

Executive Summary

College campuses are complex social systems. They are defined by the relationships between faculty, staff, students, and alumni; bureaucratic procedures embodied by institutional policies; structural frameworks; institutional missions, visions, and core values; institutional history and traditions; and larger social contexts (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, Alma, & Allen, 1998).

Institutional missions suggest that higher education values multicultural awareness and understanding within an environment of mutual respect and cooperation. Academic communities expend a great deal of effort fostering a climate to nurture their missions with the understanding that climate has a profound effect on the academic community's ability to excel in teaching, research, and scholarship. Institutional strategic plans advocate creating welcoming and inclusive climates that are grounded in respect, nurtured by dialogue, and evidenced by a pattern of civil interaction.

The climate on college campuses not only affects the creation of knowledge, but also affects members of the academic community who, in turn, contribute to the creation of the campus climate. Several national education association reports and higher education researchers advocate creating a more inclusive, welcoming climate on college campuses (Boyer, 1990; AAC&U, 1995; Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Ingle, 2005; Milem, Chang, & Antonio, 2005). Because of the inherent complexity of the topic of diversity, it is crucial to examine the multiple dimensions of diversity in higher education. The conceptual model used as the foundation for this assessment of campus climate was developed by Smith (1999) and modified by Rankin (2002).

The University of Wisconsin System (UWS) has a long history of supporting diversity initiatives¹ as evidenced by the System's support and commitment to this climate assessment project. In 2005, a taskforce committee of the UWS Inclusivity Initiative was formed to search for consulting firms that conduct climate assessments in higher education. Rankin & Associates (R&A) was identified as leader in conducting multiple identity studies in higher education. In

¹ For more information on UW diversity initiatives see <http://www.uwsa.edu/vpacad/diversity.htm>

2006, R&A presented a proposal to the UWS provosts and various constituent groups, which resulted in the formation by UWS administrators of the *Climate Study Working Group (CSWG)*² and subsequent contract with R&A to facilitate a system-wide climate assessment.

Fact-finding groups were held in September 2007 to discuss with University of Wisconsin System students, staff, and faculty their perceptions of the System climate. Informed by these fact-finding groups and by previous R&A work, the CSWG developed the final survey instrument template that was administered to the five participating institutions in spring 2008.

UW-Baraboo/Sauk County was one of thirteen UW College campuses that participated in the initial climate project in 2007-2008. The UWC Diversity Leadership Committee, appointed by Chancellor David Wilson, reviewed the CSWG template and revised the survey instrument to better fit the context of the UW Colleges. The final survey contained 91 questions, including open-ended questions for respondents to provide commentary. Each of the campuses will receive a campus-specific report. In addition, an aggregate report inclusive of all of the UW Colleges will also be developed.

This report provides an overview of the findings of the UW-Baraboo/Sauk County campus-specific assessment. All members of the UW-Baraboo/Sauk County campus community (e.g., students, faculty, academic staff, and classified staff) were invited to participate in the survey. The survey was designed for respondents to provide information about their personal experiences with regard to climate issues, their perceptions of the campus climate, student and employee satisfaction, and respondents' perceptions of institutional actions, including administrative policies and academic initiatives regarding climate issues and concerns on campus.

A summary of the findings, presented in bullet form below, suggests that while the UW-Baraboo/Sauk County has several challenges with regard to diversity issues. The findings

² The CSWG included 2 representatives from each of the five participating institutions. The Provost from each institution was requested to appoint the two representatives.

suggest that while the campus faces several challenges with regard to climate issues, these challenges parallel those identified in higher education institutions across the country³.

Sample Demographics

140 surveys were returned representing the following:

- 21.6% response rate⁴
- 94 undergraduate students (67%), 3 graduate students (2%), 19 faculty (14%), 15 academic staff (11%), and 7 classified staff (5%)
- 11 People of Color (8%);⁵ 125 White (89%) respondents
- 6 people (4%) who identified as having a physical disability
- 2 people (1%) who identified as having a learning disability
- 3 people (2%) who identified as having a psychological condition
- 8 people (6%) who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer; 4 (3%) who were questioning their sexuality
- 102 women (73%); 38 men (27%); 0 transgender⁶
- 59 people (42%) who identified their spiritual affiliation as other than Christian (including those with no affiliation)

³ Rankin, S. and Reason, R. (forthcoming). *Transformational Tapestry Model: A comprehensive approach for assessing and improving campus climates for underrepresented and underserved populations*. New York: Stylus Publications.

⁴ Caution in generalizing results for constituent groups with significantly lower response rates. Despite this limitation, the results provided here reflect participant's beliefs and concerns with regard to the campus climate.

⁵ While recognizing the vastly different experiences of people of various racial identities (e.g., Chicano(a) versus African-American or Latino(a) versus Asian-American), and those experiences within these identity categories (e.g., Hmong versus Chinese), Rankin and Associates found it necessary to collapse some of these categories to conduct the analyses due to the small numbers of respondents in the individual categories.

⁶ Transgender refers to identity that does not conform unambiguously to conventional notions of male or female gender, but combines or moves between these (*Oxford English Dictionary* 2003). [OED Online](http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00319380). March 2004. Oxford UW Press. Feb. 17, 2006 <<http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00319380>>.

Quantitative Findings

*Personal Experiences with Campus Climate*⁷

- **A small percentage of respondents reported that they had personally experienced offensive, hostile, or intimidating conduct that interfered unreasonably with their ability to work or learn on campus (hereafter referred to as harassment).**⁸ Age was most often cited as the reason given for the perceived harassment. People of Color and sexual minorities⁹ perceived such harassment slightly more often than White people. Perceived harassment largely went unreported.
 - 7% (n = 10) of respondents believed¹⁰ that they had personally experienced offensive, hostile, or intimidating conduct that interfered unreasonably with their ability to work or learn on campus.
 - The perceived conduct was most often based on the respondents' age (30%), gender (20%), university status¹¹ (20%), or education level (20%).
 - Compared with 5% of White people, 18% of People of Color believed they had personally experienced such conduct.
 - No respondents reported believing they had experienced this conduct because of their race.
 - Compared with 8% of men, 7% of women believed they had personally experienced such conduct.
 - One woman and one man who believed they had experienced this conduct stated that it was because of their gender.
 - Compared with 7% of heterosexual respondents, 8% of sexual minority respondents believed they had personally experienced such conduct.
- **A small percentage of respondents believed that they had been sexually harassed.**
 - 3% believed that they had been touched in a sexual manner that made them feel uncomfortable or fearful while at UW-Baraboo/Sauk County.
 - No respondents reported that they believed they had been sexually assaulted during their time at UW-Baraboo/Sauk County.

⁷ Listings in the narrative are those responses with the greatest percentages. For a complete listing of the results, the reader is directed to the tables in the narrative and Appendix A.

⁸ Under the United States Code Title 18 Subsection 1514(c)1, harassment is defined as "a course of conduct directed at a specific person that causes substantial emotional distress in such a person and serves no legitimate purpose" (<http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/vii.html>). In higher education institutions, legal issues discussions define harassment as any conduct that has unreasonably interfered with one's ability to work or learn on campus. The questions used in this survey to uncover participants' personal and observed experiences with harassment were designed using these definitions.

⁹ Sexual minorities are defined, for the purposes of this report, as people who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual.

¹⁰ The modifier "believe(d)" is used throughout the report to indicate the respondent's perceived experiences. This modifier is not meant in any way to diminish those experiences.

¹¹ University status was defined in the questionnaire as "Within the institution, the status one holds by virtue of their position/status within the institution (e.g., staff, full-time faculty, part-time faculty, administrator)."

Satisfaction with UW-Baraboo/Sauk County

- **83% of UW-Baraboo/Sauk County employees were “highly satisfied” or “satisfied” with their jobs at UW-Baraboo/Sauk County. 59% were “highly satisfied” or “satisfied” with the way their careers have progressed at UW-Baraboo/Sauk County.**
 - Faculty were slightly less satisfied with their jobs than were other employees.
 - Women and sexual minority employees were slightly less satisfied with the way their careers have progressed at UW-Baraboo/Sauk County.

- **80% of percent of students were “highly satisfied” or “satisfied” with their education at UW-Baraboo/Sauk County, while 72% were “highly satisfied” or “satisfied” with the way their academic careers have progressed at UW-Baraboo/Sauk County.**
 - A slightly lower percentage of Students of Color and sexual minority students were satisfied with their educations and with the way their academic careers have progressed at UW-Baraboo/Sauk County than were other students.
 - Higher percentages of women students, White students, and heterosexual students were satisfied with the way their academic careers have progressed than were men students, Students of Color, and sexual minority students.

- **36% of all respondents have seriously considered leaving UW-Baraboo/Sauk County.**
 - 25% of students, 68% of faculty, 53% of academic staff, and 67% of classified staff have seriously considered leaving.
 - Among employees, 73% of men and 54% of women thought of leaving UW-Baraboo/Sauk County.
 - 100% of Employees of Color, in comparison with 59% of White employees, have seriously considered leaving UW-Baraboo/Sauk County. Additionally, 50% of sexual minority employees, compared to 63% of heterosexual respondents, have seriously thought of leaving the college.
 - Among students, 24% of women and 27% of men considered leaving the University.
 - 100% of Students of Color and 25% of White students thought of leaving UW-Baraboo/Sauk County, as did 40% of LGB students and 22% of heterosexual students.

Perceptions of Campus Climate

- **Most respondents indicated that they were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with the overall climate at UW-Baraboo/Sauk County (93%), in their departments or work units (83%), and in their classes (91%).**
- **11% of all respondents indicated that they were aware of or believed they had observed harassment on campus. The perceived harassment was most often based on physical characteristics, age, education level, gender, and religious/spiritual status.**
 - Approximately equal percentages of White respondents (10%) and Respondents of Color (9%) believed that they had observed or personally been made aware of such conduct.
 - Compared with 11% of heterosexuals, 17% of sexual minorities believed they had observed or personally been made aware of such conduct.
 - Compared with 10% of students and 33% of classified staff, 11% of faculty and 7% of academic staff believed they had observed such conduct.
 - These incidents were reported to an employer or official only 7% of the time.
- **With regard to campus accessibility for people with mobility and visual impairment, classrooms (93%), student services center (93%), library (92%), academic buildings (91%), and restrooms (90%) were considered the most accessible (rated “very accessible” or “accessible”) areas of campus.**
- **Some employee respondents believed that they had observed discriminatory employment practices.**
 - 12% of employee respondents believed that they had observed discriminatory hiring.
 - 5% believed that they had observed discriminatory employment-related disciplinary actions at UW-Baraboo/Sauk County (up to and including dismissal).
 - 7% believed that they had observed discriminatory promotion practices.

Institutional Actions

- Respondents “strongly agreed”/“agreed” that the Other Deans (74%), Academic Staff (72%), Campus Dean/CEO (71%), Faculty/IAS (70%), and Student Government Association (60%) provided visible leadership that fosters inclusion of diverse members of the campus community.
- 54% of all respondents believed that diversity initiatives are relevant to their work
- 62% felt welcome at campus diversity events.
- 49% of employee respondents thought providing tenure clock options with more flexibility for promotion/tenure for faculty/staff with families would positively affect the climate.
- 60% thought it would be a good idea to train mentors and leaders within departments to model positive climate behavior.

- 63% thought offering diversity training/programs as community outreach would positively affect the climate.
- Less than half of all employees thought providing recognition and rewards for including diversity in course objectives throughout the curriculum and rewarding research efforts that evaluate outcomes of diversity training would positively affect the climate.
- 50% of employees felt providing on-campus child care services would positively affect the climate.
- More than three-quarters of all employees thought the following initiatives would also positively affect the climate on campus: improving, and promoting access to quality services for those individuals who experience sexual abuse (78%), providing mentors for minority faculty/students/staff new to campus (75%), and providing a clear protocol for responding to hate/hostile incidents at the campus level (84%) and departmental level (81%).

Qualitative Findings

Respondents had the opportunity to answer several open-ended questions throughout the survey. Representatives from the UW Colleges requested that R&A include the responses from all of the UW Colleges' respondents in a qualitative analysis in the aggregate report of the UW Colleges.