University of California, San Francisco
School of Dentistry

Assessment of Climate for Learning, Living, and Working
Executive Summary

September 2018
Executive Summary

History of the Project
The University of California, San Francisco School of Dentistry affirms that diversity and inclusion are essential to the intellectual vitality of the campus community and that they engender academic engagement where teaching, working, learning, and living take place in pluralistic communities of mutual respect. Free exchange of different ideas and viewpoints in supportive environments engage students, faculty, and staff to develop the critical thinking and citizenship skills that will benefit them throughout their lives.

The UCSF School of Dentistry is also committed to fostering a compassionate community that actively embraces cultural humility and advances participation in a diverse, multicultural world. As noted in the UCSF School of Dentistry’s mission, vision, and values, “Diversity at UCSF School of Dentistry has long been a matter of policy, and the focus of intense, concerted efforts to better understand how diversity benefits all of us. Our efforts align with the three targets of our mission: patient care, education and discovery.” To better understand the School climate, the senior administration at the UCSF School of Dentistry recognized the need for a comprehensive tool that would provide climate metrics for the experiences and perceptions of its students, faculty, and staff.

In spring 2017, the UCSF School of Dentistry contracted with Rankin & Associates Consulting (R&A) to conduct a School-wide study entitled, “UCSF School of Dentistry Assessment of Climate for Learning, Living, and Working.” In fall 2017, members of the UCSF School of Dentistry formed the Climate Study Work Group (CSWG) to collaborate with R&A in designing the climate survey. The CSWG was composed of faculty, staff, students, and administrators. During fall 2018, data gathered via relevant UCSF School of Dentistry literature reviews, School-wide focus groups, and the School-wide survey addressing the experiences and perceptions of various constituent groups will be presented at UCSF School of Dentistry community forums, which will develop and complete two or three strategic action items.

1https://dentistry.ucsf.edu/about/mission-vision-values
**Project Design and Campus Involvement**

The conceptual model used as the foundation for the UCSF School of Dentistry’s assessment of campus climate was developed by Smith et al. (1997) and modified by Rankin (2003). A power and privilege perspective informs the model, one grounded in critical theory, which establishes that power differentials, both earned and unearned, are central to all human interactions (Brookfield, 2005). Unearned power and privilege are associated with membership in dominant social groups (A. Johnson, 2005) and influence systems of differentiation that reproduce unequal outcomes. The UCSF School of Dentistry’s assessment was the result of a comprehensive process to identify the strengths and challenges of its climate, with a specific focus on the distribution of power and privilege among differing social groups. This report provides an overview of the results of the School-wide survey.

The CSWG collaborated with R&A to develop the survey instrument. Together, they implemented participatory and community-based processes to review tested survey questions from the R&A question bank and developed a survey instrument for the UCSF School of Dentistry that would reveal the various dimensions of power and privilege that shape the campus experience. In the first phase, R&A conducted 18 focus groups, which were composed of 103 participants (45 students; 58 faculty and staff). In the second phase, the CSWG and R&A used data from the focus groups to co-construct questions for the School-wide survey. The final UCSF School of Dentistry survey queried various campus constituent groups in the School about their experiences and perceptions regarding the academic environment for students; the workplace environment for faculty and staff; employee benefits; sexual harassment and sexual violence; occurrences of bias, stereotyping, and exclusionary behavior; racial and ethnic identity; gender identity and gender expression; sexual identity; accessibility and disability services; and other topics. The final survey contained 109 questions, including open-ended questions for respondents to provide commentary, and was estimated to take 20-30 minutes to complete.

Five hundred eighty-seven people completed the survey. In the end, the assessment was the result of a comprehensive process to identify the strengths and challenges of the School’s climate, with a specific focus on experiences regarding the distribution of power and privilege among differing social groups at the UCSF School of Dentistry.
The UCSF School of Dentistry Participants

The UCSF School of Dentistry community members completed 587 surveys for an overall response rate of 45%. Only surveys that were at least 50% completed were included in the final dataset for analyses.² Forty-two percent \((n = 248)\) of the sample were Students, 27% \((n = 159)\) were Faculty members, and 31% \((n = 180)\) were Staff. Table 1 provides a summary of selected demographic characteristics of survey respondents. The percentages offered in Table 1 are based on the numbers of respondents in the sample \((n)\) for each demographic characteristic.³

²Seven surveys were removed because the respondents did not complete at least 50% of the survey, and six duplicate submissions were removed. Responses were also examined to determine if they were problematic (i.e., the respondent did not complete the survey in good faith).

³The total \(n\) for each demographic characteristic may differ as a result of missing data.
### Table 1. The UCSF School of Dentistry Sample Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Subgroup</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>% of Sample</th>
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<tr>
<td>Position status</td>
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<td>Faculty</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Staff</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trans-spectrum/Multiple/Other</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Missing</td>
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<td>Religious affiliation</td>
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<td>Missing</td>
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<td>10.9</td>
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</table>

Note: The total n for each demographic characteristic may differ as a result of missing data.
Key Findings – Areas of Strength

1. Moderate-to-high levels of comfort with the climate at the UCSF School of Dentistry

   Climate is defined as the Current attitudes, behaviors, and standards of employees and students concerning the access for, inclusion of, and level of respect for individual and group needs, abilities, and potential. The level of comfort experienced by faculty, staff, and students is one indicator of climate.

   - 69% \((n = 405)\) of survey respondents were “very comfortable” or “comfortable” with the climate at the UCSF School of Dentistry.
   - 65% \((n = 219)\) of Faculty and Staff respondents were “very comfortable” or “comfortable” with the climate in their departments/work units.
   - 79% \((n = 301)\) of Student and Faculty respondents were “very comfortable” or “comfortable” with the climate in their classes.
   - 66% \((n = 244)\) of Student and Faculty respondents were “very comfortable” or “comfortable” with the climate in their pre-clinical lab classes.
   - 65% \((n = 255)\) of Student and Faculty respondents were “very comfortable” or “comfortable” with the climate in their patient care clinics.

2. Faculty Respondents – Positive attitudes about faculty work

   Ladder-Rank

   - 78% \((n = 21)\) of Ladder-Rank Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that criteria for tenure were clear.
   - 70% \((n = 19)\) of Ladder-Rank Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that research was valued at the UCSF School of Dentistry.

   Non-Tenure-Track

   - 89% \((n = 117)\) of Non-Tenure-Track Academic Appointment respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that research was valued at the UCSF School of Dentistry.

   All Faculty

   - 70% \((n = 109)\) of Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt valued by faculty in their department/division.

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\(^4\)Rankin & Reason (2008)
73% (n = 115) of Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt valued by other faculty at the UCSF School of Dentistry.

- 82% (n = 123) of Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt valued by students in the classroom/clinic/sim lab.

3. Staff Respondents – Positive attitudes about staff work

- 70% (n = 126) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they had supervisors or colleagues/coworkers who gave them job/career advice or guidance when they needed it.
- 78% (n = 137) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that their supervisors were supportive of their taking leave.
- 71% (n = 127) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that health insurance benefits were competitive.
- 76% (n = 134) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that clear expectations of their responsibilities existed.
- 76% (n = 136) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt valued by their coworkers in their work unit and 72% (n = 128) felt valued by coworkers outside their work unit.
- 70% (n = 124) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt valued by their supervisors/managers.

4. Student Respondents – Positive attitudes about academic experiences

The way students perceive and experience their campus climate influences their performance and success in college.\(^5\) Research also supports the pedagogical value of a diverse student body and faculty for improving learning outcomes.\(^6\) Attitudes toward academic pursuits are one indicator of climate.

- 70% (n = 173) of Student respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt valued by UCSF School of Dentistry faculty.

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\(^5\)Pascarella & Terenzini (2005)

77% (n = 189) of Student respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt valued by other students in the classroom, and 73% (n = 179) “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt valued by other students outside of the classroom.

86% (n = 211) of Student respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they had faculty whom they perceived as role models.

Student respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that their faculty mentor/coach (76%, n = 188) and faculty members (other than their faculty mentor/coach) (77%, n = 188) responded to their emails, calls, or voicemails in a prompt manner.

78% (n = 192) of Student respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt comfortable sharing their professional goals with their faculty mentor/coach.

5. Student Respondents Perceived Academic Success

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the scale, Perceived Academic Success, derived from Question 13 on the survey. Using this scale, analyses between groups were conducted for Student respondents by gender identity, racial identity, sexual identity, citizenship status, and income status. No significant differences existed.

Key Findings – Opportunities for Improvement

1. Members of several constituent groups indicated that they experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct.

Several empirical studies reinforce the importance of the perception of non-discriminatory environments for positive learning and developmental outcomes.7 Research also underscores the relationship between workplace discrimination and subsequent productivity.8 The survey requested information on experiences of exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct.

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7Aguirre & Messineo (1997); Flowers & Pascarella (1999); Pascarella & Terenzini (2005); Whitt, Edison, Pascarella, Terenzini, & Nora (2011)
8Silverschanz, Cortina, Konik, & Magley (2008); Waldo (1998)
29% \((n = 172)\) of respondents indicated that they personally had experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct.9

- 31% \((n = 54)\) noted that the conduct was based on their position status,
- 23% \((n = 40)\) on their ethnicity, and 22% \((n = 37)\) on their gender identity.

**Differences Based on Racial Identity, Gender Identity, Position Status, and Disability Status**

Chi-square analyses indicated statistically significant differences based on several demographic characteristics.

- By racial identity, a higher percentage of Respondents of Color \((31\%, \ n = 104)\) than White respondents \((21\%, \ n = 35)\) indicated they had experienced this conduct.

  - Of those who had experienced this conduct, a higher percentage of Respondents of Color \((26\%, \ n = 27)\) than White respondents \((n < 5)\) thought that the conduct was based on their ethnicity.

- No significant difference existed based on position status in the percentage of respondents who indicated they had experienced this conduct.

  - Of those who had experienced this conduct, 44% \((n = 24)\) of Staff respondents compared with 13% \((n = 5)\) of Faculty respondents thought that the conduct was based on their position status.

- No significant difference existed based on gender identity in the percentage of respondents who indicated they had experienced this conduct.

  - Of those who had experienced this conduct, 26% \((n = 27)\) of Women respondents compared with 12% \((n = 7)\) of Men respondents thought that the conduct was based on their gender identity.

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9The literature on microaggressions is clear that this type of conduct has a negative influence on people who experience the conduct, even if they feel at the time that it had no impact (Sue, 2010; Yosso et al., 2009).
By disability status, a higher percentage of Respondents with at Least One Disability (55%, \( n = 22 \)) than Respondents with No Disability (28%, \( n = 150 \)) indicated they had experienced this conduct.

○ There were no significant group differences in the percentage of respondents who thought that the conduct was based on their disability status.

Respondents were offered the opportunity to elaborate on their experiences of exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct at the UCSF School of Dentistry. Eighty-nine respondents elaborated on experiences with this conduct. Qualitative themes referred to both a lack of response to reports of such conduct, and hostile actions by faculty toward students.

2. Faculty respondents were mixed in their perception of the climate at UCSF School of Dentistry.

- 15% (\( n = 24 \)) of Faculty respondents compared with 6% (\( n = 10 \)) of Staff respondents and 7% (\( n = 18 \)) of Student respondents felt “uncomfortable” with the overall climate.

- 25% (\( n = 36 \)) of Faculty respondents compared with 14% (\( n = 35 \)) of Student respondents felt “very comfortable” with the climate in their patient care clinics.

3. Faculty and Staff Respondents – Seriously considered leaving the UCSF School of Dentistry

- 49% (\( n = 77 \)) of Faculty respondents and 47% (\( n = 84 \)) of Staff respondents had seriously considered leaving the UCSF School of Dentistry.

○ 51% (\( n = 39 \)) of those Faculty respondents who seriously considered leaving did so because of low salary/pay rate, 36% (\( n = 28 \)) because of increased workload, and 35% (\( n = 27 \)) because of tension with their supervisors/managers.

○ 49% (\( n = 41 \)) of those Staff respondents who seriously considered leaving did so because of limited opportunities for advancement, 48% (\( n = 40 \)) because of low salary/pay rate, and 42% (\( n = 35 \)) because of increased workload.
One hundred ten Faculty and Staff respondents elaborated on why they had seriously considered leaving the UCSF School of Dentistry. Three themes emerged from the responses: lack of support, negative supervisor or chair experiences, and negative work climate. One theme was specific to Staff respondents: lack of advancement opportunities.

4. **Student Respondents – Seriously considered leaving the UCSF School of Dentistry**

   - 17% \( (n = 42) \) of Student respondents had seriously considered leaving the UCSF School of Dentistry.
     - 62% \( (n = 26) \) of those Student respondents who seriously considered leaving did so in their first year as a student and 45% \( (n = 19) \) during their third year.
     - 62% \( (n = 26) \) of those Student respondents who seriously considered leaving did so because the climate was not welcoming, 60% \( (n = 25) \) because they lacked a sense of belonging, 33% \( (n = 14) \) because they lacked a support group, 31% \( (n = 13) \) because they were unsure about their career in dentistry, and 29% \( (n = 12) \) because of inequitable patient care experience.

Twenty-nine Student respondents elaborated on why they had seriously considered leaving the UCSF School of Dentistry. Two themes emerged from the responses: critiques of program quality and lack of support.

5. **Staff Respondents – Challenges with work-life issues**

   - 53% \( (n = 94) \) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that a hierarchy existed within staff positions that allowed some voices to be valued more than others.
   - 56% \( (n = 100) \) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the performance evaluation process was useful.
   - 47% \( (n = 83) \) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the UCSF School of Dentistry provided adequate resources to help them manage work-life balance.
43% (n = 77) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that UCSF School of Dentistry University policies (e.g., FMLA) were applied fairly across the UCSF School of Dentistry.

31% (n = 55) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that staff salaries were competitive, and 26% (n = 46) “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that child care benefits were competitive.

44% (n = 80) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that staff opinions were valued on UCSF School of Dentistry committees, and 43% (n = 76) “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that staff opinions were valued by UCSF School of Dentistry faculty and administration.

34% (n = 61) of Staff respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that clear procedures existed on how they could advance at the UCSF School of Dentistry, and 47% (n = 83) “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt positive about their career opportunities at the UCSF School of Dentistry.

Differences by staff status existed insofar as Staff Respondents of Color and Non-U.S. Citizen Staff respondents disclosed less positive perceptions of the campus climate than did their counterparts. Staff respondents elaborated on their perceptions of the work-place climate at the UCSF School of Dentistry. Those qualitative comments pertained to themes of excessive workload, critiques of leave/benefits, and lack of job security.

6. Faculty Respondents – Challenges with faculty work

20% or less of Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that salaries for tenure-track faculty positions were competitive (17%, n = 25), salaries for non-tenure-track faculty were competitive (11%, n = 16), child care benefits were competitive (16%, n = 22), or that the UCSF School of Dentistry provided adequate resources to help them manage work-life balance (20%, n = 29).

51% (n = 74) of Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that health insurance benefits were competitive, and 39% (n = 55) thought that retirement benefits were competitive.
• Approximately half of Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the UCSF School of Dentistry provided them with resources to pursue professional development (51%, n = 75) or that they would recommend UCSF School of Dentistry as a good place to work (50%, n = 76).

• 43% (n = 67) of Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt valued by UCSF School of Dentistry senior administrators.

• Less than half of Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that their colleagues included them in opportunities that would help their career as much as they did others in their position (45%, n = 65), the performance evaluation process was clear (34%, n = 51), their research was valued (39%, n = 55), they felt positively about their career opportunities at the UCSF School of Dentistry (45%, n = 66), or they had job security (40%, n = 60).

• 44% (n = 12) of Ladder-Rank Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that their service contributions were valued by the UCSF School of Dentistry.

• 26% (n = 7) of Ladder-Rank Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that faculty opinions were taken seriously by senior administrators, and 37% (n = 10) felt that faculty opinions were valued within UCSF School of Dentistry committees.

• Less than half of Non-Tenure-Track Academic Appointment respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that criteria used for contract renewal were clear (42%, n = 54), criteria used for contract renewal were applied equally to positions (34%, n = 44), criteria used for merits and promotion were clear (46%, n = 60), or merits and promotion standards were applied equally to faculty in their department/division (42%, n = 52).

• 32% (n = 40) of Non-Tenure-Track Academic Appointment respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they had job security.

• 25% (n = 33) of Non-Tenure-Track Academic Appointment respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that their opinions were taken seriously by senior administrators.
24% \((n = 31)\) of Non-Tenure-Track Academic Appointment respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that a fair process existed for responding to student evaluations.

Differences by faculty status existed insofar as Women respondents, Faculty Respondents of Color, U.S. Citizen respondents, and No Religious Affiliation Faculty respondents generally felt less positively about the campus climate than did their counterparts. Faculty respondents elaborated on statements regarding their perceptions of work-life balance at the UCSF School of Dentistry. Various themes emerged, including low salary and lack of job security, with Non-Tenure-Track Academic Appointment respondents in particular providing details about student evaluations.

7. A small, but meaningful, percentage of respondents experienced unwanted sexual conduct

In 2014, Not Alone: The First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault indicated that sexual assault is a substantial issue for colleges and universities nationwide, affecting the physical health, mental health, and academic success of students. The report highlights that one in five women is sexually assaulted while in college. One section of the UCSF School of Dentistry survey requested information regarding unwanted sexual contact/conduct.

- 4% \((n = 22)\) of respondents indicated that they had experienced unwanted sexual contact/conduct while at the UCSF School of Dentistry.
  - Fewer than five experienced relationship violence (e.g., ridiculed, controlling, hitting).
  - Fewer than five experienced stalking (e.g., following me, on social media, texting, phone calls).
  - 3% \((n = 20)\) experienced unwanted sexual interaction (e.g., catcalling, repeated sexual advances, sexual harassment).

  - Respondents identified UCSF School of Dentistry faculty members as the primary source of unwanted sexual interaction, which the majority of Student respondents indicated occurred in their third year.
1% (n = 5) experienced unwanted sexual contact (e.g., fondling, rape, sexual assault, penetration without consent).

- 80% to 100% of the respondents did not report the unwanted sexual contact/conduct.

Conclusion

The UCSF School of Dentistry climate findings\textsuperscript{10} were consistent with those found in higher education institutions across the country, based on the work of R&A Consulting.\textsuperscript{11} For example, 70% to 80% of respondents in similar reports found the campus climate to be “very comfortable” or “comfortable.” A comparable percentage (69%) of UCSF School of Dentistry respondents indicated that they were “very comfortable” or “comfortable” with the climate at the UCSF School of Dentistry. Twenty percent to 25% of respondents in similar reports indicated that they personally had experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct. At the UCSF School of Dentistry, a slightly higher percentage of respondents (29%) indicated that they personally had experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct. The results also paralleled the findings of other climate studies of specific constituent groups offered in the literature.\textsuperscript{12}

The UCSF School of Dentistry's climate assessment report provides baseline data on diversity and inclusion, and addresses the UCSF School of Dentistry's mission and goals. While the findings may guide decision-making in regard to policies and practices at the UCSF School of Dentistry, it is important to note that the cultural fabric of any institution and unique aspects of each campus’s environment must be taken into consideration when deliberating additional action items based on these findings. The climate assessment findings provide the UCSF School of Dentistry community with an opportunity to build upon its strengths and to develop a deeper awareness of the challenges ahead. The UCSF School of Dentistry, with support from senior administrators and collaborative leadership, is in a prime position to actualize its commitment to

\textsuperscript{10}Additional findings disaggregated by position status and other selected demographic characteristics are provided in the full report.

\textsuperscript{11}Rankin & Associates Consulting (2016)

\textsuperscript{12}Guiffrida, Gouveia, Wall, & Seward (2002); Harper & Hurtado (2007); Harper & Quaye (2004); Hurtado & Ponjuan (2005); Rankin & Reason (2005); Sears (2002); Settles, Cortina, Malley, & Stewart (2006); Silverschanz et al. (2008); Yosso et al. (2009)
promote an inclusive campus and to institute organizational structures that respond to the needs of its dynamic campus community.