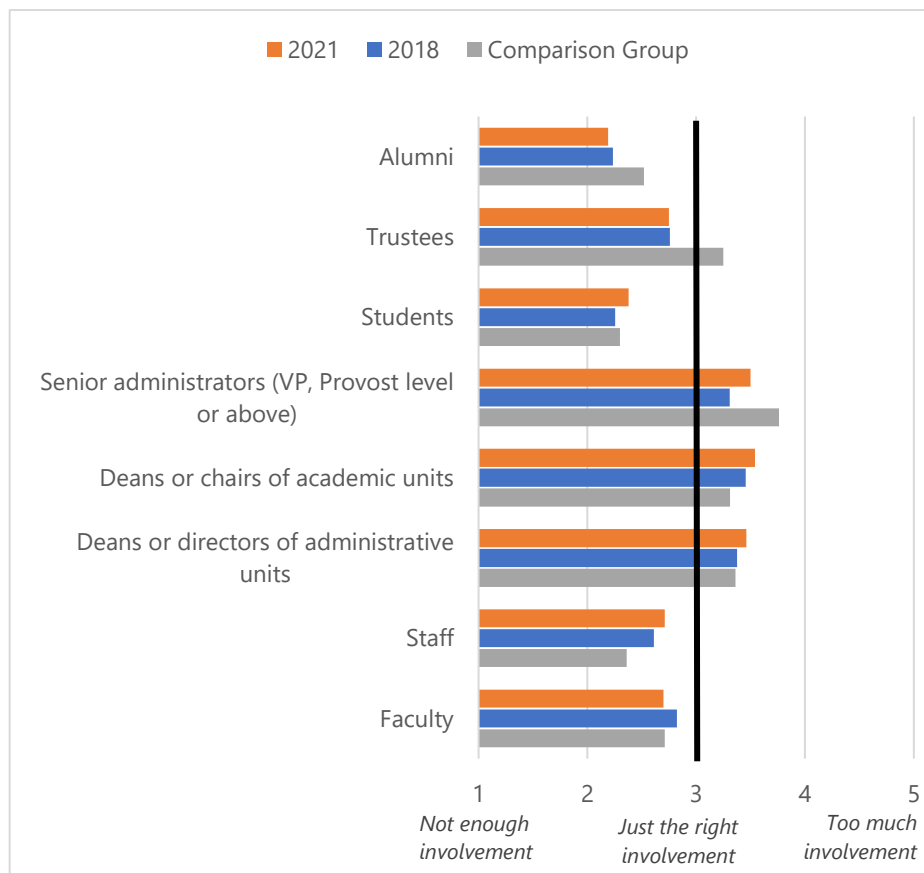
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SECTION 3: INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING & DECISION-MAKING

Respondents rate how much involvement each type of individual (faculty, staff, deans, trustees, alumni, etc.) has in the planning and decision-making process at the institution. A five-point rating scale is used.

Observations

- The most significant differences between Helena College and the comparison cohort are in the perceived level of involvement of trustees, likely because the college does not have a board of trustees.
 - Staff are perceived to be more involved at Helena College than at the comparison institutions.
 - Alumni are perceived to be less involved at HC than at comparison institutions. This has historically been a challenge for the institution.
- The only decreases between 2018 and 2021 are in perceived levels of alumni (-2%) and faculty (-4%) involvement.



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SECTION 4: WORK ENVIRONMENT

Respondents were presented with statements and asked to rate their importance to them as employees and their satisfaction. A five-point rating scale is used for both importance and satisfaction.

As in section 1, a chart was created, plotting the importance vs. satisfaction to rank institutional priorities.

Observations

- Employees find their work personally rewarding.
- Relatively high levels of satisfaction with supervisors indicate they are listening to their employees and providing sufficient support.
- The college provides adequate opportunities for professional development and training: satisfaction has increased significantly since 2018.
 - Satisfaction is also significantly higher than among the cohort comparison group.
- Resources continue to be a challenge, including fair pay, adequate staffing, and departmental budgets.
 - Satisfaction with benefits is high, and is significantly higher at HC than among the comparison group.
 - A CRM (customer relationship management) system is expected to make many tasks more efficient, though there is some skepticism that it will make up for staffing concerns.
- Some inconsistency in responses related to the availability of information.
 - Employees have information to do their jobs, but are less satisfied with their ability to get needed information.
 - The results from section one indicated a gap in inter-departmental communication, which may be a contributing factor.

Strengths

- I have the information I need to do my job well.
- My job responsibilities are communicated clearly to me.
- My supervisor pays attention to what I have to say.
- My supervisor helps me improve my job performance.
- The employee benefits available to me are valuable.
- The type of work I do on most days is personally rewarding.
- The work I do is appreciated by my supervisor.
- The work I do is valuable to the institution.
- I am proud to work at this institution.

Challenges

- It is easy for me to get information at this institution.
- My department has the budget needed to do its job well.
- My department has the staff needed to do its job well.
- I am paid fairly for the work I do.



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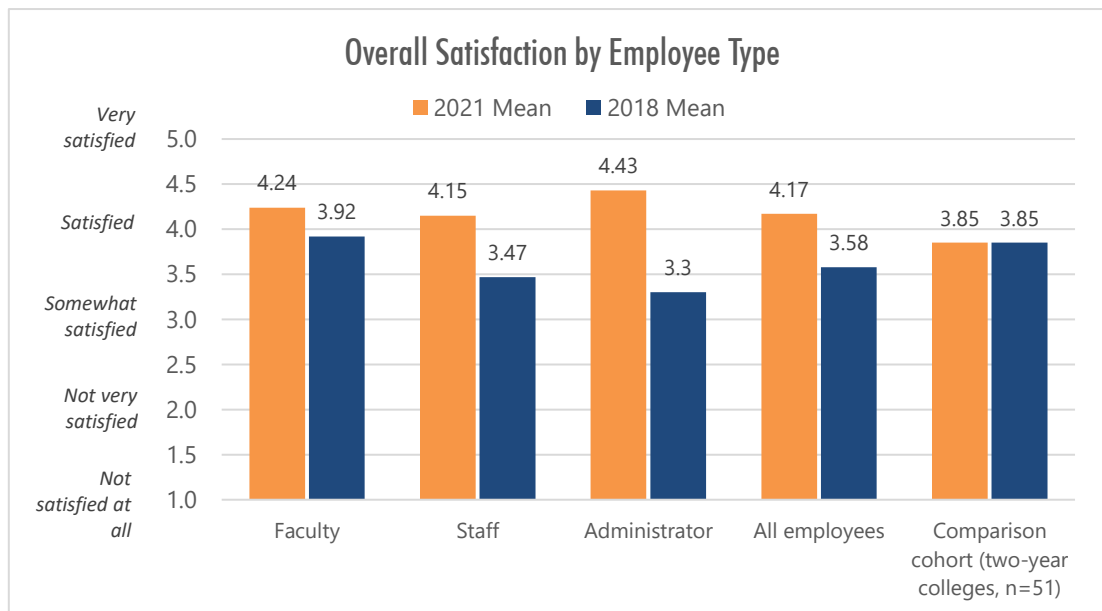
Areas Where Effort/Resources Could Be Redirected

- My department meets as a team to plan and coordinate work.
- I have adequate opportunities for training to improve my skills (37% increase in satisfaction since 2018).
- I have adequate opportunities for professional development (47% increase in satisfaction since 2018).
- I see myself working at this institution one year from now (HC custom question).

Assess Priorities

- I learn about important campus events in a timely manner.
- I am empowered to resolve problems quickly.
- I am comfortable answering student questions about institutional policies and procedures.
- My department or work unit has written, up-to-date objectives.
- I have adequate opportunities for advancement.
- I am free to be myself at this institution (HC custom question).
- I feel a sense of belonging at this institution (HC custom question).

SECTION 4: OVERALL SATISFACTION



Observations

- Employee satisfaction has increased since 2018 for all employee groups.
- Employee satisfaction is now higher than among the comparison colleges, for which the satisfaction level remained the same between 2018 and 2021.

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Key Findings: Strengths

- Employees feel that Helena College treats students as its top priority. There is a high level of commitment to the work from faculty, staff, and administration and employees find their work personally rewarding.
- Employees are generally satisfied with the support received from supervisors.
- Employees are satisfied with the opportunities available for training and professional development.
- Overall satisfaction has increased from 2018. Satisfaction did not decrease for any survey items.
- There is strong agreement on the top two goals for the college.

Key Findings: Challenges

- Employees feel they are lacking the resources to fully meet the needs of our students. This includes fair pay, adequate staffing, and departmental budgets.
- Interdepartmental communication and ability to find information also interfere with employees' ability to meet students' needs. Communication from administration
- There is room for improvement in the onboarding process, which is a collaborative effort between many departments. Effective onboarding involves both the nuts and bolts of setting up accounts, training, etc., and the act of welcoming new employees into our campus community.

Priorities

Helena College wants to ensure employees have what they need to do their jobs well, from their first day of work forward.

1. **Resources:**
 - a. Helena College is exploring strategies to diversify its income sources. This will allow us to maintain financial resilience despite changes in enrollment.
 - b. Helena College is working to align resource allocation with institutional priorities and the strategic plan.
2. **Communication:**
 - a. Identify sticking points in current information dissemination practices. Survey or discuss with employees their preferred methods of campus wide communications.
 - b. Reinforce the importance of official channels of communication and the responsibility of employees to stay up to date.
 - c. An up-to-date and reorganized website will make information easier to find.
 - d. A CRM system will make it easier for employees to obtain student data, without the need to rely on an individual or department.
3. **Onboarding:**
 - a. Work with Dean's Campus Advisory Council to develop a procedure for evaluating the onboarding process at Helena College.