

## 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 has a long history of supporting diversity initiatives<sup>1</sup> as evidenced by the System's support and commitment to this climate assessment project. In 2005, a taskforce committee of the UW System Inclusivity Initiative was formed to search for consulting firms that conduct climate assessments in higher education. Rankin & Associates (R&A) was identified as a leader in conducting multiple identity studies in higher education. In

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

2006, R&A presented a proposal to the UW System provosts and various constituent groups, which resulted in the formation by UW System administrators of the *Climate Study Working Group* (CSWG)<sup>2</sup> and subsequent contract with R&A to facilitate a UW 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 informed 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-Marinette was one of thirteen UW Colleges campuses that participated in the initial climate project in 2007-2008. The UW Colleges 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 campuses will also be developed.

This report provides an overview of the findings of the UW-Marinette campus-specific assessment. All members of the UW-Marinette 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-Marinette has several challenges

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<sup>2</sup> The CSWG included 2 representatives from each of the five participating institutions. The provost from each institution was requested to appoint the two representatives.

with regard to diversity issues, these challenges are found in many other higher education institutions across the country.<sup>3</sup>

### Sample Demographics

139 surveys were returned representing the following:

- 32% response rate<sup>4</sup>
- 95 undergraduate students, 15 (38%) faculty, 14 (36%) academic staff, and 10 (25%) classified staff
- 8 (6%) People of Color;<sup>5</sup> 125 (90%) White respondents
- 14 (10%) people identified as having a disability<sup>6</sup>
  - 7 (50%) people who identified as having a physical disability
  - 5 (36%) people who identified as having a learning disability
  - 7 (50%) people who identified as having a psychological condition
- 11 (8%) people who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer; 2 (1%) who were questioning their sexuality; 123 (86%) people who identified as heterosexual
- 87 (63%) women; 51 (37%) men; 0 transgender persons<sup>7</sup>
- 86 (62%) people who identified their spiritual affiliation as Christian

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<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> Caution is suggested in generalizing results for constituent groups with significantly lower response rates. Despite this limitation, the results provided here reflect participants' beliefs and concerns with regard to the campus climate.

<sup>5</sup> 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.

<sup>6</sup> Respondents could identify more than one disability.

<sup>7</sup> "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 University Press. Feb. 17, 2006 <<http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00319380>>.

## Quantitative Findings

### *Personal Experiences with Campus Climate*<sup>8</sup>

- **A percentage of respondents believed<sup>9</sup> they had personally experienced offensive, hostile, exclusionary, or intimidating conduct that interfered unreasonably with their ability to work or learn on campus (hereafter referred to as harassment).<sup>10</sup> White respondents, women, and LGB<sup>11</sup> respondents were more likely to believe they had personally experienced such conduct. Status<sup>12</sup> was most often cited as the reason given for the perceived harassment. Perceived harassment largely went unreported.**
  - 18% (n = 25) of respondents believed they had personally experienced offensive, hostile, exclusionary 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' status (36%, n = 9), education level (32%, n = 8), age (20%, n = 5), gender (20%, n = 5), or sexual orientation (20%, n = 5).
  - Compared with 19% (n = 24) of White people, no People of Color believed they had personally experienced such conduct.
  - Compared with 7% (n = 10) of men, 11% (n = 15) of women believed they had personally experienced such conduct.
  - Of the women who experienced this conduct, 27% (n = 4) believed it was due to their gender.
  - Compared with 16% (n = 20) of heterosexual respondents, 45% (n = 5) of sexual minority respondents believed they had personally experienced such conduct.
  - Of sexual minority respondents who experienced this conduct, 40% (n = 2) believed it was due to their sexual orientation.
  - 16% (n = 4) of participants made complaints to UW-Marinette officials, while 12% (n = 3) did not know whom to go to, and 12% (n = 3) did not report the incident for fear of retaliation.

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<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> The modifier "believe(d)" is used throughout the report to indicate the respondents' perceived experiences. This modifier is not meant in any way to diminish those experiences.

<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> This report uses the terms "LGB" and "sexual minorities" to denote individuals who self-identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and those who wrote in "other" terms, such as "pan-sexual," "homoflexible," "fluid," etc.

<sup>12</sup> 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)."

- **A small percentage of respondents believed they had been sexually harassed or sexually assaulted.**
  - 4% (n = 5) believed they had been touched in a sexual manner that made them feel uncomfortable or fearful) while at UW-Marquette.
  - 11% (n = 15) reported there were times when they were fearful of being sexually harassed on campus.
  - One respondent believed she/he had been sexually assaulted while employed or enrolled at UW-Marquette.

### Satisfaction with UW-Marquette

- **82% (n = 32) of UW-Marquette employees were “highly satisfied” or “satisfied” with their jobs at UW-Marquette. 65% (n = 24) were “highly satisfied” or “satisfied” with the way their careers have progressed at UW-Marquette.**
  - Classified staff members were less satisfied with their jobs than were other employees.
  - Women were less satisfied with the way their careers have progressed at UW-Marquette than were men.
- **86% (n = 81) of students were “highly satisfied” or “satisfied” with their education at UW-Marquette, while 72% (n = 68) were “highly satisfied” or “satisfied” with the way their academic careers have progressed at UW-Marquette.**
  - High percentages of students were satisfied with their education (97% or more of each demographic group marked “highly satisfied”/”satisfied”) and with the way their academic careers have progressed (90% or more of each demographic group marked highly satisfied/satisfied).
- **37% (n = 50) of all respondents have seriously considered leaving UW-Marquette.**
  - 25% (n = 24) of students, 73% (n = 11) of faculty, 57% (n = 8) of academic staff, and 70% (n = 7) of classified staff have seriously considered leaving UW-Marquette.
  - Among employees, 59% (n = 10) of men and 73% (n = 16) of women thought of leaving UW-Marquette.
  - Among students, 25% (n = 15) of women and 26% (n = 9) of men considered leaving the UW-Marquette.
  - 20% (n = 1) of Students of Color and 25% (n = 22) of White students thought of leaving UW-Marquette, as did 14% (n = 1) of LGB students and 27% (n = 23) of heterosexual students.

### Perceptions of Campus Climate

- **Most respondents indicated that they were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with the overall climate at UW-Marquette (86%, n = 115), in their departments or work units (85%, n = 115), and in their classes (87%, n = 98). The figures in the narrative demonstrate some disparities based on race.**

- **Approximately a fifth 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 sexual orientation, age, gender, country of origin, physical characteristics, and status. Sexual minorities were more aware of the perceived harassment.**
  - 20% (n = 28) of the participants believed they had observed or personally been made aware of conduct on campus that created an offensive, hostile, exclusionary or intimidating working or learning environment.
  - Most of the observed harassment was based on sexual orientation (39%, n = 11), age (25%, n = 7), gender (25%, n = 7), country of origin (21%, n = 6), physical characteristics (21%, n = 6), and status (21%, n = 6).
  - Compared with 22% (n = 27) of White respondents, no Respondents of Color believed they had observed or personally been made aware of such conduct.
  - Compared with 40% (n = 24) of heterosexuals, 20% (n = 4) of sexual minorities believed they had observed or personally been made aware of such conduct.
  - Compared with 14% (n = 13) of students and 29% (n = 4) of academic staff, 40% (n = 6) of faculty and 50% (n = 5) of classified staff believed they had observed such conduct.
  - These incidents were reported to an employer or official only 11% (n = 3) of the time.
  
- **Some employee respondents believed they had observed discriminatory employment practices, and indicated that these practices were most often based on gender.**
  - 13% (n = 5) of employee respondents believed that they had observed discriminatory hiring.
  - 23% (n = 9) had believed that they had observed discriminatory employment-related disciplinary actions at UW-Marquette (up to and including dismissal).
  - 26% (n = 10) believed that they had observed discriminatory promotion practices.
  
- **With regard to campus accessibility for people with mobility and visual impairment, the library (90%, n = 121), student union (88%, n = 117) academic buildings (87%, n = 116), web site (87%, n = 116), other information system (87%, n = 116), and classrooms (87%, n = 115) were considered the most accessible (rated “very accessible” or “accessible”) areas of campus. Information in other formats was considered “very inaccessible” at 5% (n = 6).**

### Institutional Actions

- More than 60% of the respondents “strongly agreed”/“agreed” that the Campus Dean/CEO (73%), other Deans (66%), Club advisors (66%), Student club presidents/leaders (62%), faculty (66%), and academic staff (74%) provided visible leadership that fosters inclusion of diverse members of the campus community.
- 41% (n = 53) of all respondents believed the Chancellor’s Office has visible leadership that fosters inclusion of diverse members of the campus community.
- 34% (n = 44) of all respondents believed the Provost’s Office has visible leadership that fosters inclusion of diverse members of the campus community.

- 53% (n = 67) of all respondents believed that diversity initiatives are relevant to their work.
- 65% (n = 83) felt welcome at campus diversity events.
- 21% (n = 7) of employee respondents thought providing tenure clock options with more flexibility for promotion/tenure for faculty/staff with families would positively affect the climate.
- 55% (n = 19) thought it would be a good idea to train mentors and leaders within departments to model positive climate behavior.
- 54% (n = 19) thought offering diversity training/programs such as community outreach would positively affect the climate.
- 28% (n = 10) of employees felt providing on-campus child care services would positively affect the climate.
- 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 (42%, n = 15), providing mentors for minority faculty/students/staff new to campus (46%, n = 16), and providing a clear protocol for responding to hate/hostile incidents at the campus level (66%, n = 23) and departmental level (63%, n = 22).

### **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.