CERC
community engagement research center

BARBARA WEITZ COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CENTER

2017 ANNUAL SURVEY LONGITUDINAL REPORT

ABOUT THE REPORT

THE AUTHORS OF THIS REPORT ARE KELLY PRANGE AND DR. JOSEPH ALLEN. QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS REPORT SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO KELLY PRANGE AT KPRANGE@UNOMAHA.EDU OR DR. JOSEPH ALLEN AT JOSEPHALLEN@UNOMAHA.EDU.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESEARCH CENTER (CERC)

The Community Engagement Research Center (CERC) is a research lab devoted to the study of community outreach and engagement, including volunteerism, service learning, collective impact, emotion management, and community involvement. The purpose of the research is to investigate organizations and employees' roles in solving social issues. Through experiments and surveys, we hope to impact communities by identifying root causes of problems and developing practical solutions to stimulate change. Students in this lab will be focused on developing research ideas, conducting studies, data collection, data analysis, writing papers for publication, and submitting research to local, regional, and national conferences. Students involved in this lab must have a drive to produce quality outcomes, have the ability to collaborate and communicate effectively in a team setting, and be passionate about learning and developing as a student.

CITATIONS

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LIST OF CONSTRUCTS MEASURED ON THE ANNUAL SURVEY:

WEITZ CEC BELONGINGNESS

Partners were asked whether or not they felt connected emotionally and socially to the Weitz CEC, its partners, and to the building.

"If someone criticizes the CEC, it feels like a personal insult."
"I identify with the CEC; being there is a part of who I am."
"I feel an emotional connection with the CEC when I attend events and activities there."
"I feel a sense of pride when I show friends and family the CEC."

NETWORKING BEHAVIOR FREQUENCY

Partners were asked how often they interacted with people from organizations inside and outside the Weitz CEC.

"Congratulate someone from another organization about a promotion, special award, or achievement."
"Attend meetings, ceremonies, or special events."
"Form alliances with people in other organizations."
"Do favors for or trade skills with people in other organizations."

PARTNER SATISFACTION

Individuals were asked whether or not they were satisfied with their involvement with the Weitz CEC.

"Overall, our organization is satisfied with our partnership with the CEC."
"I would like to continue working at the CEC."
"I feel that the CEC sets mutually-agreed-upon expectations for my organization."
"My organization's partnership with the CEC has positively affected the community."
"The CEC and my organization have common values."

PARTNER CAPACITY ATTITUDES

Individuals were asked whether they felt like their organization's capacity, ability to achieve its mission, and programming had grown since arriving at the Weitz CEC.

"My organization's board of directors is satisfied with my amount of collaboration with other CEC organizations."
"As a result of being in the CEC, I more effectively interacted with UNO campus units outside of those in the CEC."
"As a result of being in the CEC, I more effectively interacted with nonprofit organizations outside of those in the CEC."
"Being in the CEC has contributed positively to my organizational mission."
"Being in the CEC has contributed positively to my organization's sustainability.
"My organization's capacity to serve our target population has increased as a result of being in the CEC space."

QUALITY OF COMMUNICATION AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

Individuals described whether or not the Weitz CEC staff were helpful in addressing issues and communicating important information to partners.

"Provided a timely response to communications."
"Valued my suggestions and input."
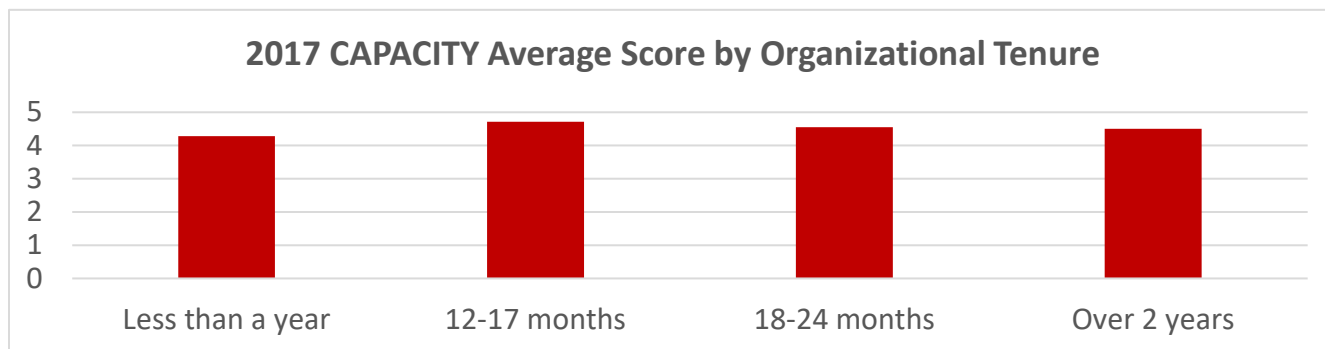*"Communicated in a way that made me feel comfortable."*
"Seemed interested in providing excellent customer service."

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KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- It is important to note when interpreting the findings that **it is common in survey evaluation to receive higher scores the first time** people rate the same items because of social desirability. That is, they want their landlords/stakeholders to be happy with their performance, so scores may be inflated. Then, the second time those same people take the survey, they may realize that the survey was used as a constructive tool rather than a disciplinary one. This is why **the second survey scores may be considered more realistic than the first survey scores.**
  - ✓ Although there were more suggestions for improvement than in 2016, and some scores decreased from 2016, it may be that we are seeing a more accurate picture of how the Weitz CEC partners feel.

- The **Weitz CEC partners indicated that they could build capacity more in 2017 than in 2016**. This may be because more-tenured organizations have had another year of successful capacity building efforts. The graph below shows that newer organizations (Less than a year) scored lower than tenured organizations.
  - ✓ Seeing an increase, rather than a slight decrease, in the CAPACITY scores is very promising considering the note above.

2017 CAPACITY Average Score by Organizational Tenure

	Less than a year	12-17 months	18-24 months	Over 2 years
Score	~4.3	~4.7	~4.5	~4.5

- The Weitz CEC staff are facing multiple challenges as the building becomes busier and the ongoing construction impedes usage of the building's full capacity. It is important to view your staff and the partners as valuable resources in this critical time. They have expressed their voice by taking this survey, and it is important for their suggestions and insight to be acknowledged. **Share the results of the survey with staff and partners** (perhaps in multiple formats) to ensure that we can get the same great feedback next year!

- **The parts of the survey that were consistent from 2016 to 2017 were partners' networking frequency, sense of belonging to the building, and their satisfaction** with their organization's partnership with the Weitz CEC.
  - ✓ There isn't much room to improve in terms of partners' sense of belonging and satisfaction. However, **there is lots of room to improve in terms of networking behavior.**

- Key suggestions to follow-up and/or create action items:
  - ✓ Develop concrete ways to connect partners to UNO faculty, organizations, and research opportunities
  - ✓ Find constructive, scheduled ways for the Weitz CEC staff to interact face-to-face with partners constructively (to identify needs). Touching base with partners on a regular basis will likely help with some of the anxiety they are feeling as the procedures change over time
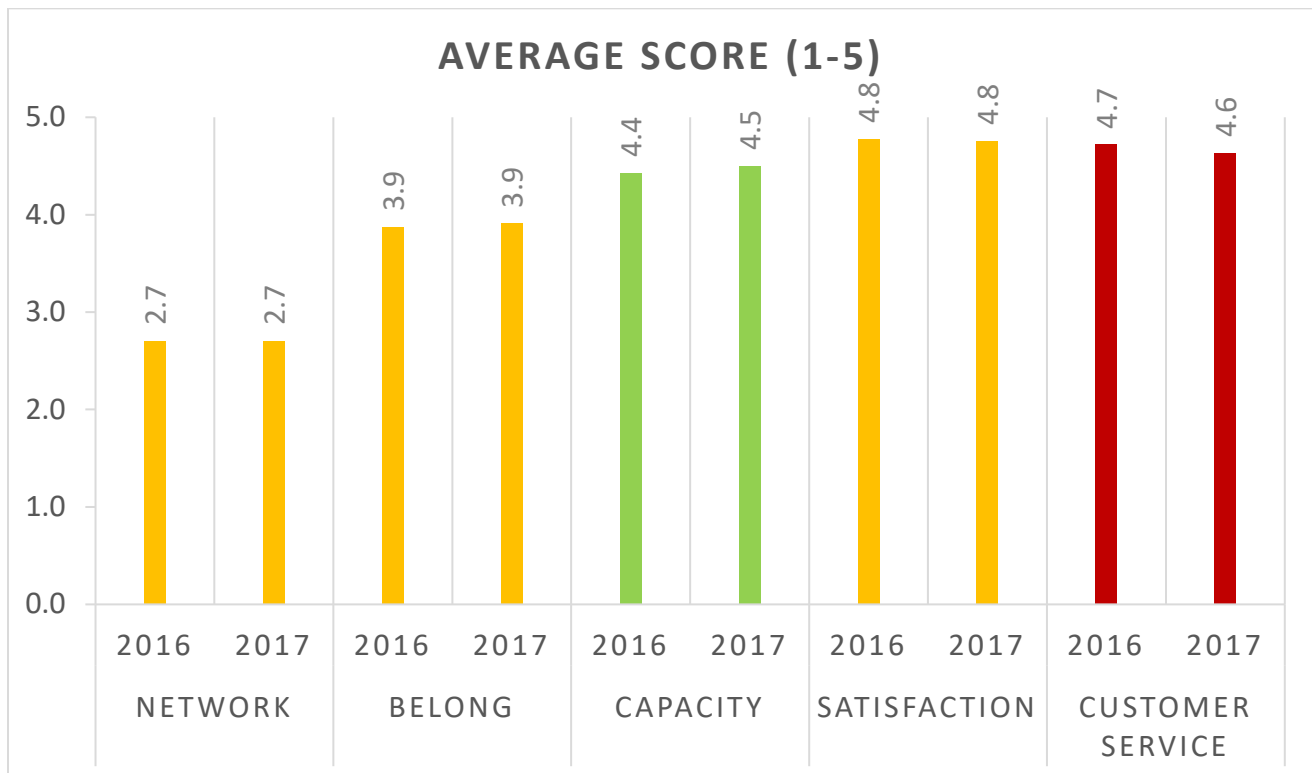 - ✓ Determine how to share results with partners

OVERALL SCORES

On the following bar graphs, yellow bars indicate a consistent trend (no difference from 2016 to 2017). Green bars indicate a positive trend, and red bars indicate a negative trend.

1. **CAPACITY scores have increased compared to last year's**, which may indicate that partners in 2017 feel that they are better equipped to grow because of being a part of the Weitz CEC.
2. The patterns in the data reveal that the **Weitz CEC partners perceive that the CUSTOMER SERVICE they are receiving from the building staff has declined slightly since last year**. This is probably because of the increased demand from partners as well as the challenges the building is facing as it grows to capacity for events and office space.
3. Overall scores for NETWORK, BELONG, and SATISFACTION did not change significantly.

AVERAGE SCORE YEAR-BY-YEAR COMPARISONS

When scoring people's responses as *1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4= Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree 5*, we see the following patterns when comparing 2016 to 2017 results. We averaged the partners' responses to all of the items for each construct. The NETWORK scores were coded differently because it had a frequency (rather than agree to disagree) response scale (*1 = Never, 2 = Once Every Few Months, 3 = On a Monthly Basis, 4 = On a Weekly Basis, 5 = On a Daily Basis*).

AVERAGE SCORE (1-5)

	2016	2017
NETWORK	2.7	2.7
BELONG	3.9	3.9
CAPACITY	4.4	4.5
SATISFACTION	4.8	4.8
CUSTOMER SERVICE	4.7	4.6

PERCENTAGE AGREEMENT SCORE YEAR-BY-YEAR COMPARISONS

The scores in the following graph represent the average percentage of respondents who indicated that they Agree or Strongly Agree with the items on each construct. In the case of Networking, the percentage combines those who indicated that they perform networking activities on a daily or weekly basis.
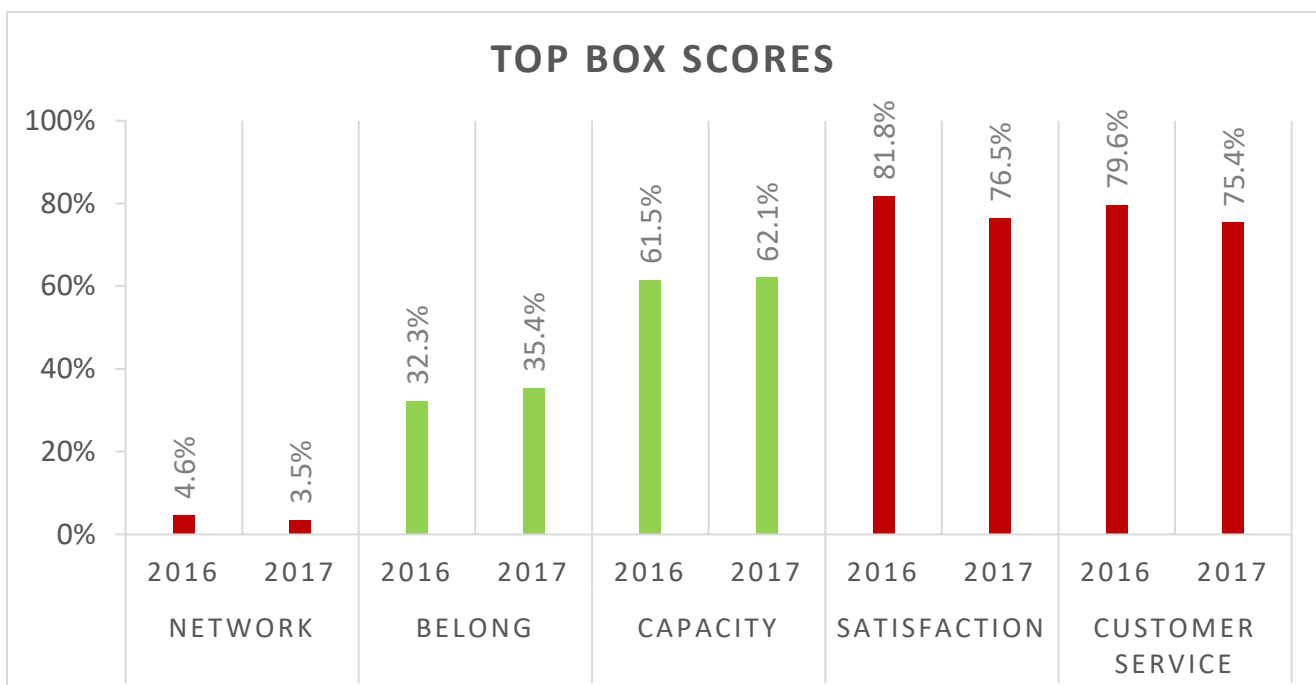

PERCENT AGREEMENT SCORES (TOP 2 BOX)

	2016	2017
NETWORK	22.1%	19.9%
BELONG	71.8%	69.4%
CAPACITY	85.6%	90.0%
SATISFACTION	97.7%	94.1%
CUSTOMER SERVICE	94.3%	91.4%
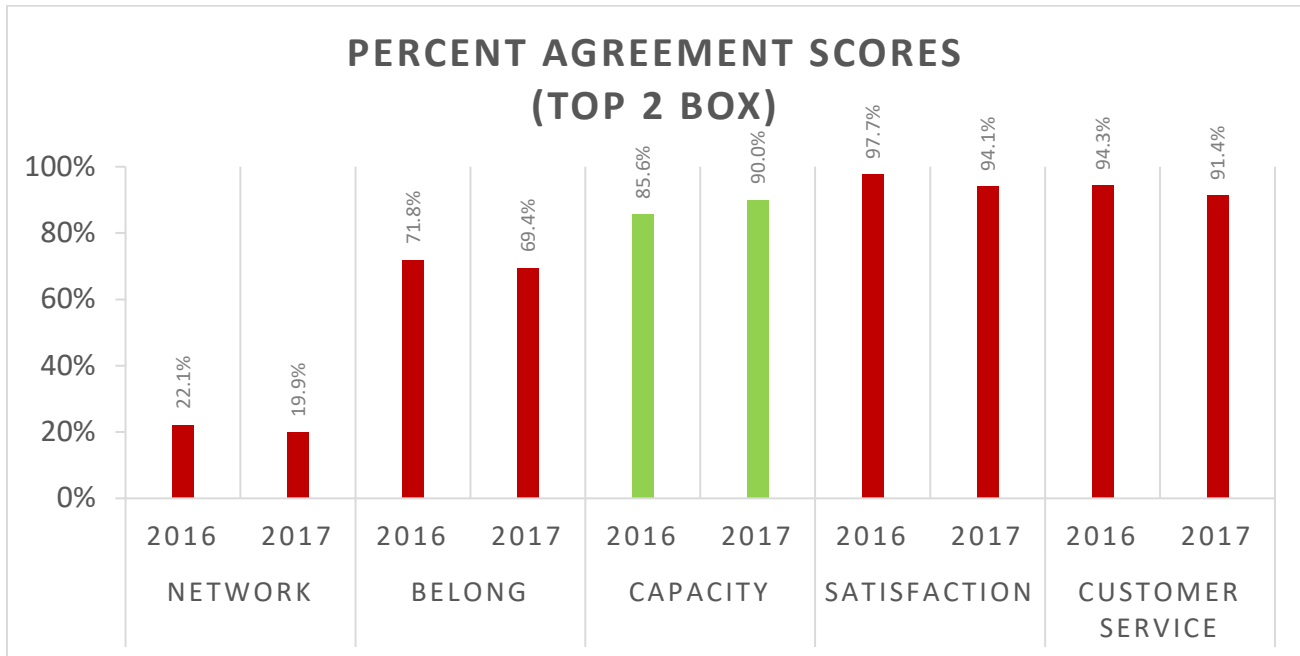
TOP BOX SCORE YEAR-BY-YEAR COMPARISONS
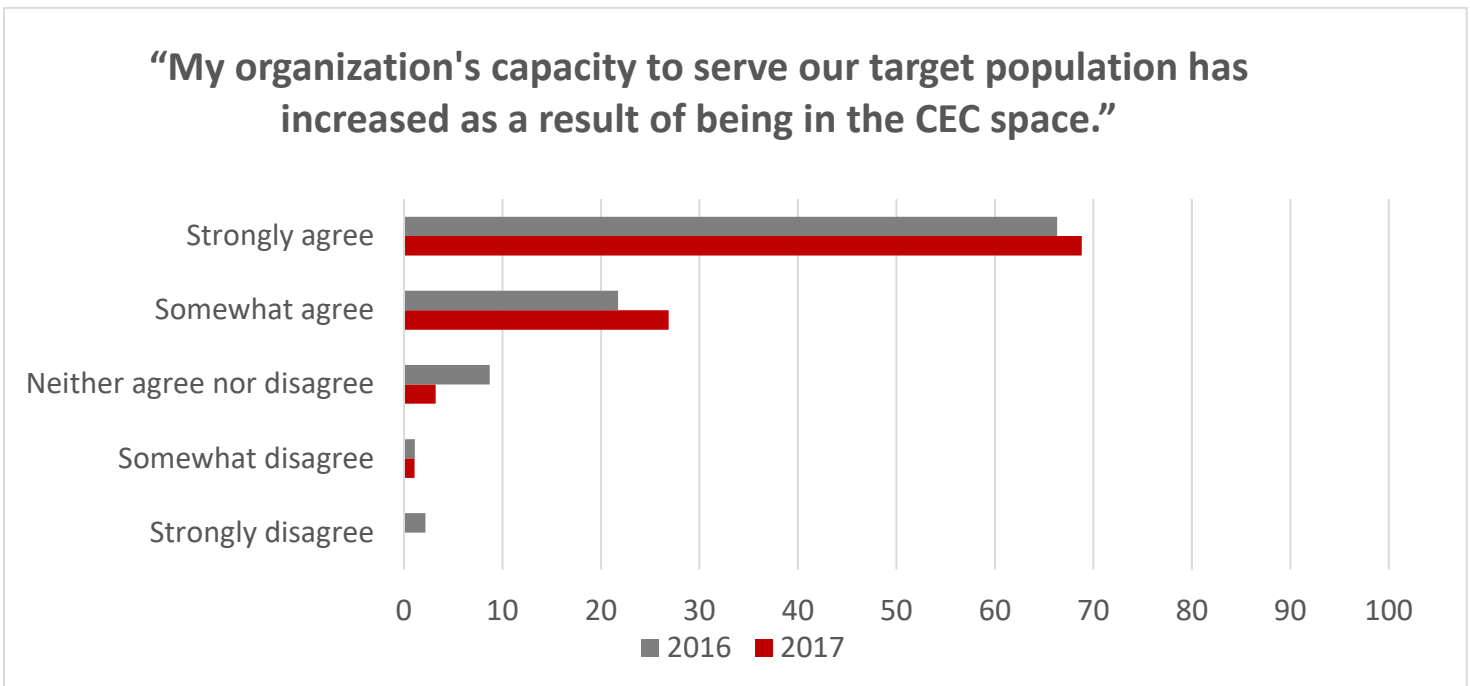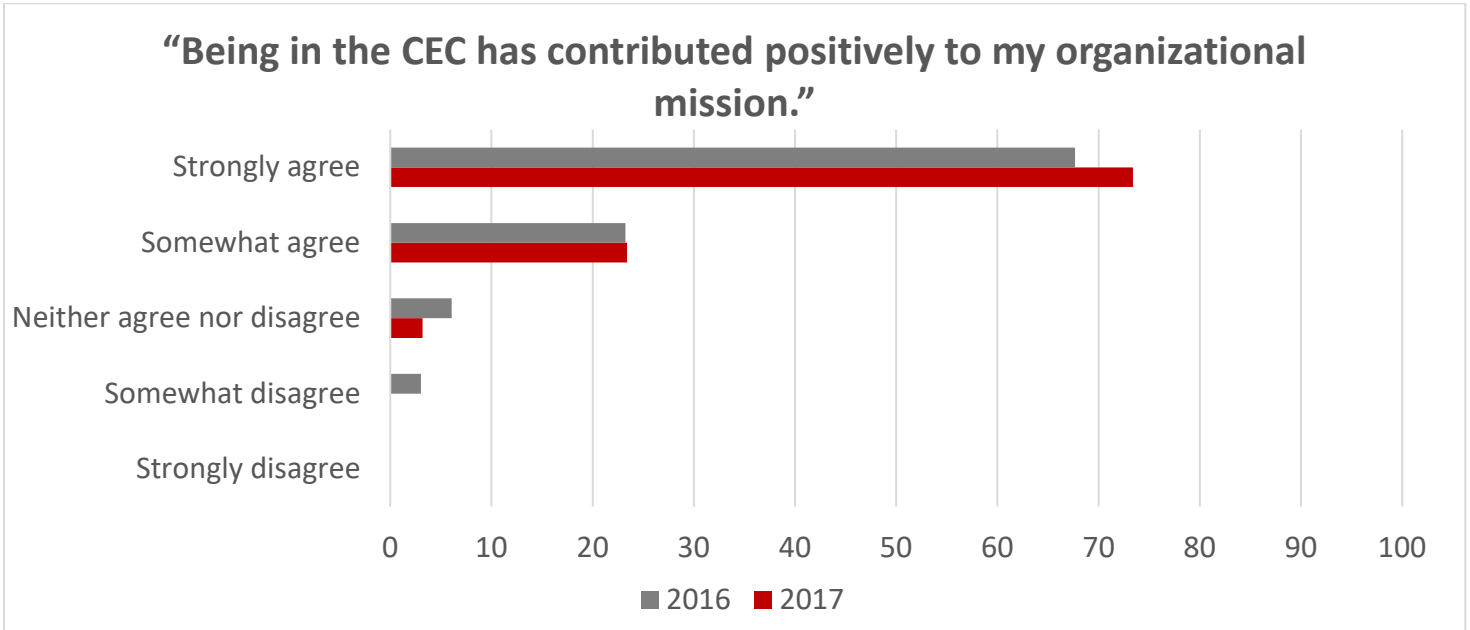
The following graph represents the average percentage of respondents who indicated either Strongly Agree or On a Daily Basis (NETWORK).

TOP BOX SCORES

	2016	2017
NETWORK	4.6%	3.5%
BELONG	32.3%	35.4%
CAPACITY	61.5%	62.1%
SATISFACTION	81.8%	76.5%
CUSTOMER SERVICE	79.6%	75.4%

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

WEITZ CEC PARTNER CAPACITY ATTITUDES

The following CAPACITY items had an increase in scores from 2016 to 2017. Overall, the CAPACITY scores indicated positive change. Each of the items for CAPACITY showed an increase (rather small), and the following two items showed the greatest increase year-over-year.

"Being in the CEC has contributed positively to my organizational mission."

Legend: ■ 2016 ■ 2017

Categories: Strongly agree, Somewhat agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Somewhat disagree, Strongly disagree

"My organization's capacity to serve our target population has increased as a result of being in the CEC space."

Legend: ■ 2016 ■ 2017

Categories: Strongly agree, Somewhat agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Somewhat disagree, Strongly disagree

WEITZ CEC CUSTOMER SERVICE

The following survey item from the SERVICE construct showed the greatest decrease from 2016 to 2017. Lower scores on this item from the previous year may indicate that partners are able to voice their concerns, but do not feel that their opinions are influencing decision-making in a timely manner.

"The Weitz CEC staff valued my suggestions and input."
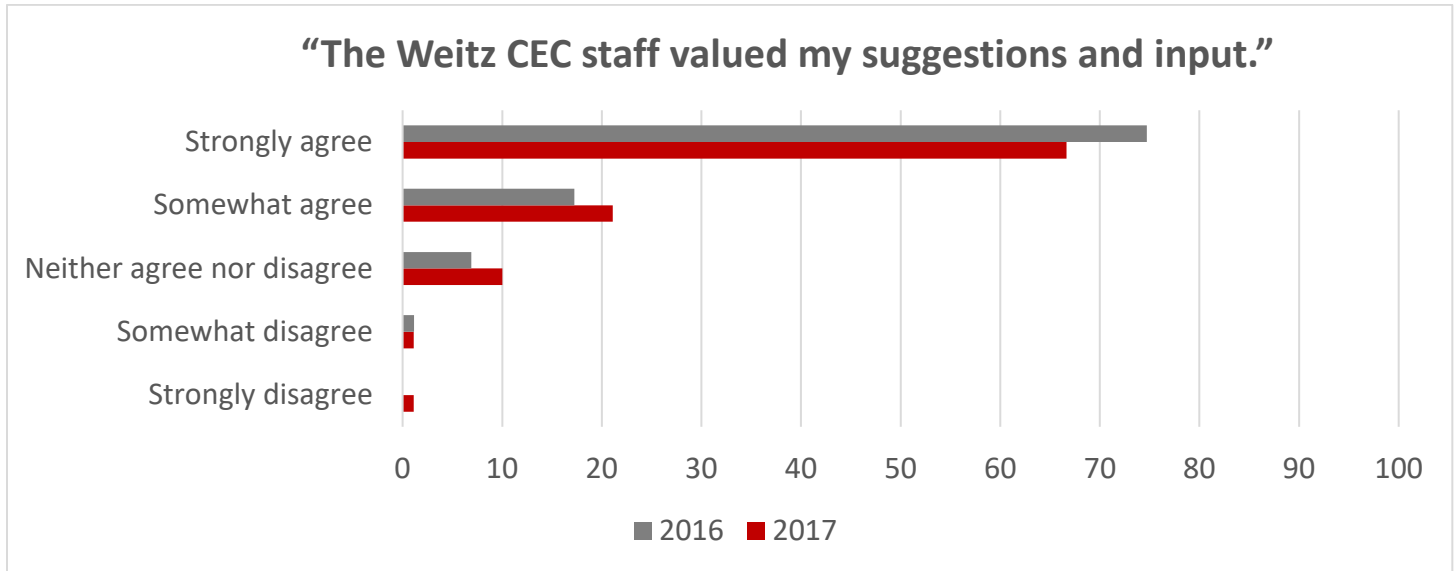
WEITZ CEC PARTNER SATISFACTION

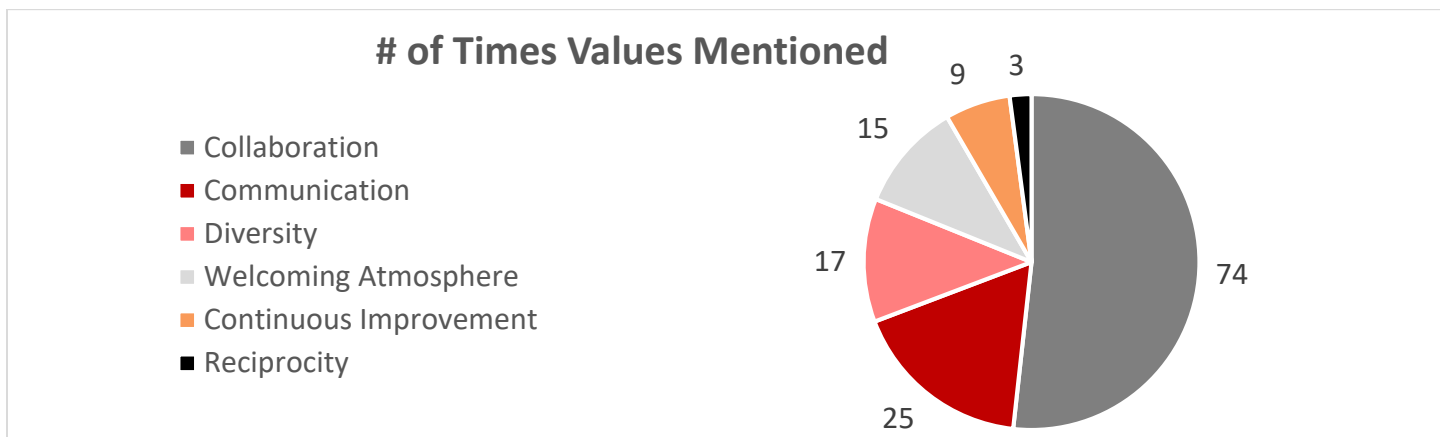The following SATISFACTION item showed a slight decrease from 2016 to 2017. This finding may be an indication of the high number of new partners in the building. Partners who just arrived (survey was conducted in April) may not have been in the Weitz CEC long enough to realize significant, positive change in the community yet.
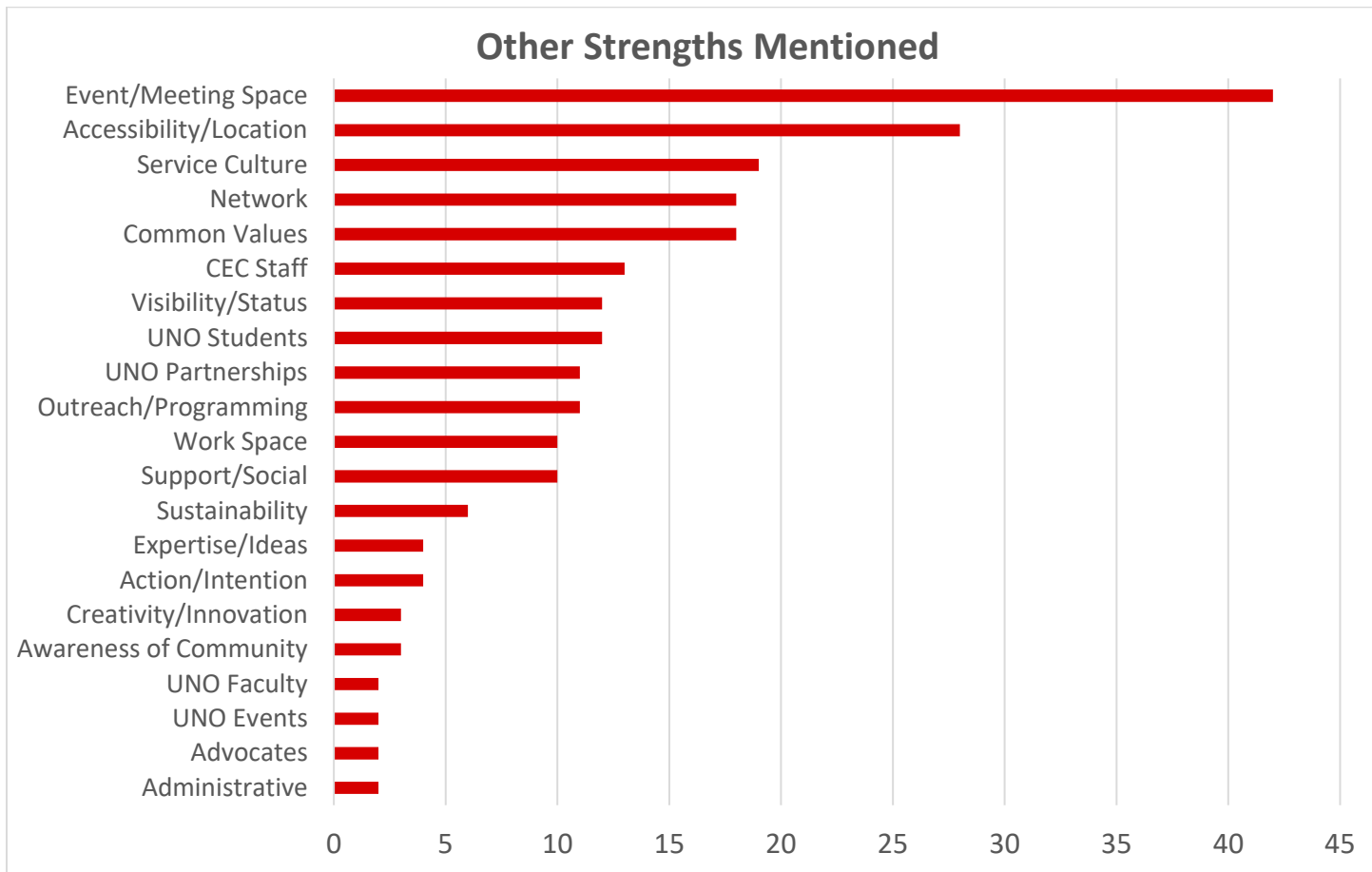
"My organization's partnership with the CEC has positively affected the community."
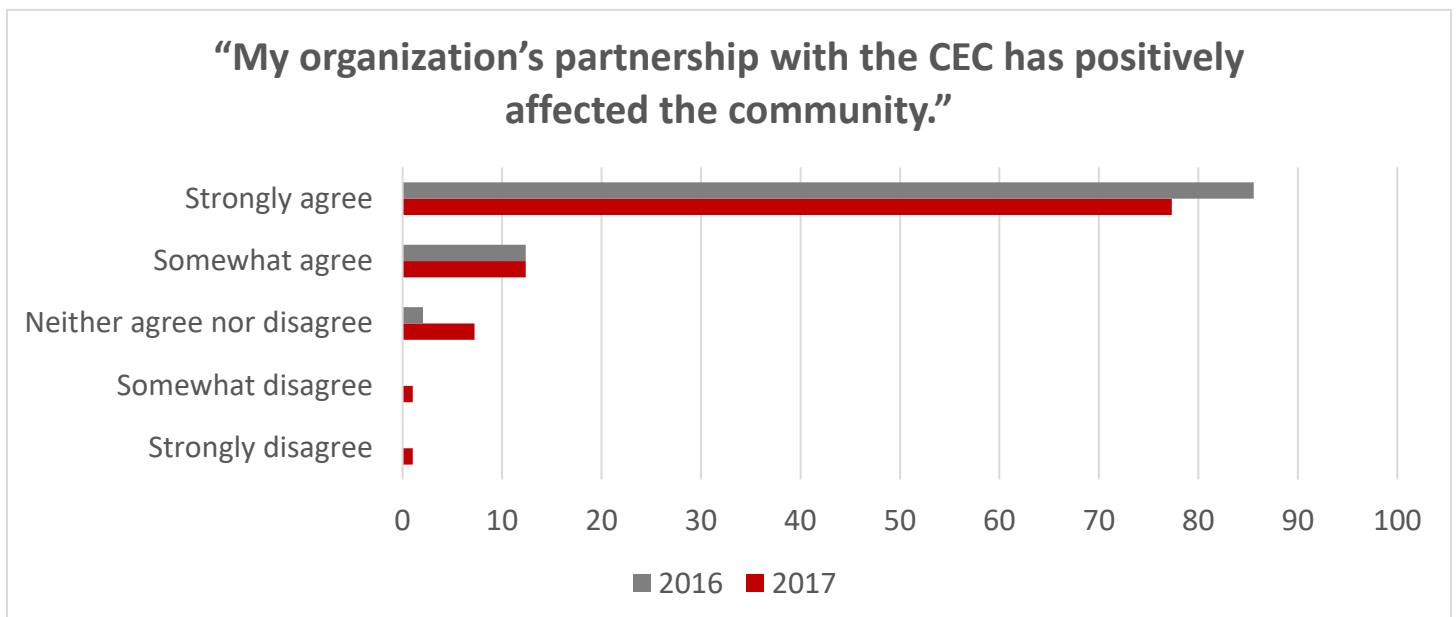
QUALITATIVE RESPONSES

STRENGTHS OF THE WEITZ CEC

Partners responded to the question, "Partnerships between organizations are both rewarding and challenging. What are three strengths of your organization's partnership with the Weitz CEC?" The pie chart below indicates how many times each of the values were mentioned in the open-ended responses.

# of Times Values Mentioned

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Diversity
- Welcoming Atmosphere
- Continuous Improvement
- Reciprocity

Pie chart values: 74, 25, 17, 15, 9, 3

The following bar graph indicates the number of people who mentioned other benefits of their partnership with the Weitz CEC.

Other Strengths Mentioned

Category	Value
Event/Meeting Space	42
Accessibility/Location	28
Service Culture	19
Network	18
Common Values	18
CEC Staff	13
Visibility/Status	12
UNO Students	12
UNO Partnerships	11
Outreach/Programming	11
Work Space	10
Support/Social	10
Sustainability	6
Expertise/Ideas	4
Action/Intention	4
Creativity/Innovation	3
Awareness of Community	3
UNO Faculty	2
UNO Events	2
Advocates	2
Administrative	2

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

We asked partners to, "List any suggestions for how the CEC could improve," They came up with a list of ideas:

The CEC is very popular, rooms are always booked. This makes certain individuals upset because of the unavailability. Individuals that come in for events or meetings, do not understand which place, the Collaborative or the atrium desk, is the front desk. maybe provide a sign that can be put on the desk in the atrium that says help desk, or something of the sort.
1) spaces for private phone calls for those who work in cubicles are limited 2) bench outside and inside west door where students wait for shuttle. When they step into to stay warm or dry, they look guilty for doing it, like they are not welcome here
1. This year CEC staff made changes to the way we use the meeting rooms without bringing the partners in on the conversation to find solutions. This was a self-governed community until it wasn't without any warning. I found it to be completely out of our way of doing business by CEC staff creating an entirely new protocol for using rooms and never giving us a heads up until it was a done deal. One day the rules are we can work rooms out together (students, organizations, etc.) to having meetings interrupted and shaming us for not reserving. I understand that things were difficult for CEC staff and together we could have come up with a solution - maybe the same solution! - but we should have been made aware of the problem and worked together. This was NO transparent. And it feels different now. It is starting to feel like any other building we rent space from as far as the management of it goes. 2. I have been vocal about my disappointment that new partners don't "get" what we are about. I have reached out over and over to organizations and every time been completely ignored. There is no consequence to using the space for their own benefit and not being part of the community, Many of us are feeling discouraged.
Access to at least one conference room for radon meetings or weekend visits.   I realize they had a bad experience one time but it would be nice to have a room I can jump into vs always having to fill out the form which takes a few minutes to fill out.   Basically I'd like an ad hoc conference room I can use and my key card would let me in - assuming no one has it rented.
An option to have walls moved on Saturdays.
Be more welcoming as to parking....always an issue on the campus!
Community outreach
Conduct research with us!
Encourage and facilitate organizations gathering in small groups.
Get the technology in the rooms to work right. Increase student participation in organizations and collaboration.
Getting the word out to students to increase participation
Having semester updates, I just think more communication. Communication might look different at various levels of leadership-does these pertain to CEO's etc. I think having just CEO meetings once a semester would be great.
I know a lot of people don' know about the CEC, and I feel like the building could try harder to advertise itself to campus and to the community.
I think most of the issues that cause problems are because of the growth of the CEC, and that's a very good problem to have. It's hard to coordinate volunteers, etc., when we don't get answers to questions about the building in a timely manner (e.g., 2 days before an event and we don't know when we can get into the building). The new rules did not seem to be mutually agreed upon and overturned some previously made arrangements. None of these things are permanent or unsolvable, though. I think that as a small CEC partner, we need to realize that lots of bigger issues are in play and we are truly very small players in a very big campus overall and we need to be flexible.
increased involvement from other partners
Just continue to show agencies support and being there to serve as a liaison between organizations and the college.
Letting UNO students know that the CEC is open to them and the community.

Leverage its status within the Omaha community to host additional community forums and symposiums to communicate and invite further collaboration to address and solve community problems. Although the CEC is an amazing organization and facility that already hosts a large number of stand-alone meetings addressing important community issues in ways that complement each other I believe it is also uniquely positioned to synthesize further collaborative efforts and take community engagement to the next level.

More interaction with renters

More knowledge of other things going on in the building

It would be helpful to UNO organizations if CEC leadership more routinely advocated for partnership between the UNO organizations and the nonprofits in the building. For example, letting nonprofit tenants know more regularly what services are provided by UNO tenants; not just during their initial tour.

No particular instance. My experience in the CEC has been good. Although, some of the rooms lock at certain times, when I need to access them in order to return items or turn in work assignments. Safety and security is important, so I understand why they're locked.

Open on the weekends, provide scheduled group trainings on webinars, CEC online room booking, etc.

Provide lunch at lunch and learns.

Some of the shared office spaces can get loud and disruptive, regardless of other partners working in the space.

Some smaller organizations may want to have variable levels of engagement and collaboration with the other partners, due to many demands outside the CEC. That need could be more valued and affirmed by the CEC. It often feels that less engaged partners are not living up to expectations.

This year Heike was kind enough to move the walls for us for our annual conference but I fear someone may not always be available.

We're concerned about scheduling future meetings and events, as we're not sure what additional unexpected physical restrictions will be affecting the CEC. The May closing of the building and the upcoming long-term construction affecting Lots D-E are very concerning.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The Annual Survey response rate was comparable to last year, with 111 (compared to 110 in 2016) individuals filling out at least part of the survey.

Number of People Indicating How Often they Work in the Weitz CEC

Number of People Indicating Their Position in the Weitz CEC

Number of Students

Number of Faculty

Organizational Tenure

Type of Organizations