

This report was prepared by *The Institute for Global Ethics*:

In fall of 2001 the Maricopa Community College District contracted an international non-profit organization, The Institute for Global Ethics of Camden, Maine to design and carry out a survey of the Maricopa community. Administered by O'Neil Associates of Tempe, this survey resulted in data from 1,458 members of the community including randomly selected members of the general population, as well as faculty and staff of MCCD and MCCD students. The survey asked questions about values, moral boundaries, ethical change, the future, the teaching of ethics and values, priorities and sources of authority in determining what is right. The survey yielded insights into the attitudes and experience of the Maricopa community, MCCD staff and MCCD students.

Values

- The two values that are clearly most important to those surveyed in Maricopa are *responsibility and truth*.
- Other important values to those surveyed include *respect, fairness, and freedom*.
- *Compassion* does not feature as strongly in this survey data as in others IGE has carried out.

Moral Boundaries

How often are decisions made by others based on the same values you selected as most important to you?

- *Family* is the group most people surveyed feel is most likely to use the same values.
- Second to *family, teachers and faculty* were chosen, and then people who work at the college in other capacities.
- *County officials* appears at the bottom of the list. This is in keeping with other survey work from IGE.
- Ratings for family were positively associated with conservatism, i.e., the more conservative someone was, the more one believed that family used the same values. The same was true for both religiosity measures.
- The lowest ratings for employers were among political moderates. At both extremes of the political spectrum, belief was stronger that employers shared their values.
- The not-at-all religious also rated employers particularly low.
- People earning less than \$25,000 a year rated working people as more likely to share their values.
- Very liberal respondents believed working people shared their values, particularly more so than did the very conservative; the middle of the political spectrum was close to the overall average score.
- People with lower levels of education were more likely to believe that working people shared their values.
- Income was negatively correlated with belief that students shared one's values.

Ethical Change

"The values of administrators at my college have changed a lot since I first came here."

- The longer one has lived in Arizona, the more one tends to agree that the values of administrators at the colleges have changed since the respondents arrived (whenever that may be).

- The most liberal and the least religious, and those who never attend church, seem to agree with this statement less than all other levels of political and religious belief and activity.

"Most people's values change over time in response to events in their lives."

- The idea that people's values tend to change in response to life experience is embraced more by people with incomes below \$25,000 than others.
- However, about 2/3 of respondents agree with this statement overall.
- As with income, education is negatively correlated with this belief -- the more highly educated tend to disagree that value change is routine.
- Education is also negatively correlated with agreement with the statement that 10 years after graduation, students' values will likely change.

The Future

"Ten years from now, I believe that the values of students at my college will be:

- More diverse
 - About the same
 - Less diverse"
- A little over half of those surveyed expect student values will be more diverse ten years from now.
 - However, people think that *their own* values will not change that much in the next ten years.

"Teaching ethics to students at my college will get more difficult in the coming years."

- People who described themselves as conservative - but not *very* conservative - were notably more likely to believe that teaching ethics to students would get more difficult in the coming years.
- Religiosity was also correlated with this belief -- more religious people agreed more, although the effect was less strong for church attendance than for religiosity in general.

Teaching Ethics and Values

"Faculty members at my college know what is considered ethical behavior in most private businesses these days."

- The highest level of agreement with the statement that college faculty know the ethical standards in business was from students -- 80% agreed.

"My community college should play a big role in educating students about ethics."

- Overall, 65% agreed that the colleges should play a big role in teaching ethics.
- The most conservative respondents also were least likely to agree that the colleges should play a big role in teaching ethics, but even so more than half of them did agree with that.

"By the time a person reaches college age, its too late to teach ethics."

- Overall, only 21% agreed that by the time people reach college age it's too late to teach them ethics.
- The most conservative respondents were more likely to agree with this statement, but even then only 37% agreed.

Faculty only: "I already help students develop values in my classes."

Faculty only: "I would not feel comfortable incorporating ethics into my classes."

- A large majority of faculty (86%) say they already help students develop values in their classes.
- Overall, only 22% express discomfort about incorporating ethics training into their classes.

Priorities

- There was strong support for *marriage and family life* as a priority over *career success*.
- *Career satisfaction* as opposed to *career success* earns more support when compared to family life. About 20% overall choose a satisfying career, particularly students and the very liberal and less religious respondents.
- Having a very low income, living alone, and/or being African American was also associated with choosing career satisfaction over family life; in each of those three conditions, preference for career satisfaction was 40% or higher.
- Support for family life is diminished when compared to ethics and character development. 40% choose character development in that comparison.
- The most conservative respondents were twice as likely as others to prefer financial success to a satisfying career.
- Students were also more likely than others to prefer financial success over career satisfaction.

Sources of Authority

Respondents were asked to rate the importance to them of a variety of sources of information about what is right and wrong. Then, respondents rated a similar list of sources of such information for their importance to "most people today."

- The primary sources for authority for respondents' and their conception of "most people today" is very similar.
- Personal experience, family and religion are given nearly equal credit in both cases (i.e., for respondents and for their conception of "most people today").
- Overall personal experience is cited by over 90% as extremely or very important in shaping their knowledge of right and wrong. The importance of personal experience is consistent with some earlier work by the Institute for Global Ethics, particularly in well-educated populations.
- Personal experience is cited by only 72% of conservatives.