

# UC Merced

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY PREPARED BY RANKIN & ASSOCIATES CONSULTING

## Project Structure and Process

The UC Merced survey contained 93 questions including several open-ended questions for respondents to provide commentary. The survey was offered in English and Spanish and distributed from February 1, 2013 through March 1, 2013 through a secure on-line portal.<sup>ii</sup> Confidential paper surveys were available to those who did not have access to an Internet-connected computer or preferred a paper survey.

## Description of the Sample at UC Merced

UC Merced community members completed 1,796 surveys for an overall response rate of 26%. Response rates by constituent group varied: 20% for Undergraduate Students ( $n = 1,085$ ), 36% for Graduate/Professional Students ( $n = 120$ ), >100% for Post-Docs/Trainees ( $n = 6$ ), 30% for Union Staff ( $n = 82$ ), 38% for Faculty ( $n = 133$ ), and 60% for Non-Union staff ( $n = 349$ ). Table 1 provides a summary of selected demographic characteristics of survey respondents. The percentages offered in Table 1 are based on the numbers of respondents in the sample ( $n$ ) for the specific demographic characteristic.<sup>iii</sup> Only surveys that were at least 50% completed were included in the final data set for analyses.

## Key Findings - Areas of Strength

### 1. High levels of comfort with the climate at UC Merced

- 76% of all respondents ( $n = 1,364$ ) of all respondents were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with the climate at UC Merced while 9% ( $n = 157$ ) were “uncomfortable” or “very uncomfortable.”
- 78% of all respondents ( $n = 1,391$ ) of all respondents were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with the climate for diversity in their department/work unit/academic unit/college/school/clinical setting while 10% ( $n = 170$ ) were “uncomfortable” or “very uncomfortable.”
- 81% of Undergraduate Students ( $n = 818$ ), 68% of Graduate/Professional Students ( $n = 93$ ), and 86% of Faculty and Post-Docs ( $n = 120$ ) were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with the climate in their classes, while 9% of Undergraduates ( $n = 59$ ), 5% of Graduate/Professional Students ( $n = 6$ ), and 4% of Faculty/Post-Docs ( $n = 5$ ) were “uncomfortable” or “very uncomfortable.”

Table 1. UC Merced Sample Demographics

Characteristic	Subgroup	<i>n</i>	% of Sample
Position Status	Undergraduate Students <sup>iv</sup>	1,085	60%
	Graduate/Professional Students <sup>v</sup>	120	7%
	Faculty <sup>vi</sup>	133	7%
	Staff <sup>vii</sup>	452	25%
	Post-Doctoral Scholars/Trainees <sup>viii</sup>	6	<1%
Gender Identity	Women	1,074	60%
	Men	708	39%
	Transgender <sup>ix</sup>	1	<1%
	Genderqueer <sup>x</sup>	8	<1%
Racial Identity	White	572	32%
	Underrepresented Minority <sup>xi</sup>	676	38%
	Other People of Color <sup>xii</sup>	478	27%
	Multi-Minority <sup>xiii</sup>	42	2%
Sexual Identity	Heterosexual	1,493	85%
	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer	110	6%
	Questioning <sup>xiv</sup>	27	2%
	Asexual <sup>xv</sup>	118	7%
Citizenship Status	U.S. Citizen	1,731	96%
	Non-U.S. Citizen	43	2%
	Undocumented	16	1%
Disability Status	No disability	12,649	78%
	Disability (physical, learning, mental health/ Psychological condition)	2,414	15%
Religious/Spiritual Affiliation	Christian affiliation <sup>xvi</sup>	811	45.2
	Other Religious/Spiritual affiliation <sup>xvii</sup>	112	6%
	Muslim <sup>xviii</sup>	19	1%
	Jewish <sup>xix</sup>	14	1%
	No affiliation <sup>xx</sup>	656	37%
	Multiple affiliations <sup>xxi</sup>	101	6%
	Unknown	83	5%

Note: The total *n* for each selected demographic characteristic differs due to missing data.

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## 2. Faculty and Staff - Positive attitudes about work-life issues

- 73% of all Post-Doc, Trainee, Graduate/Professional Student, Staff, and Faculty respondents ( $n = 513$ ) offered that UC Merced values a diverse faculty and 78% offered that the campus values a diverse staff ( $n = 547$ ).
- 66% of all Post-Doc, Trainee, Graduate/Professional Student, Staff, and Faculty ( $n = 466$ ) respondents indicated that their supervisors provided them with resources to pursue professional development opportunities and 64% felt that their supervisors provided ongoing feedback to improve their performance ( $n = 452$ ).

## 3. Students - Positive attitudes about academic experiences

- 70% of Undergraduate Students ( $n = 757$ ) and 73% of Graduate/Professional Students ( $n = 87$ ) were satisfied with their academic experience at UCM.
- 66% of Undergraduate Students ( $n = 715$ ) and 72% of Graduate/Professional Students ( $n = 86$ ) reported that they were performing up to their full academic potential.

## 4. Students and Trainees – A majority of respondents found the courses offered at UC included sufficient materials, perspectives, and/or experiences of people based on a variety of personal characteristics (e.g., age, ethnicity, gender identity, marital status, race, sexual orientation).

### Key Findings - Opportunities for Improvement

#### 1. Some members of the community experience exclusionary conduct.

- 28% of respondents ( $n = 511$ ) believed that they had personally experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive or hostile conduct; 11% of respondents ( $n = 198$ ) indicated that the conduct interfered with their ability to work or learn at UCM.<sup>xxii</sup>
- Differences emerged based on various demographic characteristics including position status, ethnic identity, racial identity, and discipline of study. For example,
  - o A higher percentage of genderqueer respondents and women reported experiencing this conduct as compared to men.
  - o A higher percentage of LGBTQ respondents than heterosexual respondents reported experiencing this conduct.

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**2. Several constituent groups indicated that they were less comfortable with the overall campus climate, workplace climate, and classroom climate**

- Faculty respondents were less comfortable when compared with Staff, Students and Post-Doctoral Scholar/Trainee respondents with the overall campus climate at UC Merced.
- Genderqueer respondents were less comfortable with the overall climate yet more comfortable in their in department/work unit/ academic unit/ college/school/clinical settings than were men and women.
- LGBTQ respondents were less comfortable with the overall climate and less comfortable with the climate in their departments/work units than heterosexual respondents. LGBTQ respondents were less comfortable in their classes in comparison to heterosexual respondents.
- White respondents were less comfortable than Underrepresented Minority respondents, Other People of Color respondents, and Multi-Minority respondents with the overall climate and the climate in their departments/work units. White respondents were more comfortable with the climate in their classes than other racial groups.

**3. A small but meaningful percentage of respondents experienced unwanted sexual contact.**

- a. 2% of respondents ( $n = 43$ ) believed they had experienced unwanted sexual contact while at UC Merced within the last five years. Subsequent analyses of the data revealed the following:
  - o With regard to race, 2% of all White respondents ( $n = 12$ ), 2% of all Underrepresented Minority respondents ( $n = 15$ ), and 3% of Other People of Color ( $n = 13$ ) experienced unwanted sexual contact.
  - o Women (3%,  $n = 33$ ) were more likely than men (1%,  $n = 10$ ) to experience unwanted sexual contact; and respondents with disabilities (3%,  $n = 11$ ) were more likely than their nondisabled counterparts (2%,  $n = 27$ ).

Additional findings disaggregated by position and other selected demographic characteristics are provided in more detail in the full report.

# UC Merced

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## Recent efforts in campus climate

- Since 2010, UC Merced's **Advisory Council on Campus Climate, Culture and Inclusion** has worked to provide ongoing evaluation of campus climate conditions, practices, and policies, as well as to suggest measures to support the goals of inclusion and community. The group is updating UC Merced's *Principles of Community* based on input collected from a broad spectrum of the campus community. The founding principles were established before the campus officially opened and serve as a guide for both the individual and collective behaviors of students, faculty, and staff. The revisions aim to strengthen aspects related to tolerance and acceptance of diversity in cultures, lifestyles, and expression.
- The **UC Merced Violence Prevention Program** was launched in early 2009 and offers support and educational services to discourage and ultimately eliminate violence. One noteworthy achievement of this program is that 97 percent of incoming undergraduates participate in the in-person violence prevention education program.
- The **Office of Ombuds Services** was established in 2012 as a confidential, neutral, independent, and informal conflict resolution resource for the campus community. The campus Ombuds is available to all constituencies to discuss and work to resolve campus-related concerns.
- In order to identify issues and needs regarding communication, the campus conducted a survey of faculty and staff in 2011. Findings from this survey resulted in the establishment of a monthly **Communications Connection series** and a campus **Leadership Council** to enhance communication and foster a greater sense of inclusion amongst staff and faculty.
- The Provost's Office has also recently committed funding to support faculty participation in **academic leadership opportunities**, many of which are specifically targeted for faculty from diverse backgrounds with interest in and potential as future academic leaders.
- UC Merced Human Resources offers a **Diversity Certificate Training Program** open to all staff and faculty that is designed to establish a foundational awareness of the concepts of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

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- Departments across campus host numerous speaker and film series as well as a wide spectrum of **multicultural and social justice events** throughout the year that are designed to enhance campus climate, encourage inclusion, foster respect, and promote community.
  - A new collaborative campaign between Housing and Residence Life and the Office of Student Life called **“Love Love. Hate Hate.”** celebrates diversity, condemns acts of hate and bias, and complements the UCM commitment to creating a learning environment free from discrimination and harassment and addressing the impact of hate crimes and bias-related actions on campus communities.
  - Another innovative diversity and dignity campaign called **“Everyone Matters”** is spearheaded by the Associated Students of UC Merced Multi-Cultural Student Council. The campaign advocates for everyone’s right to be who they are, whatever their race, socioeconomic status, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability, worldview, or ethnicity.
  - The campus now enjoys its first official **Reflection Room**, opened in January 2014, to provide a space where people from all faiths, beliefs, and backgrounds can reflect in any way that is meaningful to them. Furthermore, the campus recently improved the process for establishing lactation facilities in new campus buildings.

### Process and next steps for developing actions and initiatives based on survey findings

To effectively address important issues highlighted by the survey results, UC Merced expects to expand its Advisory Council on Campus Climate, Culture and Inclusion, which will be charged with creating an action plan based on UCM’s unique campus culture and the survey findings for the campus. The reconstituted group will be assembled within a month of the survey’s release.

#### CONTACT

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