

Climate and Culture Action Plan Update

Winter 2024

Thank you very much for all that you are doing to improve and enrich the climate and culture in your units and at the University of Oregon. Please complete the questions below and submit your update into the Campus Culture Climate Action Plan Report OneDrive folder by January 31, 2024. We will summarize the findings and share them in our efforts to collaboratively address challenges and to enhance knowledge about best practices that are occurring across the university. In early Winter term, we will also share information about the Matching Grant Program.

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A. What are the climate and culture-related issues that your unit is addressing?

In Winter of 2023, COE used UO Climate Survey data to learn more about the experiences of COE community members with respect to their professional and personal identities. Discussions were undertaken with faculty, staff, and students in affinity groups based on their professional roles (tenure and tenure track faculty, career faculty [instructional], career faculty [research], classified staff, officers of administration, graduate employees, and faculty and staff of typically underrepresented identities).

Previously, in Fall 2022 (i.e., the Fall of the same academic year), COE had also engaged in community listening sessions whose content overlapped with the content ultimately collected within climate discussions. For community listening sessions, in addition to faculty and staff within the same grouping structure, students were also included and were met in groups based on their academic level (undergraduate students, masters students, doctoral students, international students, and students from typically underrepresented groups).

For the Climate survey discussions within the college, participants were invited to consider the aggregated COE results of the UO Climate survey and to reflect on the experiences (positive, negative, or neutral) that contributed to the survey responses in general. Similarly, in the community listening sessions, individuals were invited to reflect broadly on their experiences. In these discussions, there was a general tendency towards discussions around climate. The discussions were central to the work ahead in the college as community member shared valuable details (in terms of real, every-day examples) of the kinds of interactions, experiences, and hurdles that contribute to their climate experience. These examples frequently revealed latent and achievable solutions that can be implemented in small- or large-scale.

Content from the 16 meetings held were combined to identify recurring themes, examples, and proposed solutions.

The themes identified and summarized below were submitted via report in August of 2023.

- Clarity of expectations: Improving the **clarity and transparency** around the recurring professional expectations that are embedded into our community's fabric but that are not clearly defined or equitably practiced.

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- Professional transitions: Improving our **intentionality around the professional transitions** that move individuals from one professional role to another so that individuals feel genuinely supported for success through the various stages of growth that follow.
- Community: Continuing to foster and improve the **culture of community** by emphasizing the importance of (and by facilitating constructive connections between) individuals, roles, groups, and goals.
- Value: Continuing to foster and improve a **culture of value** associated with all work, roles, and individuals that make up our college by striving to more thoroughly note the critical role each person, role, or project plays towards our shared goals.
- Communication: Improving **communication** to ensure an intentionally delivered flow of information that considers the dynamics present in all components of the message including not only the content, but the sender, the receiver, and the goal of the message.

In these discussions about climate with multiple constituents, we were able to learn the ways in which day-to-day experiences may be influenced by lapses connected to these themes, leading to (or in some cases exacerbating pre-existing) experiences of mistrust or exclusion from “the know” and/or raising concerns about transparency. As lack of clarity was sometimes perceived as an intentional tool used to maintain status quo or to interrupt growth opportunities that permit thriving. These types of experiences, stemming from lack of clarity in information and sharing, were further impacted by an individual’s positionality and / or identity (perceived identity) within the college and translated to sentiments that would be picked up by others in their perceptions of climate.

Additionally, the context for the college’s climate survey and for the college’s subsequent community discussions was one of transition and change. In March of 2022 when the COE engaged and/or was engaging in the UO Climate survey, the college was also in the midst of a significant leadership transition. The transition took place amidst a vulnerable time for the college in which faculty were returning from the separation of the pandemic and were also grappling with feelings of mistrust and uncertainty associated with the departure of 3 faculty of color within a short period of time. While there was and is an important focus on the experiences of faculty and staff of color in the college, the remedy to truly support of these populations, rests in creating the context, conditions, and space for the entire community to repair in unison.

The College of Education has identified Clarity of Expectations as the climate and culture-related item of focus for this year because:

- **A system that is not designed with intentionality, towards clarity, transparency, and accountability, is a system that will continue to allow racism and other forms of inequity to be obscured in the name of administrative confusion.**

B. What action steps are you taking to address the issues that you identified above? Please also include a timeline for each step.

The College of Education plans to intentionally strive to continuously improve both short-term and long-term administrative and professional transparency by improving its day-to-day activities including communications, decisions, changes and general messaging. In addition to these incremental changes to increase the value of all forms of

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communication, we plan to:

- Systematically update communication materials: presentations, policies, and other messaging,
- Bring clarity and transparency to the roles, expectations and changes (and or evolutions) that occur as a function of our professional roles and relationships, and
- Create clear pathways for individuals to find the information that they need.

These will be achieved through:

- An ongoing and systematic review of the content shared in support of decisions, updates, changes, and guidance.
- Systematic and consistent dissemination of the context when sharing general communication and critical materials.

Recommended Strategies, Metrics and Timelines		2023	2024	2025
a	<p>Policies: Via transparent faculty review across college, and intentional review within the Office of the Dean, update policies with an eye to equity and clarity. To ensure transparency and an eye to clarity, representative teams selected for their knowledge of the policies and experiences of individuals in each policy category, will be brought together to ensure that the products developed are designed with all populations in mind. Use policy updates as an opportunity to clarify decision-making.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience: Faculty. • Metric of measurement: Vote. 	<p>OtP Required Policies:</p> <p>Professional Responsibilities</p> <p>Peer Teaching Review</p>	<p>OtP Required Policies:</p> <p>Promotion and Tenure;</p> <p>Promotion and Review</p>	<p>Additional COE policies:</p> <p>Curriculum Policy;</p> <p>Internal governance</p>
b	<p>Community gatherings and discussions: Create forum for faculty and / or staff to discuss issues, items, resources, and terminology that are nuanced and that vary based on context and use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience: Faculty and staff • Metric: Feedback via survey, use. 	<p>Starting in January 2024</p>	<p>Evaluation via pulse survey</p>	<p>Determine ongoing needs (affinity groups, committees)</p>
c	<p>Definitions: Provide definitions and plain language for frequently mis-used / misunderstood terms, concepts, roles, and responsibilities (such as service, program directorship, plans of action, reporting expectations, and other operational expectations that impact both faculty and staff experience and</p>	<p>Website Development</p>	<p>June 2024 completion</p>	<p>Evaluation of web analytics and metrics</p>

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	<p>faculty and staff roles). Updates to an internally facing faculty and staff website/ page where frequent content can be accessed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience: Faculty, staff, students • Metric: Feedback via survey, use. 			
d	<p>Onboarding Activities: Continue to improve and update our onboarding experience by building out faculty and staff-specific presentations and materials that easily answer the recurring questions that arise for individuals who are new to the college. In recent years the college has developed more intentional presentations that are timed to occur at critical onboarding moments (i.e., within the first 2 – 8 weeks of hire). These sessions provide discussion opportunities with the dean, and relevant assistant and associate deans that are designed to both welcome individuals and to provide context and guidance related to their faculty or staff role, to the context of the college, and to their avenues for getting involved and / or effecting change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience: Faculty and staff • Metric: Feedback via survey 	Underway	Ongoing evaluation and improvement	Ongoing evaluation and improvement
e	<p>Community events: Continue to move the needle towards intentionally infusing joy into the community experiences we have.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience: Faculty and staff • Metric: Feedback via survey or anecdotal, attendance 	Underway	Ongoing improvement	Ongoing improvement

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- C. Once your action steps have been implemented, how will you know that you have achieved the intended positive shifts in climate and culture (e.g., what will be different)?

For the majority of intended climate changes listed above, the most ideal measure will be feedback from faculty and staff via climate survey, pulse survey, or other similar tools that measure attitudes, trust, and individual’s sense of agency within their professional community. While we welcome UO administered climate surveys to achieve this, the COE is also in the process of developing a pulse tool to assess micro-climate and short-term as well as long-term change.

Policy updates			
Action Items	Progress Measures	Lead	Timeline
Professional Responsibilities	Faculty feedback and vote	Joanna Goode	Present – June 2024
Teaching evaluation	Faculty feedback and vote	Angie Whalen	Present – June 2024
Promotion and Tenure	Faculty feedback and vote	Lisa Mazzei	June 2024 – June 2025
Promotion and Review	Faculty feedback and vote	Lisa Mazzei	June 2024 – June 2025
Internal Governance	Faculty & Staff feedback and vote	TBD	TBD
Curriculum Policy	Faculty feedback and vote	Associate Dean for Academic Affairs	June 2025 – June 2026
Professional Development Policy	Faculty feedback and vote	Associate Dean for Faculty Development, Associate Dean for Career Instructional and Clinical Faculty Development, Assistant Dean for Administration, Equity, and Inclusion	June 2025 – June 2026
Merit Policy	Faculty feedback and vote	TBD	June 2025 – June 2026
Other COE Policies			

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Development of Internal Facing Faculty and Staff Website	
Action Items	Progress Measures
Identify content areas for internal focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Home page• HR content and policies,• Facilities• Academics and Research• Equity and Inclusion• Awards and Recognition• Employee Tools	Staff feedback
Identify format and logic model for content	Staff feedback
Develop / improve reporting and feedback policy	Faculty and staff feedback
Develop, prune, and organize content	Staff feedback
Disseminate, discuss, and share-out	Staff feedback
Assess functionality and impact	Pulse Surveys

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Develop format / forum for community sessions for communication	
Action Items	Progress Measures
Faculty <u>and Staff</u> Topic: What is climate	Attendance, interest
Faculty <u>and Staff</u> Topic: Sensitivity and messaging	Attendance, interest
Faculty <u>and Staff</u> Topic: Reporting and Feedback	Attendance, interest
Faculty Topic: Diversifying faculty	Attendance, interest
Faculty <u>and Staff</u> Topic: Mentorship	Attendance, interest
Faculty <u>and Staff</u> Topic: Operations (e.g., Research & Buyout)	Attendance, interest
Faculty Topic: Service	Attendance, interest
Faculty Topic: Academic Freedom	Attendance, interest
Evaluation	Pulse surveys

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Pulse Survey Summary:

Abbreviated Version [Does not include multiple choice responses]

1. What is your employee role in the COE?
2. How long have you been a part of the COE community?
3. How do you feel about your role in the COE today?
4. Considering the response you provided when asked how you feel today, what do you attribute today's feelings to? (Select all that apply) [If you feel this way because of your job, is there more you'd like to add?]
5. How would you describe your typical day-to-day experience so far this quarter?
6. Considering the response you provided when asked about your typical experience in the COE this quarter. What do you predominantly attribute this typical experience to? (Select all that apply). [If you attribute these feelings to your job, is there more you'd like to add?]
[If you feel this way because of your job, what indicator do you use to monitor for improvements or change?]
7. Is this the same or different from the way you felt last quarter?
8. Optional: What does a good day look like for you? [Text]
9. Optional: Is there more you'd like to say about your personal and professional experience in the COE? (Note: Please do not rely on this survey to report personal concerns). [Text]

D. What, if any, additional information do you wish to share?

The COE is committed to identifying and taking **actions that fit within the existing day to day structures of the community** and working first to eliminate unnecessary “noise” from current processes and practices. Given the recent transitions and the general anecdotal sense of momentum towards stability and shared understanding following consecutive years of transition, we are intentionally moving away from “named initiative” or add-ons (either tested or untested) that will introduce more transition and uncertainty and focus first on shifting climate with clarity and transparency, to build the trust necessary for embarking on the larger shifts necessary for long-term change which will require a unified push.

More information about COE planning can be provided.