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OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

William & Mary

2015 Employee Climate Survey
Final Report and Recommendations to the President
February 22, 2016



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Background

As a public ivy, William & Mary seeks not only to offer a world-class education to students, but also to be one of the best universities at which to work. We should not be one without the other. Our faculty and staff are our most important resources, and a climate survey is an important tool to help us measure how we are doing.

In 2007 and 2010, the university conducted a climate survey of administrative and professional employees, including classified employees. Instructional faculty were not included in these surveys. In 2015, the Office of Human Resources partnered with different groups and offices, including the Task Force on Race and Race Relations, to conduct a comprehensive climate survey of all W&M employees, including faculty. The 2015 Employee Climate Survey was emailed to 2,765 employees. We had a very strong response to the 2015 year-end survey, and we thank all participants. Responses were received from 1,955 employees (71%). By way of comparison, the response rates to the prior surveys were not nearly as strong (56% in 2007, 46% in 2010).

Survey Administration

The 2015 Employee Climate Survey was also different from previous surveys because an independent organization, the Gelfond Group, designed and administered the survey. Gelfond conducts surveys for more than 200 national and international organizations, including those in higher education, every year. Clients include Johns Hopkins University, JPMorgan Chase, Kaplan, Inc., Morgan Stanley, The United Nations, University of Pennsylvania, and The World Bank. Gelfond also maintains a database with responses from more than one million employees to certain questions similar to those in the William & Mary survey. This proprietary database gives employers like William & Mary the ability to compare our survey results in key areas to the results of other leading organizations.

Overall Employee Engagement

The Gelfond Group uses five survey questions to measure employee engagement, defined as the level of commitment and involvement an employee has towards his or her organization and its values. Gelfond calculates an engagement index, which is the average score of the five items shown in the table below, and uses this index to compare different employers' results. The employee engagement index is a critical performance measure because of its relationship to an employer's capacity to achieve high performance levels and superior results. Engaged employees normally perform better and are more motivated. They tend to stay with the organization longer, be an advocate of the organization and its services, and contribute to its success. William & Mary's engagement index exceeds the average of all employees in the Gelfond database by three percentage points.



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Engagement Index	% Favorable	% Neutral	% Unfavorable
W&M as a place to work (Q. 1)	69	25	4
Treating employees with respect (Q. 6)	71	20	8
W&M inspires me to do my best work (Q. 28)	71	12	12
I am proud to work for W&M (Q. 34)	87	9	4
Intent to stay at W&M (Q. 76)	72	20	8
INDEX	74		
Comparative Norm	71		
Difference	+3		

Although we are pleased with the engagement score, the Gelfond Group identified one area of concern in the survey data with respect to how African-American employees respond to certain questions as compared to the rest of the university. For example,

- Nine percent of African American employees responded that they would not rate William & Mary as a good place to work, whereas only six percent of all employees responded the same way; and
- Fifteen percent of African-American employees responded that they do not feel that they are treated with respect, whereas only eight percent of all employees responded the same way.

In response to these findings, we provided the President’s Task Force on Race and Race relations with more detailed survey data. This more detailed analysis revealed a range of experiences among African American employees, including a concentration of negative responses within a particular employee classification (non-exempt employees) that impacted the average response rate for African Americans as a whole. The Task Force is using the results of the survey to help inform the important work that it is doing.

Complete Survey Responses

While we are pleased with the level of engagement of our work force, we must also understand what factors have a positive and negative influence on the engagement index. In other words, we need to look at each survey response and assess what we are doing well and where there is an opportunity for improvement.



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In addition to the engagement index, Gelfond looks carefully at what it describes as a “tip off” question to see what employees really think about their jobs. Question 35 asked employees whether they “would recommend W&M as a good place to work to a friend, family member or colleague.” According to Gelfond, the answer is representative of an employee’s true feelings about his or her job, and high performing organizations have unfavorable response rates below 10%. William & Mary (8% unfavorable) was well below that threshold and ranked among the top tenth of all employers in the Gelfond database. Though we’re pleased to score well on this question, we want this percentage at W&M to be zero.

Another area in the survey where we scored extremely well is with respect to our Title IX and discrimination training. As part of the actions taken by the President’s Task Force on Preventing Sexual Assault and Harassment, the university launched a series of new training, education and awareness initiatives last year to provide our community with more information about Title IX resources and issues. According to the survey:

- 98% of employees report that they have a good understanding of what constitutes discrimination (Q47); and
- 92% report that they would know how to report it (Q48).

In short, our recent Title IX training appears to be paying off.

Opportunities for Improvement

Although the survey results are generally very good, the survey does reflect that we need to take steps in some areas to improve how we feel about our workplace and our jobs. The following are some of the areas where the survey results were less favorable:

“My Job”

- Only 31% of employees favorably rate their opportunity for advancement (Q12).
- One in three employees believe that stress in their jobs is a problem (Q38).

“My Pay & Benefits”

- Employees did not respond well with respect to pay. Only 30% of employees favorably rate their pay (Q10).

“My Supervisor”

- Only 50% of employees favorably rate their supervisor with respect to coaching them in their career development (Q50).

“Quality of Management”



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- Only 42% of employees rate management as applying policies and procedures the same way to all employees (Q17).
- Only 37% of employees feel comfortable revealing problems or errors to management above them (Q37).
- Slightly more than half of our employees believe that their contributions are not recognized when things go well in their job (Q59).
- One in three employees believes that W&M tolerates poor performance (Q36).
- While 59% of employees believe that W&M *listens* to their problems, suggestions, ideas and concerns, only 49% believe that W&M actually *responds* to their problems and concerns (Q8 and Q9).

“Diversity”

- The survey results in the diversity area are very strong. When asked whether employees feel that they are treated fairly without regard to gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, race, color or national origin, only 10% respond in an unfavorable way.
- Though 60% of employees responded favorably when asked if W&M actively seeks to recruit and develop a diverse group of employees (Q43), this response was not as strong as generated by other questions related to diversity. Recruitment of diverse employees at all levels of the institution – staff, faculty and administration – is an area we need to focus on as a university. This is included among the action items below.

Actions and Ongoing Initiatives

As noted above, the Office of Human Resources is partnering with the President’s Task Force on Race and Relations and with other groups on campus so that they can use the employee climate survey to help inform their recommendations and work. We will also provide each of the major schools and units with a report summarizing the survey responses for their employees.

While each of us has an important role in making William & Mary a place where we are proud to work, we also believe that the Office of Human Resources can be an important catalyst and channel for improving our campus climate. The following are a series of immediate steps that HR is taking in response to the survey to address employee concerns and promote an improved campus climate.

1. **Performance Management** – Performance management is an important process that management can use to help coach employees about their future career development and opportunities as well as to recognize an employee’s contributions and accomplishments. In addition, managers cannot adequately address poor performance if annual reviews are not representative of actual performance. As



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noted above, employees identified important opportunities for improvement in these areas.

- The Office of Human Resources is revamping our employee performance management process. The first step in this process will be a new annual performance evaluation form for professional employees that we will provide to the William & Mary community this spring. The revised form will help employees better understand how they are performing in specific areas as well as provide employees with feedback about specific performance goals and development opportunities. It will also provide supervisors with a more user-friendly scale to help them differentiate between different levels of performance.
 - New employees face other challenges. Studies show that the impressions an employee forms in the first 90 days affect long-term retention rates. As a result, we have created an optional “check-up” evaluation where both the employee and supervisor provide feedback at 30-60-90 day intervals about the onboarding process. The goal of this check-up process is to get ahead of issues before they become problems. These check-up forms have been posted on the HR website.
2. **Employee Support** – Employees report that stress is a problem on the job. The survey also reflects that employees do not believe that they have resources to support opportunities for advancement.
- a. The employee assistance program (“EAP”) is administered through our medical provider, Anthem, but the EAP does not currently offer classes to help educate employees about how to address and mitigate life stresses. Beginning in April 2016, the Office of Human Resources will partner with the Commonwealth of Virginia’s EAP to provide classes for faculty and staff at William & Mary about how to deal with both job and personal stressors. In addition, we are scheduling another installment this spring of the popular Be Your Best Health Series that we first offered last year.
 - b. At any given time on our campus, we have employees who are in crisis or in need. There is nothing more important for our William & Mary family than to show that we care about each other. We are creating what will be known as the William & Mary Employee Network. Initially, the Network will be a volunteer employee group who will respond to and help employees in crisis. The help may be as simple as arranging for meals or identifying medical or legal resources that the employee might need. The Network will also partner with other areas on campus to help acclimate new employees to the



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- area, as well as to provide job counseling and resume assistance to spouses of new employees.
- c. The Office of Human Resources, Information Technology and Swem Library previously partnered to provide employees with access to Lynda.com, an online training and knowledge center. Currently, there are over 4,000 on-line courses available to help our employees improve current skills or develop new skills. Beginning this summer, Human Resources will design suggested Lynda.com course offerings to help employees develop competencies in specific areas.
 - d. The Office of Human Resources is again offering this spring the Crucial Conversations curriculum at no cost to departments. This course offers employees important coaching tips to improve communication with supervisors and peers.
3. **Diversity** – The Provost has created a working group consisting of Chon Glover, Chief Diversity Officer, Kiersten Boyce, Chief Compliance Officer, and John Poma, Chief Human Resources Officer, to help the campus attract and retain a more diverse group of employees. This group recently completed a redraft of the university’s affirmative action plans, and it will hold training sessions and aggressively work with hiring officials and department heads to enhance the university’s outreach efforts and recruitment of females, minorities, individuals with disabilities, and veterans. We also expect further recommendations on this critical issue in the upcoming recommendations from the President’s Task Force on Race and Race Relations.
4. **Employee Feedback** – Employees need a continuing opportunity to provide feedback and share concerns with senior management outside of the climate survey process. HR is taking two important steps to help make employees more comfortable reporting concerns to management.
- a. Human Resources is implementing a “Get to Know You” program where it will randomly invite a group of employees each month to meet with the Chief Human Resources Officer for a candid conversation about what is working and what is not working for employees. The CHRO will brief the President and Provost on significant issues that are brought forward.
 - b. Human Resources has added an employee comment button to its webpage to permit employees to give suggestions or to advise HR of issues or problems in the workplace. It can be either an anonymous response or not.



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- c. In addition, HR plans to provide a climate survey summary report to each of the schools and major units with detailed results for their particular areas and hold meetings to review these reports with employees.
5. **Pay** – The survey demonstrates a continuing need to address pay issues across campus. At this time, it is still to be determined whether the State’s budget will include salary increases for State employees in 2016. However, William & Mary will recommend to the Board of Visitors at its April meeting that the new fiscal year budget include a merit pool to be awarded to university employees in 2016.

Conclusion

We continue to review the survey results carefully to help us identify opportunities to build upon our strengths and to improve on our weaknesses. However, neither the administration, nor the faculty nor individual schools and units can alone make William & Mary a better place to work. Rather, it takes a concerted effort from each and every one of us to achieve workplace excellence. Together, we educate; we inspire excellence; and we care about each other. As members of this community, we are proud to work together to make William & Mary an even more special place.