

Campus Experience Survey Workgroup (CESW) Core Climate Areas/Themes for All Respondents

Background:

For more information about the CESW, including our charge and membership, please visit our [webpage](#). As a guide for our work in developing these climate areas/themes, we used the following definition of campus climateⁱ:

"The current attitudes, behaviors and standards of faculty, staff, administrators and students concerning the level of respect for individual needs, abilities and potential." Respect is one of the most critical words in this description. It's not just the experience of individuals and groups on a campus; it's also the quality and extent of the interaction between those various groups and individuals that determines a healthy campus climate. Diversity and inclusion are extremely important aspects of campus climate. According to the UC Regents' Study Group on University Diversity, "diversity and inclusion efforts are not complete unless they also address climate [and] addressing campus climate is an important and necessary component in any comprehensive plan for diversity."

In identifying these areas/themes, we built upon UC Merced's recently developed [campus strategic plan](#), in addition to the experiences of CESW members. Our intention is to identify survey themes that will provide information to the campus at a broad level about the campus climate/experience but not to directly evaluate particular programs/services that may be in the service of improving the campus climate. The data we plan to collect on campus climate/experience surveys should be used in conjunction with robust assessment plans for programs/services. We advocate that the campus be thoughtful and strategic with our deployment of surveys and our use of survey data so as not to unduly burden survey respondents and ensure we are effectively using survey data in our understanding of the experience of living, working, and going to school at UC Merced.

We have created three groupings for Core Climate Areas/Themes – Myself, My Work/Academics, and My Relationship with Campus – which can aid with structuring survey instruments and reporting. "Campus community" refers to everyone who lives, works, and/or goes to school at UC Merced. Because these themes are broad, each respondent stakeholder group – faculty (Senate, non-Senate, non-faculty academic appointees), staff, undergraduate students, graduate students, and postocs – will identify appropriate instruments/measures. However, when possible, attempts should be made to use the same survey item(s) to examine key themes so that direct comparisons can be made across groups.

Myself:

Theme	Depth
The basic needs (food, housing) of the campus community are being met. Resources (transportation, food, housing) are accessible and affordable.	
Campus community members feel physically safe on campus and in Merced, including comfort with campus policing and security practices.	
Mental and physical health needs are being met, including access to and satisfaction with available health resources.	

My Work/Academics:

Theme	Depth
The campus is supportive of community members developing an understanding of and achieving their career and personal goals. This support is reflected by programs/training, processes, and advising/mentorship.	
Campus community members receive support for and feel engaged with their work/research/scholarship/teaching/learning.	
Members of the campus community feel empowered to engage in activities that promote social justice ⁱⁱ , equity, diversity, and inclusion. Campus research supports equity and prosperity locally and globally.	
Campus community members have access to funding for work/academics (e.g., research, grants, work study, fellowships, teaching, professional development).	
There is fair and appropriate compensation (monetary) and recognition for work and contributions. Community members feel their work is valued. Work that enhances equity, diversity, and inclusion on campus is valued and rewarded.	
There are opportunities to work/collaborate/connect with other members of the campus community – past (alumni) and present (peers, faculty, staff, colleagues).	
Expectations for advancement are clearly laid out – program requirements (students), promotion/tenure/advancement/reappointment requirements (faculty/staff) - and fairly implemented.	
Work/assignments are distributed fairly.	

My Relationship with Campus:

Theme	Depth
Members of the campus community feel connected to the campus's stated goals, mission (teaching, research, public service), and vision. There is a sense of campus pride.	
Members of the campus community feel like they belong on campus and among their peers and in typical situations (e.g., classroom, meetings, etc.). They feel included, respected, and able to be their authentic selves. The campus has a culture of perspective-taking and empathy.	
Community has access to, funding, and support for campus organizations that support interests/identities for faculty, staff, and students (e.g., student clubs/organizations).	
Campus community members experience psychological safety while interacting with campus and the City of Merced. They are free from harassment and retaliation should they report harassment or other negative experiences. They experience support and a safe space for conflict resolution.	
There is a connection between the campus community and the local community. There is a connection between UC Merced and sister UC campuses.	
Campus leadership is effective and inclusive with the way it communicates with the campus community. Community members have information essential to effectively pursue their work/educational goals.	
Campus policies and practices are transparent, accessible, inclusive, equitable, understandable, and lawful (e.g., hiring). Community receives training on/notification of policies that impact them. (Note: important to add time qualifier to questions.)	
Campus community feels they have a voice in campus decision making.	

Campus has integrity. Engages in all activities in an ethical way.	
Campus operates in a sustainable, effective, and efficient way that allows community to do its work/teaching/research. Areas to consider: technology, operational workflow, policies/practices, research support, budget process, resource allocation (including workforce).	
The campus effectively monitors progress towards goals and readjusts/reallocates resources as needed. The campus monitors and is responsive to community needs.	
Campus effectively uses institutional data to make decisions. Needed institutional data is available, accessible, and understandable.	
Plans to leave UC Merced.	
Resources are provided to "cultivate the skills, knowledge, and comprehensively inclusive and anti-exclusionary attitudes necessary to ensure contribution to our Principles of Community". Resources provided "for the recruitment and retention of faculty, staff, and students of color (e.g., research, teaching, student experience/orgs related to equity, diversity, and inclusion)".	

Demographic/Background Characteristics:

To facilitate group comparisons, questions/information about the following respondent background/demographic characteristics will also be included:

- Race/ethnicity
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation
- Ability status
- Religion
- First generation status
- Age
- Income level
- Department/unit/major
- Non-resident/international status
- Amount of time at UC Merced (i.e., years employed, years as a student)
- Parental/dependent care responsibilities
- Veteran status

ⁱ <https://campusclimate.ucop.edu/what-is-campus-climate/>

ⁱⁱ A definition for justice was not provided within the strategic plan. The CESW advocates that one be identified such that survey questions can accurately capture this construct.