

Spring 2020 UD COE Staff Climate Survey

The UD College of Engineering is committed to broadening participation and fostering inclusion among its students, faculty, and staff. The purpose of this college-wide staff survey is to gain perspectives and suggestions on ways to support staff recruitment and retention.

2020 Summary of Key Survey Results

Study Sample

- Approximately 168 COE staff received the online survey in June 2020; 119 completed it for a 71% response rate. The responses included 25% who identified as supervisors, 69% women, 6% from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups (domestic), and 13% Asian. For comparison, the full staff includes 19% supervisors, 54% women, 11% from underrepresented groups, and 11% Asian.

Job Satisfaction

- When asked what attracted staff to their current positions, benefits and opportunity to use skills and knowledge were identified most frequently (each was identified by 55% of respondents), while salary was noted least often (by 25%).
- Overall job satisfaction was high for the COE staff, with 84% indicating they were highly or somewhat satisfied and just 6% indicating some level of dissatisfaction. These responses were fairly consistent across gender and managerial roles. However, slightly lower ratings were seen for Asian categories and particularly lower ratings for non-Asian minority staff members.
- Of the 11 rated factors that contribute to job satisfaction, opportunities for advancement and stress level were the most problematic for respondents, with the lowest rates reported by staff with COE for more than 10 years. 86% of respondents indicated that the COE work environment is positive while just 5% view it as negative.
- About 1 in 5 staff feel that their job description does not match their job responsibilities, with no difference seen when accounting for managerial role. Comments received suggest job descriptions are not keeping pace with new additional job responsibilities being assigned or assumed.
- About 2/3 of respondents felt that a staff mentoring program would be beneficial.

Interactions with Others

- About 90% of COE staff view their interactions with other COE staff, their supervisor and COE students as positive; 76% view their interactions with COE faculty positively.
- Of the 11 ways supervisors could show support, the highest percentage of respondents identified work schedule flexibility (84%) and the lowest percentage identified advocating for annual salary increase (28%).
- Only ½ of COE staff noted supervisor support related to work assignments or negative interactions. Upon disaggregation of negative interaction support, there is a marked difference between whether the supervisor is staff or faculty (60% negative interaction support if the supervisor is staff, 39% negative interaction support if the supervisor is faculty).
- Just 3% of COE staff feel their supervisors treat others unequally based on gender or race. Non-white respondents were more likely to perceive lower levels of support than their white counterparts.
- 1 in 4 COE staff indicated faculty support was minor or non-existent, while 1 in 8 feel faculty treat others unequally based on gender or race.
- Roughly 1/3 of respondents indicated they occasionally or often witness disrespect by a COE faculty member. While a majority (74%) spoke to their supervisor about it, a little over half who did not report COE faculty disrespect failed to do so because they did not want to make trouble.

Leadership and Development

- While staff generally feel valued, included and kept in the loop about factors impacting their jobs (~80%), perceptions of leadership support around negative interactions and leadership's desire to improve the climate were viewed less favorably.

Equity and Inclusion

- About 1 in 10 staff members reported having a negative experience in the COE based on their gender or sexual identity, with females (14%) reporting more often than males (3%). Similar results were seen when staff members were asked if they had ever observed this type of experience.
- 6% of staff members reported having a negative experience in the COE based on their race or ethnicity while 10% reported observing such an experience. In both cases minority staff members saw the highest incidence rates among the various demographic groups.
- Roughly 1 in 4 COE staff members report witnessing or experiencing inappropriate or offensive comments, jokes or microaggressions.
- 89% of staff indicated that making the COE more inclusive is important to them; about 1/3 report that they are unsure what other steps or actions could be taken to do so.
- Male staff members (71%) were much more likely than female staff members (49%) to express confidence that COE salaries are gender equitable.

COVID-19 Situation

- About 2/3 of staff reported no substantial impacts from working remotely. Comments received suggest the transition to remote was very smooth. Beyond a few mentions for additional monitors, little else appears needed to continue working from home for most COE staff.
- Only 8% of staff indicated a desire to return to working on campus in the fall, with the majority (58%) favoring a combination of remote and on-campus work activities.
- Modified schedules rated the highest (62%) and mask requirements the lowest (43%) among the precautions needed for a return to campus.