

## UC Merced Staff Engagement and Climate Surveys 2017 & 2018

One sign of a healthy organization is one which checks in on the climate of the employees on a regular basis and responds to the input. Two surveys were administered to UC Merced staff in 2017 and 2018. The first was an “engagement” survey sponsored by UCOP Human Resources and the Council of University Staff Assemblies (CUCSA), administered by Towers and Watson. This survey is administered every two years to a random sample of represented staff at each campus. 267 staff responded from UC Merced. The second survey was commissioned by the Office of Campus Climate and was administered by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) out of UCLA in February 2018. This “climate” survey was sent to every represented and non-represented staff member (1207) and received a 46% response rate from 553 staff.

The following are themes which emerged from both surveys. A more extensive, detailed presentation can be found at [diversity.ucmerced.edu/accountability](https://diversity.ucmerced.edu/accountability).

### STRENGTHS

**Benefits and Compensation.** Staff responded favorably regarding the quality and cost of health benefits and leave policies. However only 40% (195) were satisfied with their salary.

**Performance Management\*** Towers and Watson rated this area as a “strength,” with 49% of respondents giving the area a favorable rating. “Matching pay for performance” satisfaction increased by 14% compared to the previous survey, for a 29% favorable rating. 53% of respondents feel that their “personal contributions are recognized and 67% of respondents felt they were evaluated fairly on the job in the engagement survey.

**Working Relationships\*** 61.1% of the respondents to the climate survey felt “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the collegiality among staff, with 70.9% similarly reporting professional relationships with their own colleagues.

**Supervisor Support for Professional Development.** 81.6% (397 ) agreed or strongly agreed that their supervisor supports their professional development.

**Wellness.** Employees felt that their supervisors were mostly supportive of their participation in health and wellness initiatives.

\*People who self-reported as Black reported favorable scores 13% points lower in the performance management category, 11% lower in regards to diversity and 10% in the wellness category compared to the overall group. Respondents who self-reported as Asian had 10% lower favorability scores in the working relationships category.

### OPPORTUNITIES

**Career Development / Career Succession.** Only 34.7% of the staff felt satisfied or very satisfied with the prospects for career advancement and 43.8% felt support for career advancement in the climate survey. Only 21.8% (105) felt that the campus prioritized investment in the professional development of staff.

**Communication.** Employees feel that the institution does not keep employees informed and employees feel that they cannot honestly and openly communicate their views to their supervisors and

other leaders. Only 17.8% (87) expressed that the institution made it a highest or high priority to consider staff views in institutional decision-making.

**Supervision.** (See the following slide 19 for more specifics regarding supervision from Engagement survey). This received a 66% favorable score on the CUCSA survey. The highest area was “I have a clear understanding of how my job contributes to the departmental objectives.” The lowest area was that staff continue to feel that poor performers are not dealt with effectively.

27.1 % (136) reported that their supervisor “Lacks the skills or knowledge to support me in my job.” When asked, “the extent your relationship with your supervisor has been a source of stress for you in the last year.” 16.9% (81) said “Extensive” and 24.8% (119) responded “Somewhat.”

**Engagement.** Merced’s “highly engaged” score is 15% compared to US average of 35%. Employees who are “highly engaged” has decreased over the past two years by 6%. 71.2% (242) of respondents to the Climate survey said the increasing workload was an “Extensive” or “Somewhat” source of stress. About ½ of the respondents do not feel that they are involved in decisions that affect their work. In the Engagement survey 49% said they were thinking of leaving the University within the year. The climate survey reported that 31.8% (151) stated that they were likely to leave the institution within a year.

#### **Respect / Civility.**

The climate survey asked the degree to which respondents agreed with each of the following statements:

-Faculty respect staff – 60.5% reported that this was “Somewhat Descriptive” and 23.9% “Not Descriptive.”

-Staff respect each other – 53.3% “Somewhat Descriptive” and 13.8% “Not Descriptive.”

The engagement survey asked if respondents agreed with the following:

-My supervisor treats me with respect. 80% favorable <sup>1</sup>

-Employees at my campus/location are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their position or background 60% favorable <sup>1</sup>

-“I feel able to openly and honestly communicate my views to my supervisor and other leaders.” 56% favorable<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “Favorable” = agree or tend to agree

#### Risk factors identified in both surveys:

1. Retention. High rate of staff wanting to leave.
2. Exclusionary behavior. A question was asked on the climate survey about discrimination or exclusion at the institution. Respondents expressed exclusionary/ discriminatory behavior based on job classification (50.5%), level of education (27.9%), age (23.7%), gender (20.7%) and race (20.6%). The staff with high school/ GED education levels reported witnessing and experiencing the highest levels of discrimination and harassment.
3. Staff diversity. When asked about hiring practices, 37.7% (191) felt that the institution had a commitment to hiring women and minorities, 36.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed.