



Revealing Institutional  
Strengths and Challenges



INSTITUTIONAL REPORT  
RISC STUDENT SURVEY FALL 2018  
**MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE**

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# RISC SURVEY OVERVIEW

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## SURVEY DESCRIPTION

The Revealing Institutional Strengths and Challenges (RISC) Survey provides detailed, actionable data about student success, using the latest advances in survey research and technology. Survey results pinpoint where students are experiencing obstacles and identify campus offices that excel in helping students succeed in college. The survey has three main sections.

The survey first asks students about facing challenges during the current semester in five broad areas: academic support services, campus environment, finances and financial aid, succeeding in their courses, and work and personal issues. Each section has multiple challenges, with over 80 unique challenges to student success across the five areas, such as errors with financial aid paperwork, not being told to take a course necessary for their degree, or difficulty using course technology in online classes.

Next, the survey asks students about their interactions with campus offices. Our research indicates that students want office staff who are accessible, concerned about helping them, and able to effectively solve their problem. Students describe five campus offices on these three dimensions; MCCC chose the specific offices that appeared in the survey. The survey used office names specific to MCCC, so that students saw office names they recognized.

Finally, students provide their overall perceptions of the college. Students are asked if they would recommend the college to a friend, whether the college is a good value, and how well the college is helping them meet their enrollment goals, such as improving job and career opportunities or preparing for a four-year degree.

Students are also given two open-response questions, where they could write out an answer: what is MCCC's greatest strength, and if MCCC could change one thing to increase student success, what should it change? See your college contact for the written responses to these two questions.

The survey concludes with a section asking about student demographic information.

Interactive and printable versions of the survey can be found at:

**<https://www.risc.college/two-year-survey>**

## SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

The survey was administered online to 2,969 MCCC students, using college email addresses, in late fall 2018. Several email contacts resulted in 339 responses used in this report, for a 11.4% response rate. Median time MCCC students spent taking the survey was 9.3 minutes.

The table below provides some background information about your college's benchmark sample. Nine other community colleges participating in Fall 2017 and Fall 2018 are used for the benchmark numbers in this report; each college is weighted equally when calculating benchmarks. Your benchmark sample has a total of 5,740 respondents.

**Table 1.1 Community colleges in the benchmark sample**

Carnegie classification		Urbanicity		Student enrollment	
High Career & Technical	44%	City	22%	25th percentile	4,200
Mixed	33%	Town	22%	50th percentile (median)	5,172
High Transfer	22%	Suburb	33%	75th percentile	9,262
		Rural	22%		

# CHALLENGES TO STUDENT SUCCESS

## MAIN CHALLENGE AREAS

The RISC survey contains over 80 unique challenges that students face during college, and students can indicate they faced more than one challenge. The specific challenges are divided into five main areas:

- ▶ Academic support services
- ▶ Campus environment
- ▶ Finances and financial aid
- ▶ Success in courses
- ▶ Work and personal

The survey begins by asking students if they faced challenges in each of these these areas, and then asks about more specific challenges, depending on how students initially respond. The challenge order is randomly assigned for each respondent.

For example, students are asked:

**Think about your finances and financial aid. Have you had any challenges in the following areas?**

	Yes	No
Paying college and living expenses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working with financial aid office	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Military and employer tuition benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Students choosing “yes” to one or more of these response options are coded as having a challenge with finances and financial aid.

Table 2.1 provides an overview of the main challenges students faced at MCCC in Fall 2017 in the five main areas. *Work and personal issues* is the area where your students most frequently reported having challenges, with 51% reporting one or more challenges in this area.

A negative number in the *Diff.* column indicates a lower proportion of students at your institution reported challenges in an area, compared to the benchmarking group. These are presented graphically with green bars. Positive numbers indicate a greater proportion of your students are reporting challenges, and are presented with red bars.

**Table 2.1 Major challenges to student success**

	MCCC % ○	Bench. % ■	Diff.	<i>n</i>	
Work and personal issues	51	50	+1	173	
Success in courses	45	45	+0	153	
Campus environment	31	24	<b>+7</b>	106	
Finances and financial aid	29	36	<b>-7</b>	100	
Academic support services	25	26	-1	85	

**Notes**

Green indicates that MCCC has a lower proportion of students reporting a challenge compared to the benchmark sample proportion; red indicates MCCC has a higher proportion. Bold indicates a statistically significant difference from the benchmark sample (two-sample test of proportions,  $p < .05$ ). Percentages do not sum to 100 because students could choose multiple challenges across the five topic areas. *n* in table row is the number of students choosing a challenge in that area at your college; overall sample  $n=339$ .

Tables 2.2 to 2.6 provide more detail about student challenges. For example, if a student answered “yes” to “Paying college and living expenses”, they were prompted with a follow-up question:

**Where did you have issues paying expenses? Please check all that apply.**

- Tuition and fees
- Paying college and living expenses
- Living expenses (housing, food, healthcare)
- Childcare
- None of the above

To help uncover where your students are facing challenges, we rank the major categories of challenges in descending order. We then rank the more specific challenges within each major category in descending order.

For example, 51% of your students chose one or more challenges in the major category of *Work and personal issues*. The most common subcategory was *Work*, with 32% choosing challenges in this subcategory. The most common specific challenge within the *Work* subcategory was *Work hours do not leave time for study*, with 22% of your students mentioning this as a challenge to their success. All percentages in these tables are calculated as the percentage of the entire respondent sample.

**Table 2.2 Challenges with work and personal life**

	MCCC %	Bench. %	Diff. %	<i>n</i>
Work and personal issues	51	50	+1	173
Work	32	32	+0	108
Work hours do not leave time for study	22	19	+3	75
Pay not enough to cover expenses while in school	14	15	-1	49
Work schedule prevents campus resource use	14	11	+3	48
Work schedule conflicts with classes	12	11	+1	39
Work schedule not flexible during semester	9	8	+1	30
None of the above	1	3	-1	5
Family and friends	28	29	-1	95
Difficulty balancing demands of family and college	21	21	+0	71
Difficulty dealing with health of family and friends	11	10	+1	37
Difficulty finding childcare	4	4	+1	14
Family does not support me going to college	2	3	-1	8
None of the above	3	4	-1	9
Health and disability	15	15	+0	51
Physical health issue	9	8	+0	29
Emotional/mental health issue	9	9	+0	29
Faculty did not provide necessary accommodations	1	1	+0	2
Disability services did not provide support	1	1	+0	2
Pregnancy and childbirth	0	1	+0	1
Campus is difficult to navigate with disability	0	0	+0	0
None of the above	1	2	-1	2
Transportation to campus	10	11	-1	33
Car or carpool is unreliable	4	5	-1	14
Public transportation system not reliable	2	2	+0	7
Travel to campus takes a long time	1	5	-3	5
Campus transportation system not reliable	0	1	-1	1
None of the above	4	2	+2	14

**Notes**

Percentages do not sum to 100 because students could choose multiple challenges within this topic area. Denominator for percentages is the total number of survey respondents; *n* in table row is the number of students choosing a challenge in that area.

**Table 2.3 Challenges with success in courses**

	MCCC %	Bench. %	Diff. %	<i>n</i>
Success in courses	45	45	+1	153
Developmental courses	19	17	+2	64
Courses were too hard	6	6	+0	20
Did not prepare me for college-level courses	6	4	+2	20
Required to take too many	4	4	-1	12
Courses were too easy	0	1	-1	0
None of the above	6	6	+1	22
Faculty	19	16	+3	63
Did not teach well	15	11	+4	51
Feedback on assignments not helpful	9	7	+2	31
Not concerned about my academic success	7	6	+1	23
Not responsive to email	5	5	+0	17
Took too long to grade assignments	5	6	-1	16
Not helpful outside of class	4	4	+0	13
Not available to meet in person	1	2	+0	5
None of the above	1	2	-1	4
Online classes	18	22	-4	62
Lack of interaction with faculty	11	9	+1	36
Difficulty learning material on my own	10	11	-1	33
Difficulty keeping up because of no regular class times	6	8	-1	21
Lack of interaction with other students	6	5	+1	19
Difficulty using course technology	6	6	-1	19
Difficulty taking exams at testing center	1	3	-1	5
None of the above	2	3	-1	8
Doing college-level work	13	15	-2	43
Poor planning & time management skills	6	7	-1	20
Poor study skills	5	6	-1	17
Not motivated to study	5	5	-1	16
Required level of math was difficult	4	4	-1	12
Took too many classes	3	2	+1	10
Writing assignments were difficult	2	4	-2	7
Skipped too many classes	1	1	+0	2
None of the above	1	2	-1	3

**Notes**

Percentages do not sum to 100 because students could choose multiple challenges within this topic area. Denominator for percentages is the total number of survey respondents; *n* in table row is the number of students choosing a challenge in that area.



**Table 2.4 Challenges with the campus environment**

	MCCC %	Bench. %	Diff. %	<i>n</i>
Campus environment	31	24	+7	106
Parking on campus	27	20	+7	92
Difficulty finding parking on or near campus	24	17	+7	82
Parking on or near campus is too expensive	0	1	-1	0
Difficulty getting parking pass	0	1	-1	0
None of the above	3	2	+1	10
Interactions with other students	6	7	-1	21
Did not know many other students	4	5	+0	15
Did not feel welcome due to my race or ethnicity	0	1	-1	0
Did not feel welcome due to my sexual orientation	0	0	+0	0
Did not feel welcome due to my gender identity	0	0	+0	1
None of the above	2	2	+0	6
Safety and crime	1	2	-1	3
Was a victim of a crime	0	0	+0	1
Parking lots not safe	0	1	-1	1
Campus not safe	0	0	+0	1
None of the above	0	1	+0	1

**Notes**

Percentages do not sum to 100 because students could choose multiple challenges within this topic area. Denominator for percentages is the total number of survey respondents; *n* in table row is the number of students choosing a challenge in that area.

**Table 2.5 Challenges with finances and financial aid**

	MCCC %	Bench. %	Diff. %	<i>n</i>
Finances and financial aid	29	36	-6	100
Paying expenses	25	31	-6	85
Books, software, and other supplies	19	18	+0	64
Tuition and fees	19	17	+2	66
Living expenses	14	21	-7	47
Childcare	3	3	+0	10
None of the above	0	1	-1	0
Financial Aid office	10	12	-2	33
Process was unclear	5	7	-1	18
Unable to answer questions	5	4	+1	17
Difficult to contact/meet with staff	4	5	-1	12
Errors processing financial aid	3	5	-2	10
Gave me wrong information	3	3	-1	9
Delays in getting money	2	5	-2	7
None of the above	1	1	-1	2
Military & employer tuition benefits	3	1	+1	9
Did not know how to obtain benefits	1	1	+1	5
Given wrong info. about benefits	1	0	+1	5
Delays receiving benefits	1	1	+1	4
None of the above	0	0	+0	1

**Notes**

Percentages do not sum to 100 because students could choose multiple challenges within this topic area. Denominator for percentages is the total number of survey respondents; *n* in table row is the number of students choosing a challenge in that area.

**Table 2.6 Challenges with academic support services**

	MCCC %	Bench. %	Diff. %	<i>n</i>
Academic support services	25	26	-1	85
Registering for courses	13	14	-1	44
Course not offered at times I needed	7	6	+1	23
Course not offered this semester	4	4	+1	15
Course was offered but full	3	5	-2	9
Had a registration hold	1	3	-2	3
None of the above	4	4	+0	15
Academic advising	12	11	+1	42
Not told to take necessary course	6	4	+2	20
Difficult to contact/meet with advisor	6	6	+0	19
Told to take unnecessary course	5	3	+2	18
Course/program materials were incorrect	1	2	-1	4
None of the above	2	2	+0	8
Tutoring	4	7	-3	14
Tutoring not available in subject area	2	2	+0	7
Tutoring not available when I needed assistance	2	3	-1	6
Tutoring hours not convenient	2	3	-1	6
Tutoring not helpful	1	2	-1	4
None of the above	1	1	+0	2
Computer & science labs	3	5	-2	10
Problems using computers and equipment	1	2	+0	5
Lab busy when needed	1	1	-1	2
Lab hours not convenient	1	1	+0	4
None of the above	1	1	-1	2
Library	2	4	-2	7
Staff not helpful	1	1	+0	2
Study spaces not available when needed	1	1	+0	2
Hours not convenient	0	1	-1	1
Resources I needed not available online	0	1	-1	1
None of the above	1	1	+0	3

**Notes**

Percentages do not sum to 100 because students could choose multiple challenges within this topic area. Denominator for percentages is the total number of survey respondents; *n* in table row is the number of students choosing a challenge in that area.

# STUDENT-OFFICE INTERACTIONS

Table 3.1 shows the administrative support units your college chose for the RISC Survey. Unit names appeared on the survey exactly as they are listed in this report. Bookstore was the most commonly used office, with 76% reporting using the office during the Fall 2017 semester, followed by Admissions Office (57%) and Financial Aid Office (46%).

**Table 3.1 Office usage**

Office	% using	<i>n</i>
Bookstore	76	256
Admissions Office	57	192
Financial Aid Office	46	156
Library	46	156
Learning Assistance Lab	33	112

If students indicated they interacted with an office during the semester, they were asked three questions about their interactions with staff:

**How available were [unit name] staff when you interacted with them?**

- Very available
- Somewhat available
- Somewhat unavailable
- Very unavailable

**How concerned were [unit name] staff about addressing your issue?**

- Very concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- Somewhat unconcerned
- Very unconcerned

## How effective were [unit name] staff when addressing your issue?

- Very effective
- Somewhat effective
- Somewhat ineffective
- Very ineffective

Results are presented in Table 3.2, which shows the percentage of respondents choosing the top category (*very available/concerned/effective*). Because each college chose the administrative offices for this set of questions, the table only presents benchmarks comparisons for an administrative office when at least 5 other colleges surveyed students about the same type of office.

**Table 3.2 Student-administration interactions**

	MCCC % ○	Bench. % ■	Diff.	<i>n</i>	
					50      60      70      80      90
<b>Admissions Office</b>					
Available	80			192	○
Concerned	64			192	○
Effective	72			190	○
<b>Bookstore</b>					
Available	82			256	○
Concerned	64			256	○
Effective	75			256	○
<b>Financial Aid Office</b>					
Available	79	65	<b>+14</b>	156	■————○
Concerned	62	55	<b>+7</b>	156	■————○
Effective	70	67	<b>+3</b>	155	■————○
<b>Learning Assistance Lab</b>					
Available	84	70	<b>+14</b>	112	■————○
Concerned	75	64	<b>+11</b>	112	■————○
Effective	75	67	<b>+8</b>	111	■————○
<b>Library</b>					
Available	81			156	○
Concerned	63			156	○
Effective	78			154	○

### Notes

Percentage is the proportion of students rating an office in the top response category (*very available/concerned/effective*). Green indicates that MCCC has a higher proportion of students choosing the category compared to the benchmark sample proportion; red indicates MCCC has a lower proportion. Bold indicates a statistically significant difference from the benchmark sample (two-sample test of proportions,  $p < .05$ ).  $n$  in table row is the total number of students at your college rating an office on that dimension; i.e., the denominator for the row percentage.

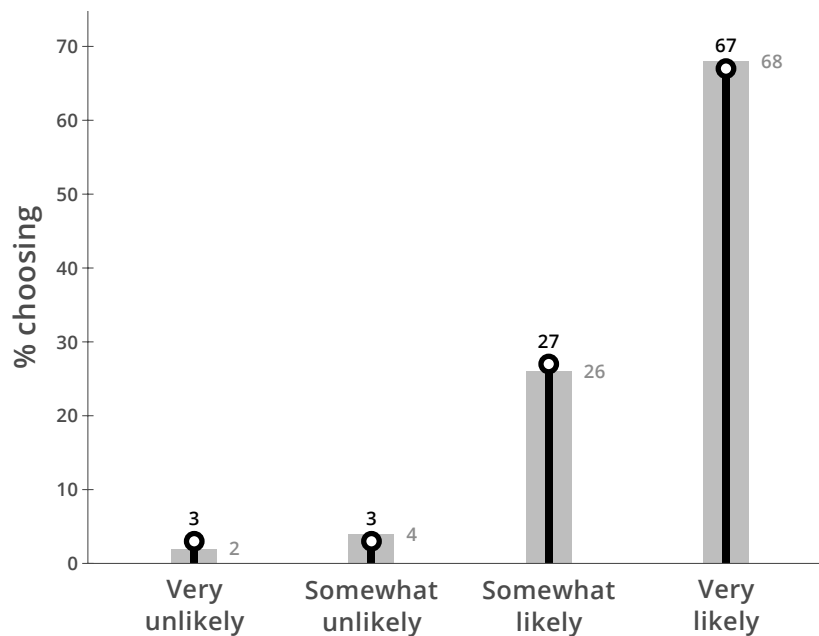
Green indicates that MCCC has a lower proportion of students reporting a challenge compared to the benchmark sample proportion; red indicates MCCC has a higher proportion. Bold indicates a statistically significant difference from the benchmark sample (two-sample test of proportions,  $p < .05$ ). Percentages do not sum to 100 because students could choose multiple challenges across the five topic areas.  $n$  in table row is the number of students choosing a challenge in that area; overall sample  $n=339$ .

# STUDENT VIEWS OF THE INSTITUTION

Besides challenges and office interactions, students were asked several questions about MCCC overall.

The first question, “Based on your experiences, how likely are you to recommend MCCC to a friend?”, is a summative measure of how students view your institution. Results are presented in Figure 4.1, with MCCC represented by the black line and the benchmark sample by the gray line. 94% of your students would be somewhat or very likely to to recommend MCCC. The MCCC distribution of responses is not statistically significantly different from the benchmark sample.

**Figure 4.1 Would student recommend MCCC to a friend?**



**Notes**

MCCC is the black bar; benchmark sample is gray.  $\chi^2 = 1.8, p < .61; n = 339$ .

Next, students were asked to rate the overall value of their education at MCCC (see Figure 4.2). 95% of your students believe their education is worth what they paid (or even worth more). The MCCC distribution of responses is not statistically significantly different from the benchmark sample.

**Figure 4.2 Overall value of education?**



**Notes**

MCCC is the black bar; benchmark sample is gray.  $\chi^2 = 1.5, p < .48; n = 339$ .

The last set of questions asks students how well your college is doing in preparing students for their educational goals. The top half of Table 4.1 lists students' responses to their primary reason for attending MCCC. 55% chose *Prepare for a four-year degree* as their primary purpose for attending your institution.

Students were then asked how well MCCC is helping them achieve the specific goal they chose. Students could choose from *very well*, *fairly well*, *somewhat*, or *not at all*. Responses from the top category are presented in the bottom half of Table 4.1. For example, 36% of the students who chose *Prepare for a four-year degree* as their primary goal indicated that MCCC is doing *very well* in terms of preparing them for a four-year degree.



**Table 4.1 How well is education helping accomplish goals**

	MCCC % ○	Bench. % ■	Diff.	<i>n</i>	
<b>Purpose of taking courses at MCCC</b>					
Prepare for a four-year degree	55	42	<b>+13</b>	185	
Increase job and career opportunities	40	49	<b>-9</b>	135	
Self-improvement	6	9	<b>-3</b>	19	
<b>How well is education at MCCC ...</b>					
Prepare for a four-year degree	36	44	<b>-8</b>	185	
Increase job and career opportunities	39	49	<b>-10</b>	135	
Self-improvement	42	49	-7	19	

**Notes**

Top panel row percentage is the proportion of students choosing one of the three educational goals. Bottom panel row percentage is the proportion of students choosing *very well* in response to the preparation question for that goal. Bold indicates a statistically significant difference from the benchmark sample (two-sample test of proportions,  $p < .05$ ). *n* in table row is the total number of students responding to the question; i.e., the denominator for the row percentage. Difference bars in the top panel of the table are in black, to reflect that schools may score high or low on these measures, depending on their institutional mission. In the bottom panel, green indicates that MCCC has a higher proportion of students reporting that MCCC is helping them achieve their educational goal compared to the benchmark sample; red indicates a lower proportion.