



2023 CAMPUS CLIMATE SURVEY TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

ABSTRACT

This report contains recommendations as submitted by the Faculty Task Force, Operating Staff Task Force, Professional and Administrative Staff Task Force, and Diversity Support Coalition student leaders.

PREPARED BY

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Executive Summary

The UNH conducted a Campus Climate Survey in spring 2023 that was administered to Durham, Manchester, and Concord campuses. The Chief Diversity Officer, the UNH Survey Center, and members of the University Commission on Community, Equity and Diversity contributed to the survey instrument, administration of the survey, and data compilation.

Chief Diversity Officer Nadine Petty engaged in a campus tour, offering higher-level accounts of data for UNH constituents. She established a dedicated webpage where internal and external stakeholders can track progress on promised deliverables. Lastly, Dr. Petty convened three task forces: the PAT Task Force, OS Task Force, and Faculty Task Force to review data specific to their populations and make recommendations. Undergraduate Student Senate and Graduate Student Senate were invited to participate to develop recommendations relevant to student data but did not engage. Consequently, feedback from prior meetings with student leaders and administration were utilized as recommendations for continued action for students.

A higher level summary of recommendations indicate a need for improved communication of available faculty supports and resources, increased faculty of color recruiting efforts, more impactful diversity, equity and inclusion efforts including broader faculty training in related awareness, more effective staff onboarding, increased acknowledgement of OS staff contributions, better training for supervisors in relation to OS staff support, increased support for disabled employees, clarity around career development opportunities for employees, greater inclusion of non-binary and transgender community members by way of more gender inclusive restrooms, and increased awareness around accommodations and bias response protocols.

Taskforce membership was comprised of the following individuals:

Faculty Taskforce	PAT Staff Taskforce	OS Staff Taskforce
Teresa Cohn Dev Dutta Rebecca Glauber Peter Lane Nate Oldenhuis Sherri Simmons-Horton (Chair)	Evan Beals Elizabeth Grosso Shari Robinson (Chair) Sharon Tarleton	Sherrie Fontaine Joseph Jillette Casandra Kelleher Donna Laferriere Wendy Monroe (Chair) Mary Beth Myers Jessica Palmer Sarah Stinson Elizabeth Valinski Stephanie Weatherbee Jamie Willet

Diversity Student Coalition
Comprised of student leaders. Represented student organizations include: Alliance, Black Student Union, Hillel, Middle Eastern Cultural Association, MOSAICO, Native American Cultural Association, and United Asian Coalition.

Compiled Faculty, Employee, and Student Recommendations

What follows are submitted recommendations from the PAT Task Force, OS Task Force, and Faculty Task Force along with feedback received from student leaders who comprise the Diversity Support Coalition situated in the Aulbani J. Beaugard Center for Equity, Justice, and Freedom.

Faculty Recommendations

Prepared by Sherri Y. Simmons-Horton, PhD., MSW on June 11, 2024

In 2023, senior administration at the University of New Hampshire engaged the UNH Survey Center to conduct a Campus Climate Survey to understand the experiences of students, faculty, and staff including racial, gender, and different ability barriers, unjust hiring, promotion, and disciplinary practices, unwanted sexual experiences, workplace climate, and sense of belonging. This report will provide a brief summary of recommendations based specifically on results from UNH faculty responses.

The Campus Climate report indicated that faculty made up 12% (n=402/3299) of the entire respondents in the survey. Overall, the survey respondents were mostly white, cisgender males or females. To this end, the reviewer interprets results with caution that findings cannot speak to the specific experiences of faculty with gendered, or racially minoritized identities in a meaningful way. Recommendations are below.

Work-life balance

Overall, findings from the survey indicated no striking concerns noted. Faculty believed that there is flexibility in the ability to work hybrid to accommodate work-life balance.

- **Recommendation:** Given the recent budget reset, faculty should have clear, concrete information on resources and supports needed to preserve the work-life balance. For example, with the sunset of CEITL, faculty lost a resource on teaching development, with no clear information on the impact of this loss on tenure expectations. Further, the impact on added expectation hiring pauses that could add responsibilities to faculty and undermine work-life balance need to be resolved.

Support and value

Faculty responses were mixed in domains attributed to support and value. As mentioned, respondents from the complete survey were mostly white, male, female, and cisgender. In responses from marginalized groups who did respond, there were concerns raised pertaining to feeling appreciated or valued (LGBTQIA+ individuals), lack of institutional support (multiracial or Person of Color), and feelings of discomfort in their college (individuals not disclosing gender identity or race/ethnicity).

- **Recommendation:** The University should strongly consider conducting a survey, focus groups, or individual interviews with faculty from marginalized groups. Further, consideration should be to have the study conducted by a research firm that specializes on

design that is consistent with anti-oppressive and diverse lenses. The current survey does not clearly reflect the experiences of these groups.

- **Recommendation:** The University should be more intentional about understanding the nuanced experiences of marginalized faculty. Additionally:
 - The University needs to improve their hiring practices and being intentional and innovative in recruitment of engaging diverse faculty and faculty doing innovative anti-oppressive research and scholarship.
 - Recruitment of a more diverse faculty (among individuals and their anti-oppressive scholarship), provides opportunity for faculty to have mentorship that can help them navigate the tenure and promotion process, as well as having an improved sense of belonging.
 - Promotion and tenure guidelines represent a tradition of institutional exclusion of women, scholars of color, and scholars who conduct research that interrogates systemic bias. Therefore, promotion and tenure guidelines need to be revised across all levels of the University to reflect the broad mosaic of scholars and scholarship.
 - The University needs to develop and create spaces where faculty of color, and faculty from other marginalized populations can have clear support in “toxic” environments on campus. For example, respondents in the survey indicated their perceptions of an over-focus on DEI and the University becoming “too woke”. Clearly a microaggression targeting an equitable, inclusive, and anti-oppressive campus climate. This sentiment is an example of how racialized and gendered groups encounter toxic environments in their workspaces as a norm.
- **Recommendation:** As faculty reported in the survey having observed exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile learning or working environment at the University in the past year, it is recommended that administration and college deans develop and adopt strategies to improve engagement with faculty of color and from other marginalized groups to build a stronger sense of belonging.
- When faculty members were asked how well they felt initiatives at UNH have helped address concerns around diversity, equity, access and inclusion, large amounts of respondents said they did not know enough to say about many of them.

Institutional actions

The survey findings suggested that respondents had mild perceptions of actions by the University regarding overall climate issues. As has been mentioned in previous areas, feelings of having no sense of belonging, lack of diversity, etc., were areas where steps by the University seem lacking or non-existent. Respondents indicating the most positive experiences across all domains of the survey were generally white cisgender men with job security at the University. Further, faculty members reported that they were unaware of UNH initiatives intended to address diversity, equity, and inclusion or did not have enough information with these to speak to them.

- **Recommendation:** Any current initiatives to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion may not be resonating with faculty from marginalized groups. It is recommended that DEI

efforts are inclusive in such a way that centers faculty voice and experiences. This may mean being intentional in having faculty be actively engaged in the planning, and execution of activities, and being involved in practices and policies that are adopted.

PAT Staff Recommendations

1. Work Environment and Hostile Conduct

Findings:

15% of respondents experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, or hostile conduct, often repeated instances.

Basis of conduct included position (26%), gender/gender identity (25%), and age (13%).

Recommendations:

Develop a comprehensive anti-harassment policy that goes beyond current standards, including clear steps for employees to seek support.

Establish an Ombudsman office to address workplace bullying and hostile conduct.

Implement regular 'safe spaces' where staff can express challenges confidentially.

Increase training and awareness programs on workplace conduct, focusing on hierarchical attitudes and power structures.

2. Disability and Accessibility

Findings:

11% of PAT staff reported having one or more disabilities.

34% of respondents with disabilities reported barriers, including physical spaces (20%) and technological barriers (13%).

Recommendations:

Broaden the definition of disability to include more prevalent forms of diversity and ensure meaningful inclusion and access.

Conduct an accessibility audit of all UNH facilities, including classrooms, restrooms, and housing.

Partner with UNH's Institute on Disability to examine and address limitations in the university setting.

Enhance focus on assistive technology and ensure availability of alternative formats for materials.

3. Gender Identity and Inclusion

Findings:

35% of trans-spectrum or gender non-conforming respondents reported experiencing barriers in facilities.

Barriers included restroom accessibility, administrative records, and housing.

Recommendations:

Address restroom accessibility and broaden acceptance and integration of pronouns across campus.

Conduct an audit of UNH housing and other facilities to ensure they are inclusive and accessible.

Host open forums to discuss and address identified problems related to gender identity inclusivity.

Reaffirm the Trans Policy and Climate Committee (TPACC) as a standing committee and/or working group within the University Commission on Community, Equity, and Diversity (UCCED)

4. Career Advancement and Recognition

Findings:

57% of faculty and staff have seriously considered leaving UNH due to low salary/pay rates (66%) and increased workload (49%).

Limited advancement opportunities were a significant factor for PAT staff.

Recommendations:

Review mentorship frameworks for PAT staff and improve utilization rates for professional development opportunities.

Evaluate current salary and pay rate strategies to ensure they reflect the cost of living and industry standards.

Develop and implement initiatives for staff recognition and create feedback loops for continuous improvement.

Enhance career development programs and provide clear advancement procedures.

5. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Initiatives

Findings:

Staff members cited insufficient pay, benefits, and support, and a lack of meaningful DEI initiatives.

Some respondents felt there was too much emphasis on DEI or "wokeness."

Recommendations:

Strengthen DEI initiatives with substantial and effective programs.

Ensure diversity-related professional experiences are part of hiring criteria.

Provide ongoing education/training programs, such as Safe Zones, and include them in onboarding processes.

Address pay equity and ensure fair processes for conflict resolution and advancement.

6. Work-Life Balance and Caregiving Responsibilities

Findings:

48% of PAT staff reported having caregiving responsibilities, mainly for children aged 6-18 (52%) and children under 6 (32%).

Recommendations:

Enhance support for employees with caregiving responsibilities, including flexible work arrangements and access to affordable childcare.

Implement family-friendly policies and resources to assist staff in balancing work and personal responsibilities.

7. Perceptions of Workplace Climate

Findings:

Staff members expressed frustration over lack of support and awareness from administration and differences in treatment between faculty and staff.

A need for improvement in morale, recognition, pay, and benefits was highlighted.

Recommendations:

Increase transparency and communication between administration and staff.

Provide regular opportunities for staff to give feedback on workplace climate and administrative actions.

Foster a culture of mutual respect and recognition, ensuring all staff feel valued and supported.

By addressing these areas, UNH can create a more inclusive, supportive, and equitable environment for PAT staff, enhancing overall staff wellbeing and job satisfaction.

Operating Staff Recommendations

The Operating Staff Council (OSC) Taskforce was asked to create recommendations in response to the 2023 Campus Climate Survey and is grateful for the opportunity to participate in the process.

The OSC Taskforce initially approached this task by examining the top 5 reasons faculty and staff considered leaving UNH according to the survey:

1. Low salary (66%)
2. Increased workload (49%)
3. Limited advancement opportunities (44%)
4. Lack of institutional support (technical support, laboratory space, etc.) (27%)
5. Tension with supervisor/manager (26%)

We attempted to address each of these issues but found it difficult to propose solutions that were compatible with current Human Resources programs and policies and that represented all Operating Staff (OS) opinions/concerns. Additionally, we have reservations about the accuracy and relevancy of the survey considering the more recent impacts of the “budget reset” and coming change of leadership at the Presidential level.

The OSC Taskforce instead identified 3 broad, interconnected categories and has provided an area for improvement specific to OS, followed by examples/ideas under each.

1. Improve communication

As noted in President Dean’s 5/9/2024 email, the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) review team recommended “improving communication across the institution”. The OSC Taskforce recommends a timely, strategic, and transparent approach to communication with a specific focus on training supervisors to better support OS with the following:

- Onboarding: providing clear expectations and essential resources supports employee integration, performance, and satisfaction which improves retention.
- Clarity around opportunities or lack thereof for professional development, growth, and advancement.
- Build staff community.
 - Create a mentoring program where new OS are paired with an established OS member who has received positive reviews.

2. Enhance culture of staff appreciation and recognition

As noted on the Human Resources website “UNH strives to be an Employer of Choice and aims for high employee satisfaction.” The OSC Taskforce recommends improving existing recognition

programs and introducing new methods to bolster employee satisfaction by focusing on the following:

- Supervisor training of existing recognition programs i.e., Spot Bonuses, professional development funds, award nominations. Many of these programs are underutilized.
- Promote and celebrate the annual staff recognition event honoring years of service. This is a long standing and meaningful tradition that has lost some ground since the Covid pandemic.
- Evaluate and improve the President’s Award of Excellence to increase access and to raise the profile of this honor. This award hinges on letter(s) of recommendation and the accompanying prizes have decreased over the years (dollar amount has stayed the same for many years and a day off is no longer offered). We suggest a more sophisticated metric, perhaps including longevity, annual reviews, and nominations to raise the impact of this celebrated award.

3. Strengthen the OSC

The OSC functions as an important clearing house for information and its representatives serve as voting members on committees where university policy is created. Therefore, a council with proper resources and robust membership is vital to a healthy campus climate. The OSC Taskforce

recommends supporting the Council and raising the profile and prestige of serving on the Council with the following:

- Supervisor training of importance of OSC and committee engagement to encourage and support participation.
- Budget for needed resources and events.
- Stipend for participants using the existing USNH (University System of New Hampshire) bonus pay policy for such payments (see section 7.5 <https://www.usnh.edu/policy/usy/v-personnel-policies/f-compensation>).
- Communication tools to facilitate timely and uniform communication across departments and campuses, e.g., an Operating Staff email distribution list, holding monthly/quarterly information sharing sessions, etc.
- Restructure membership to better represent all colleges/departments within USNH including nonacademic campus services and create an incoming-current-outgoing leadership model for increased professional development and knowledge transfer.

In conclusion, the OSC Taskforce believes that the campus climate can be improved by addressing these categories. The OSC Taskforce also respectfully suggests conducting further analysis of data related specifically to the current Operating Staff climate including but not limited to assessing how many OS positions were cut in the “budget reset,” how many have since

vacated voluntarily, and how many positions have been altered and the consequences of these changes. Additionally, we recommend creating an interdisciplinary task force with the necessary expertise from across campus to address the findings to achieve a more robust and actionable set of recommendations to improve campus climate.

Student Recommendations

Prepared for the April 22, 2024 follow-up DSC Council meeting with:

- President James Dean
- Associate Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer Nadine Petty
- Senior Vice Provost for Student Life Kenneth Holmes
- Dean of Students Michael Blackman
- Director of the Aulbani J. Beauregard Center for Equity, justice, and Freedom Yashwant Prakash Vyas

The 2023-24 Diversity Support Coalition (DSC) Council reviewed the compiled feedback provided by the DSC Student Leaders and TransUNH in fall of 2022. The council reviewed the progress updates that have been shared after that initial meeting. Based on these reviews, below is a summary of the feedback and issues students believed remained unaddressed and/or have emerged since the initial meeting. Many of these concerns have been addressed since creating this report but are offered here for posterity and transparency. New and ongoing recommendations are brought forward during regular meetings with administrators.

Housing:

- The new requirement for first- and second-year students to live on campus raises concerns among upperclassmen who are seeking inclusive housing and can't afford off-campus housing. There is already a lack of inclusive housing on campus, so to push the on-campus living requirements to a wider pool has further reduced inclusive housing options for upperclassmen.
- The new key services charges for being locked out of a room raises concerns among students who come from low-income backgrounds. Although loaner key services are free of charge and a one-time let-in service is \$25, the charge drastically goes up to \$100 if it's a student's second let-in and beyond. This charge places a burden onto students who are already struggling financially, adding another stressor into their lives and could affect their performance academically.

Campus Climate:

- The DSC Council is concerned about the overall campus climate given the upcoming presidential elections and how students represented by the DSC are being treated on a day-

to-day basis. Most of these concerns were shared in the initial feedback document and need to be addressed on an ongoing basis.

- During the Presidential election in 2016, many students and faculty of color had to endure racism and other forms of discrimination on campus.

Seeing as the University and its community will have to undergo another heated Presidential election this upcoming November, the student leaders would like to know if the University has any plans to mitigate the foreseeable discrimination that students and faculty may face.

- Lack of knowledge surrounding the Bias Response Protocol/Bias and Hate Incident Reports
 - Many of the student leaders have had experience submitting one or even helping someone else submit one, but it appears to come to a dead end. The DSC Council calls for more transparency about what happens to the forms after they are submitted.
 - The DSC Council believes it would be helpful if someone could present about the Bias Incident Report processes at the beginning of each Council Year and through follow-up visits during the rest of the year as needed. Also, can this information be shared at new student programming to ensure that students are made aware of its existence.

Professional Development for Faculty (diversity training):

- Student leaders, past and present, have expressed the need for faculty professional development on topics of equity and inclusion to address the concern of discrimination at the hands of professors.

Religious Accommodations:

- There needs to be more information and knowledge behind the process of requesting religious accommodation, and a way to ensure that professors are abiding by these policies and associated requests.
 - Some students have shared their experiences with requesting religious accommodation and professors not believing them.

Resources for the Diversity Support Coalition and the Aalbani J. Beauregard Center for Equity, Justice, and Freedom:

- The DSC is housed within and supported by the Beauregard Center. Last semester (fall of 2023), we received an update about the staff shortage in the center and have observed throughout the year that it was run by one person. Yashwant, as the Director of the Beauregard Center, has contributed advising efforts to promote the organizations, ensure their success, and help student leaders navigate through their roles. A position was cut from the Beauregard Center, which we understand was then moved back given the re-housing of the CONNECT program. With these added tasks, and the impending responsibilities with the

CONNECT program, the Bearegard Center needs support and resources to carry out all its work for the UNH community.

- Audre Lorde Summit did not happen this year.
- In the first progress updates, it was shared that an LGBTQ+ Specialist position was to be established in the Bearegard Center. Since that position hasn't been approved, that will impact the portfolio in which the position was meant to manage, and it will further affect the services that position was meant to fulfill.
- The DSC council has observed the increasing support for its organizations through administration attending events. We appreciate this ongoing partnership and communication with university leadership. We request that this partnership (once a semester meeting, continued work on addressing issues raised by the student represented by the DSC) and engagement with executive leadership continue.