

Los Rios Community College District  
Office of Institutional Research

Results of the Student Satisfaction Survey  
Conducted in Spring 2004

August 2004

During the Spring 2004 semester, the District Office of Institutional Research collaborated with the College Research Offices to conduct the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, the third administration of this student satisfaction survey since 1998. What follows is an analytical report designed to summarize the results by key areas of most importance to students, with a discussion of important items within each area, for each Los Rios college -- American River, Cosumnes River, Folsom Lake and Sacramento City. The results of this study are a first step in defining possible areas of concern to students. Although surveys are useful in identifying possible concerns, they do *not* identify *why* issues are of concern. This survey's use becomes more relevant as the results are used in the context of other studies that have been conducted, as well as with follow-up college level focus groups to be scheduled in the Fall that will provide more in depth understanding of identified concerns to use for organizational and planning purposes by each college. Although key observations are summarized below, readers are encouraged to read the full report and review the accompanying data tables that summarize all student responses, in order to understand items of importance to students of each individual college. The key observations from analysis of survey results include:

1. Across the colleges there was only **one item** on the survey about which students were somewhat dissatisfied. Of concern at only two of the four colleges, this one item is the adequacy of student parking spaces on campus. Students at ARC gave this an average satisfaction rating of 3.40, where a response of 3.00 reflects that students are somewhat dissatisfied; at SCC, the rating was 3.05. For all other items on the survey, across all college locations, students were either neutral, somewhat satisfied or satisfied. *As such, the results of this survey suggest that our colleges explore the following question. Are there ways that we might wish to review the programs and services we deliver or the ways in which we deliver them so that students are not just neutral or somewhat satisfied with them but rather they are satisfied? This may be particularly important for those items that students believe to be important or very important.*
2. Four key areas were identified as most important to students at each Los Rios colleges. Students identified these areas between *important and very important* and rated their satisfaction with these items between *neutral and somewhat satisfied*. They include Instructional Effectiveness, Counseling, Safety/Security and Registration Effectiveness. A fifth area, Admissions and Financial Aid, was ranked slightly lower in importance at some of the Los Rios colleges, but was an area where several individual items were ranked as important.
3. Comparing the levels of importance and satisfaction specified by students of other California community colleges and colleges across the U.S. that administered the Noel-Levitz Survey within the last three years, mean responses are in similar ranges. Levels of satisfaction, for the most part, are quite similar between students of California community colleges and those in Los Rios colleges, while levels are slightly higher for colleges nationally.
4. District-wide, satisfaction with Responsiveness to Diverse Populations has dropped with each survey administration, while at the same time the student population becomes more ethnically diverse. This raises some important questions to be explored through the focus group research that is slated to follow this study or through other campus-based reviews: *Have we designed support systems that work better for traditional student populations? Are these systems effective for ethnic minority students? Are there ways that we might modify service delivery to better serve this growing student population?*
5. Issues identified for further study in the area of **Instruction** (identified at more than one college):
  - Are students being notified early enough in the term when they are doing poorly in class?
  - Is there a sufficient variety of courses provided on the campus?
  - Are students' unique life circumstances understood by faculty?
  - Is the variety of course offerings sufficient?

6. Issues identified for further study in the area of **Counseling** (identified at more than one college):
  - Do students have ready access to counseling staff?
  - Is communication between counselors and students effective, such that students feel they have assistance in setting goals to work toward, have help in reaching educational goals, and feel cared about as individuals?
  - Is communication between counselors and students effective, such that students understand program requirements and understand transfer requirements?
7. Issues identified for further study in the area of **Safety/Security** (identified at more than one college):
  - Do security staff members currently have the ability to respond quickly enough to emergencies?
  - Is the campus safe and secure enough and are the parking lots well-lighted and secure enough?
  - Is the amount of parking sufficient at our two larger college campuses?
8. Issues identified for further study in the area of **Registration** (identified at more than one college):
  - Should class schedules be reviewed to ensure that courses are offered at convenient times for students?
  - Should the registration process be reviewed to ensure that students can register with few conflicts?
9. Issues identified for further study in the area of **Admissions and Financial Aid** (identified at more than one college):
  - Is there sufficient communication with students about the availability of financial aid?
  - Are financial aid awards being announced to students in time to be helpful in their college planning?
  - Is communication between financial aid staff and students effective, so students feel they are being helped?
  - Do admissions staff respond effectively to prospective students' unique needs and requests?
10. **Other Issues** identified for further study (identified at more than one college):
  - Are there sufficient channels readily available for students to express complaints and make suggestions?
  - Are there adequate services available to help students decide upon a career?
  - Are there sufficient opportunities for internships or practical experiences related to degree and certificate programs?

## Introduction

During the Spring 2004 semester, the District Office of Institutional Research collaborated with the College Research Offices to conduct the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, the third administration of this student satisfaction survey since 1998. Random samples of courses were drawn for each college, stratified by day and evening, in order to have a representative response from both day and evening students. These stratified random samples were also generated to ensure that they closely replicated enrollment by age, gender and ethnicity. A sub-committee of researchers district-wide collaborated with a faculty representative appointed by the Academic Senate who helped the committee to re-define terms used on the survey instrument that are not used by our colleges, so that students would better understand the questions being asked. This was done at the request of Student Services personnel to ensure student understanding of services they were being asked to evaluate. Research Coordinators at each college trained student researchers from the Psych 335 courses, (Research Methods in Psychology) to administer the survey in the same way at each location, explaining the definitions of the terms that follow:

**Table 1: Glossary of Terms to Help Students Answer the Questions on the Survey**

Term Used on The Survey	Equals the following LRCCD Term
Academic Advisor	Counselor in Counseling Center or in EOPS, DSPS, CalWORKs or Athletic offices
Academic Support Services	Learning Resources (such as Library Services, Tutoring Services, etc.)
Admissions Counselor	College Representative/Counselor Who Helps You Make Decisions About Attending Our College
Faculty	Instructor/Professor
Financial Aid Counselor	Financial Aid Staff
Enrollment Status	When you take the majority of your classes: Day = Up to 4:30 PM      Evening = After 4:30 PM      Weekend = Saturday and Sunday
Full-Time	Taking 12 Units or More
Part-Time	Taking less than 12 Units

In addition, if students did not receive a service or participate in a program that was specified in a given question, they were asked to select "Not available/not used" when specifying satisfaction with it.

## Who responded to the survey?

Respondents were asked a series of demographic questions that provide the following summary profile of who responded to the survey:

**Table 2: Demography as Reported by Respondents on Survey**

	ARC	CRC	FLC	SCC	District Summary
Gender					
Female	62.57%	59.65%	64.82%	63.13%	62.57%
Male	37.43%	40.35%	35.18%	36.87%	37.43%
Ethnicity					
African American	7.25%	10.59%	2.23%	10.42%	7.54%
Native American	1.21%	0.88%	3.06%	1.19%	1.61%
Asian	8.16%	27.35%	5.57%	20.54%	15.30%
Hispanic	9.37%	14.41%	5.57%	13.69%	10.69%
White	59.52%	27.94%	70.75%	36.90%	49.05%
Other	5.74%	10.00%	2.79%	7.44%	6.44%
Preferred not to respond	8.76%	8.82%	10.03%	9.82%	9.37%
Age					
18 and under	9.37%	12.24%	14.96%	10.65%	11.87%
19 to 24	54.98%	55.98%	42.94%	52.07%	51.35%
25 to 34	15.41%	13.41%	12.74%	15.38%	14.20%
35 to 44	9.97%	9.62%	13.57%	12.13%	11.36%
45 and over	10.27%	8.75%	15.79%	9.76%	11.22%
Full-Time vs. Part-Time					
Full-time	55.29%	60.82%	43.77%	60.47%	54.92%
Part-time	44.71%	39.18%	56.23%	39.53%	45.08%
Primary Time of Attendance					
Day	76.16%	73.25%	62.50%	75.15%	71.70%
Evening	23.84%	26.44%	36.31%	24.55%	27.85%
Weekend	0.00%	0.30%	1.19%	0.30%	0.46%

**Table 2 (continued):**

<b>Demography of Respondents</b>	<b>ARC</b>	<b>CRC</b>	<b>FLC</b>	<b>SCC</b>	<b>District Summary</b>
Years in Attendance					
1 year or less	38.14%	43.11%	45.13%	39.53%	41.55%
2 years	29.13%	31.96%	28.41%	32.15%	30.39%
3 years	18.02%	13.78%	17.27%	15.93%	16.25%
4 or more years	14.71%	11.14%	9.19%	12.39%	11.81%
Employment					
Full-time, off-campus	29.18%	27.35%	36.57%	27.73%	30.31%
Part-time, off-campus	38.30%	41.47%	38.78%	38.64%	39.30%
Full-time, on-campus	0.61%	0.59%	0.28%	2.36%	0.95%
Part-time on-campus	3.34%	2.06%	2.49%	4.13%	2.99%
Not employed	28.57%	28.53%	21.88%	27.14%	26.44%
Goal					
Associate degree	24.01%	21.24%	26.61%	26.95%	24.72%
Vocational/tech. program	1.82%	1.47%	1.40%	4.49%	2.28%
Transfer	57.75%	58.41%	45.94%	45.81%	51.88%
Certification (initial/renewal)	5.17%	2.95%	0.56%	7.19%	3.90%
Self improvement	2.74%	5.31%	12.04%	5.39%	6.48%
Job-related retraining	2.74%	1.77%	1.68%	4.49%	2.65%
Other	5.78%	8.85%	11.76%	5.69%	8.09%
Current GPA (Self Reported)					
No credits earned	7.23%	11.82%	11.33%	11.41%	10.49%
1.99 or below	3.14%	4.85%	1.13%	2.70%	2.92%
2.0 to 2.49	14.47%	11.82%	6.80%	13.81%	11.62%
2.5 to 2.99	20.13%	24.85%	19.55%	21.02%	21.36%
3.0 to 3.49	32.70%	28.48%	26.35%	27.03%	28.56%
3.5 and above	22.33%	18.18%	34.84%	24.02%	25.04%
Place of Residence					
Residence hall*	0.30%	0.00%	0.28%	0.29%	0.22%
Own house	18.18%	25.37%	33.52%	20.88%	24.67%
Rented room or apartment	36.36%	17.11%	20.78%	32.65%	26.57%
Parent's home	39.09%	51.92%	39.06%	37.94%	41.97%
Other	6.06%	5.60%	6.37%	8.24%	6.57%
College as Choice					
1 <sup>st</sup> Choice	72.56%	64.60%	75.28%	71.56%	71.04%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Choice	19.21%	26.55%	18.26%	18.86%	20.71%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Choice or lower	8.23%	8.85%	6.46%	9.58%	8.25%
Residential Classification					
In-state	96.68%	97.06%	97.51%	95.86%	96.79%
Out-of-state	0.60%	1.18%	0.28%	0.89%	0.73%
International	2.72%	1.76%	2.22%	3.25%	2.48%
Physical or Diagnosed Learning Disability	13.41%	6.78%	8.08%	7.10%	8.80%

\* Presumably a local university student who enrolled in LRCCD.

This profile of respondents shows some interesting differences among each college's student respondents:

- The three established colleges have more day students, with roughly three-quarters of their respondents indicating that they attend primarily in the day, while FLC has only two-thirds of its students stating that they attend primarily in the day.
- ARC has a slightly higher proportion of disabled student respondents, at 13.41% compared to FLC's 8.08%, SCC's 7.10% and CRC's 6.78%.
- CRC and SCC have more full time students, at 60.82% and 60.47%, respectively, compared to 55.29% at ARC and 43.77% at FLC.

However, the most important difference lie in the following area:

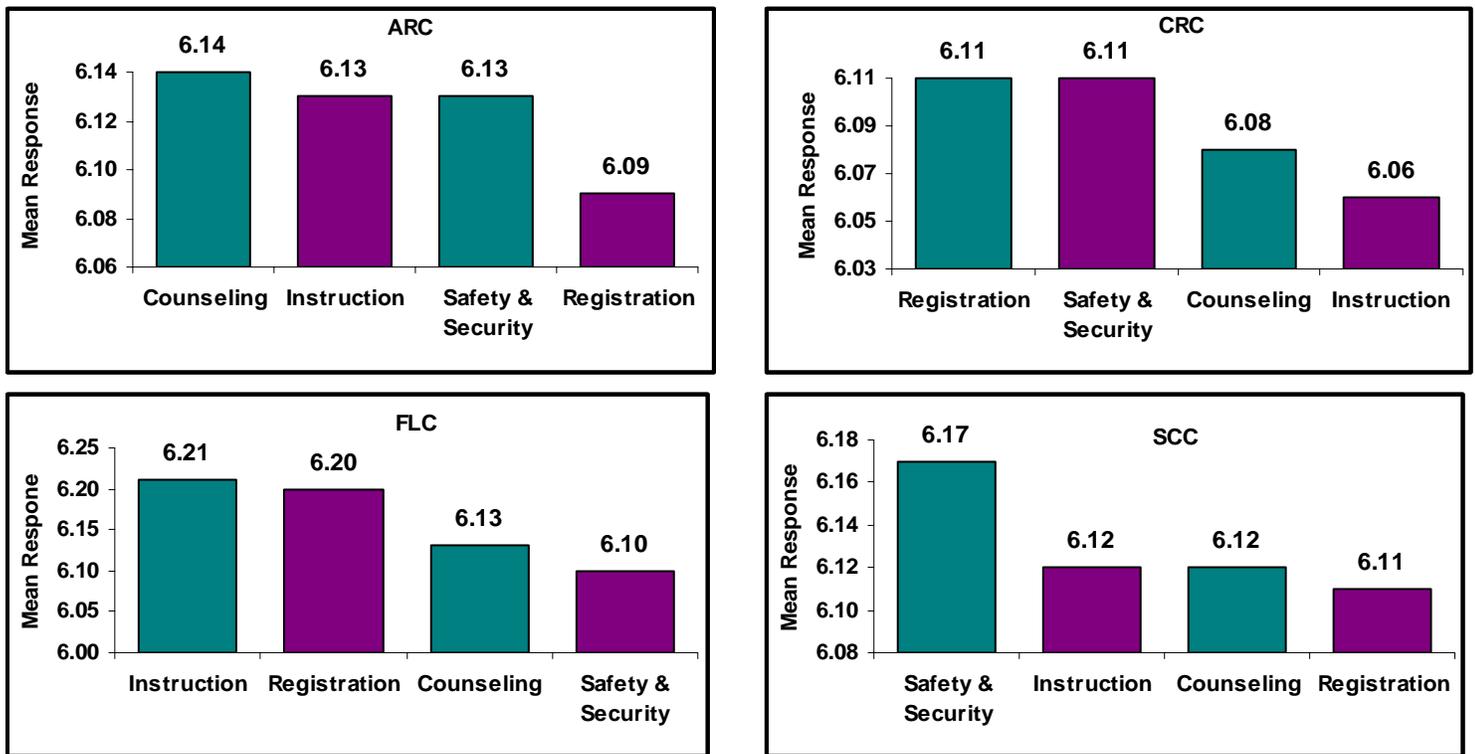
- CRC and SCC have a profoundly different ethnic mix of respondents than ARC and FLC. There are far more ethnic minority respondents from these two colleges, with only 27.94% white respondents at CRC and 36.90% white respondents from SCC; this compares with 59.52% from ARC and 70.75% from FLC.

## Composite Experiences of Importance

Noel-Levitz collapses the specific items or questions on the survey into 11 composite scales or experiences. These include: Academic Advising/Counseling; Academic/Learning Resource Services; Admissions and Financial Aid; Campus Climate; Campus Support Services; Concern for the Individual; Instructional Effectiveness; Registration Effectiveness; Safety and Security; Service Excellence (attitude of staff toward students, especially front-line staff); and Student Centeredness (campus effort to convey to students that they are important to college). The survey provides a 12<sup>th</sup> area, but only for a satisfaction measure about Responsiveness to Diverse Populations; there is no equivalent importance measure for this area.

Although the rank order varies at each college, the same four composite areas are most important to student respondents at all four of the Los Rios colleges -- Instructional Effectiveness, Counseling, Registration Effectiveness and Safety/Security. The following chart provides the rank order of these composite areas at each college.

Chart 1: Areas of Most Importance to Student Respondents at Each LRCCD College



Mean Importance Scores: 1 = Not Important at All; 2 = Not Very Important; 3 = Somewhat Unimportant; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat Important; 6 = Important; and 7=Very Important. There is also a selection called "Does Not Apply."

Students rank the areas by importance and satisfaction on individual items that comprise each area. The following table provides a summary of the twelve composite areas by college within LRCCD, including the mean level of importance, mean level of satisfaction and the gap between the two. Gaps that are 1.25 or higher may be worth noting as possible areas of concern appear in bold print. Comparative state and national level data are also provided for colleges that administered this survey within the last three years.

**Table 3: Results for the 2004 Composite Areas: LRCCD, California and U.S. Community Colleges That Administered the Survey**

	Mean Level of Importance Mean Level of Satisfaction Gap Between the Two						
	ARC	CRC	FLC	SCC	District Summary	California	U.S.
1. Instructional Effectiveness	6.13 5.13 1.00	6.06 4.89 1.17	6.21 5.30 0.91	6.12 5.13 0.99	6.13 5.11 1.02	6.11 5.18 0.93	6.14 5.31 0.83
2. Academic Advising/Counseling	6.14 4.90 1.24	6.08 4.62 <b>1.46</b>	6.13 4.89 1.24	6.12 4.66 <b>1.46</b>	6.12 4.77 <b>1.35</b>	6.12 4.98 1.14	6.08 5.10 0.98
3. Safety & Security	6.13 4.51 <b>1.62</b>	6.11 4.56 <b>1.55</b>	6.10 4.91 1.19	6.17 4.30 <b>1.87</b>	6.13 4.57 <b>1.56</b>	6.03 4.62 <b>1.41</b>	5.95 4.81 1.14
4. Registration Effectiveness	6.09 5.14 0.95	6.11 4.92 1.19	6.20 5.32 0.88	6.11 5.19 0.92	6.13 5.14 0.99	6.13 5.17 0.96	6.11 5.31 0.80
5. Admissions & Financial Aid	5.89 4.61 <b>1.28</b>	5.82 4.38 <b>1.44</b>	5.91 4.81 1.10	6.01 4.60 <b>1.41</b>	5.91 4.59 <b>1.32</b>	5.94 4.85 1.09	5.96 5.00 0.96
6. Academic Services/ Learning Resources	5.95 5.15 0.80	5.97 4.86 1.11	6.08 5.38 0.70	6.02 5.19 0.83	6.01 5.14 0.87	6.01 5.20 0.81	5.98 5.30 0.68
7. Campus Climate	5.75 4.89 0.86	5.75 4.70 1.05	5.82 5.19 0.63	5.80 4.85 0.95	5.78 4.91 0.87	5.86 5.01 0.85	5.91 5.19 0.72
8. Campus Support Services	5.32 4.65 0.67	5.31 4.52 0.79	5.29 4.60 0.69	5.50 4.78 0.72	5.35 4.63 0.72	5.44 4.81 0.63	5.39 4.85 0.54
9. Concern for the Individual	5.97 4.90 1.07	5.93 4.63 <b>1.30</b>	6.01 5.08 0.93	6.00 4.79 1.21	5.98 4.85 1.13	6.01 4.96 1.05	6.04 5.13 0.91
10. Service Excellence	5.75 4.82 0.93	5.79 4.71 1.08	5.89 5.22 0.67	5.79 4.86 0.93	5.81 4.90 0.91	5.87 4.99 0.88	5.89 5.13 0.76
11. Student Centeredness	5.71 4.96 0.75	5.74 4.77 0.97	5.80 5.27 0.53	5.78 4.94 0.84	5.76 4.99 0.77	5.84 5.08 0.76	5.91 5.26 0.65
Satisfaction with College Responsiveness to Diverse Populations (no comparable importance measure)	5.19	5.00	5.29	5.22	5.17	5.26	5.37

Importance Scores: 1=Not Important at All; 2=Not Very Important; 3=Somewhat Unimportant; 4=Neutral; 5=Somewhat Important; 6=Important; and 7=Very Important. There is also a selection called "Does Not Apply."

Satisfaction Scores: 1=Not Satisfied at All; 2=Not Very Satisfied; 3=Somewhat Dissatisfied; 4=Neutral; 5=Somewhat Satisfied; 6=Satisfied; and 7=Very Satisfied. There is also a selection called "Not Available/Not Used."

Gap scores: The mean importance rating minus the mean satisfaction rating. Gaps that are 1.25 or higher may be worth noting as possible areas of concern. They appear in bold print.

Seven of the eleven survey areas reviewed by Los Rios students show that levels of importance and satisfaction are very close together. These include: Academic/Learning Resources, Campus Climate, Campus Support Services, Instructional Effectiveness, Registration Effectiveness, Service Excellence and Student Centeredness. Four of the twelve composite areas may be of concern and in need of further review for Los Rios colleges, meaning that there is a gap at or above the threshold of 1.25 between an area's importance and student satisfaction with it. These areas include: Safety and Security for ARC, CRC and SCC; Admissions and Financial Aid for ARC, CRC and SCC; Academic Advising/Counseling at CRC and SCC and Concern for the Individual at CRC, noting that Concern for the Individual is not ranked as an area of highest importance to students.

It's important to note that for all of the areas in the table above, the **District Summary** shows that students district-wide rated the "**Level of Importance**" between *important and very important* in the first four items, and close to *important* in all but one of the remaining areas, Campus Support Services, which rates as *somewhat important*. In terms of the "**Level of Satisfaction**," Instructional Effectiveness rates at *Somewhat Satisfied*, as does Registration Effectiveness, while the other nine areas rate between *neutral and somewhat satisfied*. Moreover, the levels of importance and satisfaction specified by students of other California community colleges and colleges across the U.S. that administered the Noel-Levitz Survey within the last three years are in similar ranges. Levels of satisfaction, for the most part, are quite similar between students of California community colleges and those in Los Rios colleges, and slightly higher for colleges nationally.

Furthermore, across the colleges there was only **one individual item** on the survey about which students were not either neutral, somewhat satisfied, satisfied or very satisfied. Of concern at only two of the four colleges, this item is the adequacy of student parking spaces on campus. Students at ARC gave this an average satisfaction rating of 3.40, where 3.00 reflects that students are somewhat dissatisfied; at SCC the rating was 3.05. For all other items on the survey, across all college locations, students were either neutral, somewhat satisfied or satisfied. *As such, the results of this survey suggest that our colleges explore the following question. Are there ways that we might wish to review the programs and services we deliver or the ways in which we deliver them so that students are not just neutral or somewhat satisfied with them but rather are satisfied? This may be particularly important for those items that students believe to be important or very important.*

What follows is a closer look at the individual items within each of the four areas that are ranked highest in importance to provide the detail behind the general areas of importance. It is this more detailed information that will help to determine those issues that might be explored by the colleges, either through focus group follow-up to identify *why* students are neutral or somewhat satisfied, rather than satisfied or very satisfied or through staff meetings where college planning teams set their priorities for upcoming semesters/academic years.

## American River College

In the area of **Instructional Effectiveness**, 14 specific items were evaluated in terms of importance and satisfaction. Of these, there were small differences between the levels of importance and satisfaction in all but two. As such, students generally believe the quality of instruction is excellent, that faculty care about them as individuals, that faculty are fair and unbiased, provide timely feedback about student progress, are interested in academic problems that students have, consider student differences when teaching, are knowledgeable in their fields and are available after class and during office hours. They also believe that nearly all classes deal with practical experiences and applications, that there are a good variety of courses provided, that program requirements are clear and reasonable and that they are able to experience intellectual growth at ARC.

There were larger gaps between importance and satisfaction in two areas of Instructional Effectiveness, which might be an indication of student concern. These include faculty understanding of students' unique life circumstances and notification early in the term if they are doing poorly in a class. On average, students rated these two items between important and very important; satisfaction was rated between neutral or somewhat satisfied.

In the area of **Counseling**, there were small differences between the levels of importance and satisfaction to students for three of the seven areas. These areas include: advisors/counselors are approachable, they help students to set goals to work toward and they care about students as individuals.

There may, however, be student concern about the following four items, where there were larger differences between importance and satisfaction: counselor concern about their success as individuals, counselor knowledge about program requirements and about transfer requirements of other colleges/universities and that the college does whatever it can to help students reach educational goals. On these four items importance was rated between important and very important; satisfaction was generally rated between neutral or somewhat satisfied.

In the area of **Safety and Security**, five specific items were evaluated by students who took the survey. There were small differences between the levels of importance and satisfaction for two of the five: security staff members are helpful and the campus is safe and secure for all students.

There may be student concern about three items, where there are larger differences between importance and satisfaction. These items include how quickly security staff members respond in emergencies, and about the lighting and security in parking lots. Importance was rated between important and very important; satisfaction was generally rated between neutral and somewhat satisfied. Adequacy of the number of student parking spaces on campus is an issue to students, as the average satisfaction rating on this item was somewhat dissatisfied. This item is viewed as important to ARC students.

In the area of **Registration Effectiveness**, nine items were asked of student respondents. Of these, there were small differences between the levels of importance and satisfaction in all but two. The six items with small differences include: how helpful personnel are with registration; policies and procedures about registration, as well as course selection are clear and well-published; drop/add policies are reasonable; the business office hours are convenient; billing policies are reasonable; and bookstore staff are helpful.

The two issues with larger differences between importance and satisfaction are whether classes are scheduled at convenient times and whether students experience conflicts in registering for classes. Students evaluated these items as important and were somewhat satisfied with them.

Although **Admissions and Financial Aid** did not rank as high in importance as the first four areas listed above, it nonetheless is an area where there are several items that might be of concern for ARC. Of the six specific items in that were evaluated by students, there are small gaps between level of importance and satisfaction for three of them. These include: counselors and other staff accurately portray the campus in their recruiting practices; admissions staff members are knowledgeable; and they respond to prospective students' unique needs and requests. The three items with larger differences between importance and satisfaction are: the availability of financial aid for most students; whether financial aid awards are announced in time to be helpful to students in college planning; and whether financial aid staff members are helpful. These items were rated as important and their satisfaction level was rated as neutral or somewhat satisfied.

Although not ranked as part of the most important areas by students at ARC, there are three **additional items** where there is a gap between importance and satisfaction: internships or practical experience related to degree/certificate programs; college concern for students as individuals; ready availability of channels for expressing student complaints; and help in getting a job from the career services office. These items were rated between somewhat important and important and their satisfaction level was rated between neutral and somewhat satisfied.

## Cosumnes River College

In the area of **Instructional Effectiveness**, of the 14 specific items evaluated, there were small differences between the levels of importance and satisfaction in all but five. Students generally feel that the quality of instruction is excellent, that faculty care about them as individuals, that faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in courses, are interested in students academic problems, are knowledgeable in their fields and that they make themselves available after class and during office hours. They also believe that nearly all classes deal with practical experiences and applications, that program requirements are clear and reasonable and that they are able to experience intellectual growth at the college.

There were larger gaps between importance and satisfaction in the following five areas -- faculty understanding of students' unique life circumstances, fair and unbiased treatment of individual students, that student differences are taken into consideration as faculty teach courses, and that student are notified early in the term if they are doing poorly in a class. There was also a large gap between importance and satisfaction about the variety of courses that are offered at CRC. Whereas importance was rated between important and very important, satisfaction was rated between neutral and somewhat satisfied on these five items.

In the area of **Counseling**, there may be concern about all seven items, as indicated by the gaps between importance (which was rated between important and very important) and satisfaction (which was rated between neutral and somewhat satisfied). These items include: counselor concern about their success as individuals; approachability; help in setting goals to work towards; knowledge about program requirements and about transfer requirements of other schools; care about students as individuals; and that the college does whatever it can to help students reach educational goals.

In the area of **Safety and Security**, importance and satisfaction were rated similarly for one of the five items -- students believe that security staff members are helpful.

Concern may exist about the following areas where there were larger differences between importance and satisfaction. These include how quickly security staff respond in emergencies, the lighting and security of parking lots, safety and security for students on campus and the adequacy of the amount of student parking. These items were rated between somewhat important and important, while satisfaction levels were between neutral and somewhat satisfied.

Of the nine items related to **Registration Effectiveness**, there were small differences between the levels of importance and satisfaction in all but three. The five items with close alignment include: helpfulness of the personnel involved in registration; the clarity of policies and procedures to register and select courses; reasonable drop/add policies; convenient ways to pay school bills; the convenience of business office hours; and helpfulness of bookstore staff.

Larger gaps between importance and satisfaction were expressed about the reasonableness of billing policies, the ability to register for needed classes without conflict and concern about classes being scheduled at convenient times. Whereas these three items were rated between important and very important, their satisfaction levels were between neutral somewhat satisfied.

Although **Admissions and Financial Aid** did not rank as high in importance as the four areas listed above, it nonetheless is an area where there are items of importance to students at CRC. Of the six items related to this area, importance and satisfaction are closely aligned for one of them -- counselors and other staff accurately portray the campus in their recruiting practices.

There were larger differences between importance and satisfaction about how knowledgeable staff members are, whether financial aid is available for most students and whether financial aid staff are helpful. There were also larger differences related to whether financial aid awards are announced in time to be helpful in college planning, how knowledgeable the admissions staff is, how helpful the financial aid staff is, and whether admissions staff respond to perspective students' unique needs and requests.

Although the following seven **additional items** were not part of the most important areas to students at CRC, there was a gap between importance and satisfaction, suggesting more items of possible concern to students. These include: whether there are sufficient study areas on campus, whether students feel that administrators are approachable, whether students get the "run-around" when seeking information on the campus, whether channels are readily available for expressing student complaints, whether services are adequate to help students decide upon a career and whether the career services office provides students with the help they need to get a job. The final two items are the adequacy and availability of computer labs and the provision of internships or practical experiences related to degree/certificate programs. These items were rated between somewhat important and important and their satisfaction levels were rated as neutral or somewhat satisfied.

## Folsom Lake College

In the area of **Instructional Effectiveness**, of the 14 specific items evaluated, there were small differences between the levels of importance and satisfaction in all but two. Of the twelve items with small differences, all were viewed as important. Students generally feel that faculty care about them as individuals, that the quality of instruction in most classes is excellent, that faculty understand students' unique life circumstances and that they treat individual students in a fair and unbiased way. They also feel that faculty take into consideration student differences as they teach courses, provide feedback about student progress in courses, show interest in students' academic problems and are usually available after class and during office hours. Classes are viewed as providing practical experiences and applications, program requirements are clear and reasonable and faculty members are viewed as being knowledgeable in their fields.

The two areas where there are differences between importance and satisfaction expressed by FLC students are how early in the term students are notified if they are doing poorly in a class and the variety of courses provided by the college. Students rated these two items as important and evaluated their level of satisfaction as between neutral and somewhat satisfied.

In the area of **Counseling**, of the seven specific items evaluated, there were small differences between the levels of importance and satisfaction in three -- counselors are approachable, they help students set goals to work toward and they care about students as individuals.

The four items where there were differences between levels of importance and satisfaction are whether staff are concerned about the success of students as individuals and their knowledge about program requirements and transfer requirements to other colleges. The final items identified were whether the college does whatever it can to help students reach their educational goals. These items were rated as important or close to important and students were neutral to somewhat satisfied with them.

Of the five items related to **Safety and Security**, there were small differences between the levels of importance and satisfaction in all but two. As such, students view security staff as helpful, they believe parking lots are well-lighted and secure and they believe that the campus is safe and secure for all students.

Student respondents suggested differences between the levels of importance and satisfaction about whether security staff respond quickly in emergencies and whether the amount of parking spaces on campus are adequate. Whereas these two items were viewed as important or close to important, satisfaction levels were between neutral and somewhat satisfied.

Of the nine items related to **Registration Effectiveness**, there were small differences between the levels of importance and satisfaction for six of them. Students feel that: personnel involved in registration are helpful; policies and procedures regarding registration and course selection are clear and well-publicized; drop/add policies are reasonable; and bookstore staff are helpful. Students also feel that the business office is open at convenient times and that there are convenient ways to pay school bills.

Differences between importance and satisfaction were suggested about classes being scheduled at convenient times for students and conflicts in registering for classes. Both items were rated to be important; their satisfaction levels were between neutral and somewhat satisfied.

Although **Admissions and Financial Aid** did not rank as high in importance as the four areas listed above, it nonetheless is an area where there are items of importance to students at FLC. There were small differences between importance and satisfaction for three of the six items. Students feel that admissions staff members are knowledgeable, that they respond to prospective students' unique needs and requests and that they accurately portray the campus in their recruiting practices. There are larger differences between importance and satisfaction about whether there is adequate financial aid available for most students, whether financial aid awards are announced to students in time to be helpful in college planning and whether financial aid staff members are helpful. These three items were rated as (or close to) important; satisfaction ratings were neutral to somewhat satisfied.

There are three **additional items** for which there was a gap between importance and satisfaction, suggesting more items of possible concern to students. These include a concern about having readily available channels for expressing student complaints, whether there are adequate services to help students decide upon a career and whether there are internships or practical experiences related to degree/certificate programs. These two items were rated close to important and satisfaction was rated between neutral and somewhat satisfied.

## Sacramento City College

In the area of **Instructional Effectiveness**, there were small differences between the levels of importance and satisfaction in all of the 14 specific items evaluated by student respondents. Students generally feel that faculty care about them as individuals, that the quality of instruction in most classes is excellent, that faculty understand students' unique life circumstances and that they treat individual students in a fair and unbiased way. They also feel that faculty take into consideration student differences as they teach courses, provide feedback about student progress in courses, show interest in students' academic problems and are usually available after class and during office hours. Classes are viewed as providing practical experiences and applications, program requirements are clear and reasonable and faculty members are viewed as being knowledgeable in their fields. Students also feel that they are notified early in the term if they are doing poorly in a class and they consider the variety of courses provided by the college to be adequate.

In the area of **Counseling**, there were differences between the importance ratings and satisfaction ratings for all of the items. The items include counselor concern about their success as individuals, approachability, help in setting goals to work towards, knowledge about program requirements and about transfer requirements of other schools, care about students as individuals and that the college does whatever it can to help students reach educational goals. All of the seven items were rated as important and satisfaction related to each was rated between neutral and somewhat satisfied.

In terms of the five items that make up the area called **Safety and Security**, there were small differences in the importance and satisfaction of students on one of the five items. Students believe that security staff members are helpful.

Differences between importance and satisfaction were suggested about how quickly security staff members respond in emergencies, about the lighting and security in parking lots and about how quickly security staff respond in emergencies, the lighting and security of parking lots, and safety security for students on campus. All were evaluated as important and satisfaction was rated between neutral and somewhat satisfied. The amount of student parking space is an issue to students, as the average satisfaction rating on this item was somewhat dissatisfied. This item is viewed as important to SCC students.

Of the nine items related to **Registration Effectiveness**, there were small differences between the levels of importance and satisfaction in all but one of them. Students feel that personnel involved in registration are helpful, that policies and procedures regarding registration and course selection are clear and well-publicized, that drop/add policies are reasonable, that classes are scheduled at times that are convenient and that bookstore staff are helpful. Students also feel that the business office is open at convenient times and that there are convenient ways to pay school bills.

Differences between importance and satisfaction were suggested about classes being scheduled at convenient times for students. The average student rating was between important and very important; the satisfaction rating was somewhat satisfied.

Although **Admissions and Financial Aid** did not rank as high as the four areas of most importance, it nonetheless is an area where there may be items of concern to students at SCC. Of the six items related to this area, importance and

satisfaction are closely aligned for two of them -- counselors and other staff accurately portray the campus in their recruiting practices and admissions staff members are knowledgeable.

Concern may exist about the remaining items -- whether adequate financial aid is available for most students, whether financial aid staff are helpful, and concern about announcing financial aid awards in time to be helpful in college planning. Others are how helpful financial aid staff is, and whether admissions staff members respond to perspective students' unique needs and requests. For all four of these items, students rated them as important and were either neutral or somewhat satisfied with them.

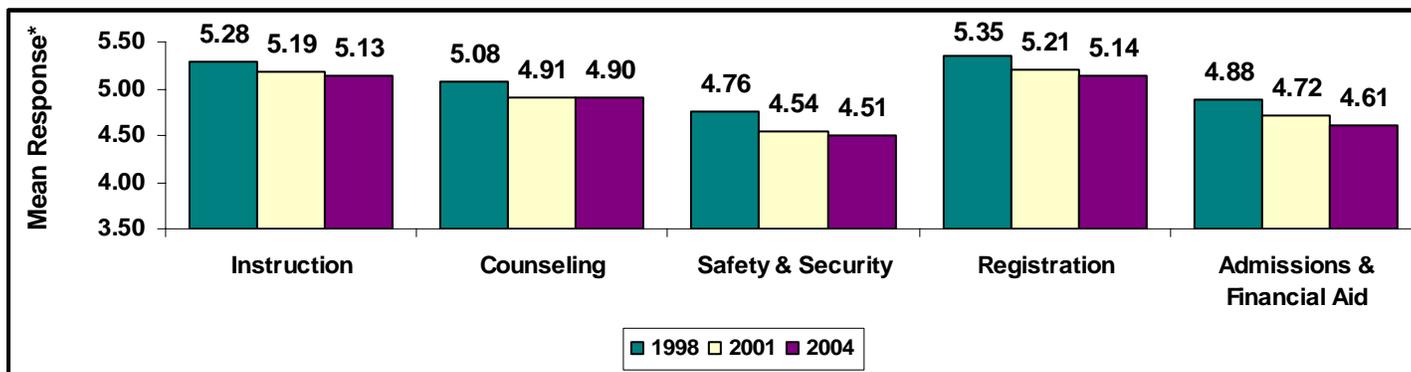
There are three **additional items** for which there was a gap between importance and satisfaction, suggesting more items of possible concern to students. There was a gap between importance and satisfaction about whether services are adequate to help students decide upon a career, whether there are adequate channels readily available for expressing student complaints and whether there are internships or practical experiences related to degree/certificate programs. Students ranked these between somewhat important and important and rated their satisfaction with them between neutral and somewhat satisfied.

## General Comparisons to Levels of Satisfaction in Previous Years

Looking at the five major areas of importance for which individual items were reviewed above for each college, some important observations can be made about how mean levels of satisfaction have changed over time.

Chart 2 shows that at American River College the mean levels of satisfaction for each of the five area dropped slightly in 2001 from the 1998 levels, but that in 2004, most remained relatively unchanged, with the exception of satisfaction with admissions and financial aid, which dropped by a comparable amount to that of three years earlier.

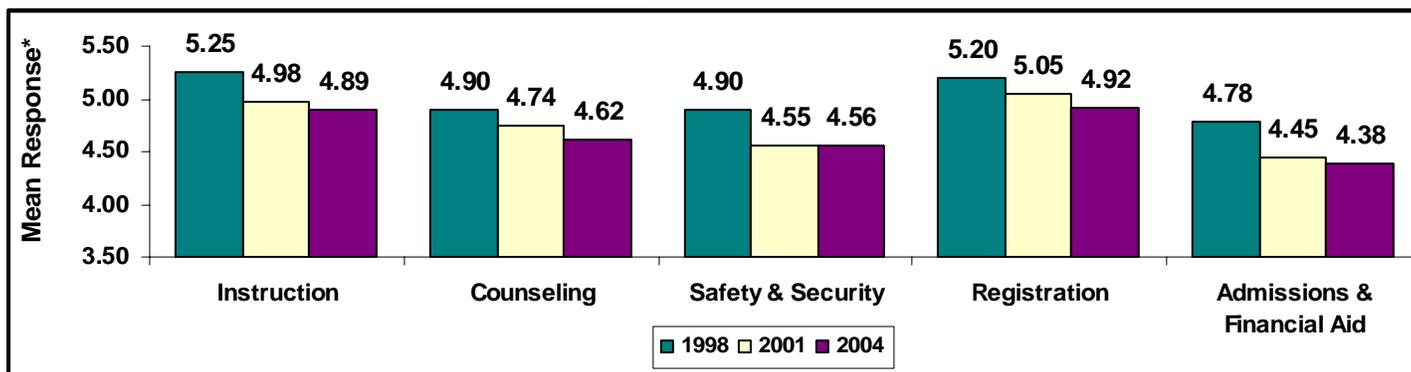
Chart 2: Mean Levels of Satisfaction at American River College across the Five Major Areas of the Survey: 1998, 2001 and 2004



\* Mean Satisfaction Scores: 1 = Not Satisfied at All; 2 = Not Very Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Dissatisfied; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat Satisfied; 6 = Satisfied; and 7 = Very Satisfied. There is also a selection called "Not Available/Not Used."

Chart 3 shows that at Cosumnes River College the mean levels of satisfaction for each of the five areas dropped in 2001 from their 1998 levels. Likewise, the levels for instruction, counseling, registration and admissions/financial aid dropped again in 2004. Safety/Security remained relatively unchanged.

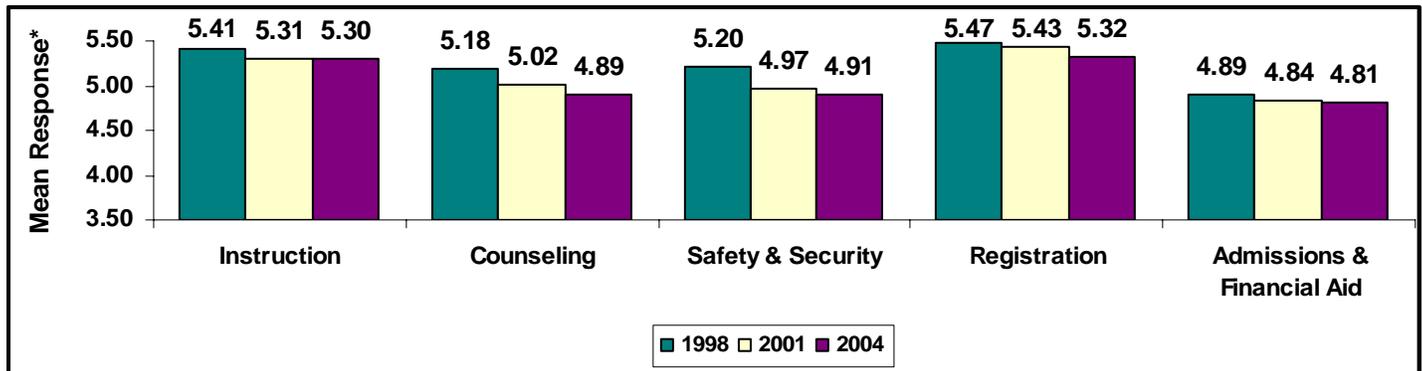
Chart 3: Mean Levels of Satisfaction at Cosumnes River College across the Five Major Areas of the Survey: 1998, 2001 and 2004



\* Mean Satisfaction Scores: 1 = Not Satisfied at All; 2 = Not Very Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Dissatisfied; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat Satisfied; 6 = Satisfied; and 7 = Very Satisfied. There is also a selection called "Not Available/Not Used."

Chart 4 shows that at Folsom Lake College the mean levels of satisfaction for instruction, counseling, safety/security and registration dropped in 2001 from the 1998 levels, while the drop in satisfaction with admissions/financial aid was very slight. In 2004, satisfaction remained relatively unchanged for Instruction. There was a very small drop for admissions/financial aid and safety/security and a slightly higher drop for counseling and registration.

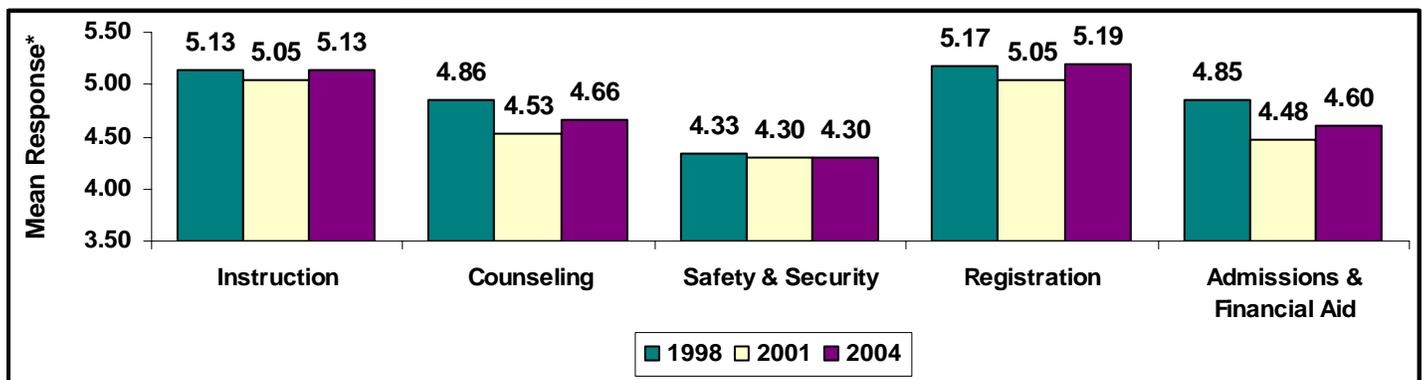
Chart 4: Mean Levels of Satisfaction at Folsom Lake College across the Five Major Areas of the Survey: 1998, 2001 and 2004



\* Mean Satisfaction Scores: 1 = Not Satisfied at All; 2 = Not Very Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Dissatisfied; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat Satisfied; 6 = Satisfied; and 7 = Very Satisfied. There is also a selection called "Not Available/Not Used."

Chart 5 shows that at Sacramento City College mean levels of satisfaction dropped for all areas in 2001 from the 1998 levels, with the exception of safety/security. In 2004, all areas improved with the exception of safety/security. Satisfaction with safety/security has remained unchanged across the three administrations of the Noel-Levitz survey.

Chart 5: Mean Levels of Satisfaction at Sacramento City College across the Five Major Areas of the Survey: 1998, 2001 and 2004



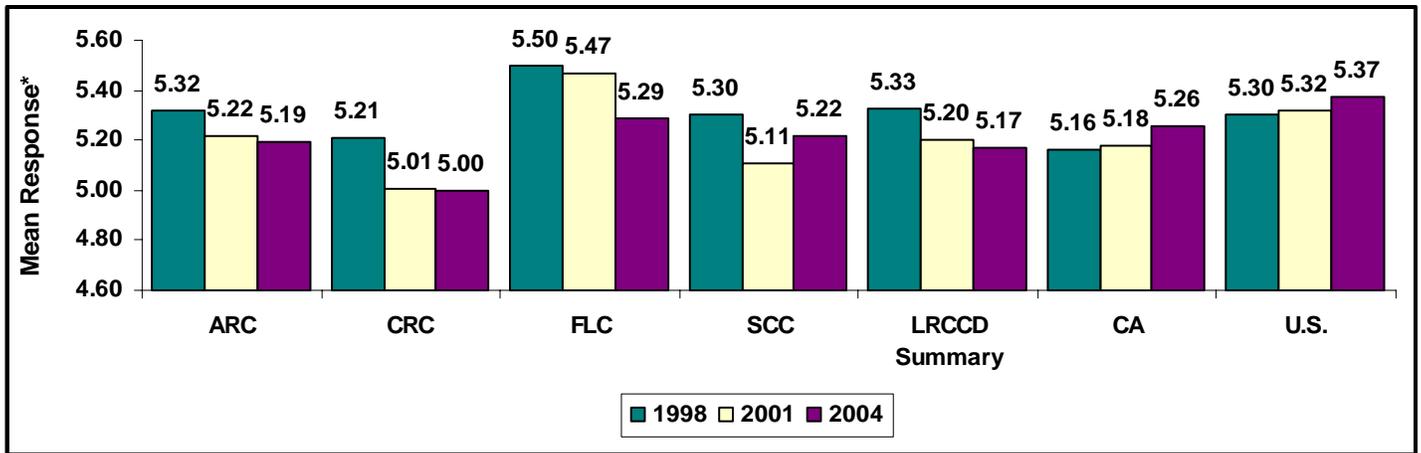
\* Mean Satisfaction Scores: 1 = Not Satisfied at All; 2 = Not Very Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Dissatisfied; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat Satisfied; 6 = Satisfied; and 7 = Very Satisfied. There is also a selection called "Not Available/Not Used."

## Student Differences at Colleges

It is important to make some observations about student population differences between the colleges, specifically as it relates to the ethnic mix. More than half of the students at CRC and SCC are ethnic minorities, at 57.6% and 55.6%, respectively, for the 2003-04 Academic Year (using Fall data as the source). This is a vastly different mix than the other two colleges; 32.9% of ARC students are ethnic minorities and 20.0% of FLC's are. Moreover, CRC's and SCC's proportions are on the increase -- up from 53.5% for CRC and 51.6% for SCC from the 1997-98 Academic Year, when the survey was first administered. This difference may be important. Reviewing the overall levels of satisfaction at both CRC and SCC in the areas of counseling and registration, the average levels of satisfaction are lower than those for ARC and FLC. Moreover, CRC, the college with the highest ethnic minority mix has seen a gradual decline in satisfaction with counseling, registration and with admissions/financial aid, as well, on the Noel-Levitz surveys over time.

In addition, satisfaction with the colleges' Responsiveness to Diverse Populations has declined at each location, with the exception of SCC, where it improved on the Spring 2004 survey, as displayed in Chart 6. As our satisfaction levels have declined, the state and national level are improving. The decline in satisfaction is occurring as ethnic diversity is increasing.

**Chart 6: Responsiveness to Diverse Populations -- Mean Levels of Satisfaction to Students in LRCCD, CA and U.S.: 1998, 2001 and 2004**



\* Mean Satisfaction Scores: 1 = Not Satisfied at All; 2 = Not Very Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Dissatisfied; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat Satisfied; 6 = Satisfied; and 7 = Very Satisfied. There is also a selection called "Not Available/Not Used."

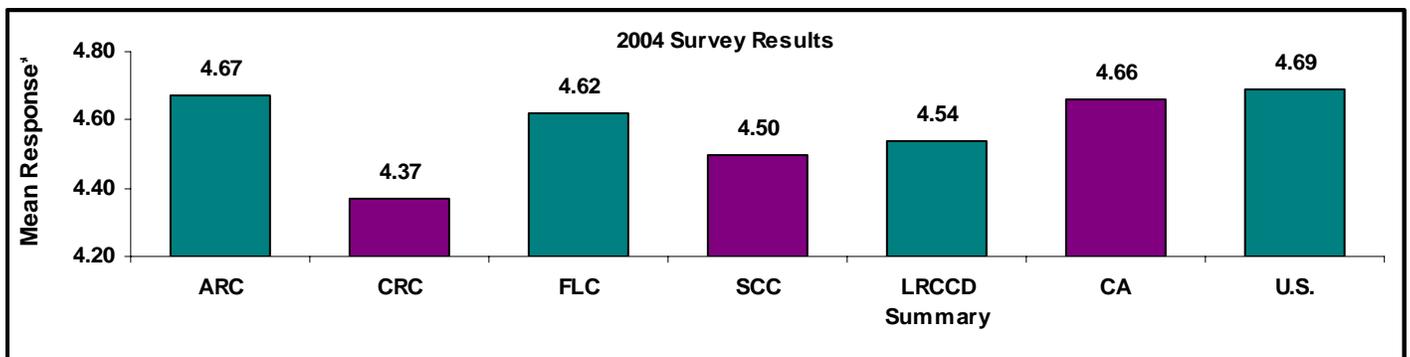
This raises some important questions to be explore through the focus group research that is slated to follow this study or through other campus-based reviews: *Have we designed support systems that work better for traditional student populations? Are these systems effective for ethnic minority students? Are there ways that we might modify service delivery to better serve this growing student population?*

These questions are important for CRC and SCC, but they are equally as important for ARC and FLC, where over 50% of student growth between 1997-98 and 2003-04 was among ethnic minority populations. Further, the growth of the ethnic minority population throughout the Greater Sacramento Area is expected to continue at high rates, particularly at the K-12 level, where 50% of the student population was Non-White in 2000. As such, the Los Rios colleges are likely to see the current pattern of growing ethnic minority students continue.

### Summary Satisfaction

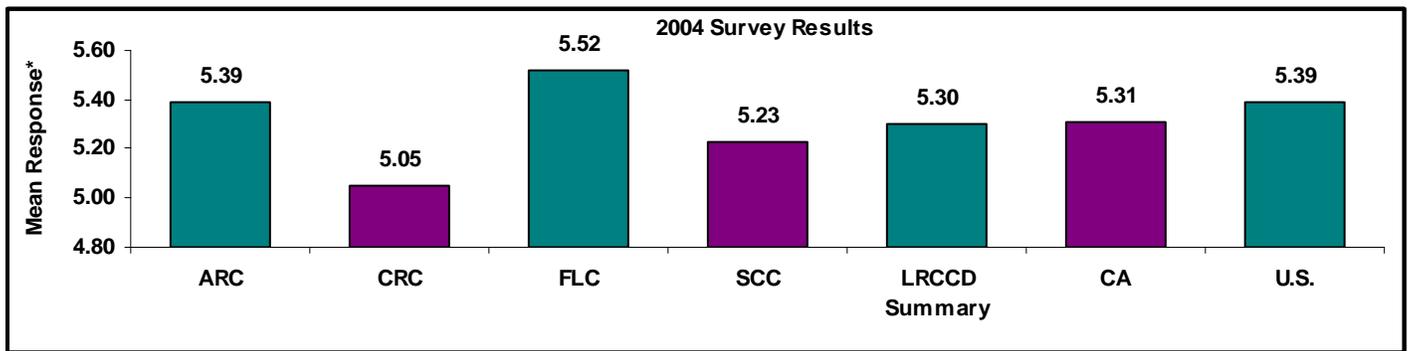
Three summary questions are asked of all students who complete the survey. The average response of each colleges' respondents follow.

**Chart 7: So Far, How Has Your College Experience met Your Expectation?: 2004**



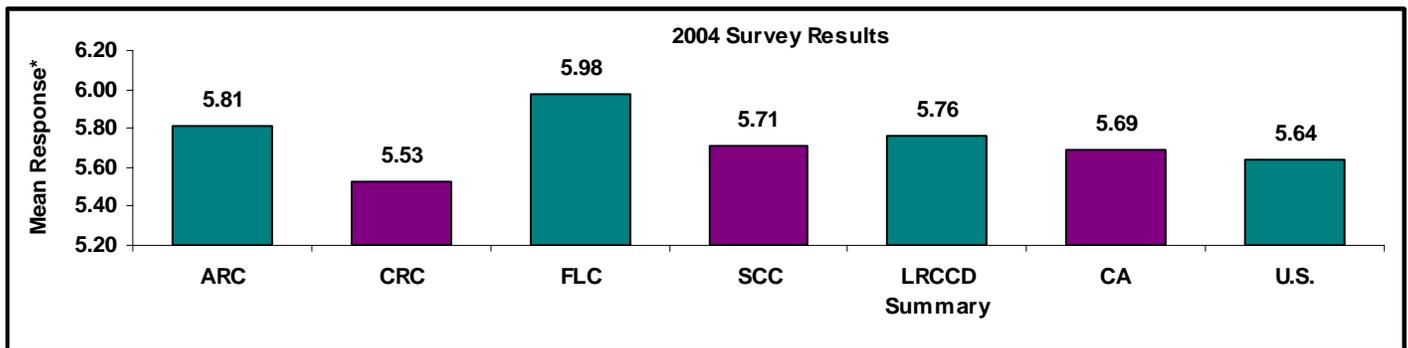
\* Response Scores: 1 = Much Worse than I Expected; 2 = Quite a Bit Worse than I Expected; 3 = Worse than I Expected; 4 = About What I Expected; 5 = Better than I Expected; 6 = Quite a Bit Better than I Expected; 7 = Much Better than What I Expected.

Chart 8: Rate Your Overall Satisfaction with Your Experience Here Thus Far: 2004



\* Response Scores: 1 = Not Satisfied at All; 2 = Not Very Satisfied; 3 = Somewhat Dissatisfied; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat Satisfied; 6 = Satisfied; 7 = Very Satisfied.

Chart 9: All in All, If You Had It to Do over Again, Would You Enroll Here?: 2004



\* Response Scores: 1 = Definitely Not; 2 = Probably Not; 3 = Maybe Not; 4 = I Don't Know; 5 = Maybe Yes; 6 = Probably Yes; 7 = Definitely Yes.

This Report on the *Results of the Student Satisfaction Survey Conducted in Spring 2004* was written by Judy Beachler, Director, Office of Institutional Research (IR). The author gratefully acknowledges the work of Minh La, IT Analyst II for Institutional Research, who provided the stratified random sample of classes for this survey, the Satisfaction Survey Task Force members, who made important recommendations for survey administration and training of survey administrators -- Mark Garrett, Counselor at ARC, Betty Glycer-Culver, Research Analyst at the District Office, Jim Higgins, Research Coordinator at ARC, Jeanne Edman, Research Coordinator at CRC, Peg Scott, Research Coordinator at FLC and Alan Keys, Research Coordinator at SCC. A special note of thanks goes to the many students in the Research Methods in Psychology courses (Psych 335) who completed training and administered the survey throughout the district. For additional copies of this report, please call (916) 568-3131 or send an email message to [IR@losrios.edu](mailto:IR@losrios.edu). Visit our website at <http://irweb.losrios.edu>. Each college's summary breakout report is also available in the College Research Offices.

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