



## Uncommon Uses

### Expanding Your Options with Class Climate®

Most modern colleges and universities perform faculty and course evaluations. Evaluation surveys have become a normal and expected part of measuring the quality of your institution. It's easy to get focused on these types of surveys because they can be standardized, repeatable, and routine. But determining a complete measure of institutional quality doesn't have to stop there.

A wide variety of additional surveys can help you identify and improve other areas of excellence. Some obvious expansions for surveys can include facility satisfaction, parent or alumni surveys, event evaluations, and more. Above and beyond those traditional survey areas, though, lies a rich field of other topics for exploration, such as institutional effectiveness surveys, assessment planning, policy and procedure review, facilities master planning, to name just a few.

So why don't more institutions expand their survey focus? One reason is that it can be hard to acquire the tools and expertise necessary to conduct these surveys and gather the information so that the results are easily available to interested parties. You need a solution that can be readily deployed and that is under your control (whether it's hosted on your own site or with Scantron's hosting service). You need the solution that stores previous surveys and enables you to reuse questions, forms, and infrastructural details such as departments and programs and can be deployed using the delivery methods (paper, online, or both) best suited to your survey. You need a tool like Class Climate.

While Class Climate is ideally suited for course and event evaluations, it is, at its core, a survey tool you can use for many different types of surveys. Let's explore some of the other types of surveys our clients have performed to help their institutions improve.

### Analyzing Institutional Performance: 360° Staff Evaluations

Located in Clarksdale, Mississippi, Coahoma Community College “provides accessible, affordable, diverse, and quality educational opportunities and services that foster a nurturing teaching and learning environment, promote intellectual and work readiness skills, support personal and professional growth, and prepare students to enter the job market or transfer to a college or university.”<sup>1</sup>



**COAHOMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
*Discover...Grow...Excel...*

nurturing teaching and learning environment, promote intellectual and work readiness skills, support personal

and professional growth, and prepare students to enter the job market or transfer to a college or university.”<sup>1</sup>

Recently, Coahoma decided to do a 360° peer-to-peer evaluation for all college staff. They wanted to collect feedback from supervisors, peers, direct reports, customers, and students and provide that to staff members as part of their institutional effectiveness program.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.coahomacc.edu>

They looked at the tools available and identified Class Climate as their most effective option due to the configurability of the system and the ability to reuse and adjust questionnaires. One of the key items for them was a core piece of Class Climate functionality: the ability to set up a master questionnaire and customize it with additional questions specific to job functions and duties.

Another feature they found helpful was the way Class Climate structures a survey set. They defined subunits to correspond to college departments, then “courses” within each subunit to map to specific combinations of employee and evaluation role (e.g., registrar–self, registrar–peer, registrar–direct report, and more). They then “enrolled” each employee in the appropriate courses to complete the evaluation infrastructure.

To capture the feedback itself, they created a master questionnaire covering a range of almost 20 specific skills. They grouped skills into groups like “Communication,” “Adaptability,” and “Task Management” so they could use Class Climate’s quality management features to track actual ratings against expected ratings for each group. They added optional “instructor” questions to customize the master questionnaire so that it included both the required general questions and any job-specific questions.

They generated the questionnaires into online surveys using Class Climate’s password features, ensuring each survey could only be completed once. They then used the Class Climate email functionality to send the appropriate set of individualized survey links to each employee.

Because this was a required activity, they were able to use Class Climate’s response tracking to invite, track, and remind participants of evaluations they had pending. This built-in feature makes it easy to see and address responses.

Human Resources functioned as the report creator, generating result reports as the evaluations were completed. They used Class Climate’s report distribution features to send result reports to the appropriate staff.

This alternate use of Class Climate provided Coahoma Community College with an effective way to identify areas where they could improve customer service, increase employee retention, and raise their graduation rate.

## Measuring Institutional Effectiveness: Surveys Across Campus

Orange Coast College (OCC) is located in Costa Mesa, California, a coastal community just south of Los Angeles.

“OCC ranks as the state’s top combined transfer school and the region’s leader for career and technical training, with more than 150 challenging academic and certificate programs taught by nationally acclaimed faculty.”<sup>2</sup> Their Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) is responsible for investigating and documenting the effectiveness of a variety of aspects of campus life, including programs, services, and student learning.



ORANGE COAST COLLEGE

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.orangecoastcollege.edu>

The OIE depends on Class Climate to develop and distribute a wide variety of surveys for its research, such as:

- Graduate follow-up surveys
- Accreditation self-evaluation surveys
- Academic Senate polling
- Policy and Procedure Review
- Facilities Master Planning and Opinion Surveys
- Children's Center parent survey

Class Climate's strong suite of survey and evaluation features led OCC to choose it as their survey vehicle of choice for institutional research. Let's explore some of the features they found most appealing and useful.

### **Distributed Workload**

The OIE serves a wide variety of college customers and needs. Many of those folks have very specific survey requirements. Class Climate's site licensing enables them to distribute the workload of creating and customizing questionnaires, collecting responses, and analyzing results.

User permissions and roles provide access for specific purposes, while allowing centralized control of the system and significant cost savings. Each interested department can leverage the main Class Climate installation, avoiding the need to secure and manage their own survey solution independently.

### **Multiple Delivery Options with Unified Results**

OCC relies on Class Climate's unified approach to survey distribution: online surveys, paper forms, and hybrid surveys all feed into a unified database. This makes it easy to analyze a complete set of survey results, without having to painstakingly combine results from different distribution methods manually. Regardless of whether responses are collected online or scanned into the system, results for each survey are stored in a single location for reporting and analysis.

Further, Class Climate online survey forms are enabled for display on mobile devices. QR code functionality means that participants can simply snap a code with their smartphone or tablet and be taken directly to the survey, quickly and easily.

### **Flexible Survey Password Control**

Class Climate makes it easy to control response security. You can define surveys to only allow one response per participant or you can configure a single "password" for all surveys. This single password merely connects responses to the correct survey, rather than preventing respondents from submitting more than one evaluation.

This flexibility expands how OCC can use Class Climate to deliver surveys. By using passwords, they can create ballots for academic senate and faculty elections, allow commenting and voting on proposed facilities service/infrastructure changes, or any other survey that requires controlling the number of responses per participant.

Conversely, they can implement the single-password option for satisfaction surveys, policy and procedure review, or any survey where multiple responses from participants are useful.

### Sustainability

The ease of performing recurring surveys is another key factor for OCC. Reusing a questionnaire for another term or year is simple and straightforward. This reuse provides a consistency in the questions asked over time, making it possible to see changing patterns and historical perspectives. A sustainable process also ensures that neither creators nor participants need to “re-learn” the system, improving the likelihood that creators will survey on issues important to them and that participants will respond.

Further, Class Climate includes quality management features survey managers can use to view results from multiple administrations of the survey and examine changing values. Once the initial survey results are in, they can set expected result thresholds (for example, for satisfaction surveys) to help track results. They can configure dashboards to see at a glance which satisfaction factors are improving and which need some more attention.

### Management and Reminders

Improving survey response rates is always a concern, especially when there are high stakes involved in the outcome, such as for faculty chair elections or policy and procedure review. OCC depends on Class Climate’s embedded management tools, such as:

- Distributing surveys and automated reminders via email to participants (where email addresses are available)
- Automatically distributing result reports to stakeholders
- Providing verification receipts to participants who have completed the survey or ballot

### Secure Storage

Because even low-stakes surveys often expose sensitive issues, securing questionnaires and results is paramount. OCC’s wide breadth of survey instruments means that some surveys require response anonymity, while still needed to track *whether* someone has responded. Participants often worry that there will be some negative result of providing open and honest feedback. Separating response tracking from responses ensures this anonymity.

Role-based logins mean that only authorized users have access to questionnaires and raw results. While reports can be distributed, those reports can offer only as much or as little of the results as the survey manager chooses.

Security and data protection aspects are high priorities for Class Climate. In addition, we offer hosting services for institutions that prefer to leave the IT work to us.

## Additional Analysis

Because a college is, almost by definition, full of researchers who both understand how to and really want to dig deeply into data, OCC appreciates Class Climate's export features. Class Climate includes a robust reporting engine, but sometimes you want to dig further, bringing results into a more broad-based analytics engine. You can export results from Class Climate to a variety of formats so you can explore your data in as much detail as you want.

## How Else Can Scantron Help?

Scantron is a long-time leader in assessment solutions and services. We've served the education market from kindergarten to professional career development for more than 40 years. Our course evaluation solution, Class Climate, provides the best in course and instructor evaluations, and delivers broad-based survey functionality, as well.

Need high-quality, guaranteed-scannable forms? Scantron's print services group can print, customize, pack, and ship your Class Climate forms using our state-of-the-art facility. Too many surveys, not enough time? Our data-processing service can help you collect data from your paper forms. Just pack up your forms, send them to us, sit back, and wait for the results to arrive.

Whatever the evaluation or survey assistance you need, Scantron has the products, tools, services, and expertise to help you ensure that you have the right program for your students. Our web-based software, combined with our length and breadth of experience, help you get the most out of your evaluations and results. Contact us today and see how Scantron can meet you where you are and help you get to where you want to be.

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