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University Campus Climate Survey: Report on Campus Staff Responses

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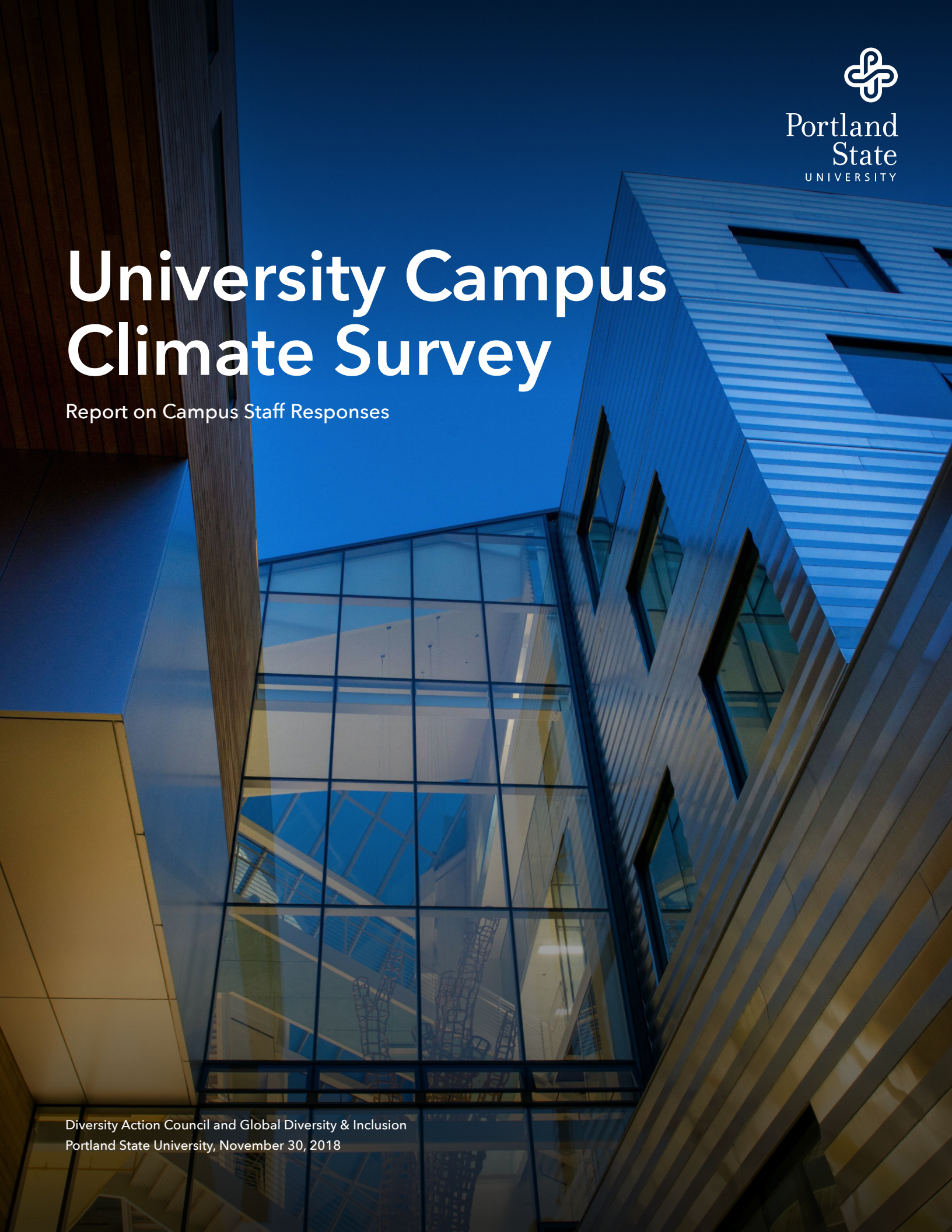

Portland State UNIVERSITY

University Campus Climate Survey

Report on Campus Staff Responses

Diversity Action Council and Global Diversity & Inclusion
Portland State University, November 30, 2018

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There are three additional reports for the other groups surveyed: students, faculty, and administrators.

PSU conducted this Campus Climate Survey to examine:

- Why PSU may or may not be welcoming to all people, particularly those from diverse populations.
- How current institutional policies and processes assist or resist the needs of staff members.
- Why admissions and hiring practices that are in place either ensure diversity among staff members or don't.
- How PSU can provide a foundation for improved efforts to make the campus a more welcoming environment.

Introduction

Portland State University (PSU) is committed to providing all members of its community, including students, staff, faculty, and administrators, welcoming employment and learning environments that are diverse, inclusive, and where individuals and groups can thrive based on their interests and abilities. This report presents results from PSU's first General Campus Climate Survey, which was administered to all PSU staff members who were employed during the Winter Term 2018. The survey asked staff members about perceptions, beliefs, and experiences related to the overall campus culture at Portland State. It also included general demographic questions.

PSU is grateful to the employees who took the survey; we appreciate their time and thoughtfulness. The survey responses provided important information which will help inform PSU's evaluation of the culture, climate, and working conditions.

About This Report

After PSU's Diversity Action Council identified the need for a campus-wide climate survey in the spring of 2016, PSU's office of Global Diversity and Inclusion (GDI) convened a meeting with faculty, staff, and students to discuss the criteria for the survey and determine a vendor to administer the survey. GDI contracted Campus Climate Survey, LLC to administer the Viewfinder® online survey. Viewfinder® is a campus climate survey instrument that measures the extent to which diversity and inclusion play an integral role within the infrastructure of our college campus.

After providing a copy of the survey and an administrative plan to the Institutional Review Board (IRB,) IRB approved an IRB Review Not Required application. The Campus Climate Survey administration was led by Julie Caron, Associate Vice President of Global Diversity and Inclusion, and Craig Leets, Director of the Queer Resource Center, who worked with Campus Climate Survey, LLC to administer Viewfinder®. After the completion of the survey, Dr. Stephen Percy, Dean of the College of Urban and Public Administration, and Julie Caron led the review of the data and report writing. The Chairs of the Diversity Action Council's Faculty, Staff and Student Recruitment and Retention committees, along with their committee members, assisted in the evaluation of the data and recommendations.

Survey Administration

All PSU staff members employed during the winter term 2018 (January 2018) were given the opportunity to complete the climate survey, which was open between January 23, 2018 and March 7, 2018.

PSU took special precautions to keep respondent identity confidential and ensure that a person's identity could not be traced to their responses. Before staff members began the online survey, they were invited to read an introductory Informed Consent Sheet. This Informed Consent Sheet served as a form of passive consent; it described the rationale for the survey, informed staff members that their participation was completely voluntary, and provided instructions for taking the survey, such as: (a) items could be skipped, (b) the survey could be completed in multiple sessions, and (c) staff members could stop taking the survey altogether. After staff members read the Informed Consent Sheet, their voluntary consent to participate was indicated by their continued progress on the survey.

Staff members were sent four emails inviting them to take the survey. Additionally, Human Resources emailed supervisors encouraging them and staff in their unit to participate in the survey. The resource centers in Student Affairs also encouraged both staff and students to complete the survey. Information about the survey was also posted in PSU's weekly on-line communication, *Currently*, which informed the campus community of the survey and encouraged participation.

Response Rates

Invitations to participate in the survey were sent to 1,376 staff members employed during Winter Term 2018. A total of 586 staff members (43%) responded to the survey, with "response" defined as the completion of question one and a response to at least one question beyond question four. Staff members did not have to answer questions if they did not so desire and they could stop taking the survey at any point. Accordingly, there were varying rates of response for each question, but typically over 450 staff members responded to questions open to all participants. There were five questions that were specifically targeted at staff members with a particular identity: veterans, individuals with a disability, people of color, LGBTQIA+, and women. These response rates depended on those who identified with the particular identity.

Survey Participants

PSU non-faculty employees are identified as Classified and Unclassified, which includes employees who are members of SEIU and AAUP as Academic Professional Faculty. In this Climate Survey all employees are grouped as "staff." The staff participating in the survey were working full- or part-time as salaried or hourly employees. Contract staff employees also participated. The length of time employed at PSU varied greatly across respondents. Over half of staff respondents worked at PSU five years or less, while nearly 20% have been employed at PSU for over eleven years. Respondents worked across nearly all academic, student support, and administrative areas of the university. The participants self-identified as woman (64.87%), Caucasian/White (79.81%), straight (72.13%) and in the age range of 31-40 (35.56%). For more detail on participation, please see Questions 1 through 4, and 42 through 48 in the Full Data Report.

Report Contents

This report presents in detail the results of the PSU Campus Climate Survey of Staff. The report includes three sections:

- **Cross-cutting report on key climate variables:** Survey findings on key campus climate variables—including feeling respected, welcome on campus, and able to express views and perspectives—are cross-tabulated by various campus stakeholder groups.
- **Major findings, implications, and recommendations:** These findings and recommendations have been created by the DAC Staff Retention and Recruitment Committee members as a result of their careful review of survey findings.
- **Full data report:** Complete survey results—including graphical presentation and data tables—are presented as provided by the consultant company that supported this survey process.

Cautions In Interpreting Data

Certain precautions are warranted when interpreting survey data, including recognition that:

- Some questions are asked only of survey respondents who have identified themselves in a certain category. For example, the Campus Climate Survey asks each respondent whether or not they are or have been enrolled in the military. Those who responded affirmatively were asked follow-up questions. Responses to the follow-up, therefore, represent a subset of survey respondents only.
- Responses to certain questions, particularly those that are answered only by a subset of respondents, may have relatively few respondents. One is cautioned about using percentages in interpreting responses where the number of respondents is small.
- Responses should be interpreted using the exact wording of questions as provided to respondents.
- The findings below are based on all participants of the survey. Nearly 80% of the participants were caucasian, and thus, may not fully represent the views of staff employees of color.

Cross-Cutting Report on Key Climate Variables

This report cross-tabulates views and perspectives on key campus climate variables by a variety of stakeholder groups. This allows for an examination of how different staff stakeholders of interest (like veterans, women, or people of color) feel about specific scenarios related to the campus/community climate or culture.

Ability to Openly Express Beliefs on Campus

Prompt	Total Respondents	Agree or Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
I can openly express my … on campus				
Religious/Spiritual Beliefs	481	51.35%	26.2%	22.45%
Political views/worldviews	565	64.6%	14.51%	20.89%
Gender Identity*	137	83.75%	5.11%	10.95%
Sexual Identity*	138	73.91%	9.42%	16.67%

Ability to Openly Express Beliefs in the Community

Prompt	Total Respondents	Agree or Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
I can openly express my … in the community				
Religious/Spiritual Beliefs	481	64.87%	22.66%	12.47%
Political views/worldviews	565	73.45%	14.34%	12.21%
Gender Identity*	137	81.03%	10.22%	8.76%
Sexual Identity*	137	75.19%	13.87%	10.95%

* Response requested only from individuals who identified as a member of the category.

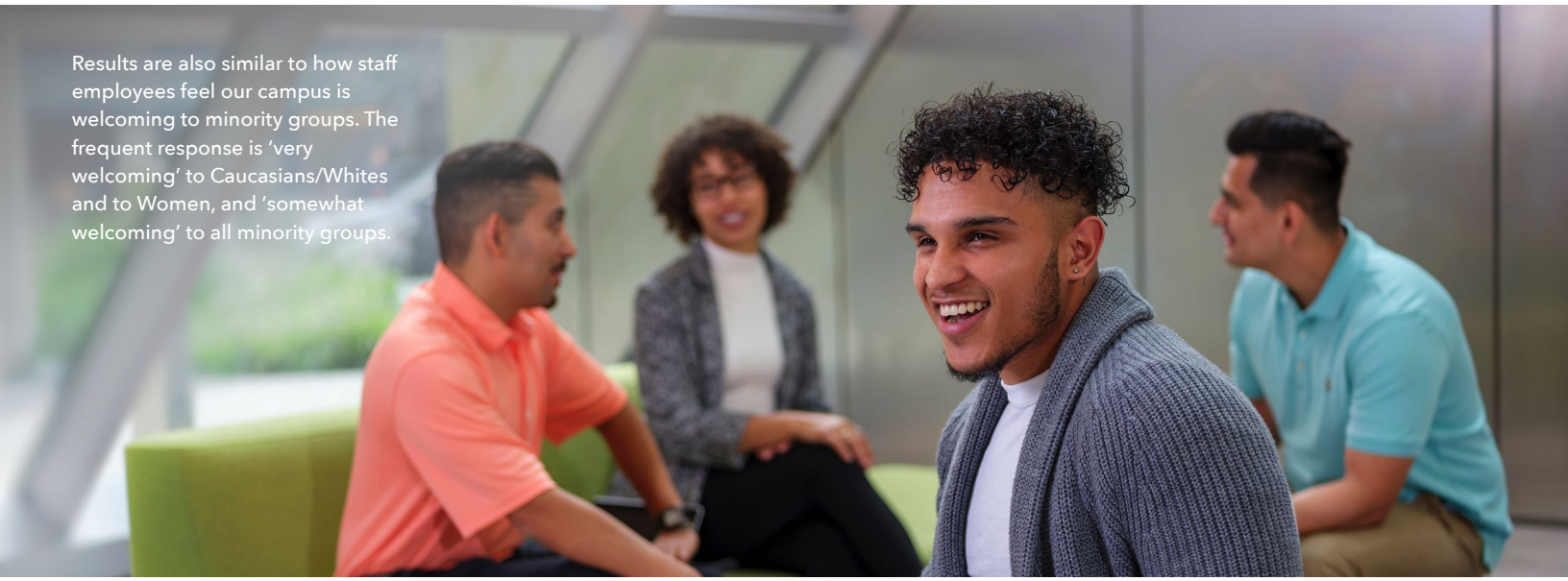
Feeling Welcome on Campus

Prompt	Total Respondents	Agree or Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
As a …, I feel welcome on campus				
Veteran*	23	69.56%	13.04%	17.39%
Person with a Disability*	73	58.91%	23.29%	17.81%
Staff of Color*	100	64%	14%	22%
Woman Staff*	382	89.73%	6.81%	3.4%

Feeling Welcome in the Community

Prompt	Total Respondents	Agree or Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
As a …, I feel welcome in the community				
Veteran*	23	69.57%	13.04%	17.39%
Person with a Disability*	72	69.45%	16.67%	13.89%
Staff of Color*	100	64%	14%	22%
Woman Staff*	381	89.73%	6.81%	3.4%

* Response requested only from individuals who identified as a member of the category.



Treated with Respect by Students

Prompt	Total Respondents	Agree or Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
… treated with respect by students				
Veterans* are	23	52.17%	34.78%	13.05%
Persons with a Disability* are	73	47.95%	46.58%	5.48%
My religious/spiritual beliefs are	470	50%	43.62%	6.38%
My political views/worldviews are	557	56.55%	32.85%	10.59%
Gender Identity is*	135	72.6%	20.74%	6.66%
Sexual Identity is*	136	69.12%	22.79%	8.09%
Staff of color are*	101	64.36%	23.76%	11.88%
Women Staff are*	379	76.26%	17.94%	5.81%

Treated with Respect by Faculty

Prompt	Total Respondents	Agree or Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
… treated with respect by faculty				
Veterans* are	23	47.83%	34.78%	17.39%
Persons with a Disability* are	73	45.21%	38.36%	16.44%
My religious/spiritual beliefs are	468	50.22%	43.16%	6.62%
My political views/worldviews are	559	56.35%	33.09%	10.55%
Gender Identity is*	136	67.65%	20.59%	11.76%
Sexual Identity is*	136	63.23%	27.94%	8.83%
Staff of color are*	100	50%	29%	21%
Women Staff are*	374	62.57%	22.46%	14.97%

* Response requested only from individuals who identified as a member of the category.

Treated with Respect by Staff

Prompt	Total Respondents	Agree or Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
… treated with respect by staff				
Veterans* are	22	77.27%	18.18%	4.55%
Persons with a Disability* are	73	61.65%	27.4%	10.96%
My religious/spiritual beliefs are	478	59.84%	32.64%	7.54%
My political views/worldviews are	561	65.95%	25.31%	8.74%
Gender Identity is*	137	71.54%	17.52%	10.95%
Sexual Identity is*	136	69.11%	19.85%	11.03%
Staff of color are*	101	54.45%	20.79%	24.75%
Women Staff are*	379	80.21%	12.14%	7.65%

Treated with Respect by Administrators

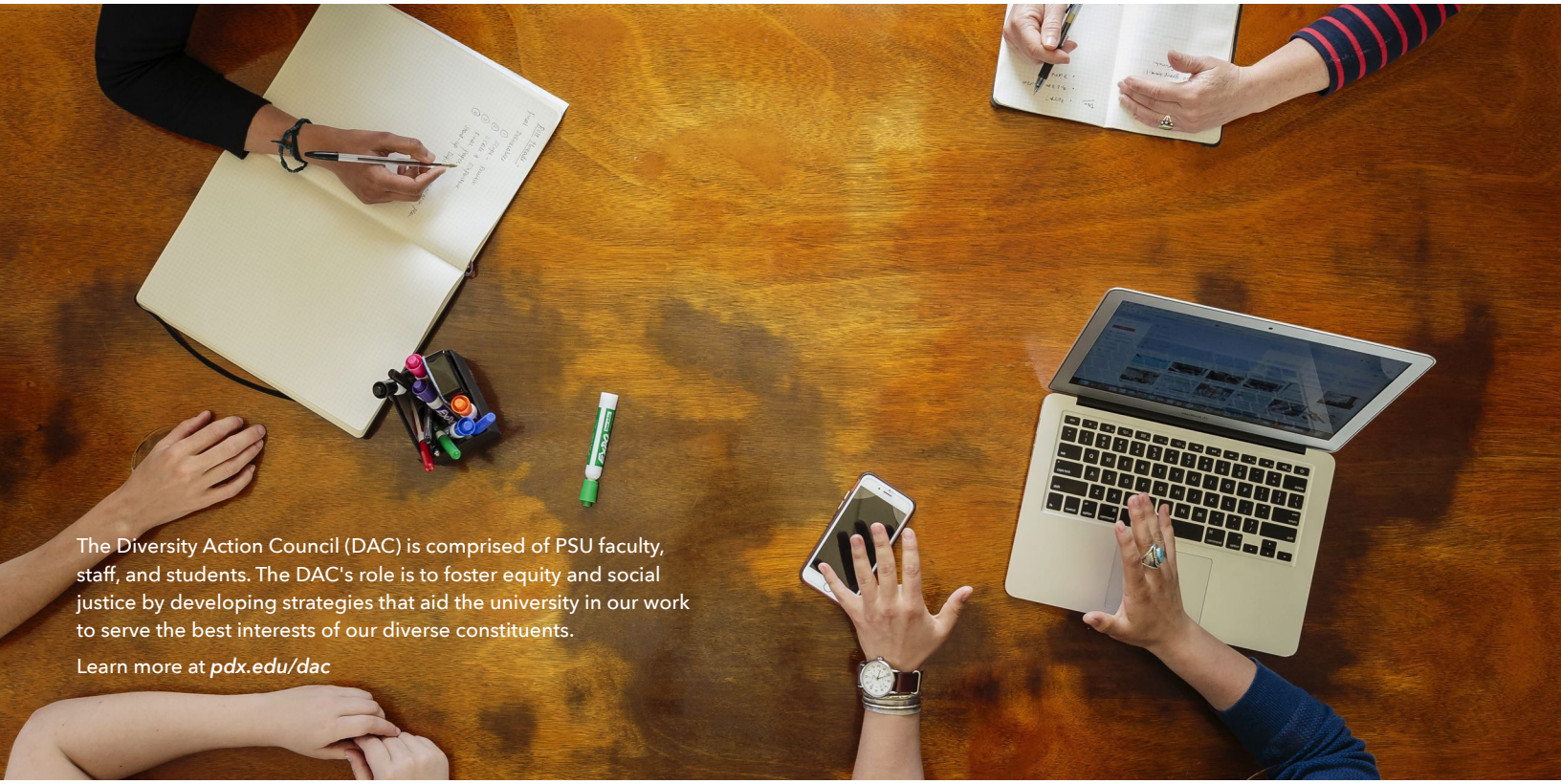
Prompt	Total Respondents	Agree or Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
… treated with respect by administrators				
Veterans* are	23	60.87%	30.43%	8.7%
Persons with a Disability* are	72	51.39%	27.78%	20.84%
My religious/spiritual beliefs are	475	50.95%	42.11%	6.94%
My political views/worldviews are	558	55.02%	34.59%	10.39%
Gender Identity is*	136	66.91%	20.59%	12.5%
Sexual Identity is*	136	62.5%	25%	12.5%
Staff of color are*	101	44.55%	28.71%	26.73%
Women Staff are*	378	64.55%	20.63%	14.82%

* Response requested only from individuals who identified as a member of the category.

Representation on the Diversity Action Council

Prompt	Total Respondents	Agree or Strongly Agree	Undecided	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
… well-represented on our Diversity Action Council				
Veterans* are	23	26.08%	65.22%	8.7%
Persons with a Disability* are	71	19.72%	69.01%	11.27%
Employees with my religious/spiritual beliefs are	456	19.08%	71.05%	9.87%
Employees with my politcal views/worldviews are	549	32.79%	58.11%	9.4%
LGBTQIA+* employees are	133	28.57%	59.4%	12.03%
Staff of color are*	101	43%	42%	15%
Women Staff are*	365	44.38%	52.88%	2.74%

* Response requested only from individuals who identified as a member of the category.



The findings discussed in this section are based on all participants of the survey. 80% of the participants were caucasian and thus do not necessarily represent the specific views of staff employees of color.

Statistics indicated that PSU is composed of more recently-hired employees, which may also indicate a high turnover of staff employees at PSU.

Data Analysis

Upon review of data in the Campus Climate Survey for Staff, the DAC Committee on Staff Recruitment and Retention has identified the following key findings as well as implications and recommendations.

Major Findings

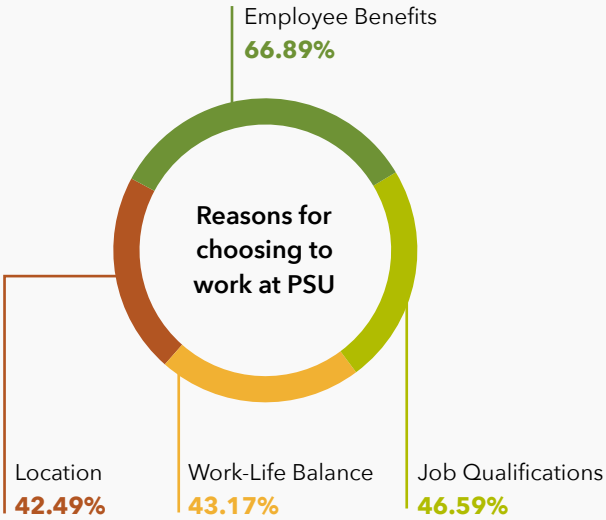
Administrators chose to work at PSU most often for reasons related to career advancement, employee benefits, job meeting personal qualifications, and work-life balance.

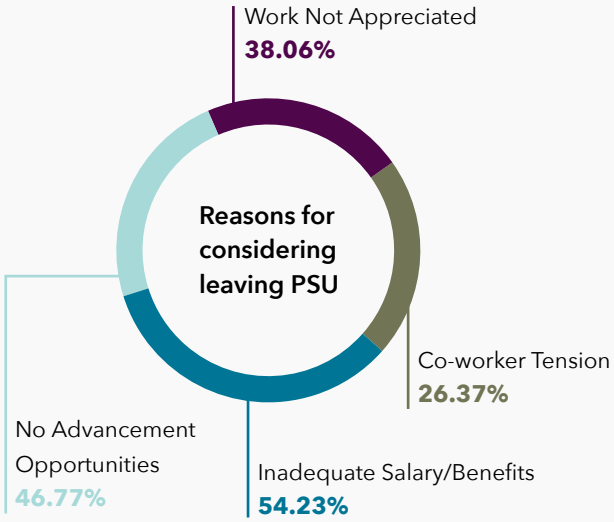
Employee Recruitment: The majority of staff first hear about the job opening by:

1. Job board (40.95%)
2. Colleagues (23.49%)
3. Friends (20.26%)

Employee Satisfaction: Several questions were asked to better understand how an employee feels about their profession at PSU.

- As of the Spring 2018, staff have been employed at PSU for:
  - 1-5 years (43.65%)
  - 6-10 years (25.73%)





Responses indicate that PSU staff are more likely to agree with "I" statements, and those with less emphasis on diversity. In addition, respondents were more likely to answer 'undecided' when the statement was about diversity.

Employee Engagement: When asked to what extent they agree or disagree with particular statements about the overall campus at PSU, staff members responded:

Agree

(Combination of 'agree' and 'strongly agree' responses)

I am satisfied overall with my interactions with other employees ***(83.62%)***

The welfare of our campus takes precedence over donor demands, investment matters, and political interests ***(63.53%).***

I would recommend my campus to others considering working here ***(69.22%).***

Goals of the University are relevant to preparation for the world students will graduate into ***(63.28%).***

I am satisfied with off-campus community engagement ***(68.77%).***

I have received adequate diversity training to engage with students and employees on campus ***(51.35%).***

"Multiculturalism" is a core value of our institution's mission ***(56.43%).***

Undecided

Public announcements by our school regarding internal communications and practices are honest and truthful.

Our campus is diverse, but not inclusive.

Our campus is inclusive, but not diverse.

Our school engages with external communities to understand their interests and responds to their needs.

If there were recognition (awards, financial incentives, etc.) for contributions to campus diversity, I would participate in advancing those efforts.

Campus leaders are held to appropriate measures of accountability and responsibility for our campus climate.

Employee Engagement: When asked to what extent they agree or disagree with particular statements about the overall campus at PSU, staff members responded:

- **Statements in the 'agreed' categories:**
    - *I am satisfied overall with my interactions with other employees*
    - *The welfare of our campus takes precedence over donor demands, investment matters, and political interests*
    - *I would recommend my campus to others considering working here*
    - *Goals of the University are relevant to preparation for the world students will graduate into*
    - *I am satisfied with off-campus community engagement*
    - *I have received adequate diversity training to engage with students and employees on campus*
    - *"Multiculturalism" is a core value of our institution's mission*

- **Statements in the 'undecided' categories:**
    - *Public announcements by our school regarding internal communications and practices are honest and truthful*
    - *Our campus is diverse, but not inclusive*
    - *Our campus is inclusive, but not diverse*
    - *Our school engages with external communities to understand their interests and responds to their needs*
    - *If there were recognition (awards, financial incentives, etc.) for contributions to campus diversity, I would participate in advancing those efforts*
    - *Campus leaders are held to appropriate measures of accountability and responsibility for our campus climate*

PSU staff were undecided whether *the policy to improve campus climate through diverse hiring is effective (47.75%)*; and *if diversity-related accomplishments are considered in the hiring process (41.25%).*

Employee Work Experience: When asked to what extent they agree or disagree with particular statements about the overall work experience at PSU, staff members responded:

Favorable

Satisfied with employee benefit package (59.614%)

Ideas were acknowledged by their co-workers and supervisors (70.62%)

Professional development is encouraged (69.85%)

Other employees available for career advice (62.19%)

Mentors are important for junior staff members (85.29%)

Unfavorable

There are pay disparities here (72.77%)

Staff believe they are underpaid for the work that they do (69.71%)

Staff can easily track improvement in areas of diversity in their annual performance review (14.18%)

Merit and promotional process is fair (20.74%)

Advancing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Questions were asked to better understand the level of interactions and encouragement within the institution about diversity and inclusion; as well as communication, recognition, working relationships, and accountability from leadership.

- The majority of staff employees were either undecided or did not believe that PSU promoted racial and cultural interactions between different groups (38% 'somewhat' and 28.67% 'undecided').
- The majority of staff employees found promoting diversity and inclusion to the campus leadership to be important (66.44% 'very important').
- The majority of staff employees experienced discrimination/bias/harassment at PSU (62.38%)
    - More staff have felt discriminated against on the basis of their gender (38.3%), age (38.62%), and bullying (18.69%).
- The majority of those who responded that they have experienced discrimination would not report it (80.65%).
- Staff strongly agreed that all members of the PSU community should participate in diversity training, including board of trustees, senior administration, faculty, search committee heads, staff members, and students.
- Most staff employees are aware of the campus-wide strategic plan (61.72%).
- Staff employees 'agree' that senior leadership establishes the campus visions (46.99%).
- Staff believe senior administrators show a commitment to campus diversity (54.97%).

Discrimination

For the purpose of the Climate Survey, "*discrimination*" was not limited to protected classes, but also included bullying, socioeconomic status, and political views.

Implications and Recommendations

Upon review of the data findings, the Recruitment and Retention of Diverse Staff Committee makes the following recommendations.

Climate Survey: Our committee encourages continued use of University-wide climate surveys and management of climate surveys at the department level. If too many climate surveys (university-wide plus departments) are distributed at the same time, within the same year, employees can get confused and/or exhausted from taking multiple surveys. We also suggest having a climate survey for self-identified employees of color to capture their perspective on PSU. This will allow us to understand and identify how we can recruit diverse staff and to improve employee retention. Further research will also be needed to capture under-represented experiences.

Exit Interviews/Surveys: With the data demonstrating that more staff employees have been employed for 1-5 years at PSU, this may indicate a high turnover of employees. Our committee indicated the importance of optimizing our employee lifecycle and having a consistent exit interview or survey for all employees, as a part of better End of Employee Lifecycle Care. We believe this will increase the longevity of our future employees by understanding why PSU employees are leaving. We suggest that Human Resources creates consistent guidelines and processes for exit interviews. This will allow for the demographic data to be confidentially collected. We also highly recommend that Human Resources provides the training and guidance to supervisors and/or Human Resources coordinators around campus to maintain consistency and set a standard for exit interviews at PSU.

Training for supervisors: Our committee suggests having appropriate ongoing training for management and supervisors. We also recommend that supervisors continue to engage in culturally responsive workshops, including those about hiring practices. Supervisors should conduct self audits about their biases and different treatment of minority communities, with the goal of adapting practices to eliminate disparities. Our staff employees indicated that they feel under-appreciated, undervalued, and underpaid—we believe if managers receive the proper on-going training, this will improve professional relationships, unit culture, and employee satisfaction.

- HR training/guidance for supervisors to be conducted with an equity lens.
- Equitable career development for underrepresented staff, who may receive less feedback from supervisors who are a dominant gender/race.
- Lack of career advancement/development was one of the biggest pain-points in this survey. Establish focus groups or other opportunities to evaluate these barriers.

Equity Lenses are equity-focused considerations meant to guide the implementation of each strategic goal in the PSU Strategic Plan.

Learn more at *pdx.edu/president/psus-strategic-plan*

Visibility of DAC: The climate survey demonstrated the lack of awareness of the President's Diversity Action Council. Our committee highly suggest having visible leadership and Human Resources' support. We plan to work with the DAC Communication Committee and collaborate with departments to make DAC more visible. We would also like Human Resources to add an equity section to their New Hire Orientation and invite a member of the DAC to present. Our staff members can provide valuable information and be a resource to our newly-hired staff.

Recruiting Diverse Staff: The method of how employees are recruited may indicate that we need to utilize more diverse and alternative recruiting methods while continuing to build a positive image of this institution. While word of mouth is still considered a viable marketing strategy for PSU, first hand and direct information is immediately more credible. This data suggests that PSU is most successfully marketing to the caucasian/white population.

Many staff learn about PSU job opportunities from word of mouth. If PSU is truly inclusive, and employees feel respected, employees will share their experiences and could attract more diverse talent. However, the opposite scenario is also true—when an employee is faced with a negative experience or potential discrimination, this will be shared with and amplified through colleagues and friends. PSU benefits were the frequent answer of what attracted staff members to PSU. Also, our staff cited inadequate pay and benefits as reasons they considered leaving. This suggests that staff employees are willing to take advantage of PSU benefits, such as tuition reduction, but do not feel supported or do not feel they have the opportunity for advancement. This data also indicates that convenience is the reason they were attracted to PSU, and may outweigh the reasons why they do not leave PSU.

- Human Resources and departments proactively update and write job descriptions to include explicit cultural responsiveness and racial equity language.
- PSU should increase the access of inclusive hiring training and culturally responsive career advancement coaching/training for both staff and managers.
- As mentioned before, we recommend HR include an equity section during the newly-hired orientation so our employees can learn the campus commitment to equity and available resources or programs around campus.

Accountability: Our committee suggests incorporating equity, diversity, and inclusion accountability in our performance evaluations for all groups including leadership and management. PSU leadership and management should make a clear and direct commitment to a University-wide Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Plan to ensure that progress is not lost when leadership changes over time. Our committee believes placing the appropriate measurement tools and dissemination of a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Plan will be crucial for being able to hold individuals accountable. This plan will need to be implemented at the administrative level to increase accountability and mission to diversified staff based on the PSU strategic plan and engagement of staff members. We believe this can change the culture in the workplace.