



Rankin & Associates, Consulting

Assessment • Planning • Interventions

University of Missouri -
Kansas City

Campus Climate
Research Study
Executive Summary

September 2017



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Introduction

History of the Project

The University of Missouri – Kansas City (UMKC) affirms that diversity and inclusion are crucial to the intellectual vitality of the campus community. Diversity and inclusion engender academic engagement where teaching, working, learning, and living take place in pluralistic communities of mutual respect. Free exchange of different ideas and viewpoints in supportive environments encourage students, faculty, and staff to develop the critical thinking and citizenship skills that will benefit them throughout their lives.

UMKC also is committed to fostering a caring community that provides leadership for constructive participation in a diverse, multicultural world. As noted in UMKC's vision statement, “UMKC will become a model urban research university characterized by signature graduate and professional programs, a dynamic undergraduate population, a highly diverse faculty, staff and student body, and active engagement with its city and region”¹ To better understand the campus climate, the senior administration at UMKC recognized the need for a comprehensive tool that would provide campus climate metrics for the experiences and perceptions of its students, faculty, and staff. During the fall 2016 semester, UMKC conducted a comprehensive survey of all students, faculty, and staff to develop a better understanding of the learning, living, and working environment on campus.

In May 2016, members of the University of Missouri – Kansas City worked with the University of Missouri System to form the Systemwide Climate Study Team (SCST). The SCST was composed of faculty, staff, and administrators across the entire University of Missouri System. Ultimately, the University of Missouri System contracted with Rankin & Associates Consulting (R&A) to conduct a campus-wide study entitled “University of Missouri – Kansas City Climate for Learning, Living, and Working.” Data gathered via reviews of relevant UMKC literature and a campus-wide survey addressing the experiences and perceptions of various constituent groups

¹<http://www.umkc.edu/chancellor/mission-vision.cfm>

will be presented to the UMKC community. The community, upon receiving the report, will then come together to develop and complete two or three action items by spring 2018.

Project Design and Campus Involvement

The conceptual model used as the foundation for UMKC's assessment of campus climate was developed by Smith et al. (1997) and modified by Rankin (2003). A power and privilege perspective informs the model, one grounded in critical theory, which establishes that power differentials, both earned and unearned, are central to all human interactions (Brookfield, 2005). Unearned power and privilege are associated with membership in dominant social groups (Johnson, 2005) and influence systems of differentiation that reproduce unequal outcomes. UMKC's assessment was the result of a comprehensive process to identify the strengths and challenges of campus climate, with a specific focus on the distribution of power and privilege among differing social groups. This report provides an overview of the results of the campus-wide survey.

In total, 4,650 people completed the survey. In the end, UMKC's assessment was the result of a comprehensive process to identify the strengths and challenges of campus climate, with a specific focus on the distribution of power and privilege among differing social groups at UMKC.

UMKC Participants

UMKC community members completed 4,650 surveys for an overall response rate of 25%. Only surveys that were at least 50% completed were included in the final data set for analyses.²: Forty-two percent ($n = 1,946$) of the sample were Undergraduate Students, 24% ($n = 1,124$) were Graduate/Professional Students, 1% ($n = 36$) were Post-Doctoral Scholars/Fellows/Residents, 12% ($n = 533$) were Faculty members (including Administrators with Faculty Rank), <1% ($n = 13$) were Emeritus Faculty, and 22% ($n = 998$) were Staff (including Administrators without Faculty Rank). Table 1 provides a summary of selected demographic characteristics of survey

²Sixty-four (64) surveys were removed because they did not complete at least 50% of the survey, and 33 duplicate submissions were removed. Surveys were also removed from the data file if the respondent did not provide consent ($n = 59$). Two additional responses were removed because they were judged to have been problematic (i.e., the respondent did not complete the survey in good faith).

respondents. The percentages offered in Table 1 are based on the numbers of respondents in the sample (*n*) for each demographic characteristic.³

Table 1. UMKC Sample Demographics

Characteristic	Subgroup	<i>n</i>	% of Sample
Position status	Undergraduate Student	1,946	41.8
	Graduate Student	1,124	24.2
	Post-doctoral scholar/fellow/resident	36	0.8
	Faculty (including Administrator With Faculty Rank)	533	11.5
	Emeritus Faculty	13	0.3
	Staff (including Administrator Without Faculty Rank)	998	21.5
Gender identity	Woman	2,828	60.8
	Man	1,693	36.4
	Transpectrum	87	1.9
Racial/ethnic identity	American Indian/Alaska Native	17	0.4
	Asian/Asian American	499	10.7
	Black/African American	503	10.8
	Hispanic/Latin@/Chican@	197	4.2
	Middle Eastern/Southwest Asian	95	2.0
	Multiracial	355	7.6
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	6	0.1
	White/European American	2,853	61.4
Sexual identity	LGBQ (including Demisexual)	552	11.9
	Heterosexual	3,833	82.4
	Asexual	19	0.4
Citizenship status	U.S. Citizen	4,100	88.2
	Visa Holder	364	7.8
	DACA/DAPA	5	0.1
	Permanent Resident	129	2.8
	Refugee Status	< 5	---
	Undocumented Resident	< 5	---

³The total *n* for each demographic characteristic may differ as a result of missing data.

Table 1. UMKC Sample Demographics

Characteristic	Subgroup	<i>n</i>	% of Sample
Disability status	Single Disability	370	8.0
	No Disability	4,074	87.6
	Multiple Disabilities	166	3.6
Religious/spiritual identity	Christian	2,338	50.3
	Additional Religious/Spiritual Affiliation	516	11.1
	No Affiliation	1,512	32.5
	Multiple Affiliations	181	3.9

Note: The total *n* for each demographic characteristic may differ as a result of missing data.

Key Findings – Areas of Strength

1. High levels of comfort with the climate at UMKC

Climate is defined as the “current attitudes, behaviors, and standards of employees and students concerning the access for, inclusion of, and level of respect for individual and group needs, abilities, and potential.”⁴ The level of comfort experienced by faculty, staff, and students is one indicator of campus climate.

- 79% ($n = 3,684$) of the survey respondents were “very comfortable” or “comfortable” with the climate at UMKC.
- 72% ($n = 1,117$) of Employee respondents were “very comfortable” or “comfortable” with the climate in their primary work area.
- 84% ($n = 3,055$) of Faculty and Student respondents were “very comfortable” or “comfortable” with the climate in their classes.

2. Faculty Respondents – Positive attitudes about faculty work

- 70% ($n = 167$) of Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that research was valued by UMKC.
- 77% ($n = 181$) of Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they had opportunities to participate in substantive committee assignments.
- 76% ($n = 394$) of Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that their colleagues included them in opportunities that will help their career as much as they did others in similar positions.
- 78% ($n = 180$) of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that teaching was valued and 79% ($n = 180$) “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that service was valued by UMKC.

⁴Rankin & Reason, 2008, p. 264

3. Staff/Administrator Respondents –Positive attitudes about staff work

- 78% ($n = 770$) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they had supervisors who gave them job/career advice or guidance when they needed it.
- 81% ($n = 800$) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they had adequate resources to perform their job duties.
- 82% ($n = 809$) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt valued by coworkers in their department.
- 83% ($n = 826$) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they had colleagues/coworkers who gave them job/career advice or guidance when they needed it.
- 86% ($n = 844$) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that their supervisors provided adequate support for them to manage work-life balance.
- 86% ($n = 848$) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they were given a reasonable time frame to complete assigned responsibilities.

4. Student Respondents – Positive attitudes about academic experiences

The way students perceive and experience their campus climate influences their performance and success in college.⁵ Research also supports the pedagogical value of a diverse student body and faculty for improving learning outcomes.⁶ Attitudes toward academic pursuits are one indicator of campus climate.

All Student respondents

- 71% ($n = 2,131$) of Student respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the campus climate encourages free and open discussion of difficult topics.
- 72% ($n = 2,164$) of Student respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt valued by other students in the classroom.
- 73% ($n = 2,201$) of Student respondents “strongly agreed” or “agree” that they had faculty whom they perceived as role models.

⁵Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005

⁶Hale, 2004; Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Harper & Quaye, 2004

- 77% ($n = 2,339$) of Student respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt valued by faculty in the classroom.

Graduate Student respondents

- 82% ($n = 906$) of Graduate/Professional Student/Post-Doctoral Scholar/Fellow/Resident respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that their advisors provided clear expectations.
- 87% ($n = 949$) of Graduate/Professional Student/Post-Doctoral Scholar/Fellow/Resident respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they receive due credit for their research, writing, and publishing (e.g., authorship order in published articles).
- 87% ($n = 965$) of Graduate/Professional Student/Post-Doctoral Scholar/Fellow/Resident respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they had adequate access to their advisors.
- 90% ($n = 989$) of Graduate/Professional Student/Post-Doctoral Scholar/Fellow/Resident respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt comfortable sharing their professional goals with their advisor.
- 91% ($n = 1,014$) of Graduate/Professional Student/Post-Doctoral Scholar/Fellow/Resident respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that department faculty members (other than advisors) respond to emails, calls, or voicemails in a prompt manner.
- 93% ($n = 1,038$) of Graduate/Professional Student/Post-Doctoral Scholar/Fellow/Resident respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that department staff members (other than advisors) respond to emails, calls, or voicemails in a prompt manner.

Student Respondents *Perceived Academic Success*

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the scale, *Perceived Academic Success*, derived from Question 15 on the survey. Analyses using these scales revealed:

- A significant difference existed in the overall test for means for Students by gender identity, sexual identity, and disability status on *Perceived Academic Success*.
- Transspectrum Undergraduate Student respondents have less *Perceived Academic Success* than Man Undergraduate Student and Woman Undergraduate Student respondents.
- Transspectrum Graduate Student respondents have less *Perceived Academic Success* than Man Graduate Student and Woman Graduate Student respondents.
- LGBTQ Undergraduate and Graduate Student respondents have less *Perceived Academic Success* than Heterosexual Undergraduate and Graduate Student respondents.
- Single Disability and No Disability Undergraduate Student respondents have greater *Perceived Academic Success* than Multiple Disabilities Undergraduate Student respondents.
- No Disability Graduate Student respondents have greater *Perceived Academic Success* than Single Disability and Multiple Disabilities Graduate Student respondents.

Key Findings – Opportunities for Improvement

1. Members of several constituent groups indicated that they experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct.

Several empirical studies reinforce the importance of the perception of non-discriminatory environments for positive learning and developmental outcomes.⁷ Research also underscores the relationship between workplace discrimination and subsequent productivity.⁸ The survey requested information on experiences of exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct.

- 17% ($n = 785$) of respondents indicated that they personally had experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct.⁹
 - 27% ($n = 209$) felt that it was based on their position status.
 - 21% ($n = 162$) noted that the conduct was based on ethnicity.
 - 20% ($n = 158$) felt that it was based on their age.
 - 19% ($n = 150$) felt that it was based on their gender/gender identity.
- Significant differences were observed based on position status, racial identity, age, and gender identity:
 - By position status, Faculty respondents (27%, $n = 145$) and Staff respondents (25%, $n = 251$) were significantly more likely than other respondents to indicate that they had experienced this conduct.
 - Of those respondents who noted that they had experienced this conduct, 42% ($n = 105$) of Staff respondents, 31% ($n = 45$) of Faculty respondents, 21% ($n = 30$) of Graduate/Professional Student/Post-Doctoral Scholar/Fellow/Resident respondents, 12% ($n = 29$) of Undergraduate Student respondents thought that the conduct was based on their position status.

⁷Aguirre & Messineo, 1997; Flowers & Pascarella, 1999; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Whitt, Edison, Pascarella, Terenzini, & Nora, 2001

⁸Silverschanz, Cortina, Konik, & Magley, 2008; Waldo, 1999

⁹The literature on microaggressions is clear that this type of conduct has a negative influence on people who experience the conduct, even if they feel at the time that it had no impact (Sue, 2010; Yosso, Smith, Ceja, & Solórzano, 2009).

- By racial identity, significant differences were noted in the percentages of Black/African/African American respondents (23%, $n = 115$), White respondents (17%, $n = 469$), and Asian/Asian American respondents (11%, $n = 53$) who noted that they believed they had experienced this conduct.
 - Of those respondents who noted that they believed they had experienced this conduct, significantly lower percentages of White respondents (9%, $n = 41$) than all other racially identified respondents thought that the conduct was based on their racial identity.
- By age, a greater percentage of respondents between 45 and 54 years of age (26%, $n = 94$) and respondents between 55 and 64 years of age (27%, $n = 88$) noted they had experienced exclusionary conduct.
 - Of those respondents who noted that they believed they had experienced this conduct, higher percentages of respondents between 65 and 74 years of age (36%, $n = 5$) and respondents between 55 and 64 years of age (27%, $n = 24$) thought that the conduct was based on their age.
- By gender identity, a significantly higher percentage of Transspectrum respondents (31%, $n = 27$) than Women respondents (18%, $n = 513$) and Men respondents (14%, $n = 228$) indicated that they had experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct.
 - 30% ($n = 8$) of Transspectrum respondents, 23% ($n = 116$) of Women respondents, and 11% ($n = 25$) of Men respondents who indicated that they believed they had experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct indicated that the conduct was based on their gender identity.

Respondents were offered the opportunity to elaborate on their experiences of exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct at UMKC. Three hundred fifty-eight respondents (students, faculty, and staff) contributed comments regarding these personal experiences. Two

themes emerged from their narratives: (1) concerns relating to inclusion of a range of identities (race, ethnicity, ability status, age, religion, and gender/gender identity) at UMKC, and (2) perceived disrespectful interactions.

2. Several constituent groups indicated that they were less comfortable with the overall campus climate, workplace climate, and classroom climate.

Prior research on campus climate has focused on the experiences of faculty, staff, and students associated with historically underserved social/community/affinity groups (e.g., women, People of Color, people with disabilities, first-generation students, veterans).¹⁰ Several groups at UMKC indicated that they were less comfortable than their majority counterparts with the climates of the campus, workplace, and classroom.

- By gender identity: Men respondents were significantly more likely to indicate that they were “very comfortable” than were Women respondents with the overall climate at UMKC and the climate in their classes.
- By racial identity: Hispanic/Latin@/Chican@ respondents and White respondents were significantly more likely to be “very comfortable” with the overall climate than were other racial groups with the overall climate at UMKC. Similarly, White respondents were also significantly more likely to be “very comfortable” with the climate in their primary work areas and the climate in their classes.
- By sexual identity: Heterosexual Faculty and Student respondents were significantly more likely to be “very comfortable” than LGBTQ respondents with the climate in their classes.
- By disability status: Respondents with No Disability were significantly more likely to be “very comfortable” than Respondents with Multiple Disabilities with the overall climate at UMKC and the climate in their classes.

3. Employee Respondents – Challenges with work-life issues

¹⁰Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Hart & Fellabaum, 2008; Norris, 1992; Rankin, 2003; Rankin & Reason, 2005; Worthington, Navarro, Loewy, & Hart, 2008

- 53% ($n = 287$) of Faculty respondents and 54% ($n = 540$) of Staff respondents had seriously considered leaving UMKC in the past year.
 - 64% ($n = 527$) of those Employee respondents who seriously considered leaving did so because of a low salary/pay rate.
 - 46% ($n = 380$) of those Employee respondents who seriously considered leaving indicated that they did so because of limited opportunities for advancement.
- Salary/Administrator without Faculty Rank respondents (58%, $n = 211$) were significantly more likely to seriously consider leaving UMKC than were Hourly Staff respondents (51%, $n = 234$).
- Black/African/African American Employee respondents (60%, $n = 97$) were significantly more likely to seriously consider leaving UMKC than were Hispanic/Latin@/Chican@ Employee respondents (37%, $n = 14$).
- U.S. Citizen Employee respondents (55%, $n = 754$) were significantly more likely to seriously consider leaving UMKC than were Non-U.S. Citizen Employee respondents (44%, $n = 65$).

4. Staff and Administrators without Faculty Rank Respondents – Challenges with workplace climate

- 62% ($n = 609$) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that there is a hierarchy within staff positions that allows some voices to be valued more than others.
- 44% ($n = 426$) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that UMKC policies (e.g., FMLA) were fairly applied across UMKC.
- 42% ($n = 412$) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt valued by UMKC senior administrators (e.g., chancellor, vice chancellors, provost).
- 29% ($n = 284$) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they are pressured by departmental/program work requirements that occur outside of their normally scheduled hours.

- 25% ($n = 241$) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they were burdened by work responsibilities beyond those of their colleagues with similar performance expectations.

Four hundred fifty-seven (457) Staff respondents contributed comments regarding their employment-related experiences. Four themes emerged from these comments: positive reflections regarding their level of work-life balance and support from supervisors, a perceived sense of unreasonable workloads without appropriate levels of compensation, specific concerns related to salary, and a lack of institutional support for professional development leading to advancement opportunities for staff.

5. Faculty Respondents – Challenges with faculty work

- 25% ($n = 57$) of Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt pressured to change their research/scholarship agenda to achieve tenure/promotion.
- 49% ($n = 114$) of Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they were burdened by service responsibilities beyond those of their colleagues with similar performance expectations.
- 41% ($n = 94$) of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt pressured to do extra work that was uncompensated.
- 26% ($n = 126$) of Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that salaries for adjunct faculty were competitive.
- 32% ($n = 161$) Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that salaries for non-tenure-track faculty were competitive.

One hundred twenty-one of Faculty respondents provided elaborations on their experiences regarding workplace climate concerns facing all levels of faculty. Two themes emerged from their comments: (1) concerns related to salary/benefits and faculty pay and (2) the belief that UMKC does not do enough to support faculty research or faculty professional development.

6. A small, but meaningful, percentage of respondents experienced unwanted sexual conduct.

In 2014, *Not Alone: The First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault* indicated that sexual assault is a significant issue for colleges and universities nationwide, affecting the physical health, mental health, and academic success of students. The report highlights that one in five women is sexually assaulted while in college. One section of the UMKC survey requested information regarding sexual assault.

- (5%) respondents indicated that they had experienced unwanted sexual conduct while at UMKC.
 - 1% ($n = 37$) of respondents experienced relationship violence (e.g., ridiculed, controlling, hitting) while a member of the UMKC community.
 - 1% ($n = 62$) of respondents experienced stalking (e.g., physical following, on social media, texting, phone calls) while a member of the UMKC community.
 - 2% ($n = 111$) of respondents experienced unwanted sexual interaction (e.g., cat-calling, repeated sexual advances, sexual harassment) while a member of the UMKC community.
 - 1% ($n = 41$) of respondents experienced unwanted sexual contact (e.g., fondling, rape, sexual assault, penetration without consent) while a member of the UMKC community.
- Undergraduate Student respondents, Women respondents, Heterosexual respondents, White respondents, and U.S. Citizen respondents, more often reported unwanted sexual experiences than their counterparts.
- Acquaintances/friends, UMKC students, and current or former dating/intimate partners were most often identified as sources of unwanted sexual experiences.
- The majority of respondents did not report the unwanted sexual experience.

Respondents were offered the opportunity to elaborate on why they did not report unwanted sexual experiences. One theme emerged among UMKC's respondents who explained why they did not report unwanted sexual contact. The primary rationale cited for not reporting these

incidents was that they were fearful of being blamed/fearful of making the unwanted sexual contact publicly known.

Conclusion

UMKC's climate findings¹¹ were consistent with those found in higher education institutions across the country, based on the work of R&A Consulting.¹² For example, 70% to 80% of respondents in similar reports found the campus climate to be “comfortable” or “very comfortable.” A similar percentage (79%) of UMKC respondents reported that they were “very comfortable” or “comfortable” with the climate at UMKC. Likewise, 20% to 25% of respondents in similar reports indicated that they personally had experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct. At UMKC, a smaller, but still meaningful percentage of respondents (17%) indicated that they personally had experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct. The results also paralleled the findings of other climate studies of specific constituent groups offered in the literature.¹³

UMKC's climate assessment report provides baseline data on diversity and inclusion, while also addressing UMKC's mission and goals. While the findings may guide decision-making in regard to policies and practices at UMKC, it is important to note that the cultural fabric of any institution and unique aspects of each campus's environment must be taken into consideration when deliberating additional action items based on these findings. The climate assessment findings provide the UMKC community with an opportunity to build upon its strengths and to develop a deeper awareness of the challenges ahead. UMKC, with support from senior administrators and collaborative leadership, is in a prime position to actualize its commitment to promote an inclusive campus and to institute organizational structures that respond to the needs of its dynamic campus community.

¹¹Additional findings disaggregated by position status and other selected demographic characteristics are provided in the full report.

¹²Rankin & Associates Consulting, 2015

¹³Guiffrida, Gouveia, Wall, & Seward, 2008; Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Harper & Quaye, 2004; Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005; Rankin & Reason, 2005; Sears, 2002; Settles, Cortina, Malley, & Stewart, 2006; Silverschanz et al., 2008; Yosso et al., 2009

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