UWSA Staff Engagement 2013 Report
Staff Engagement Survey 2013

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CONTACT .......................................................................................................................... 2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ................................................................................................. 4
INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................. 5
SURVEY DESIGN ............................................................................................................... 7
SURVEY METHODOLOGY ............................................................................................... 8
RESPONSE RATE AND DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ....................................................... 9
  RESPONSE RATE ........................................................................................................... 9
  DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ..................................................................................... 9
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT ..................................................................................... 13
  TRAINING ..................................................................................................................... 13
  CAREER SERVICES ..................................................................................................... 18
  JOB MOBILITY ............................................................................................................. 19
ORGANIZATION ENVIRONMENT ................................................................................... 27
  UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP ........................................................................................ 27
  ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT ..................................................................................... 33
  DEPARTMENT ENVIRONMENT ................................................................................... 37
  WORKLOAD ................................................................................................................ 50
  OVERTIME .................................................................................................................. 56

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY ............................................................................................. 61
  NEGATIVE INTERACTIONS WITH CO-WORKERS .................................................... 61
  NEGATIVE INTERACTIONS WITH SUPERVISORS .................................................... 67
  WORK/LIFE BALANCE ................................................................................................. 73

JOB ATTITUDES ............................................................................................................. 77

SUPERVISION AND FEEDBACK ..................................................................................... 92
  RELATIONSHIP WITH SUPERVISOR ........................................................................ 92
  SUPERVISORY BEHAVIORS ........................................................................................ 101
  FEEDBACK ENVIRONMENT ....................................................................................... 113
  FORMAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW SYSTEM .......................................................... 120
  RECENT PERFORMANCE REVIEW SESSION ...................................................... 126

UWSA PARTICIPATION AND FEEDBACK .................................................................... 132

SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS ....................................................................................... 143

UWSA STAFF ENGAGEMENT 2013 REPORT | 3
Executive Summary

Overview

The following report presents the results of the first University of Waterloo Staff Association Staff Engagement Survey. The purpose of the study was to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement in staff experiences. Five main areas of interest were explored, including employees’ perceptions of opportunity for career- and self-advancement, specific experiences within the University of Waterloo environment, psychological safety, job attitudes, and supervision and feedback. The survey was hosted online, and was sent to a total of 1999 full and 104 part-time staff in June of 2013, with a total of 821 individuals completing the survey.

Strengths

The data revealed several areas of strength. In general, a large percentage of staff members who completed the survey:

- reported good relationships with their supervisors and coworkers.
- reported low levels of conflict and high levels of psychological safety in their work units.
- reported that the organization is doing a good job of providing opportunities for personal development and assistance.
- reported high levels of perceived equality.
- reported that they understand the performance rating system.
- reported high levels of satisfaction with the University of Waterloo as an employer and strong intentions to remain with the organization.

Challenges

The data revealed a number of challenges or potential areas for improvement. A significant portion of staff members who completed the survey:

- indicated that they do not believe that upper leadership cares about them or that they can be trusted.
- appear to believe that the hiring process is unclear and potentially biased.
- perceived that there is favoritism within their department.
- indicated that UW does not have a system that enables employees to achieve higher job levels.
- reported working uncompensated hours.
- are doubtful that the UWSA can assist them and do not believe that the UWSA cares about staff well-being and satisfaction at work.
Introduction

The University of Waterloo Staff Association provides staff members at the University of Waterloo with professional support, career-oriented services, and a voice in important decisions within the campus community.

In March of 2013, the UWSA contacted consultants in the Industrial/Organizational Division of the Department of Psychology at the University of Waterloo to plan and initiate the Staff Engagement Survey 2013. The purpose of the survey was to capture University of Waterloo staff members’ perceptions and experiences of the work environment in order to identify both existing areas of strength as well as opportunities for improvement in staff experiences. After initial meetings, the UWSA and the group of consultants identified key areas of interest to survey among UW staff members. These key areas are illustrated and briefly described below.
UWSA Staff Engagement Survey 2013

- Development and Mobility
  - Availability and supervisor support of training programs
  - Support for advancing knowledge
  - Career development opportunities
  - Job mobility opportunities

- Organizational Environment
  - Perceptions of university leadership
  - Availability of supports for staff
  - Importance of staff satisfaction to University of Waterloo
  - Departmental culture and work environment
  - Workload

- Psychological Safety
  - Coworker negative interactions
  - Supervisor negative interactions
  - Influence of job responsibilities on home life
  - Perceived balance between work and home lives

- Job Attitudes
  - Satisfaction with job and organization
  - Satisfaction with pay and promotion opportunities
  - Identification with the University of Waterloo

- Supervision and Feedback
  - Perceptions of supervisory support
  - Satisfaction with performance review and feedback
Survey Design

In selecting the questions used for the UWSA Staff Engagement Survey 2013, consultants compiled a question bank of existing scales published in the organizational behaviour literature. Only validated scales published in peer-reviewed journals were included in the question bank.

UWSA representatives and consultants from I/O division reviewed the published scales and selected individual questions that best captured the different categories of interest. After selecting relevant questions, a draft survey was assembled and further revised after consulting with a number of stakeholders.

The final version of the survey was pilot tested with a small sample of University of Waterloo staff members. Further suggestions were incorporated into the final survey.
Survey Methodology

The survey was programmed using the survey platform *Qualtrics®,* an online tool for hosting and distributing online surveys. The online survey was programmed to send invitations to individual staff members using e-mail addresses provided by the Human Resource department. To ensure confidentiality, all identifying information was stored separately from survey responses. Staff members were assigned random codes, which were later used in data analysis.

Prior to distribution, UWSA leadership announced the survey on the University of Waterloo Daily Bulletin and on the UWSA twitter account. The survey opened on June 20th and invitations to participate along with individualized links were sent to all full-time and part-time staff members, regardless of whether or not they were members of the UWSA. To help increase response rates, reminders were sent weekly to individuals who had not completed the survey. In total four weekly reminders were sent. To further encourage participation, prizes were provided by the UWSA and awarded to randomly selected survey completers. Prizes included: one Apple iPad ($399 value), one BlackBerry Q10 ($199 value), two Watcard Gift Certificates ($100 each), two Watcard Gift Certificates ($50 each), and five Tim Horton's Gift Certificates ($10 each).
Response Rate and Descriptive Statistics

Response Rate
Survey invitations were sent to 1,999 full and 104 part-time staff members. A total of 924 individuals started the survey (43.9%), with 821 individuals (39.2%) completing to the final question. From the 924 individuals who started the survey, 884 individuals were full-time (44.2% response rate) and 37 individuals were part-time staff (35.6% response rate). From the 821 individuals who completed, 790 individuals were full-time (39.5% completion rate) and 31 individuals were part-time (29.8% completion rate) staff members. The results presented in this report reflect all responses collected, both from complete and incomplete surveys.

Demographic Information
In order to describe the respondent characteristics, we collected basic demographic information about age, gender, and tenure with the University of Waterloo, position, and supervisor.

Age
As shown below, 10.7% of respondents were under 30 years old (87 people), 12.6% were aged 30-34 (103 people), 11.2% were aged 35-39 (91 people), 12.9% were aged 40-44 (105 people), 15.7% were aged 45-49 (128 people), 15.4% were aged 50-54 (126 people), 12.4% were aged 55-59 (101 people), and 9.2% were above 60 years of age (75 people).
Gender

In addition to information about age, respondents were asked to report their genders. As shown below, 30.6% of respondents were male (250 people), 69.2% of respondents were female (565 people), and 0.1% reported other (1 person).

Respondents were also asked to indicate their tenure with the University of Waterloo (number of years employed at the University of Waterloo), their department (years employed in their current department), their position (years in their current position), and tenure with their current supervisor.

Tenure with University of Waterloo

As shown below, 6.1% of respondents (50 people) reported working at UW for less than a year, 27.3% (224 people) reported working at UW for 1-5 years, 22.7% (186 people) reported working at UW for 6-10 years, 15.2% (125 people) reported work at UW for 11-15 years, 6.3% (52 people) reported working at UW for 16-20 years, and 22.4% (184 people) reported working at UW for more than 20 years.
Tenure with Department

As shown below, 12.2% of respondents (100 people) reported working in their current department for less than a year, 36.1% (297 people) reported working in their current department for 1-5 years, 22% (181 people) reported working in their current department for 6-10 years, 12.4% (102 people) reported work in their current departments for 11-15 years, 4.5% (37 people) reported working in their current departments for 16-20 years, and 12.9% (106 people) reported working in their current departments for more than 20 years.
UWSA Staff Engagement Survey 2013

Years in Current Position

Illustrated in the figure below, 16.9% of respondents (139 people) reported working in their current position for less than a year, 43.5% (357 people) reported working in their current position for 1-5 years, 21.7% (178 people) reported working in their current position for 6-10 years, 9.6% (79 people) reported working in their current departments for 11-15 years, 3.7% (30 people) reported working in their current departments for 16-20 years, and 4.6% (38 people) reported working in their current departments for more than 20 years.

![Years in current position graph]

Years with Current Supervisor

As displayed in the figure below, 25.6% of respondents (210 people) reported working with their current supervisor for less than a year, 53.1% (436 people) reported working with their current supervisor for 1-5 years, 14.4% (118 people) reported working with their current supervisor for 6-10 years, 4.4% (36 people) reported working with their current supervisor for 11-15 years, 1.5% (12 people) reported working with their current supervisor for 16-20 years, and 1.1% (9 people) reported working with their current supervisor for more than 20 years.

![Years with current supervisor graph]
Training and Development

Training

One of the areas of interest for the University of Waterloo Staff Association was staff members’ perception of opportunities and support for training and development at the University of Waterloo. In this section of the survey, respondents were asked the following questions in regards to their experience of training and development.

1. The University of Waterloo offers excellent training programs.

Results revealed that 50.2% (461 people) somewhat agreed, 18.9% (174 people) strongly agreed, 14.7% (135) neither disagreed nor agreed, 13.1% (120 people) somewhat disagreed, and 3.2% strongly disagreed with the statement above.
2. University of Waterloo employees are provided with the resources necessary to acquire and use new knowledge and skills.

As displayed in the chart above, most respondents (46.6%, 428 people) selected “somewhat agree”, 19.6% (180 people) selected “strongly agree”, 16.2% (149 people) selected “somewhat disagree”, 14.5% (133 people) selected “neither disagree nor agree”, and 3.1% (28 people) selected “strongly disagree” in response to the statement that University of Waterloo employees are provided with resources necessary to acquire and use new knowledge and skills.
3. The University of Waterloo provides opportunities for employees to develop specialized skills related to their jobs

As displayed in the chart above, most respondents (45%, 412 people) selected “somewhat agree”, 18.9% (173 people) selected “somewhat disagree”, 16.7% (153 people) selected “strongly agree”, 14.6% (134 people) selected “neither disagree nor agree”, and 4.7% (43 people) selected “strongly disagree” in response to the statement that University of Waterloo provides opportunities for employees to develop specialized skills related to their jobs.
4. The University of Waterloo has programs and policies that help employees reach higher job levels.

In response to the statement “the University of Waterloo has programs and policies that help employees reach higher job levels,” 33% (302 people) selected “somewhat agree”, 24.7% (226 people) selected “somewhat disagree”, 22.1% (202 people) selected “neither disagree nor agree”, 10.3% (94 people) selected “strongly agree”, and 10% (92 people) selected “strongly disagree”.
5. The University of Waterloo has career development programs that help employees develop their job skills.

In response to the statement “the University of Waterloo has career development programs that help employees develop their job skills,” 41.6% (380 people) selected “somewhat agree”, 21.5% (196 people) selected “neither disagree nor agree”, 17.4% (159 people) selected “somewhat disagree”, 13.4% (122 people) selected “strongly agree”, and 6.1% (56 people) selected “strongly disagree”. 
To gauge staff knowledge and use of available services, respondents were asked to indicate a) whether they were aware of, and b) whether they had used a list of existing career services.

As displayed in the figure below, 55.9% (678 people) were aware of and 22.1% (165 people) had used Workshops and Webinars through Career Services. In terms of services related to Conflict Management and Human Rights, 63.5% (659 people) were aware of and 10.7% (111 people) had used the services. Occupational Health Services were known by 59.4% (616 people) and used by 15% (156) of survey respondents. Organizational & Human Development Courses were known by 57.5% (596) and used by 44.5% (461) of respondents. In terms of UWSA Member Support, 58.1% (602 people) were aware of and 6.9% (72 people) had used the service. In terms of the Employee Assistance Program, 69.2% (718 people) were aware of and 12.5% (130 people) had used the program. The services available through the Centre for Career Action were known by 64.6% (670 people) and used by 15.3% (159 people). The Career Development eManual was known by 40.3% (418 people) and used by 11.4% (118) of respondents. Finally, the service of Meetings with Staff Career Advisors was known by 65.5% (678 people) and used by 15.9% (165 people).
Job Mobility

Perceived job mobility was identified as an area of interest for the UWSA. Our current use of job mobility refers to perceived internal opportunities (within University of Waterloo) for job change. The following questions were included to capture perceived job mobility among staff members.

1. The University of Waterloo has a number of internal job opportunities for employees.

Results revealed that 47.4% (416 people) somewhat agreed, 22.9% (201 people) strongly agreed, 17.1% (150) neither disagreed nor agreed, 10% (88 people) somewhat disagreed, and 2.6% strongly disagreed with the statement above.
2. During the past 24 months, have you applied to any internal job opportunities?

As displayed in the pie chart above, 30% of respondents (267) had applied for an internal job opportunity in the past 24 months and 70% of respondents (611) had not.

3. If yes, how many jobs have you applied to in the past 24 months?

Results revealed that 50.8% of respondents who had applied to internal positions (135 people) applied to one job, 24.8% (66 people) had applied to two jobs, and 13.5% (36 people) had applied to three jobs, and 3.8% (10 people) had applied to four jobs.
4. If YES, why did you apply to another position at UW? (select all that apply)

As displayed in the figure above, the most common reasons for applying to another position at the University of Waterloo were: “I wanted a new challenge,” (210 selections), “The new position was a good fit with my skills and interests,” (190 selections) and “I wanted to increase my pay level,” (154 selections).

Respondents who selected “Other” were provided with space to briefly explain. The following are major themes identified with examples of typical comments. Please note that any potentially identifying information was omitted from comments and typos were corrected for ease of interpretation.
Workload/Stress

“Due to stress, I wanted to apply for a position that had less responsibility and no requirement to supervise staff.”

“It’s related to why I wanted to get away from my current job - the workload. I like the people here and my boss; but with the job freeze - jobs are being eradicated from departments and being centralized / moved up the food chain; yet the innovation happens at the lower levels because it has to due to budget and personal constraints.”

Problems with Supervisors

“I had a manager that was not trained or interested in her job, so the situation was unworkable.”

“My supervisor was determined to make my life a misery. Subtle abuse.”

“The management quality at my previous job became so unbearable I actually thought of sacrificing my 10+ year career here to leave UW completely - unfortunately my age & investment in pension convinced me to stay.”

Contract to Full-time Transition

“It was a contract position for two years that went to FT”

“I was on contract and applied for postings that were a fit for my skills. I was permanently hired to do the job I have been doing on contract.”
5. In your opinion, have the selection procedures for internal jobs...

a) Been free of bias?

As shown in the figure above, 29.1% (77 people) selected “somewhat agree”, 22.3% (59 people), selected “somewhat disagree”, 19.6% (52 people) selected “neither disagree nor agree”, 18.1% (48 people) selected “strongly disagree”, and 10.9% (29 people) selected “strongly agree” in response to the statement that the selection procedures for internal jobs are free of bias.
As shown in the figure above, 27.5% (73 people) selected “somewhat agree”, 23.8% (63 people), selected “neither disagree nor agree”, 22.3% (59 people) selected “somewhat disagree”, 14.7% (39 people) selected “strongly disagree”, and 11.7% (31 people) selected “strongly agree” in response to the statement that the selection procedures for internal jobs had been explained thoroughly.
6. If NO, why have you not applied to any internal job opportunities at the University of Waterloo?

As displayed in the figure above, the most common reasons for not applying to another position at the University of Waterloo were: “I am happy in my current position,” (409 selections), “I am happy in my current department,” (284 selections) and “I believed that another candidate was already in mind,” (101 selections).

Respondents who selected “Other” were provided with space to briefly explain. The following are major themes identified with examples of typical comments. Please note that any potentially identifying information was omitted from comments and typos were corrected for ease of interpretation.
Employed at UW > 1 year

“I have only been here just 1 year.”

“I am new to UW and have not completed my probationary period yet.”

Beliefs about Preference for External Candidates

“I believe most departments want external candidates and will find any internal applicants as "not being suitable or qualified".

“At senior levels greater than USG 15 these is a sense that selection committees are valuing external (new) candidates and not giving full consideration to, or stereotyping, internal employees as not open to change or innovative enough or not having external experience.”

Application Process

“The online application process is too cumbersome and lengthy. In the end, there is usually someone external hired. Job descriptions are written to fit the persona of the social media personality.”

“The application process is not a reason why I haven't applied but it is complex and it is definitely not user friendly. I've used it as a manager and have had very computer literate and excellent candidates who struggled with it.”

Lack of Suitable Positions

“No job postings that match my qualifications and interests and are at my position level or higher.”

“My present qualifications are not required in most other jobs at UW.”

“None of the posted jobs relate to my area of expertise and/or have the desired USG level”

Beliefs about Application Impacting Current Job

“I wouldn't want the information to get back to my department as they may not think I am dedicated to my position. I heard that word gets around easily on campus.”

“If I were to apply for another job I believe it could adversely affect my current role.”

“I don’t feel I would have the support of my current manager.”
Organization Environment

University Leadership

The UWSA identified satisfaction with University Leadership as an area of interest in understanding staff experiences. The following questions measuring support and communication from University Leadership.

7. 

a) University Leadership keeps my interests in mind when making decisions.

As illustrated in the figure above, 46.2% of respondents (407 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 22.1% of respondents (195 people) agreed, 21.2% of respondents (187 people) disagreed, 8.7% of respondents (77 people) strongly disagreed, and 1.7% (15 people) strongly agreed with the statement that the University Leaders keeps their interests in mind when making decisions.
b) I trust University Leadership in making decisions that are important to me

As illustrated in the figure above, 35.8% of respondents (316 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 31.6% of respondents (279 people) agreed, 22.1% of respondents (195 people) disagreed, 7.6% of respondents (67 people) strongly disagreed, and 2.8% (25 people) strongly agreed with the statement that they trust University Leaders in making important decisions.
c) University Leadership is open and honest in communicating reasons for changes in policy and personnel

Results revealed that 35.3% of respondents (311 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 31.9% of respondents (281 people) agreed, 21.4% of respondents (188 people) disagreed, 8.2% of respondents (72 people) strongly disagreed, and 3.2% (28 people) strongly agreed that University Leadership is open and honest in communicating reasons for changes in policy and personnel.
d) University Leadership provides a stable and consistent environment for employees at the University of Waterloo

As shown in the figure above, 46% of respondents (311 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 31.9% of respondents (281 people) agreed, 21.4% of respondents (188 people) disagreed, 8.2% of respondents (72 people) strongly disagreed, and 3.2% (28 people) strongly agreed that University Leadership provides a stable and consistent environment for employees.
e) University Leadership acts on employees’ ideas and suggestions.

Results showed that 51.2% of respondents (450 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 21.7% of respondents (191 people) agreed, 18.5% of respondents (163 people) disagreed, 6.5% of respondents (57 people) strongly disagreed, and 2% (18 people) strongly agreed that University Leadership acts on ideas and suggestions from employees.
f) University Leadership tells employees in advance about changes that will affect them.

Results showed that 37.8% of respondents (333 people) agreed, 33.3% of respondents (293 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 17.4% of respondents (153 people) disagreed, 6.4% of respondents (56 people) strongly disagreed, and 5.1% (45 people) strongly agreed that University Leadership tells employees in advance about changes that will affect them.
Organizational Support

The following questions were designed to measure staff perceptions of support from the University of Waterloo as an employer. Whereas the preceding questions dealt with University Leadership, the questions that follow relate to perceptions of the employer as a whole.

8.

a) Help is available from the University of Waterloo when I have a problem

In response to the statement “help is available from the University of Waterloo when I have a problem,” 53.3% of respondents (470 people) agreed, 24.3% (214 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 12.4% (109 people) strongly agreed, 6.2% (55 people) disagreed, and 3.9% (34 people) strongly disagreed.
b) The University of Waterloo really cares about my well-being.

In response to the statement “the University of Waterloo really cares about my well-being,” 38.8% of respondents (342 people) agreed, 36.1% (318 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 12.9% (114 people) disagreed, 6.7% (59 people) strongly agreed, and 5.6% (49 people) strongly disagreed.
c) The University of Waterloo cares about my general satisfaction at work.

Results revealed that 35.4% of respondents (312 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 34.7% of respondents (306 people) agreed, 18.4% of respondents (162 people) disagreed, 6.2% of respondents (55 people) strongly disagreed, and 5.2% (46 people) strongly agreed that the University of Waterloo cares about staff satisfaction at work.

d) The University of Waterloo cares about my opinions.
When asked to respond to the statement “the University of Waterloo cares about my opinions”, 42.7% of respondents (377 people) neither disagreed nor disagreed, 26.5% (234 people) agreed, 18.3% of respondents (161 people) disagreed, 7.6% of respondents (67 people) strongly disagreed, and 4.9% of respondents (43) strongly agreed.

Following the questions about organizational support, space was provided for respondents to add any additional comments about the organizational environment. The following are major themes identified with examples of typical comments. Please note that any potentially identifying information was omitted from comments and typos were corrected for ease of interpretation.

**Communication**

“It has been my experience/observation, that the University communicates information at the last minute, leaving little time for staff to plan – e.g., Town Hall Meetings are usually communicated in such a short time-frame that it is not possible to reschedule meetings to be able to attend.”

“I am not always aware of the decisions that are being made by our leaders unless they directly affect me in my role. All of the communications made from the top level are laid out in lengthy documents that I often do not have time to read.”

“I feel there is full intent, and appropriate concern for staff from University Leadership. However, the engagement and communication needs work.”

**University Leadership and Distance from Community**

“The higher levels do not have a clear understanding of the academic departments and what their individual needs are.”

“University Leadership seems detached from the actual community. The president is rarely seen except at town halls. As leaders they need to lead and not hide at Needles Hall. They need to lead by example and the perception is that there is no cohesive direction that they all buy into and are championing. Very difficult to look up to leaders who do not demonstrate the qualities of good leadership”

“There is a feeling of Leadership not being fairly represented by all staff (e.g., how are they aware of the issues if there is known lack of communication between them and the staff in their departments).”

**Emphasis on Faculty/Academia**

“Faculty consideration drives the work/employer environment, not staff.”

“I feel that the University’s priority is mainly with students and faculty rather than the staff who work at ensuring that the needs of the University are accomplished and maintained.”
Department Environment
The following questions were designed to evaluate perceptions of the work environment at the departmental level.

9

a) To what extent are personal conflicts evident in your department?

As shown in the figure above, 34.7% of respondents (306 people) reported a little personal conflicts, 27% (238 people) reported some personal conflicts, 20.6% (182 people) reported no personal conflicts, 11.8% (104 people) reported a lot of personal conflicts, and 5.9% (52 people) reported a great deal of personal conflicts in the departmental work environment.
b) How much tension is there among members in your department?

As seen above, 34.2% of respondents (301 people) reported a little tension, 26.6% (234 people) reported some tension, 22.6% (199 people) reported no tension, 10.8% (95 people) reported a lot of tension, and 5.9% (52 people) reported a great deal of tension among members in their departments.
c) How much emotional conflict is there among members in your department?

As shown above, 33.4% of respondents (294 people) reported a little emotional conflict, 28.8% (253 people) reported no emotional conflict, 23.7% (208 people) reported some emotional conflict, 8.9% (78 people) reported a lot of emotional conflict, and 5.2% (46 people) reported a great deal of emotional conflict in their departments.

d) How often do people in your department disagree about the work being done?

As seen from the figure above, 38.6% of respondents (340 people) reported a little departmental disagreements, 27.6% (243 people) reported some departmental disagreements, 16.4% (144 people) reported no department disagreements, 12.6% (111 people) reported a lot of department disagreements, and 4.8% (42 people) reported a great deal of department disagreements about the work being done.
a) Do members of your department feel safe communicating opinions about work issues to others in the group, even if their opinion is different and others in the group disagree with them?

As displayed in the figure above, 37.7% of respondents (327 people) sometimes felt safe, 32.4% (281 people) often felt safe, 14.2% (123 people) rarely felt safe, 12.7% (110 people) always felt safe, and 3.1% (27 people) never felt safe communicating opinions about work issues.
b) Do members of your department feel safe getting involved in issues that affect the quality of work life in your work group?

Results showed that 40.5% of respondents (350 people) sometimes felt safe, 28.8% (249 people) often felt safe, 15.7% (136 people) rarely felt safe, 11.6% (100 people) always felt safe, and 3.4% (29 people) reported never felt safe getting involved in issues that affect the quality of work life in your work group.
c) In my department, employees are encouraged to speak frankly even when they are critical of well-established ideas.

In response to the statement that employees are encouraged to speak out frankly even when critical of well-established ideas, 42.2% of respondents (364 people) agreed, 23.3% (201 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 17.4% (150 people) disagreed, 10.4% (90 people) strongly agreed, and 6.7% (58 people) strongly disagreed.
d) In my department, all members are treated equally regardless of their personal identity and background (e.g. cultural background, religious affiliation, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity).

Results showed that 38.5% of respondents (332 people) agreed, 37.3% (322 people) strongly agreed, 10.5% (91 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 7.9% (150 people) disagreed, and 5.8% (50 people) strongly disagreed all members of their department are treated equally regardless of personal identity and background.
e) It is best not to rock the boat in my department.

As shown above, in response to the statement “it is best not to rock the boat in my department,” 30.8% of respondents (266 people) disagreed, 25.6% (221 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 20.9% (180 people) agreed, 13.6% (117 people) strongly disagreed, and 9.2% (79 people) strongly agreed.
f) Telling others what they want to hear is sometimes better than telling the truth in my department.

As shown above, in response to the statement “Telling others what they want to hear is sometimes better than telling the truth in my department,” 35.3% of respondents (305 people) disagreed, 23.1% (200 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 23% (199 people) agreed, 11% (95 people) strongly disagreed, and 7.5% (65 people) strongly agreed.
g) In my department, people's ideas are judged based on their quality, not based on who expresses them.

Results revealed that in response to the statement “In my department, people's ideas are judged based on their quality, not based on who expresses them,” 42.3% of respondents (365 people) agreed, 24.4% (210 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 17.1% (147 people) disagreed, 9.9% (85 people) strongly agreed, and 6.4% (55 people) strongly disagreed.
In response to the statement “In my department, members can express their “true” selves,” 40.1% of respondents (346 people) agreed, 26% (224 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 15.7% (135 people) disagreed, 11.8% (102 people) strongly agreed, and 6.4% (55 people) strongly disagreed.
h) In my department, there is favouritism.

Results revealed that in response to the statement “In my department, there is favouritism,” 25.6% of respondents (205 people) disagreed, 25.3% (218 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 23.8% (205 people) agreed, 13% (112 people) strongly disagreed, and 12.3% (106 people) strongly agreed.

Following the questions about the departmental environment, space was provided for respondents to add any comments. The following are major themes identified with examples of comments. Please note that any potentially identifying information was omitted from comments and typos were corrected for ease of interpretation.

**Positive Team Environment**

“I am in a small department (3 people, recently expanded to 4) and we have a good relationship regarding expression of ideas etc.”

“I feel privileged to work in the area I am in. The working environment is very collegial, even when the workload becomes onerous. I enjoy coming in each morning!”

“I am very comfortable in this department being a new employee to the university.”
Variability between Departments

“I've worked in another department where it was very difficult to speak out due to management. It varies so differently throughout the university and it is really sad.”

“Every environment at the University of Waterloo is different. Some smaller units are better employers than larger units and vice versa. It is difficult to compare units. It would be great if someone could deal with the people who are causing the environment to be less than ideal rather than turning a blind eye to the situation.”

“I have a wonderfully supportive manager in my current position; however, I left my last position due to a rigid and toxic work environment.”

Importance of Staff Feedback

“I believe there are different weights put on the value of suggestions, etc. depending on whether it comes from a faculty member or a staff member.”

“It's safe to bring up issues and be critical. However they often fall on deaf ears, and my belief on the chances they will be considered or acted upon are slim to none.”

“More feedback could be sought when significant decisions are made. More monitoring of environment to determine and remedy negative impact to those changes. More consideration could be given to opinions and suggestions.”
Workload

The following questions were designed to greater understand the stress experienced by University of Waterloo staff associated with their workload.

11. How much stress does each of the following produce for you

a) The number of projects I have

As shown in the figure above, 40.7% of respondents (349 people) reported that the number of projects they have produces moderate stress, 23.8% (204 people) reported that the number of projects produces little stress, 20.6% (177) reported that the number of projects produces a lot of stress, 8% (69 people), and 6.9% of respondents (59) reported that the number of projects they have produces no stress.
b) The amount of time I spent at work

As shown in the figure above, 32.9% of respondents (289 people) reported that the amount of time spent at work produces moderate stress, 27.1% (232 people) reported that the amount of time spent at work produces little stress, 23% (197) reported that the amount of time spent at work produces no stress, 12.4% (106 people) reported that the amount of time spent at work produces a lot of stress, and 4.7% of respondents (40) reported that the amount of time spent at work produces a great deal of stress.
c) The volume of work that must be accomplished in the allotted time.

Results showed that 34.2% of respondents (293 people) reported that the volume of work to be accomplished in the allotted time produces moderate stress, 25.3% (217 people) reported that the volume of work to be accomplished in the allotted time produces little stress, 21.1% (181 people) reported that the volume of work to be accomplished in the allotted time produces a lot of stress, 11.9% (102 people) reported that the volume of work to be accomplished in the allotted time produces a great deal of stress, and 7.5% (64 people) reported that the volume of work that must be accomplished in the allotted time produces no stress.
Results showed that 31.2% of respondents (267 people) reported that time pressure experienced produces moderate stress, 28.9 % of respondents (248 people) reported that time pressure produces little stress, 20.3% of respondents (174 people) reported that time pressure produces a lot of stress, 10.2% of respondents (87 people) reported that time pressure produces a great deal of stress, and 9.5% of respondents (81 people) reported that time pressure produces no stress.
e) The amount of responsibility I have

As shown in the figure above, the amount of responsibility produces moderate stress for 35.9% of respondents (308 people), little stress for 32.9% of respondents (282 people), a lot of stress for 13.4% of respondents (115 people), no stress for 12.8% of respondents (110 people) and a great deal of stress for 4.9% of respondents (42 people).
f) The amount of red tape I need to go through to get my job done

Results revealed that the amount of red tape needed to go through to complete one’s job produces little stress for 31.2% of respondents (267 people), moderate stress for 26% of respondents (222 people), a lot of stress for 16.8% of respondents (144 people), no stress for 13.9% of respondents (119 people), and a great deal of stress for 12% of respondents (103 people).
Overtime

The frequency and causes for non-compensated work was identified as an area of interest for the UWSA. The following questions deal with non-compensated work hours. Please note that only those who reported working non-compensated were directed to the follow-up questions.

12.

a) Do you work non-compensated hours?

As shown in the figure above, 50.5% of respondents (367 people) reported that they did not work non-compensated hours whereas 49.5% of respondents (360 people) reported that they did.
b) If YES, on average how many non-compensated hours do you work per week?

![Bar chart showing the distribution of non-compensated hours worked per week.]

Results revealed that among those who reported working non-compensated hours, 23.7% (81 people) reported working 5 additional hours per week, 16.4% (56 people) reported working an additional 10 hours per week, and 13.5% (46 people) reported working an additional 2 hours per week. The mean number of non-compensated hours worked per week was 6.3 hours with a standard deviation of 5.4 (N = 342).
c) If YES, how often do you work non-compensated hours?

As shown in the figure above, when asked how often they work non-compensated hours, 51% of respondents (179 people) reported working non-compensated hours weekly, 24.8% (87 people) reported working non-compensated hours once or twice a month, 17.7% (62 people) reported working non-compensated hours daily, 4.8% (17 people) reported working non-compensated hours once or twice every 6 months, and 1.7% (6 people) reported working non-compensated hours once or twice a year.
d) If YES, why do you work non-compensated hours? (select all that apply)

As displayed in the figure above, the most common reason for working non-compensated hours was a lack of adequate time to finish the job (210 selections), followed by enjoyment of the work (158 selections), and perceived expectations in the department (125 selections). The “other” category has 126 selections.

Respondents who selected “Other” were provided with space to briefly explain. The following are major themes identified with examples of typical comments. Please note that any potentially identifying information was omitted from comments and typos were corrected for ease of interpretation.

**Concern for Students**

“We are not encouraged not to work beyond our scheduled hours, so I have cut down; however, if students need help, I do not turn them away. Instead, I try to balance extra hours with time off in lieu during slack periods; it probably all balances out in the end.”

“Sometimes I like to get it done so the students don’t feel stressed or anxious and I might be going on vacation or something.”
“We work with students. I care about students, so I put the extra time in.”

“I just figure it is part of the job and I love the work I do. The non-compensated work revolves around students and sometimes the time involved just gets away from me. The non-compensated hours are usually joyful.”

Peak Times of the Year

“Certain times during the term are very hectic.”

“Year-end reporting and filing requirements take up a considerable amount of time from October through the end of March. In order to get everything completed accurately and on-time, in the current environment, extra hours are necessary.”

“The workload is very heavy for most of the Fall and Winter terms.”

Staffing Issues

“We have been understaffed for at least two years; getting worse. I don’t have time to finish my job and the jobs of the staff who haven't been replaced yet.”

“Staff shortages -- down 3 FTEs.”

“My team has been short staffed for about a year, and as the manager for my team I am responsible in ensuring that work is still completed. There is always more work then there are hours in a day and hence I bring work home with me about 2-3 times per week.”

Enjoyment/ Pride in Work

“Extra hours are voluntary on my part and I believe benefits the school.”

“I enjoy my work, and as a professional I like to see projects/activities to completion. I work both compensated (lieu time) and uncompensated hours. The data above reflects only the uncompensated time. Therefore, I work significantly more time than is indicated in the figure above.
Psychological Safety

Negative Interactions with Co-workers
The following questions were included to greater understand the occurrence of harassment among coworkers and from supervisors at the University of Waterloo.

13. During the past 24 months at the University of Waterloo, have you experienced or witnessed a situation in which coworkers...

a) Excluded you or someone else from social interactions during or after work

When asked how frequently they witnessed or experienced exclusion from social interactions during or after work, 54.1% of respondents (457 people) reported never, 20.3% (171 people) reported rarely, 17.4% (147 people) reported sometimes, 5.3% (45 people) reported often, and 2.8% (24 people) reported very often.
b) Belittled your opinions or someone else’s opinions in front of others.

When asked how frequently they witnessed or experienced a co-worker belittling opinions in front of others, 46.9% of respondents (397 people) reported never, 23.6% (200 people) reported rarely, 21.6% (183 people) reported sometimes, 5% (42 people) reported often, and 3% (25 people) reported very often.
c) Made you or someone else look foolish

As shown in the figure above, when asked how frequently they witnessed or experienced a co-worker making another look foolish, 48.6% of respondents (412 people) reported never, 24.2% (205 people) of respondents reported rarely, 18.3% (155 people) of respondents reported sometimes, 6% (51 people) of respondents reported often, and 2.8% (24 people) reported very often.
d) Told you or someone else that their thoughts or feelings are stupid

When asked how frequently they experienced or witnessed a co-worker telling someone else that their thoughts or feelings are stupid, 71.7% of respondents (607 people) reported never, 15.1% of respondents (128 people) reported rarely, 9.6% of respondents (81 people) reported sometimes, 2.7% of respondents (23 people) reported often, and 0.8% of respondents (7 people) reported very often.
e) Told you or someone else that they were incompetent.

When asked how frequently they experienced or witnessed a co-worker telling someone else that they were incompetent, 66.7% of respondents (564 people) reported never, 16.8% of respondents (142 people) reported rarely, 11.2% of respondents (95 people) reported sometimes, 3.3% of respondents (28 people) reported often, and 1.9% of respondents (16 people) reported very often.
As shown in the figure above, when asked how frequently they had experienced or witnessed a co-worker ridiculing someone, 60.9% of respondents (514 people) reported never, 19.2% of respondents (162 people) reported rarely, 14.6% of respondents (123 people) reported sometimes, 3.2% of respondents (27 people) reported often, and 2.1% reported very often.
Negative Interactions with Supervisors

The following questions were included to greater understand the occurrence of harassment from supervisors at the University of Waterloo.

13. During the past 24 months at the University of Waterloo, have you experienced or witnessed a situation in which supervisors...

a) Excluded you or someone else from social interactions during or after work

When asked how frequently they witnessed or experienced supervisors excluding others from social interactions during or after work, 71.6% of respondents (457 people) reported never, 20.3% (171 people) reported rarely, 17.4% (147 people) reported sometimes, 5.3% (45 people) reported often, and 2.8% (24 people) reported very often.
b) Belittled your opinions or someone else’s opinions in front of others.

When asked how frequently they witnessed or experienced a supervisor belittling opinions in front of others, 62% of respondents (523 people) reported never, 17.7% (149 people) reported rarely, 13.3% (112 people) reported sometimes, 3.8% (32 people) reported often, and 3.3% (28 people) reported very often.
c) Made you or someone else look foolish

As shown in the figure above, when asked how frequently they witnessed or experienced a supervisor making another look foolish, 63.3% (534 people) of respondents reported never, 17% (143 people) of respondents reported rarely, 13.8% (116 people) of respondents reported sometimes, 3.1% (26 people) of respondents reported often, and 2.8% (24 people) reported very often.
d) Told you or someone else that their thoughts or feelings are stupid

When asked how frequently they experienced or witnessed a co-worker telling someone else that their thoughts or feelings are stupid, 77.1% of respondents (651 people) reported never, 11.7% of respondents (99 people) reported rarely, 6.9% of respondents (58 people) reported sometimes, 2.3% of respondents (19 people) reported often, and 2% of respondents (17 people) reported very often.
e) Told you or someone else that they were incompetent.

When asked how frequently they experienced or witnessed a supervisor telling someone else that they were incompetent, 74.4% of respondents (628 people) reported never, 13% of respondents (110 people) reported rarely, 8.3% of respondents (70 people) reported sometimes, 2.6% of respondents (22 people) reported very often, and 1.7% of respondents (14 people) reported often.
f) Ridiculed you or someone else

As shown in the figure above, when asked how frequently they had experienced or witnessed a supervisor ridiculing someone, 70.8% of respondents (597 people) reported never, 15.1% of respondents (127 people) reported rarely, 8.9% of respondents (75 people) reported sometimes, 3% of respondents (25 people) reported very often, and 2.3% of respondents (19 people) reported often.
Work/Life Balance

The following questions were designed to assess staff experiences of work/life balance.

14

a) My work at the University of Waterloo keeps me from my personal/family activities more than I would like.

As shown in the figure above, when asked about their level of agreement with the statement “my work at the University of Waterloo keeps me from my personal/family activities more than I would like,” 38.1% of respondents (322 people) selected disagree, 20.1% of respondents (170 people) selected neither disagree nor agree, 19.9% of respondents (168 people) selected agree, 16.7% of respondents (141 people) selected strongly disagree, and 5.3% of respondents (45 people) selected strongly agree.

As shown in the figure above, when asked about their level of agreement with the statement “my work at the University of Waterloo keeps me from my personal/family activities more than I would like,” 38.1% of respondents (322 people) selected disagree, 20.1% of respondents (170 people) selected neither disagree nor agree, 19.9% of respondents (168 people) selected agree, 16.7% of respondents (141 people) selected strongly disagree, and 5.3% of respondents (45 people) selected strongly agree.
b) The time I devote to my job at the University of Waterloo keeps me from participating as much as I would like in household responsibilities.

As shown in the figure above, when asked about their level of agreement with the statement “the time I devote to my job at the University of Waterloo keeps me from participating as much as I would like in household responsibilities,” 38% of respondents (321 people) selected disagree, 20.9% of respondents (176 people) selected neither disagree nor agree, 18.5% of respondents (156 people) selected agree, 17.4% of respondents (147 people) selected strongly disagree, and 5.2% of respondents (44 people) selected strongly agree.
c) Due to all the pressures at work, sometimes when I come home I am too exhausted/stressed to do the things I enjoy.

As shown in the figure above, when asked about their level of agreement with the statement “due to all the pressures at work, sometimes when I come home I am too exhausted/stressed to do the things I enjoy,” 34.6% of respondents (293 people) selected agree, 23.4% of respondents (198 people) selected disagree, 16.9% of respondents (143 people) selected neither disagree nor agree, 15.2% of respondents (129 people) selected strongly agree, and 9.8% of respondents (83 people) selected strongly disagree.

Following the questions about work/life balance, space was provided for respondents to offer any additional comments about their experiences of balance at the University of Waterloo. The following are major themes identified with examples of typical comments. Please note that any potentially identifying information was omitted from comments and typos were corrected for ease of interpretation.
Positive Environment

“Generally my department has been extremely helpful in allowing me to handle personal issues by working odd hours when needed.”

“Because I am able to work part time in a wonderful and flexible department, I feel that my work/life balance is exceptionally good.”

“My department is very family-oriented and help me to manage both work and family obligations.”

“Having recently started working in the university after leaving a job in the private sector, I find the work/life balance at the university much better than the private sector. This is why I chose to leave and accept a position with the university.”

Flex-Time in Practice

“I feel like we have a "policy" regarding flex time and work/life balanced, but 1. I do not see it being modeled by supervisors; and 2. I see others being praised for their "hard work" when putting in the amount of time a colleague does is simply not realistic for me 3. I often feel guilty for leaving early or taking time off to accommodate family needs.”

“I really enjoy the idea of flex time; however, it is often not set up well in every department. It is definitely not valued as much as it should be.”

“I wish that flex time was more in favour; I like to work very early when my brain is at its best, and go home early, but that is no longer allowed.”

Work/Life Balance as Personal Choice

“Work/life balance is a personal choice. I choose to work extra hours and make my work a priority as I believe in the work that I do and the goals of the university. Here at the university, I can choose to make my personal life a priority if I want to. Many other employers don’t allow their staff to have that choice. I have worked in other environments outside of the university and balance is much more difficult there.”

“Work/life balance is sometimes a personal choice and not imposed externally. However most supervisory/management staff on campus are working longer hours, at home, when sick and sometimes through the use of personal cell phones.”
Job Attitudes

15

a) In general, I like working at the University of Waterloo

As shown in the figure above, in response to the statement “I like working at the University of Waterloo,” 48.5% of respondents (410 people) agreed, 44.5% of respondents (376 people) strongly agreed, 4.6% of respondents (39 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 2% of respondents (17 people) disagreed, and 0.4% of respondents (3 people) strongly disagreed.
b) All in all, I am satisfied with my job at the University of Waterloo

As shown in the figure above, in response to the statement “All in all, I am satisfied with my job at the University of Waterloo,” 48.6% of respondents (410 people) agreed, 30.8% of respondents (260 people) strongly agreed, 11.6% of respondents (98 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 7.2% of respondents (61 people) disagreed, and 1.7% of respondents (14 people) strongly disagreed.
c) I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do

As shown in the figure above, in response to the statement “I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do,” 39.8% of respondents (336 people) agreed, 24.1% of respondents (203 people) disagreed, 16.4% of respondents (138 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 13.9% of respondents (117 people) strongly agreed, and 5.9% of respondents (50 people) strongly disagreed.
d) There is little chance for promotion in my job

As shown in the figure above, in response to the statement “There is little chance for promotion in my job,” 34.4% of respondents (290 people) agreed, 24% of respondents (202 people) strongly agreed, 22.3% of respondents (188 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 16.1% of respondents (136 people) disagreed, and 3.2% of respondents (27 people) strongly disagreed.
e) I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career working at the University of Waterloo

As shown in the figure above, in response to the statement “I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career working at the University of Waterloo,” 40% of respondents (338 people) agreed, 35.7% of respondents (302 people) strongly agreed, 16.9% of respondents (143 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 5.1% of respondents (43 people) disagreed, and 2.2% of respondents (19 people) strongly disagreed.
f) The University of Waterloo has a great deal of personal meaning for me

As shown in the figure above, in response to the statement “The University of Waterloo has a great deal of personal meaning for me,” 36% of respondents (304 people) agreed, 25.5% of respondents (215 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 23.8% of respondents (201 people) strongly agreed, 10.8% of respondents (91 people) disagreed, and 3.9% of respondents (33 people) strongly disagreed.
g) Right now, staying with the University of Waterloo is a matter of necessity as much as desire

As shown in the figure above, in response to the statement “Right now, staying with the University of Waterloo is a matter of necessity as much as desire,” 30% of respondents (253 people) agreed, 23.6% of respondents (199 people) disagreed, 23.5% of respondents (198 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 14.8% of respondents (125 people) strongly agree, and 8.2% of respondents (69 people) strongly disagreed.
h) Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave the University of Waterloo

As shown in the figure above, in response to the statement “Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave the University of Waterloo,” 31.1% of respondents (263 people) agreed, 24.5% of respondents (207 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 22.6% of respondents (191 people) disagreed, 14.9% of respondents (126 people) strongly agree, and 6.9% of respondents (58 people) strongly disagreed.
i) One of the major reasons I continue to work for the University of Waterloo is that I believe that loyalty is important and feel a sense of obligation to remain.

As shown in the figure above, in response to the statement "One of the major reasons I continue to work for the University of Waterloo is that I believe that loyalty is important and feel a sense of obligation to remain," 33% of respondents (278 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 25.1% of respondents (211 people) disagreed, 24.1% of respondents (203 people) agreed, 11.5% of respondents (97 people) strongly disagreed, and 6.3% of respondents (53 people) strongly agreed.
j) When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work

As shown in the figure above, in response to the statement “When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work,” 47% of respondents (396 people) agreed, 26.2% of respondents (221 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 13.2% of respondents (111 people) strongly agreed, 10.2% of respondents (86 people) disagreed, and 3.4% of respondents (29 people) strongly disagreed.
k) I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose

As shown in the figure above, in response to the statement “I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose,” 53.3% of respondents (447 people) agreed, 19.4% of respondents (163 people) strongly agreed, 19.1% of respondents (160 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 6.7% of respondents (56 people) disagreed, and 1.5% of respondents (13 people) strongly disagreed.
I) I will look to change jobs (but stay within University of Waterloo) in the next 6 months

As shown in the figure above, in response to the statement “I will look to change jobs (but stay within University of Waterloo) in the next 6 months,” 27.1% of respondents (228 people) disagreed, 25.8% of respondents (217 people) strongly disagreed, 24.3% of respondents (205 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 13.9% of respondents (117 people) agreed, and 8.9% of respondents (75 people) strongly agreed.
m) I plan on leaving the University of Waterloo in the next 6 months

As shown in the figure above, in response to the statement “I plan on leaving the University of Waterloo in the next 6 months,” 58.9% of respondents (495 people) strongly disagreed, 24.9% of respondents (209 people) disagreed, 11.7% of respondents (98 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 2.4% of respondents (20 people) agreed, and 2.3% of respondents (19 people) strongly agreed.
Respondents who agreed/strongly agreed with the above statement were directed to the following:

**You indicated that you have a strong intention to leave the University of Waterloo in the next 6 months. Please indicate the primary reason for this intention.**

Among those who indicated intent to leave the organization in the next 6 months, 37.8% (14 people) cited dissatisfaction with the current job as a reason, 24.3% (9 people) cited retirement, 13.5% (5 people) cited other, 10.8% (4 people) cited dissatisfaction with the University as an employer, 8.1% (3 people) cited new job opportunity elsewhere, and 5.4% (2 people) cited family/personal reasons.

Respondents who selected “Other” were provided with space to briefly explain. The following comments were recorded:

“This is only a possibility - would love to stay here, but my husband’s job may be relocating”

“Supervisor treats staff in the unit, including me, with disrespect and unfairly”

“Restructure has limited career options and devalued skillset”

“I need part time hours and that’s not a possibility at UW”

“I indicated dissatisfaction with current job but it is mostly because of dissatisfaction with my current supervisor and not the job itself”
“I do not feel valued enough and I am disappointed with the culture at UW and a lack of respect among people”

“Dissatisfaction with my current organization, management styles and lack of skillset among my colleagues”
Supervision and Feedback

Relationship with Supervisor

The following questions were included to greater understand the relationship between respondents and their supervisors.

16

a) My immediate supervisor and I can talk effectively to solve conflicts between work and non-work life/responsibilities

As shown in the figure above, when asked their level of agreement with the statement “My immediate supervisor and I can talk effectively to solve conflicts between work and non-work life/responsibilities,” 51.3% of respondents (432 people) strongly agreed, 27.3% (230 people) agreed, 8% (67 people) disagreed, 7.5% (63 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, and 5.9% (50 people) strongly disagreed.
b) My immediate supervisor looks out for the personal welfare of group members

As shown in the figure above, when asked their level of agreement with the statement “My immediate supervisor looks out for the personal welfare of group members,” 47.1% of respondents (395 people) strongly agreed, 27.4% (220 people) agreed, 11.3% (95 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 8.1% (63 people) disagreed, and 6.1% (51 people) strongly disagreed.
c) How well does your immediate supervisor understand your job problems and needs?

As shown above, when asked how well their immediate supervisor understands their job problems and needs, 37.9% of respondents (316 people) indicated “mostly”, 29.1% of respondents (243 people) indicated “fully”, 17.1% of respondents (143 people) indicated “moderately”, 11.9% of respondents (99 people) indicated “a little” and 4% of respondents (33 people) indicated “not at all”. 
d) How well does your immediate supervisor recognize your potential?

As shown above, when asked how well their immediate supervisor recognizes their potential, 35.8% of respondents (300 people) indicated “fully”, 32.9% of respondents (276 people) indicated “mostly”, 17% of respondents (143 people) indicated “moderately”, 9.7% of respondents (81 people) indicated “a little” and 4.6% of respondents (39 people) indicated “not at all”.
e) Regardless of how much formal authority they have built into their position, what are the chances that your immediate supervisor would use their power to help you solve problems in your work?

As shown above, when asked the chances that their immediate supervisor would use their power to help solve a work problem 35.6% of respondents (298 people) indicated that chances were high, 32% (268 people) indicated that chances were very high, 19.8% (166 people) indicated that chances were moderate, 9.4% (79 people) indicated that chances were small, and 3.1% (26 people) indicated that there was no chance.
f) Regardless of how much formal authority they have built into their position, what are the chances that your immediate supervisor would support you in a difficult situation?

As shown above, when asked the chances that their immediate supervisor would help them in a difficult situation, 35.9% of respondents (298 people) indicated that chances were very high, 35.7% (296 people) indicated that chances were high, 18.7% (155 people) indicated that chances were moderate, 7.7% (64 people) indicated that chances were small, and 1.9% (16 people) indicated that there was no chance.
As shown in the figure above, in reaction to the statement that they have confidence in their immediate supervisor, 39% of respondents (324 people) agreed, 33.5% of respondents (278 people) strongly agreed, 19% of respondents (158 people) were neutral, 5.9% of respondents (49 people) disagreed, and 2.5% of respondents strongly disagreed.
h) How would you characterize your working relationship with your supervisor?

As shown above, when asked to rate the effectiveness of their relationship with their immediate supervisor, 46.7% of respondents (388 people) selected extremely effective, 35.9% of respondents (298 people) selected somewhat effective, 8% of respondents (66 people) selected neither ineffective nor effective, 6.5% of respondents (54 people) selected somewhat ineffective, and 2.9% of respondents selected extremely ineffective.

For those who indicated that their working relationship with their supervisor was extremely ineffective, space was provided for respondents to provide further explanation. The following are major themes identified with examples of typical comments. Please note that any potentially identifying information was omitted from comments and typos were corrected for ease of interpretation.

Supervisors with Political Agendas

“The supervisor seems to have his/her own agenda and to be filling the supervisory position strictly as a stepping stone to what he/she really wants to do, so there is little to no personal investment in the current position and no concern for the team members -- they are strictly a means to an end.”

“With this supervisor, I feel like a pawn and a competitor to my team members, whereas I used to feel very valued by my supervisor, team, and larger department.”
Openness to Staff Input

“Supervisor does not ask for my input and criticizes it when given. I feel constantly devalued and micromanaged. Supervisor is egocentric and likes to be the center of attention - not team focused.”

“Supervisor is not willing to hear, let alone consider, any ideas that do not match with his/her own. S/he behaves immaturely, choosing to ignore people rather than deal constructively with issues.”
Supervisory Behaviors

17

a) Lets group members know what is expected of them

As shown above, when asked to indicate the frequency with which the immediate supervisor lets group members know what is expected of them, 40% of respondents (330 people) reported often, 27.4% of respondents (226 people) reported occasionally, 19% of respondents (157 people) reported always, 11.5% of respondents (95 people) reported seldom, and 2.2% of respondents (18 people) reported never.
b) Provides you with enough structure to be successful

As shown above, when asked to indicate the frequency with which their immediate supervisor provides them with enough structure to be successful, 40.8% of respondents (337 people) reported often, 24.5% of respondents (202 people) reported always, 21.7% of respondents (179 people) reported occasionally, 9.3% of respondents (77 people) reported seldom, and 3.8% of respondents (31 people) reported never.
c) Maintains concrete standards of performance

As shown above, when asked to indicate the frequency with which their immediate supervisor maintains concrete standards of performance, 36.1% of respondents (297 people) reported often, 23.7% of respondents (195 people) reported always, 22.5% of respondents (185 people) reported occasionally, 12.8% of respondents (105 people) reported seldom, and 4.9% of respondents (40 people) reported never.
d) Gives me positive feedback when I perform well

As shown above, when asked to indicate the frequency with which their immediate supervisor gives positive feedback following good performance, 33% of respondents (272 people) reported always, 29.1% of respondents (240 people) reported often, 21.3% of respondents (176 people) reported occasionally, 11.6% of respondents (96 people) reported seldom, and 5% of respondents (41 people) reported never.
e) Personally pays me a compliment when I do outstanding work

As shown above, when asked to indicate the frequency with which their immediate supervisor pays them a compliment when they produce outstanding work, 33.7% of respondents (278 people) reported always, 25.5% of respondents (210 people) reported often, 20.4% of respondents (168 people) reported occasionally, 12.1% of respondents (100 people) reported seldom, and 8.3% of respondents (68 people) reported never.
f) My immediate supervisor lets me know when I perform poorly

As shown above, when asked to indicate the frequency with which their immediate supervisor lets them know when they perform poorly, 32.2% of respondents (260 people) reported occasionally, 25% of respondents (202 people) reported seldom, 15.2% of respondents (123 people) reported often, 14.1% of respondents (114 people) reported always, and 13.5% of respondents (109 people) reported never.
g) My immediate supervisor is displeased with my work for no apparent reason

As shown above, when asked to indicate the frequency with which their immediate supervisor is displeased with their work for no reason, 76.2% of respondents (629 people) reported never, 14.2% of respondents (117 people) reported seldom, 6.9% of respondents (57 people) reported occasionally, 1.8% of respondents (15 people) reported often, and 0.8% of respondents (7 people) reported always.
h) I am reprimanded by my immediate supervisor without knowing why

As shown above, when asked to indicate the frequency with which they are reprimanded by their immediate supervisor without knowing why, 86.2% of respondents (710 people) reported never, 7.8% of respondents (64 people) reported seldom, 4.2% of respondents (35 people) reported occasionally, 1% of respondents (8 people) reported often, and 0.8% of respondents (7 people) reported always.
i) Even when I perform poorly on my job, my supervisor does not get upset with me

As shown above, when asked to indicate the frequency with which they perform poorly on the job and their supervisor does not get upset, 28% of respondents (217 people) reported never, 19.3% of respondents (149 people) reported occasionally, 19% of respondents (147 people) reported often, 17.8% of respondents (138 people) reported always, and 15.9% of respondents (123 people) reported seldom.
j) My immediate supervisor leads by “doing” rather than simply “telling”

As seen in the figure above, when asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “My immediate supervisor leads by doing rather than sampling telling,” 35% of respondents (290 people) agreed, 22.3% of respondents (185 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 22% of respondents (182 people) strongly agreed, 13% of respondents (108 people) disagreed, and 7.6% of respondents (63 people) strongly disagreed.
k) My immediate supervisor takes a personal interest in my career

As seen in the figure above, when asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “My immediate supervisor takes a personal interest in my career,” 33.1% of respondents (275 people) agreed, 24.3% of respondents (202 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 20.8% of respondents (173 people) strongly agreed, 14.1% of respondents (117 people) disagreed, and 7.6% of respondents (63 people) strongly disagreed.
I) My immediate supervisor is supportive and encouraging

As seen in the figure above, when asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “My immediate supervisor is supportive and encouraging,” 36.2% of respondents (300 people) strongly agreed, 36.1% of respondents (299 people) agreed, 15.7% of respondents (130 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 7.4% of respondents (61 people) disagreed, and 4.7% of respondents (39 people) strongly disagreed.
Feedback Environment

18

A) My supervisor gives me useful feedback about my job performance

As seen in the figure above, when asked to indicate their agreement with the statement “My supervisor gives me useful feedback about my job performance,” 49% of respondents (405 people) agreed, 19% of respondents (157 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 17.7% of respondents (146 people) strongly agreed, 10.5% of respondents (87 people) disagreed, and 3.8% of respondents (31 people) strongly disagreed.
b) When my supervisor gives me performance feedback, they are considerate of my feelings

As seen in the figure above, when asked to indicate their agreement with the statement “When my supervisor gives me performance feedback, they are considerate of my feelings,” 50.5% of respondents (415 people) agreed, 24.1% of respondents (198 people) strongly agreed, 18.5% of respondents (152 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 4.5% of respondents (37 people) disagreed, and 2.4% of respondents (20 people) strongly disagreed.
c) My supervisor is tactful when giving me performance feedback

As seen in the figure above, when asked to indicate their agreement with the statement “My supervisor is tactful when giving me performance feedback,” 50.4% of respondents (414 people) agreed, 26.3% of respondents (216 people) strongly agreed, 16.1% of respondents (132 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 4.4% of respondents (36 people) disagreed, and 2.8% of respondents (23 people) strongly disagreed.
d) My supervisor is usually accessible when I want performance information

As seen in the figure above, when asked to indicate their agreement with the statement “My supervisor is usually accessible when I want performance information,” 46.3% of respondents (380 people) agreed, 27.3% of respondents (224 people) strongly agreed, 16.9% of respondents (139 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 6.6% of respondents (54 people) disagreed, and 2.9% of respondents (24 people) strongly disagreed.
e) My supervisor is too busy to give me feedback

As seen in the figure above, when asked to indicate their agreement with the statement “My supervisor is too busy to give me feedback,” 35.2% of respondents (288 people) disagreed, 35.1% of respondents (287 people) strongly disagreed, 17.2% of respondents (141 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 9.5% of respondents (78 people) agreed, and 2.9% of respondents (24 people) strongly agreed.
f) I feel comfortable asking my supervisor for feedback about my work performance

As seen in the figure above, when asked to indicate their agreement with the statement “I feel comfortable asking my supervisor for feedback about my work performance,” 42.4% of respondents (346 people) agreed, 28.5% of respondents (233 people) strongly agreed, 16% of respondents (131 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 8.6% of respondents (70 people) disagreed, and 4.5% of respondents (37 people) strongly disagreed.

Following the questions about feedback environment, space was provided for respondents to provide any additional comments. The following are major themes identified with examples of typical comments. Please note that any potentially identifying information was omitted from comments and typos were corrected for ease of interpretation.

**Desire for Informal Feedback**

“*I think the formal evaluation process should be done every two years rather than every year. An informal evaluation process could be done every other year or more often if necessary.*”

“I wish a mid-year review was a requirement for all employees. *Informal, review of goals, this is how things are going, outside of the regular day-to-day conversations.*”
“It would be nice to get more regular feedback than yearly performance evaluations.”

**SupervisorDisconnected from Jobs**

“My supervisor’s understanding of my job is superficial”

“My supervisor does not really know what tasks I do because he does not work directly with my projects. Therefore he cannot give me feedback on tasks. However, he is very approachable and tries to have some interest in what I do. There are other senior team members who do provide direct feedback.”

“My immediate supervisor has no idea what I do here. Most of my projects are initiated by faculty and 99% of my work comes through them. However, my immediate supervisor does my review.”

“Supervisor is so far removed they would have a difficult time providing feedback”
Formal Performance Review System

The following questions were included to gather information about staff perceptions of the formal performance review system.

19

a) The performance review system at the University of Waterloo is valuable

As shown in the figure above, when asked their level of agreement with the statement “The performance review system at the University of Waterloo is valuable,” 34% of respondents (279 people) agreed, 25.7% of respondents (211 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 21.6% (177 people) disagreed, 14.3% of respondents (177 people) strongly disagreed, and 4.4% of respondents (36 people) strongly agreed.
b) I understand the performance review system being used at the University of Waterloo

As shown in the figure above, when asked their level of agreement with the statement “I understand the performance review system being used at the University of Waterloo,” 55.5% of respondents (456 people) agreed, 16.3% of respondents (134 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 13% (107 people) strongly agreed, 10.4% of respondents (85 people) disagreed, and 4.8% of respondents (39 people) strongly disagreed.
c) I know the criteria used at the University of Waterloo to evaluate performance

As shown in the figure above, when asked their level of agreement with the statement “I know the criteria used at the University of Waterloo to evaluate performance,” 55.2% of respondents (453 people) agreed, 18.3% of respondents (150 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 12.3% (101 people) strongly agreed, 10% of respondents (82 people) disagreed, and 4.3% of respondents (35 people) strongly disagreed.
d) The performance review system at the University of Waterloo is fair

As shown in the figure above, when asked their level of agreement with the statement “The performance review system at the University of Waterloo is fair,” 32.2% of respondents (263 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 27.7% of respondents (226 people) agreed, 22.6% (185 people) disagreed, 13.8% of respondents (113 people) strongly disagreed, and 3.7% of respondents (30 people) strongly agreed.
e) The University of Waterloo clearly communicates to me the objectives of the performance appraisal system

As shown in the figure above, when asked their level of agreement with the statement “The University of Waterloo clearly communicates to me the objectives of the performance appraisal system,” 35.7% of respondents (291 people) agreed, 30.5% of respondents (249 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 19.1% (156 people) disagreed, 9.6% of respondents (78 people) strongly disagreed, and 5.1% of respondents (42 people) strongly agreed.
f) In general, I feel that the University of Waterloo has an excellent performance review system

As shown in the figure above, when asked their level of agreement with the statement “In general, I feel that the University of Waterloo has an excellent performance review system,” 33.4% of respondents (272 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 26% of respondents (212 people) disagreed, 20.4% (166 people) strongly disagreed, 17.6% of respondents (143 people) agreed, and 2.6% of respondents (21 people) strongly agreed.
Recent Performance Review Session

The following questions pertain to the most recent performance review session conducted by supervisors at the University of Waterloo.

20.

a) Did you participate in a performance review session this year?

When asked if they participated in a performance review session this year, 92.6% of respondents (761 people) responded with “yes” whereas 7.4% of participants (61 people) responded with “no.”
b) The review session provided a fair and unbiased measure of my level of performance

As shown in the figure above, when asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “the review session provided a fair and unbiased measure of my performance,” 53.8% of respondents (409 people) agreed, 17.2% of respondents (131 people) strongly agreed, 16.6% of respondents (126 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 9.1% of respondents (69 people) disagreed, and 3.3% of respondents (25 people) strongly disagreed.
c) I felt quite satisfied with my last performance review session.

As displayed in the figure above, in response to the statement “I’m quite satisfied with my last performance review session,” 52.2% of respondents (396 people) agreed, 21.8% (165 people) strongly agreed, 16.5% (125 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 5.8% of respondents (44 people) disagreed, and 3.7% of respondents (28 people) strongly disagreed.
d) The feedback was an accurate evaluation of my performance.

As reflected in the figure above, when asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “the feedback was an accurate evaluation of my performance,” 52.2% of respondents (396 people) agreed, 21.8% of respondents (165 people) strongly agreed, 16.5% of respondents (125 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 5.8% of respondents (44 people) disagreed, and 3.7% of respondents (28 people) strongly disagreed.
e) I do not feel the feedback reflected my actual performance

As shown in the figure above, in response to the statement “I do not feel the feedback reflected my actual performance,” 38.9% of respondents (294 people) disagreed, 30.3% (229) of respondents strongly disagreed, 14.2% of respondents (107 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 12.3% of respondents (93 people) agreed, and 4.4% of respondents (33 people).
f) The feedback was consistent with how I felt I performed

In response to the statement “the feedback was consistent with how I felt I performed,” 52% of respondents (394 people) agreed, 21.3% (161 people) of respondents strongly agreed, 15.6% of respondents (118 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 7.7% of respondents (58 people) disagreed, and 3.4% of respondents (26 people) strongly disagreed.
As displayed in the figure above, when asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “I understand what the UWSA does,” 50.9% of respondents (415 people) agreed, 21% of respondents (171 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 16.1% of respondents (131 people) disagreed, 9.1% of respondents (74 people) strongly agreed, and 3.1% of respondents (25 people) strongly disagreed.
b) Are you currently a member of the UWSA?

As shown in the figure above, when asked if they are current members of the UWSA, 77.6% of respondents (635 people) indicates “yes”, 18.8% of respondents (154 participants) indicated “no”, 3.5% of respondents (29 people) indicated that they “do not know.”
If respondents indicated that they are currently members of the UWSA, they were directed to the following questions:

22

a) I understand what the UWSA can do if I have issues at work

As displayed in the figure above, 45.1% of respondents (286 people agreed), 23.2% of respondents neither disagreed nor agreed (147 people) 21.3% of respondents (135 people) disagreed, 5.5% of respondents (35 people) strongly agreed, and 4.9% of respondents (31 people) strongly disagreed.
b) Being a member of UWSA is worthwhile

When asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “being a member of the UWSA is worthwhile,” 40.8% of respondents (258 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 38.7% of respondents (245 people) agreed, 10.6% of respondents (67 people) disagreed, 7.6% of respondents (48) strongly agreed, and 2.4% of respondents (15 people) strongly disagreed.
c) Help is available from the UWSA when I have a problem

As shown in the figure above, when asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “help if available when I have a problem,” 45.3% of respondents (286 people) neither disagree nor agree, 42.7% of respondents (270 people) agreed, 6.6% of respondents (42 people) strongly agreed, 4.4% (28 people) of respondents disagreed and 0.9% of respondents (6 people) strongly disagreed.
d) The UWSA really cares about my well-being

When asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “the UWSA really cares about my well-being,” 49.6% of respondents (314 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 36.3% of respondents (230 people) strongly agreed, 7.3% of respondents (46 people) strongly agreed, 5.1% of respondents (32 people) disagreed, and 1.7% of respondents (11 people) strongly disagreed.
e) The UWSA cares about my general satisfaction at work

As shown in the figure above, when asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “the UWSA cares about my general satisfaction at work,” 45.3% of respondents (287 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 40% of respondents (253 people) agreed, 7.4% of respondents (47 people) strongly agreed, 6% of respondents (38 people) disagreed, and 1.3% of respondents (8 people) strongly disagreed.
f) The UWSA cares about my opinions

When asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “the UWSA cares about my opinions,” 44% of respondents (276 people) agreed, 44% of respondents (276 people) neither disagreed nor agreed, 7.7% (48 people) strongly agreed, 3.0% of respondents (19 people) disagreed, and 1.3% of respondents (8 people) strongly disagreed.

Following the close-ended questions about the UWSA, respondents were provided space to offer any additional comments about their experiences with the UWSA. The following are major themes identified with examples of typical comments. Please note that any potentially identifying information was omitted from comments and typos were corrected for ease of interpretation.

**Positive Interactions**

“Glad to have it, and glad that it goes beyond similar support at other universities. Love that staff career advising is part of the package!”

“I accessed the services of the UWSA this year for the first time and the person I worked with was exceptional.”

**Uncertainty about UWSA’s Power**

“I agree to all of the statements, just unsure the exact power and influence the UWSA has with change throughout the university.”
“I definitely think the UWSA cares about me at work, otherwise some of these very difficult questions wouldn’t be asked and this survey wouldn’t be conducted. I feel they care, and that they’re there to talk to; however, because they represent both management and staff, they effectively have no real power, as they need to support both interests, which may often be conflicting.”

“I don’t believe the UWSA can actually do anything to help in most cases. They have people to listen and meet with but I don’t feel they actually can do anything about most things.”

Unaware of What UWSA Does

“Don’t really know what the UWSA does for me.”

“I think it would be a great service to the UW community to explain what exactly the Staff Association does do as frankly I am unclear.”
23. If you are not a current member of the UWSA, why not? (select all that apply)

As shown in the figure above, when asked why they are not current members of the UWSA, 86 selections were made for the option “the cost does not justify the benefits of membership,” 52 selections were made for “other,” 35 selections were made for “I am unfamiliar with what the benefits are,” and 30 selections were made for “I do not know enough about the staff association.”

Those who selected “other” were provided with space to offer comments. The following are major themes identified with examples of typical comments. Please note that any potentially identifying information was omitted from comments and typos were corrected for ease of interpretation.

**Uncertainty about UWSA’s Power**

“Staff association does not have a strong enough voice or influence with leadership.”

“I think SA is not a strong advocate for staff in areas that matter.”

**Cost of Membership**

“The reason is the cost, but it has nothing to do with justification. I cannot afford to pay any fee that is not required.”
“The staff association doesn’t have enough programs and activities as well as power to justify the cost.”
Summary and Next Steps

Summary

The UWSA Staff Engagement Survey was initiated with the goal of identifying key areas of strength and opportunities for improvement in staff experiences at University of Waterloo. A total of 821 full and part-time staff members responded to the invitation and completed the questionnaire. As presented in this report, data revealed that staff members have high levels of satisfaction with the University of Waterloo as an employer and strong intentions to remain in the organization. Results also revealed a number of strengths of the organization as perceived by staff members, including positive relations with coworkers and supervisors, a safe and low-conflict work environment, good opportunities for personal development, perceived equality, and a solid performance rating system. In terms of opportunities for improvement, findings suggest that strengthening trust in upper leadership, clarifying hiring processes, exploring perceived favouritism, improving perceived job mobility, and addressing uncompensated work hours may be important to staff at the University of Waterloo.

Next Steps

This report will be shared with Geoff McBoyle, Vice President, Academic and Provost and the University Leadership. The University of Waterloo Staff Association will enter into discussions with the Provost about the results and potential next steps during the fall 2013. Through these discussions, the UWSA will work with the Provost to prioritize issues and design and implement new initiatives to address areas for improvement. The UWSA is committed to supporting the University of Waterloo’s goal of becoming an exemplary employer in the eyes of its staff members.