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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Charged under the leadership of President Wilson Bradshaw in 2009, this year’s campus climate and culture study is one of Florida Gulf Coast University’s most rigorous and encompassing examinations of the campus experience of faculty and staff to date. Grounded in lessons learned from previous iterations and, guided by a cross-section of university faculty and staff, this survey provides critical data necessary for the University to become a learning organization at the forefront of higher education leadership in the new millennium.

A 58% response rate was achieved (N=742). Some key findings of the study include:

- Generally, faculty and staff are satisfied in their roles at FGCU, feel that their careers have progressed well, and would accept their position again if given the opportunity. At the same time, morale is low on campus as individuals feel disconnected from decision-making, have issues with salary inequality, and desire more engagement, visibility, and transparency from senior leadership;

- For the most part faculty are more critical of nearly every dimension of their campus experience than their staff counterparts in terms of institutional communication, senior leadership performance, campus morale, and many other dimensions;

- Faculty and staff are happy with the degree of work family balance that they enjoy in their lives although many faculty and staff feel pressure to avoid time away from work as it may reflect negatively on their careers.

- Salary inequality was the most widely identified problem. Many focused on issues of salary compression and inversion, where long-time employees are paid on a lower scale than new hires. Others mentioned disparities among colleges/departments, while others referred to overall lower salaries at FGCU compared to other institutions both regionally and nationally.

- For the most part women, minorities, and members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) communities are as satisfied on campus as their majority counterparts (men, whites, heterosexuals). At the same time these group experiences higher degrees of sexism, racism, and homophobia respectively and each feel that their identity as minorities has a deleterious effect on their opportunities at FGCU, when compared to their majority peers.

- While the majority of faculty and staff believe that FGCU is committed to diversity, a vocal group of individuals is staunch in its insistence that diversity goals cannot come at the expense of institutional quality. To this end they clearly define diversity using a deficit lens and seem to have a limited understanding of the organizational and educational benefits that diversity offers to FGCU.

- Faculty and staff at FGCU have a great love of the university and feel a great sense of ownership in its continuing future and vitality. They desire a fundamental role in the process of decision making and insuring the integrity of keeping with the institution’s lofty mission and unique founding in Southwest Florida.
INTRODUCTION

Now is a time of transition for Florida Gulf Coast University as the community participates in a series of conversations concerning how the university can become a better, more mission-centered and high-performing institution for the 21st century. An essential step will be ensuring that institutional leadership is aware of and committed to building an inclusive, supportive campus environment where every member of the faculty, staff, and student body is valued and encouraged to reach his or her highest potential in service of the institution’s strategic goals.

A key to creating an inclusive and high-performing institution is to strive to operate as a learning organization concerned with building real solutions to deeply and permanently “interrupt the usual” dynamics of how they currently behave. A critical building block for creating such an organization is having a clear understanding of how the men and women of FGCU experience the workplace climate and culture as good, bad, and indifferent.

This kind of clear understanding cannot occur without a willingness on the part of the institution’s leaders to engage in an unflinching assessment of successes and challenges at all levels of the organization. President Bradshaw has exhibited considerable leadership inviting such a close examination of the university; particularly at a time when there is so much raw emotion surrounding the very public challenges that FGCU has faced in recent years. Only by holding a mirror up to itself, can any organization understand how best to move forward and improve. We believe that this study is a courageous example of this type of self-reflection and is a critical next step in the university taking strides towards a better future.

Some 2010 Highlights

Some highlights of the 2010 Survey implementation include:

(1) Focus on building a multivariate understanding of where the university stands on a battery of dimensions, including but not limited to general satisfaction, morale, mission focus, communication, leadership, campus climate dynamics, perceptions of inclusion and exclusion, and other issues of diversity.

(2) Data presented here focuses on both quantitative data collected through online survey deployment, and a second focus given to using open-ended comments to give texture and context to the quantitative survey responses.

(3) Focused examination of how different groups of employees—for example, faculty and staff, gender groups, racial and ethnic groups, and sexual orientation groups—perceived the campus culture and climate at FGCU.

(4) Intention to provide a community perspective that can be used to assist strategic work happening campus wide, charting the trajectory of the university over the next five to seven years.

(5) Nearly a 60% response rate, suggesting that faculty and staff were interested in participating in a process that they felt was safe, secure, and that allowed them to have
Report Focus

With a survey of over 100 individual items, it is nearly impossible to explore every question and relationship in a report while keeping it consumable for an administrative audience. As a result, this report focused on key differences between faculty and staff; men and women; and ethnic and racial minorities and majority group community members (Table 1). The report also provides insight into the experiences of individuals who are diverse in terms of their sexual orientation. Given the sample size limitations of minorities and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer communities (LGBTQ), these findings are offered with some caveat.

Table 1. Report Key Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positional Role</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty N=425 (59%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff N=279 (38%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other N=21 (3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women N=444 (61%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men N=281 (39%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race and Ethnicity</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American N=38 (5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American/Pacific Islander N=13 (2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/Hispanic N=44 (6%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American N=2 (.3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White N=592 (82%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other N=36 (5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sexual Orientation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual N= # (93%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Queer/Transgender N=33 (5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other N=14 (2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overview of the FGCU 2010 Climate Report

In ways that could never happen in a face-to-face meeting, the workplace climate and culture survey presented a safe environment for faculty and staff to provide what is often difficult feedback to leadership. This feedback is essential to increasing faculty and staff retention, establishing a supportive and inclusive work environment, and inspiring even higher levels of workplace

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Note: Caution is suggested in generalizing the results of constituent groups with significantly lower response rates. Despite this limitation, the results provided reflect participants’ beliefs and concerns with regard to campus climate and culture.
satisfaction and performance. The data presented in this report provide vital indicators to help leadership understand important issues such as satisfaction, accountability, communication, and conflict in the workplace. By having this information, leadership is empowered to make decisions from a data-centric space that can be used to further optimize organizational structures, policies, communication techniques, and the overall culture of the organization. What follows is a presentation of the key findings, themes, and ideas that emerged in our study.

This research is organized into several major sections:

• Section 1 - Outlines the collaborative research methodology employed in the survey;
• Section 2 - Presents a discussion of organizational culture and climate as a conceptual framework for this study;
• Section 3 - Highlights several quantitative themes that emerged from the data;
• Section 4 - Presents the qualitative themes from this report that were gathered through our online survey methodology;
• Concluding thoughts.
SECTION 1: A COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH EFFORT

Charged under the leadership of President Wilson Bradshaw in 2009, this year’s campus climate and culture study is one of Florida Gulf Coast University’s most rigorous and encompassing examinations of the campus experience of faculty and staff to date. Grounded in lessons learned from previous iterations, this survey effort is even more intentional and aligned to the challenges and unique realities of FGCU in an effort to provide critical data necessary for the University to become a learning organization at the forefront of higher education leadership in the new millennium.

Faculty & Staff Advisory Committee

Each member of the newly formed FGCU Faculty & Staff Climate & Culture Advisory Committee informed and participated in the design and development of this survey. Members of this committee are leaders from the faculty and staff, led by former Ombudsman Dr. Charles McKinney—who, after his retirement, agreed to stay with the project in a consulting capacity—and Dr. Amanda Evans, a highly regarded faculty member in the College of Professional studies, and co-chair of the CORE Planning Committee.

The committee as a whole is comprised of Dr. Elizabeth Elliott, Dr. Kathy Hale, J. Webb Horton, Dr. Hudson Rogers, Tim Shannon, Dr. Paul Snyder, Dr. Haley St. Hill, Sherry Voss, and Michele Yovanovich. Members of the FGCU Advisory Committee assisted in all aspects of developing the survey instrument and designing the deployment process. The committee met numerous times and spent more than 15 hours meeting directly with the consultant regarding major concepts, questions, and process of the research design. The goal was to ensure a process that would be reflective of the entire FGCU community and allow for a safe, high-fidelity research effort.

Role of Senior Leadership

Members of the president’s senior leadership team also participated in project design. Members of the committee presented concepts for exploration, responded to multiple iterations of the survey, and gave feedback on all aspects of project implementation. Further, President Wilson Bradshaw was actively involved with the research team at this phase of the process meeting, encouraging the Advisory Committee and ensuring that the research effort maintained the highest levels of integrity and visibility within this leadership agenda.

Research Team

The research team was comprised of individuals affiliated with the Madison, WI, non-profit organization, the Center for Strategic Diversity Leadership and Change, Inc. (CSDLC). Dr. Damon A. Williams, a leader in the discussion of diversity, inclusion, and organizational change, is principal for the CSDLC. Dr. Williams led all phases of the research project.

Dr. Williams has been a featured speaker at more than 100 meetings. He has served as a scholar in residence with two of the nation’s largest higher education policy organizations, the AACU and ACE. His widely published Ford Foundation-funded monograph on organizational change and diversity with AACU, “Towards a Model of Inclusive Excellence and Change,” is moving virally across the country, having been downloaded more than 20,000 times. Dr. Williams also serves as vice provost and chief officer for diversity and climate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison,
where he is also a member of the faculty in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analyses.

The research project and all aspects could not have been possible without the valuable contributions of Ms. Kellea Miller, Dr. Carole Kolb, and others who supported various components of the research endeavor.

Dr. Kolb’s efforts were particularly instructive as she served as lead analyst and author for several aspects of this report. Dr. Kolb is an associate with the CSDLC and a program and research associate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the office of the vice provost for diversity and climate.

**Research Process**

The online survey was deployed in November of 2009 and remained active until early January 2010. The survey was hosted on a commercial website that had no affiliation with Florida Gulf Coast University. The process of analyzing and interpreting the data generated from the climate survey included descriptive statistics, bivariate analyses, and in-depth qualitative analyses of more than 150 pages of qualitative information collected through the on-line data collection process.

Individual items and cross tabulations are especially illuminating in helping campus leaders to understand particular areas that they should center their attention, in the process of translating complex survey data into strategic planning, new ideas, and ultimately change in the organizational environment. In instances where demographic or categorical distinctions have been drawn—such as in crosstabs by age, gender, positional role at FGCU—all such analyses have been subjected to appropriate statistical evaluations to assure that the distinctions cited are indeed statistically valid.

Almost all questions in this survey offered “Don’t know” and “Does not apply” response alternatives in addition to more specific responses. Unless otherwise indicated response percentages cited in this study were recalculated to remove the impact of “Don’t know” and “Does not apply” responses and only report the responses of those individuals who had a position on the various questions presented in this study.

**Treatment of Qualitative Data**

There was a large amount of written observation shared by survey respondents along with their numeric responses to this survey. These comments were generally frank, carefully articulated, and tended to reflect a balance of sentiments regarding the FGCU employee climate although the large majority offers a critique. We have summarized the various thematic areas of these comments, and have presented a sampling of verbatim statements within the document that are illustrative of the tenor of the comments. These statements help to humanize the report, and bring to life the myriad nuances involved in organizational life.

We are not aware of any conditions present at the time this study was in the field that we believe may have biased the outcome of the survey. The presence of both positive and negative viewpoints is consistent with employee surveys.
SECTION 2: WHAT IS ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE AND CULTURE?

Climate versus Culture: A Tethered Concept

Research in organizational climate and culture has contributed to the understanding of important topics such as leadership, job satisfaction, organizational socialization, work-family-conflict, work place bullying, sexual harassment, racial discrimination, retention and promotion, and job performance to name but a few. Within the literature, there has been much confusion between the two terms and both have been used arbitrarily with individuals using terms like organizational climate and culture nearly interchangeably. Given the nature of this report, we felt it important to outline some of the major conceptual boundaries of both constructs, with a particular focus on how they are complimentary ideas that when explored at the same time may present critical data to guide institutional decision-making.

To say that organizational climate and culture are two distinctive concepts is an argument for a more scholarly venue then this report. Probably the best way to think about these two concepts generally is that organizational culture and climate are highly related organizational ideas that describe how the complex social systems of the campus come together and coalesce to create a unique organizational milieu of people, interactions, politics, policies, beliefs, values, and outcomes. As you will find in the paragraphs that follow, in some ways the concepts are more similar than different.

Campus Climate

We have used the term campus climate for numerous years in higher education and more broadly, organizational climate in the corporate and non-profit worlds. Because it is used so often by so many, it often feels like members of our community know what we mean when we discuss an organization’s climate, but occasionally, someone will stop and ask – climate? What do you mean by that? Are you talking about the weather? We most definitely do not mean the physical temperature on campus, but in some ways we do mean the psychological temperature of feeling as if the campus is “chilly” or hostile to the presence of individuals who are different along any host of identity dimensions.

“Climate” on a college or university campus is a term that is used to discuss how individuals and groups experience membership in the campus community. It’s a general term that quickly summarizes the inclusivity dynamics of the organization and the degree to which various stakeholders feel included or excluded in the environment. Because conversations of climate are inherently concerned with real and perceived realities of different groups, this idea always is nestled in broader socio-historical context of difference defined in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, and a near limitless range of social identities.

Campus climate is about moving beyond the numbers (Hurtado, 2007). The very presence of individuals from different backgrounds results in diversity. Climate, on the other hand, refers to the experience of individuals and groups on a campus—and the quality and extent of the interaction between those various groups and individuals. Diversity and inclusion efforts are not complete unless they also address climate. Stated another way, addressing campus climate is an important and necessary component in any comprehensive plan for diversity. To provide a foundation for a vital community of learning, a primary mission of the academy must be to create a climate that cultivates
diversity and celebrates difference. Because of the inherent complexity of the topic of diversity, it is crucial to examine the multiple dimensions of the campus climate on college and university campuses.

Hurtado and Associates (1999) offers a four-dimensional framework to understand the campus climate that is helpful for considering it in all of its complexities. They argue that the campus climate is best understood as the: (a) Historical Context of Exclusion or Inclusion, (b) Structural or Compositional Dimension, (c) Psychological Dimension, and (d) Behavioral Dimension. Table 2.1 outlines the dimensions of the framework, which is extremely well regarded as a general way of defining the campus climate in higher education.

Table 2.1 Four Dimensions of the Higher Education Campus Climate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Potential Data Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Historical Context of Inclusion or Exclusion | The broader sociological and historical context detailing when diverse groups were included on campus and the relevant moments that define their experience in becoming full members of the institutional community | • Lawsuits  
• Campus protests  
• Policy shifts  
• Changes in legal interpretation of key issues |
| Structural or Compositional Dimension | The absolute number of diverse groups that will in many ways determine the context for how they experience the campus                                                                                     | • Number of minorities  
• Number of women  
• Number within the LGBT Community  
• Percentages of diverse groups  
• Equitable percentages in various disciplinary areas, majors, senior leadership, etc. |
| Psychological Dimension            | The extent to which individuals perceive conflict and discrimination on campus, feel somehow singled out because of their background, or perceive institutional support/commitment related to diversity.          | • Perceptions of belonging  
• Perceptions of alienation  
• Perceptions of conflict |
| Behavioral Dimension               | Reports of interactions or contact experiences between and among different groups, participation (or lack thereof) in campus programs, traditions, and activities, and full engagement in the various systems of the institution. | • Experience with mainstream campus systems  
• Experiences in diverse campus experiences  
• Interactions with different groups |

The influence of an institution’s legacy of inclusion or exclusion, for example, is largely unaddressed in campus climate survey research; such research involves a more in-depth study of norms that may be embedded in campus culture, traditions, policies, and the history of including or excluding different groups. What types of protests have happened on campus? When did the institution first admit women and minorities? What is the history of sexual harassment or high profile incidents of discrimination that inform the campuses’ social adobe? These are the questions that shape the campuses’ relational patterns and set the big-picture reality of an institution’s legacy of inclusion or exclusion.

The structural or compositional dimension refers to the number of diverse groups that are present; for example, the number of women in key positions of leadership or the percentage of African
Americans in the student body or faculty. This climate dimension is incredibly important and, in many ways, influences the last two dimensions: governing how individuals behave and perceive the campus environment. Structural diversity means the actual representation of diverse groups on a campus. In important and foundational ways, the existence of diversity has an impact on climate. A diverse student body, for example, can attract additional students of color, which then results in a “critical mass” of students who can see their impact and value on the campus simply due to their representative numbers. Similarly, the presence of a critical mass of women faculty often helps attract and retain women faculty. While structural diversity in this context is important, it is not the only factor that contributes to creating a healthy or unhealthy climate.

Despite its importance, the singular act of increasing the number of people of color, women, or members of other historically marginalized groups may not create a more positive campus climate for these individuals, as many scholars have noted. What may prove more important is their lived experience, the concepts captured in the psychological and behavioral dimensions of the campus climate.

The last two dimensions—psychological and behavioral dimensions—are generally the focus of most campus climate research and formed the core of our research at Florida Gulf Coast University. The psychological dimension of the campus climate refers to the extent to which individuals (a) perceive conflict and discrimination on campus, (b) feel somehow singled out because of their background, or (c) perceive institutional support/commitment related to diversity. The behavioral dimension of the climate refers to reports of interactions or contact experiences between and among different groups, participation (or lack thereof) in campus programs, traditions and activities, and full engagement in the various systems of the institution.

**Organizational Culture**

**Figure 2.1 Multiple Overlapping Layers of Organizational Culture**

![Image of Organizational Culture Layers](image_url)

*Source: Adapted from Schein (1996).*

A parallel yet distinct concept is that of organizational culture. Edgar Schein (1996) theorizes that organizational cultures have multiple overlapping layers that must be understood and evolved to fit...
the overall goals of the institution (Figure 2.1). At the outermost level, the culture is easy to see, manipulate, and change. Change might be as simple as moving administrative leadership from one building to another, perhaps choosing a particular cultural theme when adorning the walls of a highly trafficked student center, or designing an office suite with glass doors and an open floor plan to encourage interaction and collaboration. This level commonly is referred to as the geospatial level and is most easily changed through first-order simple change strategies.

By comparison, the more resilient aspects of culture exist at deeper levels, embedded in the individual assumptions and beliefs, the mental models that individual members have regarding priorities, mission, diversity, excellence, and an entire host of dynamics. At this level, the culture is similar to what Hurtado and Associates refer to as “the behavioral and psychological dimensions of the campus climate.” The difference is that the ideas explored at the core of a cultural study are generally broader than a campus climate study, which often tends to focus on the unique implications of particular social identities as members of a racial or ethnic group, gender group, and so on.

According to Edgar Schein (1996), cultural analysis is especially valuable when dealing with aspects of organizations that seem irrational, frustrating, and intractable. He writes, “The bottom line for leaders is that if they do not become conscious of the cultures in which they are embedded, those cultures will manage them” (p. 375). It is significant that Schein uses the plural “cultures.” Using open-systems concepts, we know that members of a group culture may also belong to subcultures within an organization. Since organizations have a shared history, there normally will be at least a few values or assumptions common to the system as a whole. Nonetheless, sometimes—as in many orchestra organizations—the subcultures have had different experiences over time, and their group learning has produced very different sets of basic assumptions.

Organization members interpret the behavior and language of others through their own cultural biases. Each member’s (or subsystem’s) set of beliefs, values, and assumptions becomes their unquestioned “reality”; they then perceive behavior inconsistent with their own biases as irrational or even malevolent. The organizational culture model suggests reinterpreting such conflict as a product of different sets of experiences. Instead of looking at conflict as “right” versus “wrong,” this approach suggests that subsystems examine the assumptions underlying behavior, honor the experiences and learning that led to those assumptions, and then investigate whether those assumptions still work well in the present.

**Why Climate & Culture Data Are Important**

As a still new and emerging institution, FGCU has a chance to build an organizational environment that is special in the landscape of public universities. It is for this reason that the FGCU campus climate and culture study is so important. Because culture is so deeply rooted in an organization’s history and collective experience, working to change it requires a major investment of time and resources. Data-driven insights are often helpful. Without such data, it is difficult for insiders to view their “reality” as something they have constructed or to see meaning in things they normally take for granted.

Examining the campus climate and culture is an important part of a regular campus-based assessment, especially as postsecondary institutions enter an era of evidence-based practice, and aim to achieve enhanced levels of accountability and organizational learning, driving to ever-higher levels
Launching a well-designed research effort creates the type of data-driven approach that can lead to new initiatives and enhanced understanding of key issues that university leadership must address toward creating a more inclusive campus environment. If done well, such efforts can position the campus community toward a more sophisticated understanding of various issues affecting faculty, staff, women, minorities, members of the LGBT community, and others. Gathering these data is essential to having a robust conversation that goes beyond anecdotal diversity crises and that will position the campus to be more proactive than in the past.

How FGCU takes the data presented here and engages in a meaningful discussion of change is an example of “double-loop” learning, a term commonly used among organizational theorists (Argyris & Schon, 1974). Double-loop learning occurs when error is detected and corrected through modification of an organization’s underlying norms, policies, and objectives. In contrast to “single-loop” learning—the process of solving problems based on an existing set of assumptions—double-loop learning also involves becoming aware of a group’s underlying assumption set and continually inquiring as to whether it is still useful for the task at hand. These levels of analyses and conversation are essential to moving the institutional agenda forward.
SECTION 3: QUANTITATIVE DATA OVERVIEW

Overall Impressions

Overall, faculty and staff generally had a positive view of their experiences on campus, with no statistically significant differences exhibited between the two groups across three general measures of satisfaction, as presented in Figure 3.1. More specifically, 89% of staff are satisfied in their position, as compared to 85% of faculty; 77% of staff are satisfied with how their careers have progressed at FGCU, as compared to 79% of faculty. Additionally, when asked whether they would accept their current positions all over again, if given the choice, 90% of staff and 84% of faculty said that they would. A significant difference was observed between staff and faculty in terms of their overall satisfaction and their desire to accept their current positions again if given the opportunity. The difference in satisfaction regarding general career progression was not statistically significant.

Figure 3.1 Satisfaction at FGCU

Staff and faculty were asked to state what “best described their current thinking about their future at FGCU.” Their responses were similarly positive; no significant differences existed between faculty and staff (Table 3.1). Both faculty and staff ranked liking their job as the best description of why they choose to continue their employment on campus. The second-highest ranked description for faculty was that they felt the work they do is important. The second-highest ranked description for staff was that “it’s a job.” The third-highest ranked description for faculty was that “it’s a job” and for staff was that it provides “health benefits.” Taken collectively, these findings support the idea that faculty and staff generally like their jobs at FGCU and are generally satisfied with their experiences on campus at the big-picture level.
Table 3.1 Most frequently cited description of an individual’s future at FGCU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Staff Cited</th>
<th>Faculty Cited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It's a job.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have family ties in this area.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The health or other benefits keep me here.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like my job.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel the work I do is important.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel the work FGCU does is important.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This job gives me opportunities to grow that I would have a hard time finding elsewhere.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be hard finding comparable compensation elsewhere.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is possible for me to stay at FGCU and advance my career.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General Work Culture

As individuals become more experienced in a particular environment, they engage in a kind of collective learning that creates the set of shared assumptions and beliefs we call culture. In many ways culture is an active, living phenomenon through which people jointly create and recreate the worlds in which they live. Table 3.2 presents data from 17 questions designed to explore the general culture of FGCU.

Table 3.2 Percentage of staff and faculty respondents in agreement across various dimensions of faculty culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FGCU values creativity.</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGCU values innovative ideas.</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGCU promotes a culture where I am valued as an employee.</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGCU culture improves the quality of my work.</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGCU continually attempts to find better ways to do things.</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGCU encourages lively debate on key decisions from multiple voices.</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGCU trusts me to do my job.</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive appropriate supervision from my direct supervisor to do my job.</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In general, morale is high at FGCU.</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My morale is high working at FGCU.</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's okay to voice your opinion freely at FGCU.</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGCU’s treatment of its employees sets an example for other organizations.</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGCU places an appropriate amount of emphasis on consensus building.</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior management provides an appropriate level of direction.</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All employees are valued equally, regardless of position and responsibilities.</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGCU treats its employees with respect.</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGCU values long-term service to the University.</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These questions explored concepts related to the dynamic and learning-centered nature of the organization, perceptions of morale, the collaborative nature of decision-making, and other concepts.

---

2 There was a tie between the open-ended response, other, and “this job gives me an opportunity for growth that I would have a hard time finding elsewhere.”
related to institutional culture. In general, both faculty and staff found aspects of the culture to be both positive and negative, although staff consistently scored each question more positively than their faculty counterparts. To this end, independent sample t-tests revealed that nearly all of these differences were statistically significant (p=.001).

Some interesting findings include the following:

- 81% of staff and 70% of faculty felt that FGCU values creativity. Similarly, 79% of staff felt that the University valued innovative ideas. By comparison, only 65% of faculty felt that FGCU valued innovative ideas;

- Both staff and faculty felt that they were trusted to do their job (93% and 77%) and that they received appropriate supervision (80% and 77%).

- 69% of staff felt that FGCU promotes a culture where they are valued versus only 50% of faculty. Similarly, 63% of staff felt that the culture improved the quality of their work versus only 39% of faculty;

- Neither faculty nor staff felt that morale was high on campus, with only 35% and 53% agreeing with these statements, respectively. Surprisingly, both groups held higher perceptions of their own personal morale, 71% (staff) and 55% (faculty), although the score for faculty was not high at all;

- Faculty respondents were critical of the University’s efforts to continually improve and encourage lively debate about key decisions. Only 32% and 36% of faculty agreed with these statements, respectively. Similarly, only 49% of staff felt that they were proactively engaged in key decisions, implying that both groups at times felt shut out of important conversations. This point is further amplified by data illustrating that only 49% of staff and 38% of faculty felt that the culture supported their voicing their opinions freely;

- Only 45% of staff and 30% of faculty felt that senior management provided sufficient direction. Similarly, only 58% of staff and 36% of faculty felt that enough emphasis was placed on consensus building; and

- Faculty (20%) and staff (30%) were similarly aligned in their criticism that FGCU was not a leader for other organizations in terms of its treatment of employees.

In further analyses of the bivariate relationships between morale and satisfaction, we uncovered several findings that are notable, if not unsurprising. First, the more that individuals felt a personally high sense of morale, the more likely they were to feel that morale was high on campus (r=.830, p=.001). Additionally, the more satisfied that individual's are in their careers on campus, the more likely they are to have a positive sense of morale both personally (r=.632, p=.001) and in terms of their general perceptions of morale at FGCU (r=.476, p=.001).
Mission and Values

Almost every organization has a tendency to drift away from its mission once it enters the mature stage of its development. When drift occurs, it may damage the reputation of the institution among stakeholders, the public, and threaten the focus and vibrancy of the institution’s ability to deliver on the promise of its mission and core values. For this reason, leadership desired to explore the degree to which staff and faculty perceived FGCU as fulfilling its multifaceted institutional mission. Several questions were developed directly out of the University’s mission statement to probe employee perceptions of “mission-role” drift. Differences between faculty and staff were highly significant (p=.001).

Figure 3.2 Faculty and Staff Perceptions of University Mission and Values Fulfillment

Figure 3.2 highlights dimensions of the FGCU mission across seven different questions that focus on issues relative to the University’s teaching, learning, research, and service mission. In general, staff and faculty agreed that the institution activates its multidimensional mission in a number of different ways. Consistent with other questions in this survey, staff responded more positively regarding their perceptions of mission fulfillment than their faculty counterparts; nevertheless, there was a large degree of agreement that FGCU was generally living up to its lofty mission statement.
Some highlights include the following:

- Similar findings exist across the dimensions of lifelong learning, civic responsibility, public service, community partnerships, and environmental sustainability, with both staff and faculty agreeing that the institution is advancing these aspects of its mission and values;

- Although both faculty and staff stated that they generally believe FGCU is fulfilling its mission, staff were significantly more supportive than their faculty counterparts;

- Scores were particularly high along the dimensions of civic responsibility (88% of faculty and 96% of staff) and community partnerships (85% of faculty and 94% of staff); and

- Surprisingly, only 62% of faculty agree that FGCU continually pursues academic excellence, as compared to 93% of staff. Similarly, only 52% of faculty stated that FGCU keeps the advancement of knowledge and the pursuit of truth at the heart of the University’s purpose.

**Organizational Communication**

Most experts on organizations, management, and leadership assert that effective communications is the foundation for effectiveness in any type of organization. They assert that there cannot be too much communication. Organizational communication is defined as the informal and formal communications that move information up, down, and across the institution. In Figure 3.3, we present FGCU respondent data across 7 questions designed to gauge perceptions of institutional communication at FGCU.

Similar to the general dimensions of consensus building, openness to faculty and staff’s speaking their mind, and receiving clear direction from senior leadership, faculty and staff were not totally positive regarding the institution’s culture as it relates to communication.

Some highlights include the following:

- Generally, only 44% of faculty and 59% of staff characterize the overall quality of internal communication at FGCU positively;

- Only 37% of faculty and 58% of staff indicated that administrative procedures are well understood by employees. Only 45% of faculty and 62% of staff stated that University administration adequately discloses information about key university issues to its employees;

- 77% of faculty and 67% of staff indicated that they depend more on the institutional grapevine than formal communications to keep up with what is going on within the institution; and

- Similar to earlier findings, both faculty (84%) and staff (85%) stated that communication with their supervisor or department chair is good. They also stated that their immediate
supervisor or department chair effectively communicates priorities for their area (76% of faculty and 79% of staff).

Figure 3.3 Perceptions of Institutional Communication at FGCU

In our continuing exploration of the various dimensions of communication and morale and satisfaction, several statistically significant relationships emerged for both faculty and staff. Notably, Pearson’s product moment correlations revealed that the more individuals felt included in the process of decision-making, the more likely they were to feel satisfied overall ($r=.341$, $p=.001$) and a higher sense of morale both personally ($r=.693$, $p=.001$) and generally ($r=.603$, $p=.001$). Also, the more the more that individuals feel that they can voice their perspectives freely, the greater levels of satisfaction ($r=.409$, $p=.001$) and both personal ($r=.729$, $p=.001$) and overall perceptions of morale. ($r=.785$, $p=.001$).

This same relationship also existed between the need for senior leadership to communicate information about key issues and satisfaction and morale. The more that senior leadership provides direction and engages the campus community, the more satisfied employees are ($r=.366$, $p=.001$),
the higher their personal sense of morale (r=.592, p=.001), and their general sense of morale on campus (r=.664, p=.001).

**Work and Personal Life Balance**

Work-life conflict occurs when work and family demands are mutually incompatible so that meeting demands in one domain makes it difficult to meet demands in the other. This definition implies a multi-directional relationship where work can affect family and family can affect work. When work and family are in conflict, happiness and success are often foregone in both.

Work-life conflict can be considered to have two major components: the practical aspects associated with time crunches and scheduling conflicts (i.e., an employee cannot be in two different places at the same time) and the perceptual aspect of feeling overwhelmed, overloaded, or stressed by the pressures of multiple roles. This research included six questions designed to explore issues of work-life conflict.

Some highlights of our comparison of faculty and staff highlighted in Figure 3.4 include the following:

- 84% of staff and only 66% of faculty stated that they are satisfied with their personal and professional life balance;
- 89% of faculty and 92% of staff indicated that they feel FGCU is supportive when they need family leave;
- 54% of faculty are reluctant to take leave for fear that it will affect their careers, as compared to only 35% of staff;\(^3\)
- 47% of faculty and 34% of staff stated that they feel they have to miss out on important things in their personal life because of professional responsibilities;
- 43% of faculty and 41% of staff indicated that they feel employees without children are burdened with more work responsibilities than their colleagues with children;
- 40% of faculty and 35% of staff stated that they feel employees with children are considered to be less committed to their careers than those without children; and
- 72% of faculty and 88% of staff indicated that they were satisfied with their health benefits. Similarly, 81% of faculty and 89% of staff indicated that they were satisfied with their access to tuition reimbursement.

\(^3\) Pearson’s correlation analyses of the bivariate relationship between perceptions of institutional support when one takes leave and the fear that taking leave will have a negative impact on one’s career were significantly correlated with one another in the inverse. As individuals are more likely to be fearful of hurting their career by taking leave, they are less likely to feel that the institution supports them when they need family leave (r--.133, p=.0001).
Similar to the bivariate relationships discussed in terms of communications and satisfaction and morale, the better that individuals feel about their work life balance, the more likely they are to feel satisfied and have a high level of morale. More specifically, the more that individuals feel supported in taking leave when they need to, the more satisfied they are ($r=.296$, $p=.001$), and the greater their personal ($r=.377$, $p=.001$) and campus wide perceptions of morale ($r=.322$, $p=.001$).
Perceptions of the Campus Climate

Campus climate is a measure—real or perceived—of the campus environment as it relates to interpersonal, academic, and professional interactions. In a healthy climate, individuals and groups generally feel welcomed, respected, and valued. A healthy climate is grounded in respect for others, nurtured by dialogue between those of differing perspectives, and evidenced by a pattern of civil interactions among community members. Not all aspects of a healthy climate necessarily feel positive—indeed, uncomfortable or challenging situations can lead to increased awareness, understanding, and appreciation. Tension, while not always positive, can be healthy when handled appropriately. Conversely, in an unhealthy environment, individuals or groups often feel isolated, marginalized, and even unsafe.

This study included a battery of campus climate items. They included, but were not limited to, general measures of the climate, specific measures of racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, and other concepts of relevance to any discussion of inclusion or exclusion in a complex institutional environment. The campus climate is experienced through the lens of one’s identity. As a result, this study included a range of different social identities, allowing us to potentially analyze the various dimensions of the campus climate from a host of different perspectives, including positional role on campus, gender, race and ethnicity, and sexuality. Unfortunately, the total number of respondents by race and ethnicity and sexuality limited the types of analyses that could be performed between unique sub-groups. This limitation severely hampers our ability to explore different sub-groups in the same way that we can explore positional status and gender.

Gendered Analyses of the Campus Climate

As we analyzed the similarities and difference between how men and women experienced the FGCU environment, we found some statistically significant relationships between gender and the various gender discrimination variables included in this study. Generally, women reported statistically significant differences from their male counterparts when they were specifically probed about the implications of gender and their ability to pursue opportunity in terms of direct issues of gender discrimination.

Before presenting some of these differences, we must highlight the level of gender discrimination and challenges that women experienced across a number of campus climate variables. More specifically, only 18% of women generally felt uncomfortable on campus; 39% characterized FGCU as a sexist environment; 22% said that they had been discriminated against on campus at some point during their careers at FGCU; and 19% indicated that they had been denied opportunities because of their gender. While these numbers are not large, the goal is for FGCU to be characterized by no perceptions of gender discrimination or loss of opportunity. What these numbers look like over time will be important for understanding the gendered experience at FGCU.

Some highlights of our comparison between men and women included the following:

- Overall, 73% of women felt that the general campus climate was improving more than their male counterparts (61%). They also exhibited no differences in their general comfort on campus, when compared to their male counterparts;
• Women were more likely to characterize FGCU as a sexist environment (39%) than their male counterparts;

• Women (56%) also felt that FGCU was a more classist environment in terms of positional role than their male counterparts (38%);

• Not surprisingly, women have feared for their safety on campus as a result of their gender more than their male counterparts. Women were also more likely to have avoided certain parts of campus because of their gender, more than their male counterparts. We must note that the percentage of women “fearing for their safety on campus” and “avoiding parts of the campus environment” was 13% and 14%, respectively, with the majority of women having rarely experienced this feeling or avoided parts of campus;

• Women were more likely to report that others assumed that they could not do their work because of their gender;

• No statically significant differences existed between men and women in terms of hate crimes or sexual assault because of gender. Only five women and three men indicated that they had experienced hate crimes because of their gender. Similarly, these same individuals also indicated that they had experienced a gender-based physical assault on campus; and

• Women were more likely than men to report that they have felt discriminated against because of their gender and that they had been denied opportunities because of their gender.

**Minority Analyses of Campus Climate**

Only a moderate number of ethnic and racial minorities were available for this study; as a result, we did not analyze the data by racial and ethnic group, as we would have normally preferred to do. Nevertheless, exploratory analyses of the data suggested that aggregate analyses of African Americans/Blacks, Native Americans, Latinos/Hispanics, Mixed Race, Asian/Asian American/Pacific Islanders, and other minority respondents would benefit our ability to help leadership to understand the FGCU campus climate and culture. What follows here are analyses of these groups, reported in the aggregate as “minority respondents” (n=133), as compared to majority or “white” respondents.

As we analyzed the similarities and difference between minorities and members of the majority population, we uncovered several statistically significant relationships between racial and ethnic identity and the various racial discrimination variables included in this study. The trend of these findings is very similar to what we found in our data on women. Generally, minorities reported a statistically significant difference from their majority counterparts when they were specifically probed about the implications of race and their ability to pursue opportunities in terms of direct issues of racial discrimination.
Again, we must contextualize the magnitude of the challenge members of the minority community expressed about their experiences at FGCU before delving more deeply into the various areas of difference. Specifically, 22% of minorities generally felt uncomfortable on campus; 35% characterized FGCU as a racist environment; 39% said that they had been discriminated against on campus at some point during their careers at FGCU; and 28% indicated that they had been denied opportunities because of their race or ethnicity. While these numbers are not large, the goal is for FGCU to be characterized by no perceptions of racial discrimination or loss of opportunity.

Some highlights of our data included the following:

- No statistically significant differences exist between minorities and whites in terms of their overall impressions of the campus environment. More specifically, no statistically significant differences exist along measures of general satisfaction, satisfaction in terms of career progression, and whether or not one would again accept their position on campus if given the opportunity;

- Minorities reported no differences from their majority counterparts in terms of their perceptions of satisfaction on campus, general perceptions of the campus environment as hostile or friendly, and whether the environment was welcoming. They also reported no differences in general comfort on campus;

- Minorities were more likely to feel that the campus climate was generally improving than did their majority counterparts;

- Minorities were more likely to view FGCU as a classist environment in terms of both economic status and positional role on campus than their white counterparts;

- Minorities were more likely to view FGCU as a racist environment than their white counterparts;

- Minorities were more likely to support a colleague who has a different racial identity than their own. They were also more likely to have mentored students who are different than themselves;

- Minorities were more likely to have been doubted by an FGCU colleague who assumed that they could not do their work as a result of their racial or ethnic identity (37%) than their white peers;

- Minorities were more likely to have feared for their physical safety on campus because of their racial and ethnic background than their white counterparts;

- Minorities were more likely to have been doubted by a colleague who assumed that they could not do something because of their racial or ethnic background;

- Minorities were more likely to have reported being the victim of a hate crime because of their racial or ethnic background, although the absolute number of individuals reporting this experience was 10 minorities, or 7% of minority respondents; and
• Minorities were more likely to have been discriminated against because of their racial and ethnic background and more likely to feel as if they have been denied opportunities because of their racial and ethnic background;

_Sexual Orientation Analyses of Campus Climate_

Even though the number of LGBTQ respondents was small in this study (n=47), our analyses revealed a set of findings that in some ways paralleled the experiences of minorities and women reported earlier in this section. Moreover, members of the LGBTQ community had a similar experience to that of heterosexuals in terms of their general perceptions of the campus environment and their experience on campus. No statistically significant differences existed between members of the LGBTQ community and the heterosexual community in terms of satisfaction, morale, and a battery of other items. Nevertheless, this group, similar to women and minorities, reported a more negative experience than their majority peers, when probed in ways that specifically tapped into their identity as members of the LGBTQ community.

Although statistically significant differences existed between members of the LGBTQ community and the heterosexual community, the level of LGBTQ members reporting a negative experience was relatively low. To this end, 16% of LGBTQ respondents reported having been denied opportunities to advance in their job based upon their sexual orientation; and 29% reported having experienced discrimination at work because of their sexual orientation. While these numbers are relatively low, they illustrate a negative experience that the campus community should have a zero tolerance for overall.

Our analyses revealed the following:

• 42% of the LGBTQ community reported that the general campus climate was improving versus 70% of the heterosexual community. This was a notable difference between members of the LGBTQ community and racial/ethnic minorities and women, who both felt that the environment was improving when women are compared to men and racial/ethnic minorities are compared to whites;

• 66% of the LGBTQ community found FGCU to be a welcoming environment versus 87% of the heterosexual community;

• 66% of the LGBTQ community characterized the FGCU environment as homophobic versus only 18% of the heterosexual community;

• 48% of the LGBTQ community responded that they have avoided disclosing their sexual orientation at FGCU to avoid potentially being discriminated against in their jobs;

• No statistically significant differences existed between members of the LGBTQ community and heterosexuals in terms of having experienced a hate crime. Only 2 members of the LGBTQ community reported having experienced a hate crime at FGCU; and
Members of the LGBTQ community (29%) experienced discrimination because of their sexuality at a greater level than their heterosexual colleagues (2%). Further, they reported having been denied opportunities (16%) because of their sexuality at a greater degree than their majority counterparts (3%).

**Performance Evaluation & Perceptions of Compensation**

Figure 3.5 Performance evaluation and perceptions of compensation

No meaningful differences existed between faculty and staff with respect to their ability to have discussions about their job role performance (Figure 3.5). Only 28% of staff and faculty 33% of faculty fear having conversations regarding their performance evaluations with their supervisors, suggesting that the clear majority were not inhibited in these conversations. This point is illustrated by data illustrating that 83% of staff and 84% of faculty were comfortable asking questions in this arena, echoing points made previously regarding the good communication channels that exist between department chairs/supervisors and faculty/staff.

Salary compression, in its simplest form, may be defined as experienced employees having earnings that (relative to new hires) do not reflect their years of service. Points regarding salary compression are echoed in the open-ended data discussed in the next section of this report and are consistent with challenges faced at many institutions, particularly in these difficult economic times. Faculty and staff were united in their perception that they were not being compensated at levels commensurate with peers of a similar ability that worked at other institutions. To this point, only 47% of staff and 35% of faculty felt that they were being compensated at the same level as their peers. Employees are generally more satisfied when compensation is congruent with their individual needs, a point that we explored.

In further analyses of the bivariate relationships between satisfaction and these same measures, we generally found that the more satisfied individuals were on campus, the more likely they were to talk
with their supervisors and feel that they were compensated at a level commiserate to that of their peers. More specifically, the more satisfied respondents were, the less likely they were to fear discussing issues regarding performance evaluation ($r = -0.292$, $p = 0.001$). In a related fashion, the more satisfied individuals were with their overall experience at FGCU, the more likely they were to feel comfortable having conversations about their performance evaluations ($r = -0.298$, $p = 0.001$).

An even stronger bivariate relationship existed between an individual’s willingness to accept his or her job again at FGCU and the perception that they were being compensated at a level commiserate to their peers at other institutions ($r = 0.325$, $p = 0.001$). The relationship between compensation and morale was also reflected in our data. The more faculty and staff felt that their compensation was similar to that of their peers at other institutions, the greater their personal morale ($r = 0.429$, $p = 0.001$) and their perceptions of institutional morale ($r = 0.487$, $p = 0.001$). Unsurprisingly, these relationships existed for both faculty and staff.
SECTION 4: QUALITATIVE DATA OVERVIEW

Dimensions of the Qualitative Data

The climate survey included six open-ended questions that invited participants to elaborate on their responses to each section of questions. More specifically, the open-ended questions asked respondents to offer their thoughts in the following areas: (a) overall satisfaction at FGCU, (b) campus environment, (c) campus work culture, overall impressions about climate and/or recommendations for improvement, unit/departmental issues, and institutional commitment to diversity. Participants were candid in their responses and shed a good deal of light both on FGCU’s successes in fostering a healthy campus climate and where there are opportunities for growth. As suggested by Table 4.1, a total of 1,104 qualitative statements were found across the various dimensions of the survey.

Table 4.1 Open-Ended Climate Survey Response Frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Major Concepts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Satisfaction</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>• A large number of people (n=88) said they were satisfied or mostly satisfied with their positions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• While people take pride in “building” a young university, they are concerned about the direction that the institution is taking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Environment</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>• Need for more equal distribution of benefits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Parts of the campus seem unsafe at night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Work Culture</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>• A number of people reported problems with leave time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• There are senior management issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Communication could be improved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Several people feel that senior leadership is not visible enough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Faculty feel micromanaged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Several people mentioned fear of reprisal in reporting abuses or raising objections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate in Unit/Department</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>• Salary inequalities, both within FGCU and among other institutions, are a major concern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• There is a lack of resources/uneven distribution among departments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Commitment to Diversity</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>• Nearly half the respondents suggested that institutional attempts to foster diversity would result in reverse racism or diminished quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation was widely reported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Christians feel that they are also discriminated against.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Thoughts</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>• The campus still needs to heal from recent scandals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Some employees are afraid to utilize Human Resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Need for better opportunities/respect for OPS and adjuncts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the data analysis process, several themes emerged as supra-concepts across categories. These themes give context to the individual concepts discussed below and include the following:
• As a young institution, FGCU simultaneously experiences the enormous sense of potential that comes from the lack of a historically entrenched, reified culture and the “growing pains” that result from the process of forming an institutional identity.

• Recent highly publicized scandals have eroded morale.

• There is a pervasive desire for strong leadership that includes open communications, transparency, and a sense of fairness.

• FGCU’s significant growth over the past several years has created challenges for faculty and staff.

• There is a lack of consensus among respondents over the need to engage in diversity efforts.

Caveat About the Qualitative Data

It is important to note that a smaller percentage of people responded to the open-ended questions than actually completed the survey. Usually in a survey such as this, people who take the time to elaborate in an open-ended format do so because they feel strongly about something and, more often than not, those feelings are negative. As such, the views presented in this section do not necessarily represent the majority, but they do represent a very passionate, and meaningful subsection of FGCU’s population.

In addition, any sort of qualitative analysis is based on the researcher’s own subjective interpretation. In the spirit of full disclosure, themes that were highlighted in this section were selected based on the frequency that FGCU employees raised them. Responses included in this report, are always presented with any potentially identifying or libelous information removed.

What follows is a detailed narrative that brings these concepts to life, largely using the participants’ own words. In some cases, minor editorial changes were made to enhance readability. As you read these data, you will find several qualitative concepts that echo the quantitative themes identified in Section 3 in terms of a high level of overall satisfaction on campus; the need for more engagement and transparency; the persistent faculty critique of the academic enterprise; and a desire for FGCU to live up to its lofty potential.

Overall Satisfaction at FGCU (n=290)

Of the nearly 300 people who responded to this question, 88 said that they were satisfied or mostly satisfied with their positions at FGCU. Many of those said that despite their overall satisfaction, they were concerned about some aspect of the institution. Common concerns included themes already discussed above—salary, resources, opportunities for advancement. An additional concern that was apparent in this section was that of the university’s growth and direction.
I like Being at A Young Institution

It is clear that many at FGCU are excited by the prospect of being part of a young institution. As one person remarked, “I am very proud of the work I do and how my contribution has helped FGCU grow. I have a very maternal/paternal feeling about FGCU.” This feeling of helping to build an institution seems to foster a sense of responsibility and self-sacrifice: “I enjoy working here. There is a lot of pressure because of a lack of resources (both human and fiscal). But at the same time, it’s very rewarding to be a part of such a fast-growing institution. I have the ability to have a positive impact on the future growth on this campus.”

While this willingness to do more with less in order to help foster the university is evidenced throughout the survey, it is equally evident that many at FGCU are heavily invested in the promise of something innovative and new. Several people expressed concern over the direction that the university is taking and whether it has strayed from its original mission:

• “FGCU is still growing very rapidly and will continue to do so for some time. In some ways, our original goals and mission are no longer appropriate for a school of our size (small class size for instance). Yet, it is not clear what we are growing into and how we can best use our current and future strengths to our best advantage. As you look over the data from this survey, please consider clearly communicating what we are growing into, and how we as employees and faculty can best contribute to these goals.”

• “I am satisfied. I am just concerned about the bureaucratic culture that is emerging at FGCU. In addition, I am concerned that FGCU is leaving its strengths in education in favor of scholarship.”

Campus Environment (n=120)

The Need for A More Equitable Distribution of Benefits

Responses to this question were so varied that it is difficult to point to dominant themes. One issue that was raised repeatedly was the need for a more equitable distribution of benefits. The issue of domestic partner benefits will be discussed more fully below under “sexual orientation,” but it is important to note that this is a benefit that is important to heterosexual domestic partners as well.

In addition, while much of the discussion of benefits focused on insurance and tuition waivers, a number of people spoke about how expanded access to other benefits, such as access to the pool and fitness facilities for OSP and adjuncts would help improve morale.

• “I believe there are a lot of times that certain actions on campus discriminate based on job title, such as OPS. They are not allowed many extras as other employees are. I understand that some OPS include younger college students and it would not make sense to allow some of the freebies or extras to be given. But there are numerous jobs where an OPS employee will put in many hours, sometimes even more than those of Salary employees that are able to take advantage of going to the Gym or Pool for free.”
Safety Issues for Women

Several women reported feeling unsafe in parts of campus, including the faculty parking lot, at night. This point echoes quantitative data, which also indicated that some concerned exists around these issues. Some statements to this effect include:

- “Many areas on campus are very dark and potentially dangerous to walk around at night. One of the main parking lots for faculty appears quite dangerous to walk to at night after I teach.”
- “There are not NEARLY enough blue light emergency boxes on campus. There are supposed to be so many of these that a student could run to one in a matter of about 30 seconds if she found herself in a situation where she was in trouble and needed emergency assistance. I have avoided campus events and courses at night specifically due to safety concerns.”

Campus Work Culture (n=166)

A Reluctance to Use Leave Time

A surprising trend that emerged in this section was a reluctance to use leave time. While employees everywhere often complain that they do not receive enough leave time, a number of FGCU employees did not complain about the amount of leave time that the university gives them but rather their ability to utilize it. This point echoed quantitative findings indicating perspective of faculty (54%) and staff (35%) who felt that taking leave would hurt their careers.

The reason for this reluctance seems to vary depending upon job classification. For support personnel, there seems to be an issue in some units of subtle or direct pressure not to take time from the office:

- “While I’ve been able to utilize my family leave as requested, I’ve had more than one instance where I was made to uncomfortable for doing so. I’ve experienced a general attitude that my supervisor is doing me a favor by ‘letting’ me use my leave. I’ve also heard my supervisor making negative comments when my colleagues are using their leave time.”
- “I am among a small number of people within our part of the FGCU organization required to work on most holidays and during emergencies. We get comp days in lieu thereof, but sometimes I get feeling management would be happier if we just worked the holidays and dispensed with compensatory leave.”

For faculty and professional staff, there seems to be more autonomy in determining when to take time off, but heavy workloads require them to routinely spend evenings and weekends working in order to keep up—time for which they do not receive compensation:

- “I work 50-60 hours each week as a faculty member. I have three different preparations every semester and my class sizes have been increasing every year. If a master’s class is small,
less that around 13 students, it will be cancelled, but large classes (>30) are rarely split in
two. Because of increasing class size, I have watered down my classes with fewer
assignments to grade and the quality of education has suffered.”

Unit & Departmental Perspectives (n=140)

The people who responded to this question were generally satisfied with the climates within their
departments, although a few pointed to inadequate supervision, and four of the 140 respondents
reported favoritism.

Salary Compression and Inequality

Salary inequality was the most widely identified problem. Many respondents focused on issues of
salary compression and inversion, where long-time employees are paid on a lower scale than new
hires. Others mentioned disparities among colleges/departments, while others referred to overall
lower salaries at FGCU compared to other institutions both regionally and nationally. The effects on
morale are apparent in the following quotes:

• “Comparability of resources and compensation is a big issue on our campus, especially
  in some areas where new untested faculty are hired at much higher salaries than more
  senior/experienced faculty. The inversion and compression is tremendous. Plus, it isn’t
  okay to be at the same level as a new faculty member if you’ve been here for 10 years.
  Interesting, the President and Provost took big salary increases as new folks to come
  here, but they haven’t come forth with recognition for the folks who have been here
  and built this place. Just more students and more work. . . . ”

• “How in the hell does a comparable position have such disparity when we are all equal
  in education and experience? To pay someone $30+ thousand less than a comparable
  counterpart in another college is defeating to my integrity and morale. I can barely
  meet economic responsibilities on a week-to-week basis, and then I find out in the
  compression/inversion study that those in comparable positions are paid $20 to $30
  thousand less for the same work is WRONG. If I could sell my house and move on, I
  WOULD!”

Next to lack of salary, lack of or inequitable distribution of resources was the most common
concern at the departmental/unit level. Several people expressed frustration with outdated
equipment, lack of adequate space, or even basic supplies such as toner and pens. Many respondents
reported spending significant time and money to overcome these obstacles:

• “I tried to borrow a laptop to go to a conference, and my whole unit does not have
  ONE laptop to lend out to faculty. I even went to the Dean to see if I could get one,
  and she told me they have no computers to lend people. I got a used computer when I
  was hired. After one year, I asked for an upgrade and got another newer but still used
  computer. As I do all of my teaching either in the hybrid or online format, I should
  have the latest equipment. Also, I am unable to get funding to buy software to deliver
online lessons. I purchased Camstasia to do vodcasts for my lectures, and it cost me $299. There should be more funding for technology in our department and unit.”

- “In the humanities, we don’t need labs and grants as much as we need library resources for scholarship, teaching, and research. FGCU’s library funding is very poor in the humanities fields. We claim to be a digital campus; unfortunately, many of the resources humanists rely on for teaching and research are now digital resources that we don’t subscribe to, because the good ones cost real money. We have quite a large list of electronic titles and databases, but not the main ones that everyone needs. Our book budget for the visual arts last year—art history and studio—was something like $2,500, and that included digital resources. So, effectively, we can’t afford much of anything. Humanities faculty are locked out of doing high-quality research, or efficient research, because we don’t have access to a real research library. The only way I can get what I need is by interlibrary loan, but many things cannot be loaned at all and databases, of course, cannot be accessed on ILL.”

Campus Climate (n=270)

One theme—apparent here and throughout the open-ended questions—is the need to continue healing as a campus from the recent lawsuits that have plagued FGCU. The following quotes, taken from the open-ended responses, show that campus climate and morale have suffered in the wake of these incidents. Feelings range from anger at the media and employees who lodged complaints to mistrust over the way things were handled:

- “We have had too many scandals and lawsuits some of which could have been prevented. I was hoping that with new leadership (in several positions), we would see some positive changes to address critical shortages in personnel and resources, but this has not happened. I see little hope that the next few years will be any different.”

- “I worry about the reputation that FGCU has in the community due to recent pending lawsuits and settlements. It somehow gives the appearance or sends the message that we are discriminators, which I know is not true.”

- “It would be nice if the local newspapers and media would focus on the good things that are happening at the University, rather than only ever reporting when something goes wrong or when there is a problem. Being sometimes the only ‘news’ in town, members of the community only know about the ‘bad’ things at FGCU. As a member of the staff, it is difficult to sometimes face members of the community and state that you work at FGCU for fear that they will think you are a part of the latest ‘scandal’ that has been on the front page of the paper. I don’t want to be embarrassed to work at FGCU. I am proud of it, it just seems that more can be done to keep the bad out (or fix the bad so they won’t have anything to report on) and replace with the good when it comes to the media. I believe it will boost morale and also the public image of the University.”

Criticism of Human Resources
Another theme that was prevalent in the open-ended questions was a substantive critique leveled at the Office of Human Resources. Substantive or not, this theme is critical given the important role that Human Resource personnel play on campus.

- “There really is no one on this campus you can go to if you have an issue with your supervisor. Can’t go their boss because that’s going over their head and can’t go to HR because they will run to your boss with the information . . . so we suffer in silence.”

- “I went to HR on several occasions and asked to keep the matter confidential. Before I could return to the office, my supervisor had knowledge of my visit. The HR Director telephoned not only my supervisor but also the Administrative Assistant. I had no one to turn to after getting slapped in the face by the HR Director, and I decided to kept my mouth shut and pray.”

Disenfranchisement Among OPS and Adjunct Employees

A final theme that was prevalent throughout the open-ended questions was a sense of disenfranchisement among OPS and adjunct employees. Some people reported feeling less respect and inclusion than faculty and full-time staff. Others had spent long periods of time without an opportunity for advancement. There is an impression that FGCU holds people in these positions indefinitely to save money:

- “I feel FGCU needs a better policy regarding OPS staff. There should be a time limit, and after such time, the employee should be made permanent. I’m not sure if it is the case, but it feels as if the University is merely trying to save money by keeping people OPS for extraordinarily long periods of time. I am doing the same work but without benefits or holiday pay. That hurts me and my family financially.”

- “I feel that our part time OPS faculty and staff should be supported better to feel like they are part of the University family. I first started in OPS and never received notifications on any events, etc. I struggled to fit in.”

- “I work like a full time faculty member, but get treated like a second class citizen because I am adjunct. I put in enormous hours and give my students my all and yet my birthday is not included in the monthly birthday calendars. I am cut off from email at the end of every semester even if students are trying to reach me for letters of recommendation. On the other hand, I love my fellow faculty members and I love the staff at FGCU that I work with. They are smart, fun and very helpful. I think the way qualified adjuncts like me are treated is an embarrassment to higher education.”

Institutional Diversity (n=119)

The responses to the diversity section of this survey were among the most thought provoking. Interestingly, a relatively small number reported experiences of prejudice or discrimination based on race or gender. By comparison, a larger number of people expressed concern over discrimination against people based on their sexual orientation and their religious beliefs.
Sexual Orientation

All though it is clear from efforts like the “Safe Zone” program that FGCU is working to create a welcoming environment for its LGBT community, there is widespread disappointment regarding the lack of domestic partnership benefits. Interestingly, many of the people who raised this issue identified as heterosexual, but believed that this is an area where FGCU has fallen short. A number of people also expressed concern that this could affect the university’s ability to recruit and retain faculty. In addition, those who complained acknowledged the fact that policies tied to domestic partner benefits were dictated by Florida state law, but felt that it was the responsibility act as a leader in this area, either by working to reshape the legislation or to raise private money to cover the costs. As one employee articulately states:

• “As to my dissatisfaction with benefits and tuition reimbursement: the benefits themselves have been adequate to my health needs and I don't need to use the tuition reimbursement at this point in my career. However, the exclusion of domestic partner benefits and the failure of the tuition voucher system to accommodate my partner (who wants to take classes but does not enjoy the same discount that my married colleagues receive) are deeply discouraging and demoralizing lapses. It's not enough to claim that state law won't allow use of public funds to support these sorts of benefits. If the institution really believes what it claims to value about diversity, it will do the difficult work of making this happen by finding the private money to support it (the foundation might, for instance, stop insisting it can't do this and instead ask someone or some group to help support this type of thing). These sorts of benefits are not just about the real human lives that suffer inequitably. It's also about the signals we send to our students and the community. We value diversity, we say, but when we have the opportunity to be leaders (to get out of front of our community and lead the way on one of the key human and civil rights issue of our time), we remain silent as an institution and hide behind actuarial projections and fundraising fears. What kind of message do we send to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students about how valued they are when their non-heterosexual professors are treated as inferior to straight faculty? The fact that this is not a more urgent concern of an administration so committed to diversity is appalling.”

Misguided Perceptions Of Diversity Initiatives

Of the 118 people who answered our diversity themed open-ended question, nearly half (54) resisted or misunderstood the process of advancing diversity initiatives in higher education. The majority of these expressed concerns about quality being sacrificed and the potential for qualified candidates to be passed over for positions in favor of less-qualified candidates. This perception is common in higher education as many falsely associate the pursuit of diversity with an erosion of standards. Unfortunately, this “anti-affirmative idea” continues to permeate the assumptions and mental models of many, suggesting the need for a more proactive conversation about what it means to pursue issues of diversity as a matter of institutional excellence in the new millennium.

• “Diversity is good. However, pursuit of diversity here at FGCU has resulted in some minorities who are incompetent in their jobs and yet will never be held responsible because to do so would make it look like we don’t value diversity. Sadly, this hurts diversity efforts because no one wants to get stuck with an incompetent colleague or direct report that you can’t terminate if warranted.”
• “Leadership, faculty, administrators, and students should be chosen and recognized for abilities and accomplishments regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or other identities. The very action of deciding acceptance on some identity formula discriminates against those having shown exceptional capabilities and lowers the overall quality of the body whole.”

Faith Based Dynamics on Campus

A number of respondents discussed their religious faith as an important dimension of their diverse experience on campus. This is an area that is often overlooked in discussions of diversity and campus climate; nevertheless, many persons offered opinions by the following, “true diversity would offer equal privileging to all groups, including those that represent conservative groups, groups that promote family values, and groups that share religious worldviews, including those from Christian denominations. At present, these latter groups are rapidly inheriting the negative biases and prejudices so often relegated to former victims of discrimination.”

The prevalence of responses that referred to this perspective across the open-ended questions points to some aspect of FGCU’s culture that in some ways struggles with faith and politico-conservative dynamics on campus. One person, who seems to have a very nuanced grasp of FGCU’s particular culture, described it like this:

• Individually, faculty are generally congenial and supportive toward each other, and I can honestly say that I like the vast majority of people I have worked with at the University. We have absorbed the Southwest Florida culture, and I see that culture permeating campus conversations more here than at other institutions where I have worked. We also have faculty who have come from other places who have a very different culture. Unfortunately, both orientations have strengths and weaknesses. So I can say that while you see the best of both cultures - valuing intellectual debate while being open and welcoming, we have the worst of both also. For example, we have faculty in our division who tell sexually inappropriate jokes on a regular basis, and I may be the only one who has indicated that they really are not funny (reacting against what would be considered the SW Florida culture); I have also felt ostracized to be in a room with other colleagues (who would never tell sexually inappropriate jokes, or disparage someone based on their sexual orientation) who have disparaged strongly religious Christians, certainly not realizing that I would consider myself one.

Criticisms of Senior Leadership

One important theme that emerged throughout the survey, but particularly in the qualitative sections, is a persistent criticism of senior leadership by faculty and staff. While there are a few problems noted at the deans’ level, most of the concerns that people raised, real or imagined, had to do with dynamics at the vice president level and above. It was clear in analyzing this data that there is a good deal of pain and anger around this issue. It was equally clear that much of this anger centers on senior most leadership in academic affairs.

While this report is intended to shed light and open a dialogue on this important situation, its purpose is not to publically single out or embarrass any particular individual. For that reason, we refer to individuals in a generic way and have redacted identifying information from quotes.
Communication, Visibility, and Micromanagement

In addition to problems with overwork and leave time, a cluster of themes arose around issues with senior leadership, including communication, visibility, and micromanagement. In addition, several people reported a fear of reprisal if they raised these issues with their superiors. On communication and visibility:

- “Faculty has to rely on Faculty Senators to disseminate information to departments. That does not always happen efficiently, which leaves many faculty in the dark, or in the position of reacting to policies after they are approved. President Bradshaw’s letters are helpful but few and far between. Faculty input needs to be considered while policies are being developed—not as an afterthought.”

- “I love my job here. But the most reliable source of communication is the grapevine. It is timelier than any announcement from the president, VPs, or any of my supervisors. Great job, SAC, for giving us the comment boxes, but more needs to be done. Ask staff how to fix this. There are many good ideas out here.”

- “I feel that, overall, communication from administration is good. However, this is the first institution where I’ve not seen the president and provost as a visible presence on campus. My position requires me to circulate campus frequently, and I have never seen our top administrators visiting the various campus offices. I’m sure they have, but it’s not frequent enough. You can’t get a real feel for what is going on if you don’t step out and see for yourselves.”

- “It is not enough to merely send out all campus e-mails to effectively communicate. For the most part, senior administration is invisible. With few exceptions, they never venture outside of their offices to meet and talk with staff. Unless he is going to a meeting, you never see the President on campus.”

Several faculty members reported feeling that they were micromanaged. They commented that in recent years, senior administrators have taken a larger role in curricular and faculty-hiring decisions—areas that were formerly the purview of faculty. Some feel that these actions have resulted in a reduction of academic freedom:

- “Upper administration has made arbitrary personnel decisions. It micro-manages numerous decisions ranging from curriculum and faculty evaluation standards to hiring decisions. The highhanded, arrogant attitudes and practices of upper administration have a dispiriting impact on the campus.”

- “Within some few courses there seems to be a ‘cookie-cutter’ approach to instruction; i.e., there is an expectation that all instructors use the same textbook, teach the same material at the same time, use the same instructional methods, etc. This seems to threaten academic freedom.”

Throughout this section, people claimed that they were reluctant to discuss dissatisfaction with the campus work culture out of a fear of punishment:
• “My perception is that people are much more careful about voicing their opinions about important issues at FGCU, both within the college and at the university level. This caution, according to my perception, began BEFORE the economic downturn and so cannot, in my opinion, be accredited to that. There is, I think, more fear of reprisals from the administration.”

The FGCU Old-Boys Network

The term “old boys network” or “old boy’s club” occurred numerous times throughout the survey. This is due in part to the fact that many, but not all, of FGCU’s senior most administration are men. This ethos extends beyond the actual gender composition of FGCU’s senior ranks, however. There is also a strong sentiment on campus that senior leadership engages in favoritism in promotion and hiring and has been uneven in disciplining personnel.

This sense of an old boys network has not only eroded morale, it also contributes to a general sense of mistrust that seems to permeate FGCU:

• “In addition I have observed a real reservation towards ideas that are new or might upset the status quo. This reservation is not toward race or other "typical" bias, but rather towards upsetting the good old boys.”

• “[One official] personally participates in grants with one college. It is difficult to believe that he is unbiased in his treatment of all the colleges. In addition, he has hired many former friends as consultants. I am not happy here and plan to leave when I can.”

• “The system here is very biased. It is based on a series of personal vendettas where [one senior official] does not value the employees of the university. So much so that they feel that they don't owe us the employees explanations regarding their decisions. They have kept people who should have been fired and fired those that they should have kept.”

Formalization & Loss of the Entrepreneurial Spirit

Many survey respondents fondly referred to FGCU’s early days and how employees felt that they were encouraged to be innovative, entrepreneurial, and to “think outside the box.” It is apparent that as FGCU has grown, some of its processes have become more formalized and bureaucratic. While this may be a necessary part of growth, it appears as though the ways these changes have been introduced to the campus community have been poorly received. Several people complained about senior academic leadership being dictatorial, micromanaging, and corporate in their approach to faculty.

• “I had never heard of a [leader] at a university wanting to review a test and ask if an item analysis had been done because a parent complained about their child. You are [a senior leader], not a principal. Try acting like one and try treating faculty as though they might have a clue about their fields.”
• “As a 10 year Faculty member, I have thoroughly enjoyed my position until the last year. I am now disgusted with FGCU and am aggressively pursuing a position with another College/University. The former academic leadership was open and responsive. They were readily available and listened to Faculty and Staff. In contrast, [one of our current leaders] is the worst I have experienced in over 3 decades of higher education. He is not only distant and unapproachable, his arrogance and micro management has taken the University to the lowest point I have experienced. He treats the Faculty like village idiots. He single handedly has destroyed this academic community… My view is shared University wide and FGCU will be losing the most qualified and nationally recognized scholars. Dozens of us are pursuing other positions.”

• “FGCU is run like a high school. The folks in AB5 think that they are the principals of a high school and do not believe in faculty governance. They are aloof and walk around with their noses in the air. [One leader in particular] is always derogatory and sarcastic when he shows at a college faculty meeting. He particularly likes to make specific comments about people's salaries and gets very personal in a sarcastic way. He pontificates his positions and does not really listen.”

Perceived Double Standards

There is also a sense among employees that there are double standards regarding senior leadership. There was a general lack of understanding regarding leadership’s level of compensation, travel expenses, and decisions to approve campus remodeling projects when employees are receiving minimal raises, carrying heavier work loads, and often feel that there is no opportunity for advancement. Some comments included:

• “Administration provides for their needs first, and often tells faculty that there aren’t resources for their needs. For example, administration has a private, gated parking lot. Faculty have continuous problems with parking. Money to support faculty development has been cut out of colleges/departments and we now have to compete at the university level. This is a time consuming and bureaucratic process of questionable fairness. [One administrator] takes a trip with "selected" faculty each year spending thousands that could be used on faculty development. Where are faculty raises? When is administration going to address inversion/compression? No money for raises, but constant catering trucks in front of the administrative building.”

• “I think that what [senior leaders] want they GET, they make the final decision on hiring, color to use in a new building and using intricate inlaid tile to make [one leader] happy is beyond all comprehension of use of valuable funding in these difficult economic times. Those luncheons sponsored by the Board to bring everyone together are a waste of my time. Give me a $50.00 gift certificate so I can choose who I want to dine with. Those videos of FGCU faculty and staff shown are insulting and demeaning.”

This perspective is common on many campuses and is offered as illustration of it’s prominence in the data, more than any acknowledgement of it’s authenticity as a “true double standard” between “administration” and others.
It seems that many of the issues described above stem from a lack of transparency. A number of people believe that decision-making at FGCU occurs behind closed doors. They also feel that policies, especially those concerning personnel, are enacted inconsistently. Most of all, there seems to be a lack of a clear sense of mission.

- “I think transparency is an issue. Given the top-down administrative structure and a ‘need to know,’ attitude of the administration, I believe that my ideas about higher education, resource priorities, and the future of FGCU are ignored, or worse, belittled.”

- “The university opened with a bold, optimistic, mission and I think the more that we can do to live out that mission the better off we will be. The rapid expansion during former leadership’s tenure at FGCU seemed to encourage a rapid, random growth that followed whims of donors rather than the founding mission of the institution. If we focus on excellence in teaching, a commitment to environmental sustainability, and service learning, we can differentiate ourselves as an institution. All in all, I work with amazing colleagues, and I appreciate the opportunity to help grow this very special university.”
THE CAMPUS CLIMATE & CULTURE STUDY – A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Despite the many concerns raised throughout this report, the bulk of data reflected a university community that is loyal, hardworking, satisfied, and focused towards making FGCU a model institution. As we conclude this report, these points should not be lost! Overwhelmingly, our data suggests that FGCU is a positive work environment where people are satisfied in their jobs, would accept their jobs again if given the chance, and is in substantive ways characterized by a supportive campus climate that is inclusive and respectful of diversity whether viewed through the lens of positional role, race and ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation.

Whenever an organization matures and evolves in the way that FGCU has, it’s not uncommon that some of the informality and entrepreneurial spirit will be lost. This evolution is a part of the process of maturation that any new organization will experience if it has enjoyed the types of success that FGCU has since inception. The key is to manage the perceptions of what is occurring and to proactively include the campus community in the journey. Faculty and staff desire to be in an honest dialogue about the difficulties, realities, and future of FGCU. We believe that more interaction in this way could improve the campus climate and enhance institutional morale.

As FGCU continues to grow and develop, it enjoys a special opportunity in terms of campus culture and climate that the vast majority of higher education institutions do not. Most of our universities, because of their age, defined their cultural reality long ago. As such, efforts to change these cultures have been painful and often-convoluted processes that were riddled with conflict and deeply entrenched mores. FGCU, in comparison, is a relative tabula rasa. It has the rare opportunity to develop in an era of unprecedented (albeit not perfect) social awareness and to draw on national best practices that have only been developed in the last few decades.

Many of the people who completed this survey were appreciative that FGCU’s senior leadership had taken the trouble to commission the project and actively solicit their views. They were also aware that the current leadership inherited many of the problems that the university has faced recently, but are keenly interested in what those leaders will do to move the institution through this challenging time. There was optimism that this was the beginning of an effort to heal from the many difficulties that the campus had experienced in recent years. As one employee eloquently suggested, leadership plays a key role in this process:

“The president asked us to walk with him and many did. Has he stopped to look who is sitting on the side of the road or who failed to follow? I ask him to lead us, to take us to the next level and provide us with the tools and management that will allow us to fulfill his visions.”

To this end, the manner in which President Bradshaw commissioned and executed the FGCU Climate and Culture project is exactly the type of leadership that the campus community has requested. The process was shared, transparent, and engaged. If others in leadership move forward in the same style as has been exhibited by President Bradshaw, it will go a long way towards assuaging a community that wants to be engaged and share in the responsibilities of securing FGCU’s future and continuing vitality.
WORKS CITED


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