



Institutional Research and Assessment Report

May 12, 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2016 UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO STAFF SURVEY

The 2016 University of Idaho Staff Survey was intended to help identify issues of concern among a broad spectrum of staff members and generate discussions to determine and meet the needs of staff. The survey includes questions on job satisfaction, working environment and conditions, organizational communications, and campus climate. The Staff Survey is conducted every three to four years. Of the 1589 staff members invited to complete the survey, 934 did so. Approximately fifty-nine percent (58.9%) of staff responded. The survey was conducted in the fall of 2016, during November and December. The margin of error (confidence interval) was 2.06.

Staff were significantly more satisfied with "salary" (52% were "satisfied" or "very satisfied," up 9% from 2012), "job security" (85% were "satisfied" or "very satisfied," up 9%), "retirement benefits" (85% were "satisfied" or "very satisfied," up 9%), and "workload" (75% were "satisfied" or "very satisfied," up 3%). Conversely, only eight-seven percent (87%, down 3% from 2012) of respondents were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with "working conditions." Eighty-four percent (84%, up 23% since 2012 and up 50% since 2008) were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their "health benefits."

Two new items on the survey this year were: "Do you expect to be employed at UI two years from now?" (78% yes, 22% no); and "If you were to leave UI in the future, what might be the deciding factor?" "Competitive salary/pay" (74%), "expanded professional opportunities" (40%), and "family considerations" (32%) were cited as the most common reason for possibly leaving. Respondents were asked to check all answers that applied.

In a series of items about the climate on campus, eighty-five percent (84.5%, up 1%) reported the "U of I provides a comfortable atmosphere for students faculty and staff." Additionally, eighty-three percent (83%, up 2%) reported they "agree" or "strongly agree" that "The environment in my area encourages respect for equality and dignity for all employees."

Two items regarding campus climate were included for the third time. Fifty-five percent (55%, down 2%) of respondents reported that "Units across campus are encouraged to cooperate in a coordinated manner," and sixty-four percent (64%, down 4%) that "it is a high priority for UI to develop a sense of community among staff, faculty and students."

In another new question this year, staff were asked if they had experienced unwanted, uncivil and/or aggressive behavior from someone in the workplace. This behavior was identified as inappropriate comments, unprofessional expectations, aggressive or unreasonable behavior. Approximately one-third (33%, up 6%) of staff responded "yes."

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO REPORT OF THE 2013 STAFF SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

The University of Idaho Staff Survey was designed in response to a variety of comments and concerns expressed during the 1995 and 1996 President's Forums for Staff, and was first administered in 1996. The survey was intended to help identify issues of concern among a broad spectrum of staff members; generate discussions to determine and meet the needs of staff; expand the university's insight into staff perceptions, attitudes and opinions in a variety of areas; and develop an information base to help the university set some goals and priorities for staff development. The survey includes questions on job satisfaction, working environment and conditions, organizational communications and campus climate. Data are used in the aggregate only.

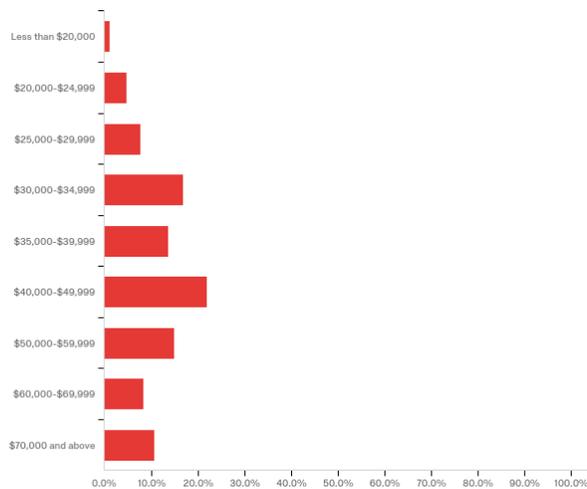
The survey is web-based, and employees were notified, through personal emails from the President, of the web address for the survey. The survey is conducted using software designed for this purpose. A pre-letter was sent notifying staff of the upcoming survey as well as an initial message inviting participation and two follow-up messages. All of these messages were sent via email.

Of the approximately 1589 staff members invited to complete the survey, 934 did so. Fifty-nine percent (58.9%) of staff responded, up one percent (1%) from 2012.

DEMOGRAPHICS

As is typical of this type of survey, a greater number of women than men responded, sixty-one percent (61%, down 1% from the 2012 survey) being female. Forty-five percent (45%) of respondents are between the ages of 35 and 54, down 6% from 2012; while twenty-seven percent (27%, up 1%) of respondents are age 55 or older. Respondents were asked to report on all races that apply to them. Ninety-two percent (92%, down 2% from 2012) of respondents are "Caucasian", two percent (2%) "Asian American", four percent (4%, up 2%) "American Indian/Alaskan Native", and two percent (2%, up 1%) "African American/Black" two percent and "Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander" one percent, respectively. Four percent (4%, up 1%) reported "Hispanic or Latino" ethnicity.

Forty-seven percent (47%) of staff respondents have been employed at the UI for five years or fewer (up 7%); the median length of time is 6-10 years, as it has been in the past. The median salary range for UI staff is between \$40,000 and \$49,999 (up from \$35,000 and \$39,999 in 2012) with over fifty percent (52.4%) of all staff making between \$30,000 and \$49,999. The chart below represents the respondents distribution by salary range.



Sixty percent (59.6%) of respondents were “classified”, thirty-six percent (35.7%) “exempt”, fewer than one percent (<1%) were “instructional”, and four percent (4%) were “not sure” or “other.”

JOB SATISFACTION

The questions in the survey on job satisfaction focus around several factors, such as satisfaction with job benefits, opportunities, and supervisors, and stress experienced over the last two years. In one item staff are asked to review and rate certain aspects of their jobs related to employee benefits.

Staff were significantly more satisfied with “salary” (52% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied,” up 9% from 2012), “health benefits” (84% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied,” up 23% from 2012), and “job security” (85% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” up 9%). Conversely, only eighty-seven percent (87%, down 3%) of respondents were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with “working conditions (hours, location).” Eighty-five percent (85%, up 9%) were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the “retirement benefits.” Seventy-five percent (75%, up 3%) were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their “work load,” and fifty-five percent (55%) were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their “employee assistance program” an increase of eight percent (8%).

Satisfaction with opportunities available to staff increased in all categories since 2012. Forty-five percent (45%, up 4% from 2012) of staff reported they are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with “career advancement opportunities”, sixty-seven percent with “professional development opportunities” (67%, up 3% since 2012), sixty-three percent with “personal development opportunities” (63%, down 5%), seventy percent with “training opportunities” (70%, up 16%), and forty-four percent with “opportunities to influence UI governance” (44%, up 10%). It should be noted, however, that there was a large percentage (18%) of “not applicable/don’t know” responses to the question on influencing government. The greatest dissatisfaction expressed as either “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” was for “career advancement opportunities with forty-eight percent (48%) and “opportunities to influence UI governance” with thirty-nine percent (39%).

WORK ENVIRONMENT

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In a series of questions about their general work environment, staff were asked to report how closely they agreed with statements involving their supervisors.

Staff were asked to report on first, second, and third supervisors. However, zero respondents reported having a third supervisor. Four percent (4%) reported on two supervisors.

Those areas in which three quarters or more of respondents reported that they “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statements provided regarding their *first* supervisor included:

- “My department is supportive of my needs to attend to my personal and family responsibilities” (95%);
- “My supervisor treats me with consideration and respect” (92%);
- “My supervisor allows me to use University equipment (computer, printer) to look up my paycheck information on Vandal Web” (90%);
- “My supervisor encourages me to be innovative and proactive in my position” (85%);
- “My supervisor is fair when giving criticism” (84%);
- The environment in my work area encourages respect for equality and dignity for all employees” (83%);
- “My supervisor acknowledges my professional successes” (82%);
- “My supervisor takes employee ideas into account when making important decisions” 82%);
- “My annual performance evaluation is conducted in a timely manner” (82%); and,
- “My annual performance evaluation is important to me” (80%);

Other items that were also viewed favorable include: “My supervisor is an effective and competent leader” (79%); “My supervisor fosters good two-way communication” (79%); and, “My supervisor supports and encourages me to take computer training classes that are relevant for me to do my job” (77%).

Conversely, those areas in which fewer than three-quarters of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” were:

- “Opportunities to influence UI governance” (46%);
- “My work area is adequately staffed” (59%, up 5%);
- “My evaluation is used to help plan my training and development in order to improve my performance” (64%, up 1%).
- “My supervisor is fair in determining if courses taken during working hours should be work related release time” (67%, up 3%); and,
- “Personal development opportunities” (67%);

Thirty-one percent (31%, up 3%) of staff reported that they have experienced an “extreme” level of stress over the past two years, while fifty-six percent (56%, up 2%) have experienced a “moderate” level. The sources of stress listed most frequently as

"extreme" were mostly consistent with those reported in 2003 and 2008: "work load" (24%), "personal finances" (20%), "finding a balance between work and home" (16%), and "managing household responsibilities" (11%). Thirty-five percent (35%) of respondents reported that "personal relationships" had contributed to their stress. Other areas one-third of respondents reported were "extreme" or "moderately" stressful were "my physical health" (31%) and "institutional policies and procedures" (33%).

Ninety-three percent (93%, up 2%) report they do not believe "there are toxins in my work area that need to be removed (e.g. asbestos, chemicals, fumes)." For the second time this year, those that reported "yes" on this question were offered the opportunity to report a safety concern with a link to a form that is submitted directly to the Environmental Health and Safety Office. Sixty-nine percent (69%, down 3% from 2012) of respondents "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that "health and safety concerns I express are effectively resolved."

When asked specifically about campus facilities, seventy-two percent (72%, up 5%) reported that "lighting on campus is adequate," and fifty-three percent (53%, up 3%) "agree" or "strongly agree" that "I am satisfied with my ability to park on campus."

ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE

In an attempt to understand the working environment and conditions within departments, as well as at the university level, the survey contains a series of elements specific to the organizational climate. Nearly nine out of ten staff members responding to the survey "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that "most faculty with whom I interact treat me with respect" (86%, no change), "most administrators with whom I interact treat me with respect" (88%, no change), and "my department provides me with adequate equipment and/or materials with which to do my job" (89%, up 1%).

In a series of items about the climate on campus, eighty-eight percent (87%, up 3%) reported the "U of I provides a comfortable atmosphere for students faculty and staff." Additionally, seventy-one percent (93%, up 6%) reported they "agree" or "strongly agree" that "My department gives attention to the needs of individuals with disabilities in the workplace." Twelve percent (14%, up 4%) report having been discriminated against because of their gender, three percent (3%, up 1%) because of ethnic status, twelve percent (34%, up 4%) because of age, three percent (3%, up 3%) because of sexual orientation, and three percent (3%, up 1%) because of religious affiliation. As in previous years, employees were asked if they have been sexually harassed at the UI within the last five years. Again this year, and consistent with previous years, ninety-eight percent (98%, up 2%) responded that they have not been sexually harassed.

Two items that first appeared in 2012 regarding campus climate, were included again this year. Fifty-five percent (55%, up 5%) of respondents reported that "Units across campus are encouraged to cooperate in a coordinated manner," and sixty-four percent (64%, up 9%) that "it is a high priority for UI to develop a sense of community among staff, faculty and students."

In another recently added question, staff were asked if they had experienced unwanted, uncivil and/or aggressive behavior from someone the workplace in the past 5 years. This behavior was identified as inappropriate comments, unprofessional expectations, aggressive or unreasonable behavior. One-third (33%, no change from 2012) of staff responded “yes.”

TECHNOLOGY

A section on technology asked staff to comment on whether or not they had access to a variety of technology in their workplace, and how much they agreed with certain statements about the technology used in their job. Nearly all staff have access to most of the technology listed in the survey:

	Yes %	Change from 2012 %
I have access to University email in my workplace.	100	+1
I have access to Vandal Web in my workplace.	100	+2
I know how to access Vandal Web.	100	+1
I have access to a computer printer that I can use during my workday.	98	-1
I am aware of the variety of information on Vandal Web.	98	+1

Ninety-eight percent (98%, up 1%) of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that “I have the necessary skills to use the computer effectively to complete my job,” ninety percent (90%, up 1%) that “my department keeps the work computer assigned to me adequately upgraded so I can do my job effectively,” and eighty-nine percent (89%, up 2%) that “the UI provides sufficient computer technical support for me to do my job.”

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Finally, for a series of statements regarding organizational communication at the UI, staff were asked to rate how strongly they agreed. The area with the highest response rates in “agree” or “strongly agree” was “There is a high degree of open, two-way communication in my work area” (81%, no change from 2012). Other areas with higher response rates of “agree” or “strongly agree” were:

- “I have adequate information about the staff ombudsman” (68%, up 16%);
- “I have adequate information about how to file a grievance” (51%, no change);
- “It is a high priority for UI to develop a sense of community among staff, faculty, and students” (64%);
- “UI administrators are effective and competent leaders” (63%, up 13%); and
- “I have access to information about Staff Council such as subcommittees, representatives, and officers” (58%, no change)

Areas in which the fewest respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” include:

- “UI administration uses staff input and recommendations” (51%, up 12%)

FUTURE TURNOVER OR ATTRITION

Two new items were included in the survey this year. The first item, seventy-eight percent (78%) responded "yes" to the question "do you expect to be employed at UI two years from now?" For the second item, respondents were asked, "If you were to leave UI in the future (in two years, or at a later date), what might be the deciding factor(s)?" Respondents were asked to select all that applied. Seventy-four percent (74%) selected "competitive salary/pay", forty percent (40%) selected "expanded professional opportunities," thirty-two percent (32%) selected "family considerations," and thirty percent (30%) selected "work environment" as reasons for leaving UI in the future. "Work schedule" was only cited as a reason by thirteen percent (13%) of respondents. "Benefits" (23%) and "location" (22%) were reported by fewer than a quarter of respondents. Sixteen percent (16%) cited "other" reasons. The most common answers given for "other" included "retirement," "workload," "personnel or supervisor issues," and "lack of funding for position."

COMMENTS

The remainder of the survey solicited, through open-ended comments, data where further professional development should be offered as well as other suggestions that respondents might have. The bulk of the comments around professional development were related to increasing opportunities for staff to take computer and/or software training courses, more trainings offered face-to-face, greater training offerings to employees not on the Moscow campus, greater institutional support for attending conferences or participating in outside training opportunities, and leadership/management/supervision skills training.

Those comments appearing most commonly addressed the following staff concerns:

- discrimination of women, and/or family size and/or status
- disparities between classified and exempt staff, including benefits and salaries
- few opportunities for advancement and/or lack of "career tracks" within positions
- childcare issues; schedule flexibility to attend to family matters
- low morale and salary compression issues
- institutional inefficiency, bureaucracy, slow processes, lack of professionalism
- lack of recognition for staff working outside of normal business hours or at other locations
- pressure to earn more degrees before staff will be respected, advance or be paid more; but lack of realization of any of these "benefits" once additional degrees are earned

On a positive note, many staff expressed a positive feeling about the future direction of the UI, including the new 2016-2025 strategic plan.

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