Washington University in St. Louis
Diversity Engagement Survey – Executive Summary

Introduction

In February of 2015, a Diversity Engagement Survey obtained through the American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC) was made available to all members of Washington University's Danforth Campus and Central Fiscal Unit (CFU) for a period of four weeks. As part of the university's ongoing efforts to ensure that diversity and inclusiveness are woven into all aspects of the university environment, this survey was conducted to better understand how Washington University faculty and staff perceive the current state of diversity and inclusion. In order to obtain a university-wide perspective on this important topic, data was collected and summarized from the Danforth Schools, CFU and the School of Medicine which had also conducted this survey in November, 2014.

Survey Participants

Through this process, 5,028 WU faculty, staff and management completed the survey, representing an overall response rate of 38%. The response rates were representative of the university population. Available online and on paper, the survey was anonymous and data was only reported in the aggregate to ensure no individual respondent could be identified. Participation in the survey and each individual question was entirely optional. There were 22 closed-response questions that were standard to the survey and additional custom questions were added by each campus. **Table 1.1** shows the demographics of survey participants.

Table 1.1: University-Wide Survey Participants by Role, Race/Ethnicity and Gender[1]

Role	*n*	%	Race/Ethnicity	*n*	%	Gender	*n*	%
Exec. Leadership / Sr. Administration	91	2%	Black / African-American	507	11%	Female	3,296	67.5%
Faculty	1,088	22%	Hispanic/Latino	61	1%	Male	1,559	32.0%
Staff	3,808	76%	Asian	254	5%	Transgender and other gender identities	25	0.5%
Staff: Management	1,028	21%	White	3,889	81%			
Staff: Non-Management	2,735	55%	All Others	114	2%			

Table 1.2 on the following page shows the participants as they appear by school.

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[1] Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding; due to respondents choosing multiple roles and/or multiple races; and/or not indicating their role, race or gender.

Table 1.2: University -wide Survey Participants by School and Role[2]

School	Management		Faculty		Staff		Total	% of Total
Arts and Sciences	64	15%	229	54%	126	30%	423	8%
Brown School of Social Work	27	32%	30	35%	28	33%	85	2%
Olin Business School	20	24%	30	37%	31	38%	82	2%
School of Engineering and Applied Science	10	15%	28	42%	28	42%	66	1%
School of Law	8	17%	18	38%	22	46%	48	1%
Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts	15	38%	15	38%	10	25%	40	1%
Danforth Schools Subtotal	144	19%	350	47%	245	33%	744	15%
Central Fiscal Unit	293	39%	18	2%	431	58%	747	15%
School of Medicine	660	19%	677	20%	1,973	57%	3,434	68%
Total	1,112	22%	1,062	21%	2,686	53%	5,028	100%

Note: Percentages Shown in Management, Faculty and Staff show % of that group within each school.

Percentages shown in the total column show what % that school's participant count represents, of the 5,028 participants.

The Survey Tool

The Diversity Engagement survey measures and describes the inclusiveness of the academic learning environment, defines the institutional areas of strengths and areas for improvement, and points to the strategic direction for organizational change. As an innovative tool, it draws upon workforce engagement theory and theoretical components of organizational inclusion. The twenty-two standard survey questions are mapped to eight "inclusion" factors (trust, appreciation of individual attributes, sense of belonging, access to opportunity, equitable reward and recognition, cultural competence, respect, and common purpose) that further group into three workforce engagement clusters—vision/purpose, camaraderie, and appreciation. These aspects of organizational culture and diversity have been identified and confirmed as the key components and determinants of workforce inclusion and diversity identity based on research conducted by Dr. Deborah Plummer and colleagues at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.[3] A more complete description of the conceptual framework as well as definitions for each cluster and the eight inclusion factors can be found in Attachment A.[4]

It should also be noted that responses to the customized questions developed to fit the University community are not included in the Workforce Engagement Cluster analysis below.

The survey also yielded the opportunity for respondents to write in comments to two questions, and as a result, approximately 2,000 anonymous written comments were collected. These questions reflected a desire to hear from participants regarding personal experiences at the university and are not included in the summary below. Written comments are currently being analyzed for topic and frequency of subject and will be released later in the summer of 2015, providing yet another opportunity for discussion and follow up.

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[2] Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding; due to respondents choosing multiple roles and/or multiple races; and/or not indicating their role, race or gender.

[3] Dr. Plummer's many publications include: Plummer, DL, ed., *Handbook of Diversity Management: Beyond Awareness to Competency-Based Learning*, University Press of America, 2003; Plummer, DL, *Racing Across the Lines: Changing Race Relations Through Friendship*, Pilgrim Press, 2004; and Plummer, DL and Slane S, "Patterns of Coping in Racially Stressful Situations" *The Journal of Black Psychology* Vol 22 No 3 August 1996 pp 302-315.

[4] The DES conceptual framework excerpted from the DES User Guide, pp. 12-15.

Appendix A contains a description of the survey factors. Appendix B contains all summary charts from which general findings below have been derived.

Survey Results

Responses to all survey questions were captured using a 5 point Likert scale which ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". In preparing to summarize data, it was decided to first analyze and report on patterns among those responses which fell into the "agree" and "strongly agree" responses. Therefore this report does not include findings from an analysis of responses to other points of measure on the Likert response scale ('neither agree nor disagree', 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree'). More work must be done to fully appreciate what information is contained in the survey when viewed from that perspective.

Using our approach, and in looking at responses by cluster, we find that the majority of university employees answered questions positively. Viewing responses by cluster (i.e., Appendix B, Table 1, WUSTL TOTAL) yields the following:
- **Vision/Purpose:**
  - **70%** of total responses were "agree" or "strongly agree."
- **Camaraderie:**
  - **75%** of total responses were "agree" or "strongly agree."
- **Appreciation:**
  - **80%** of total responses were "agree" or "strongly agree."

While responses generally are positive, group responses varied when viewed by race, gender, sexual orientation, generation, religious belief system and length of service. Here we will focus on some of the major trends in the responses, and by necessity, we will not discuss every potentially important point.

Further, we also recognize that the varying numbers of individuals in different subgroups can sometimes make interpretation of the results challenging. For example, small numbers of individuals in a subgroup might mean that meaningful differences in responses are not statistically significant but could remain important for follow up nonetheless. Readers should also be reminded that the survey is only one of a number of sources regarding diversity and inclusion.

Findings by Race

In general, respondents identifying as underrepresented minorities (URM) had less positive responses than Caucasian/White respondents across almost all survey questions, whether viewed by school or role. Under-represented minorities composed 12**%** of the total population responding, of which African-Americans made up 90% of the total URM responses. As a group, Hispanic/Latinos represent 1% of all responses. While small in number, Hispanic/Latino respondents are similar in responses to African Americans.

When shown by cluster, African American responses are lower as follows (Appendix B, Table 2, WUSTL TOTAL):
- Vision/Purpose:
  - -12 percentage points
- Camaraderie:
  - -15 percentage points
- Appreciation:
  - -13 percentage points

As a group, Asian respondents were similar or more positive to Caucasian/white respondents.

More information on responses to questions by race can be viewed in Appendix B, Table 2.

Findings by Gender

In general, responses from women were less positive than those from men. When broken down by school/CFU, and separately by role, deeper divisions appear. Table 3, Appendix B shows the following:

- When viewed by unit, greater differences appear for females across the group of Danforth Schools-12 percentage points) and across the CFU (-13 percentage points)
- Within these Danforth units, differences appear most evident on questions which comprise Vision/Purpose, Camaraderie and Appreciation.
- At the medical school, "equitable reward" and "trust" appear less positive among females.
- When viewed by role female faculty across all schools responded less positively than male faculty.

More information on responses to questions by gender may be reviewed in Appendix B, Table 4.

Results by Other Factors

Tables 5 and Table 6 in Appendix B reflect results summarized by the remaining factors: Generation, Sexual Orientation, Belief system and Length of Service. Table 5 summarizes responses by school/CFU; Table 6 reflects these data by role.

Within Table 5 (by unit) we can see some discernible patterns within schools for generation, sexual orientation and length of service.

Table 6 (by role) reflects the following themes:
- Respondents identifying as LGBT are less positive than those reporting as heterosexual. This is most pronounced for questions relating to camaraderie.
- Faculty who identify as having "Non-Christian" belief systems tended to be less positive in their responses than those describing themselves as "Christian", at least at the School of Medicine.
- Faculty responded less positively when responses are viewed either by Gender or Sexual Orientation.
- Employees who are here less than one year are more positive than those here 10 years or more. This pattern appears for all clusters and within all schools. For staff, this more positive view among more recently hired individuals continues through the first 5 years. It should be noted that other organizations that have conducted employee engagement surveys have documented declining engagement scores as length of service increases.[5]
- When looking deeper at Race and how responses change with length of service, our analysis shows little difference in responses by race within the first year, however, gaps widen as length of service goes up (Table 7, Appendix B)

Conclusion:

In summary, survey results reflect a pattern of less positive responses among underrepresented minorities across all schools and all roles. And, there are discernable concerns among female employees, particularly female faculty.

These areas of concern should be explored in greater depth and present opportunities for enhancing university initiatives to create a more diverse and inclusive workforce. Greater and more positive communication and cross-cultural interaction will be important to move the institution forward. Creating a climate of mutual respect in the

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[5] Markey, R "The Four Secrets to Employee Engagement" *Harvard Business Review* January 27, 2014.

workplace and encouraging greater understanding across cultures and genders must be embedded in our training and development efforts and in our everyday practice. In addition, changes to institutional policies and practices may be needed to better support the organizations goals and produce real change. Analysis will continue on the survey results collected and additional findings will be shared throughout the coming months. Meanwhile, you can view detailed survey responses by visiting the Office of Human Resources website.

Contributing Researchers:

Washington University faculty experts were instrumental in guiding and validating the analytical approach to the employee survey data. Deanna Barch, Ph.D., the Gregory B. Couch Professor of Psychiatry, professor of psychology and radiology and chair of the department of psychology; and Ken Schechtman, Ph.D., associate professor of biostatistics and associate professor of medicine in cardiology, provided valuable insights and recommendations that led to a more refined, sophisticated statistical approach to analyzing and presenting the survey data. The university thanks these faculty members for their lending their time and expertise to this important initiative.