UWL Employee Engagement Survey

Spring 2018 Survey Report

Driving positive change in the UWL work experience

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with the support of the Investing in Our People Strategic Action Team

The UWL Employee Engagement Survey was conducted as part of the 'Investing in Our People' strategic initiative with the purpose of assessing current employee perceptions and informing ways UWL could improve as an employer. The survey was administered to all current employees in March, 2018. 456 employees took the survey, yielding a 32% response rate.

What was measured?

The survey captured employee perceptions regarding engagement (how connected and involved employees are with their work), satisfaction, and 6 'drivers of engagement': *work itself, recognition & value, support from supervisor/chair/division head, opportunities for growth & development, communication & decision-making, and well-being*. In addition, the survey collected ideas regarding solutions for increasing employee engagement. Survey results are analyzed for all employees together as well as by work-role and college/division. Results are also explored by demographic characteristics.

Results and Insights

An average employee engagement score of 6.10 (on a scale of 1-7) and an average general satisfaction score of 5.45 indicate employees are engaged in and generally satisfied with their work. Yet, results on the 6 'drivers of engagement' dimensions suggest the current levels of engagement and satisfaction are not sustainable in the long term without targeted changes to the work experience and employee treatment. Many people are feeling overworked and undervalued, with insufficient opportunities to grow and develop professionally. This combination is likely to lead to burnout and increased turnover. Additionally, there are commonly held negative perceptions regarding communication and decision-making across the university, which if left unaddressed could lead to a climate of cynicism and lower levels of employee commitment to UWL.

Recommendations for Consideration

These data suggest the following areas should be targeted for positive change:

- Fairness in communication & decision-making – especially in consistency of decisions and policies across employees, communication across 'siloed' groups and work roles, and in aligning resources with declared UWL priorities
- Support for employee well-being – especially addressing perceived work 'overload' and supporting employees in pursuing work-life balance
- Enhanced professional development and growth opportunities –including both employee skills/knowledge development initiatives (e.g., workshops, access to courses, and mentorship) and avenues for expanding one's current role or being promoted within one's current unit/division

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About the Survey

As part of the UWL strategic initiative to 'Invest in our People', a survey of employee satisfaction and engagement was conducted in March 2018. The purpose of this survey was two-fold:

1. To assess the current state of employee engagement and work-related attitudes

2. To inform actionable change that positively impacts employees' experiences, engagement, and job satisfaction

Employee engagement refers to the connection employees feel with their jobs; how invested employees feel in the success of their work teams and UWL more broadly. Research has found that engaged employees get more satisfaction and fulfillment from their work, are less likely to quit, and are more likely to 'give their all' at their jobs (see Byrne et al., 2011; Cook, 2008; Harter et al., 2009; Rich et al., 2010).

In addition to asking questions in order to evaluate current levels of engagement and satisfaction of UWL employees, we also asked questions about 6 '*drivers of engagement*' (perceptions and experiences that research has shown to impact engagement) and ideal '*engagement solutions*' (employee ideas on programs or initiatives that they believed would positively impact their own engagement at work).

The survey was built based on a review of the existing employee engagement research and publicly available survey measures related to employee engagement. The systematic survey development process and initial analysis of the item/dimension properties support the internal reliability and construct validity of the survey measure (Devellis, 2003). A copy of the original survey as well as more information about the psychometric properties of the survey, including preliminary reliability and validity support, are available upon request.

The survey consisted of 68 total items: 14 items assessing employee engagement and satisfaction, 41 items assessing the 6 drivers of engagement, 5 items assessing employee ideas for engagement solutions, and 8 demographic items. The survey took about 10 minutes to complete. The survey was administered online within Qualtrics, with a unique link to the survey emailed to each UWL employee (preventing any employee from taking the survey more than once). The survey was open March 6-23, and 1 reminder email was sent to employees who had not yet completed the survey 1 week prior to the close date. Distribution of the survey was approved by the UWL Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects.

Who Participated?

The survey was sent to all 1419 UWL employees (current as of March 1, 2018). **456 employees took the survey, yielding a 32% participation rate.**

Work Roles

421 participants provided information on their work roles. Distribution of work roles across participants closely resembles the distribution of all employees at UWL, with the exception of graduate/teaching assistants (who are underrepresented in the survey). Across all work role categories, **25% of participants hold a supervisor position**.

Work Role	# Participants	# Employees Total	Participation Rate
Academic Staff	148	375	39.5%
Faculty/IAS	171	575	29.7%
University Staff	95	320	29.7%
Graduate/Teaching Assistants[1]	7	98	7.1%

Participants by Work Role

■ Academic Staff ■ Faculty/IAS ■ University Staff ■ Graduate/Teaching Assitant
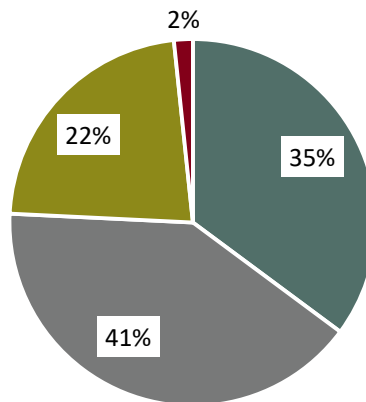
Faculty/IAS by Appointment

■ IAS

■ Tenure-Track

■ Tenured
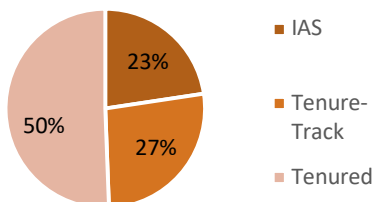
University Staff by Division

■ Professional Services

■ Administrative Support

■ Facilities/Maintenance

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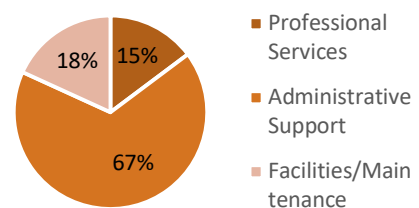
[1] As this participant group was under 10, it was not included in work role comparisons.

College/Division

392 participants indicated their college or division. Additional information regarding which employee groups are represented by each college/division title is provided in Appendix A. CLS (including the School of Arts and Communication) had the most employees participate, followed by CSH and Student Affairs.

The distribution of participants across college/division somewhat resembles the distribution of all employees (keeping in mind that not all participants indicated their college/division). Specific groups who are relatively under-represented in the survey data are School of Education and Administration & Finance. Specific groups who are relatively over-represented in the survey are Academic Affairs & Provost Units, Diversity & Inclusion, and University Advancement.
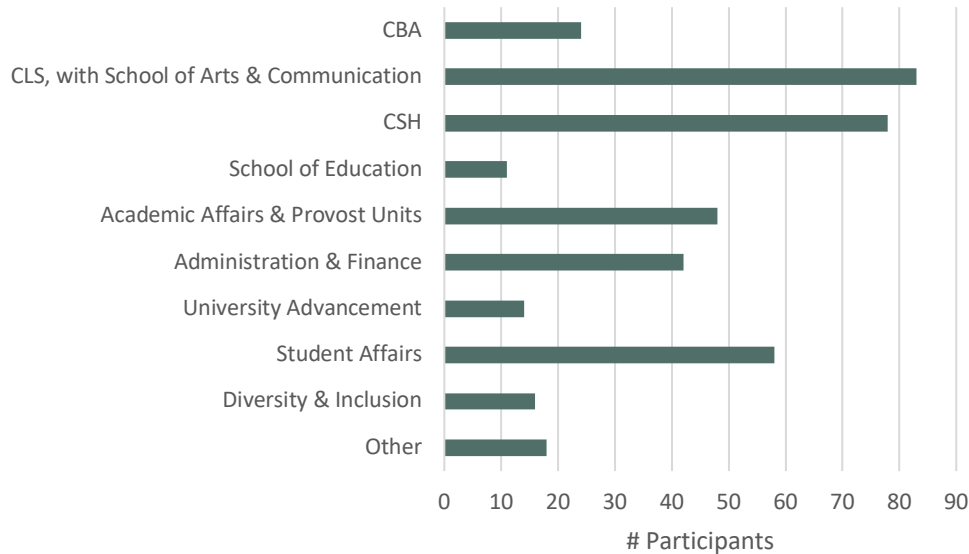
College/Division	# Participants	# Employees Total	Participation Rate
CBA	24	91	26.4%
CLS, with School of Arts & Communication	83	273	30.4%
CSH	78	338	23.1%
School of Education	11	99	11.1%
Academic Affairs & Provost Units	48	113	42.5%
Administration & Finance	42	226	18.6%
University Advancement	14	23	60.9%
Student Affairs	58	216	26.9%
Diversity & Inclusion	16	34	47.1%
Other[2]	18	--	--

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[2] Chancellor's division is included in the 'Other' category as the number of employees in this group is under 10.

Years at UWL

406 participants indicated how many years they had worked at UWL. The majority (67%) of participants who provided this information have worked at UWL for 10 years or less.
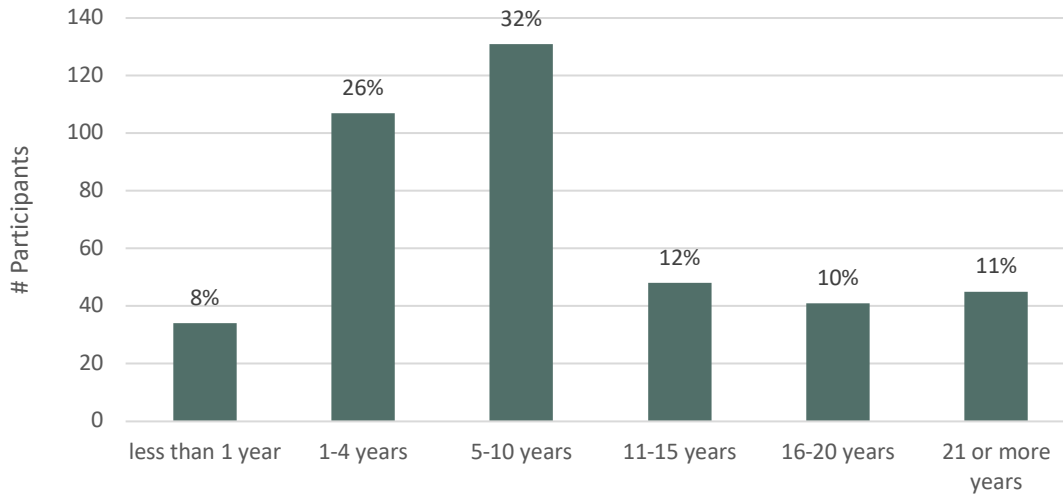
Personal Demographics

356 participants indicated their age category, 353 indicated gender, and 375 indicated racial/ethnic identity. Based on this data, participants represent a wide range of ages, the majority (67%) identify as female, and the overwhelming majority (95%) identify as White.
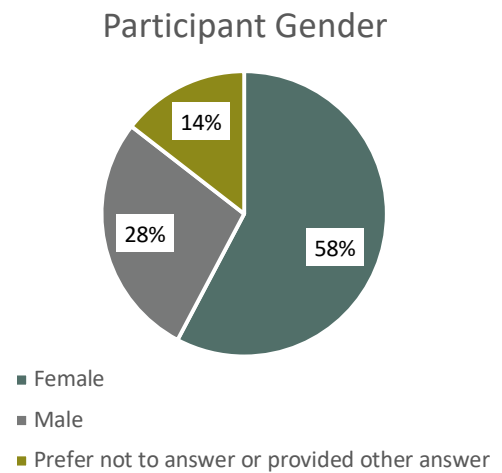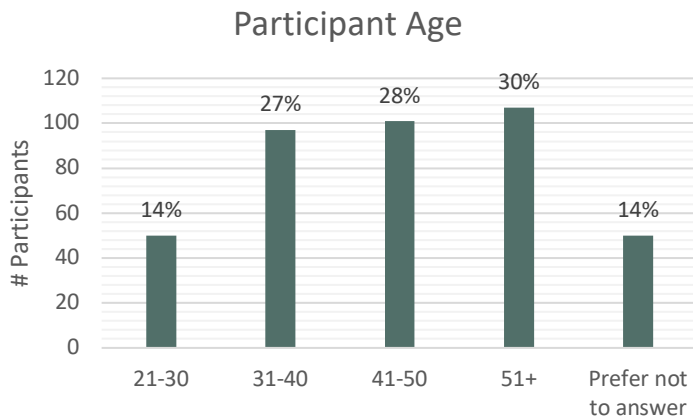
Guidance on Interpretation of Results

For all engagement, satisfaction, and drivers of engagement items and dimensions, scores are provided on a scale of 1 to 7, where 7 is highest/most positive rating, 1 is the lowest/most negative rating, and 4 indicates a neutral rating. Any alternative response scales are noted within the report.

Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Meaning	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

In all results sections, mean scores are provided along with a standard deviation (SD) for that mean score. Mean scores represent the mathematical average response. Standard deviations are an indication of the amount of variation in responses, with higher values indicating more individual-level variation and lower values indicating more agreement across employees. A general rule of thumb suggests approximately 66% of responses fall within 1 SD above and below the mean response for each item/dimension.

When color coding is used in results tables, red shading indicates negative perceptions (<4.0), yellow indicates somewhat neutral perceptions (4-4.9), white/gray shading indicates moderately positive perceptions (5-5.9) and green shading indicates more strongly positive perceptions (>6.0).

Negative Perceptions	Neutral Perceptions	Moderately Positive Perceptions	Strongly Positive Perceptions

Engagement Results: All Employees

In this initial section of survey results, data for all employees are examined holistically and provide insight into employee perceptions campus-wide. Mean scores for all employees on each dimension and also on each item indicate areas of strength and opportunities for improvement for UWL as an employer, regardless of employee work role, college, or division. Results are presented first for engagement and satisfaction, and then for the 6 drivers of engagement examined in the survey.

Current Levels of Engagement & Satisfaction

Across all employees who completed the survey, the average engagement score is 6.10 and the average satisfaction score is 5.45. This indicates that **generally speaking UWL employees are engaged in their work and have moderately high levels of overall satisfaction**. UWL employees are more engaged in their work than they are satisfied with their jobs and UWL as an employer. There is also considerably more variation in employee satisfaction than there is with engagement.

	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Mean (SD)
Engagement	1.3%	4.6%	94.1%	6.10 (.74)
Satisfaction	11.7%	11.5%	76.7%	5.45 (1.21)

Engagement Items

The following item-level results provide more depth into current employee engagement levels. These items are meant to capture the more emotional aspects of engagement (feeling inspired and excited about one's work), the more physical aspects of engagement (putting a lot of effort and energy into one's work), and the more cognitive aspects of engagement (being completely focused and attentive to one's work).

Item Text	Mean	SD
My job inspires me.	5.42	1.37
I am excited about my job.	5.44	1.39
I am proud of the work I do.	6.28	0.91
I find my work interesting.	6.00	1.06
I try my hardest to perform my job well.	6.54	0.76
I devote a lot of energy to my job.	6.53	0.82
I put my full effort into my job.	6.43	0.78
At work, I focus a great deal of attention on my job.	6.38	0.83
At work, my mind is focused on my job.	6.14	0.95
At work, I am absorbed by my job.	5.84	1.17

Satisfaction Items

The following item-level results provide more depth into current employee satisfaction levels. These items are meant to capture employees' general satisfaction with their jobs and with UWL as an employer. While all items indicate moderate levels of satisfaction, it is noteworthy that these results indicate not all employees would recommend UWL to others as a good place to work.

Item Text	Mean	SD
Overall, I am very satisfied with my job.	5.32	1.47
In general, I don't like my job. (*reverse-coded*)	5.68	1.41
In general, I like working at UWL.	5.59	1.28
I would recommend UWL to others as a good place to work.	5.22	1.49

Drivers of Engagement

In addition to assessing overall employee engagement and satisfaction, this survey captured employee perceptions regarding 6 established precursors of engagement and satisfaction – 6 'drivers of engagement'. These 6 dimensions, and the items within them, allow us to have a more accurate and fine-grained understanding of employee experiences at UWL and ultimately can inform opportunities for positive change.

1. The Work Itself	•Having work that is clear, interesting, and autonomous
2. Recognition & Value	•Feeling appreciated and valued by UWL as an employer
3. Support from Supervisor/Chair/ Division Head	•Feeling appreciated and supported by one's direct supervisor, chair, or division head
4. Growth & Development	•Seeing adequate opportunities for professional growth
5. Communication & Decision-Making	•Perceiving fair processes for decision-making across UWL and in one's 'unit'
6. Well-Being	•Believing that UWL supports employee well-being in policy and daily practice

Drivers of Engagement: Dimension Level Results

Dimension	Mean	SD
Work Itself	5.44	1.14
Recognition & Value	4.87	1.16
Support from Supervisor/Chair/Division Head	5.63	1.47
Opportunities for Growth & Development	4.62	1.42
Communication & Decision-Making	4.23	1.35
Well-Being	4.57	1.32

Scores on the drivers of engagement are noticeably lower than scores on engagement and satisfaction, with 4 of the 6 dimensions yielding mean scores considered to be in the 'neutral' range and no dimensions yielding a mean score considered 'strongly positive'. The standard deviations across all 6 dimensions are also fairly high given the 7-point scale, indicating there is considerable variation across employees for each driver of engagement.

Dimension Scores: All Employees
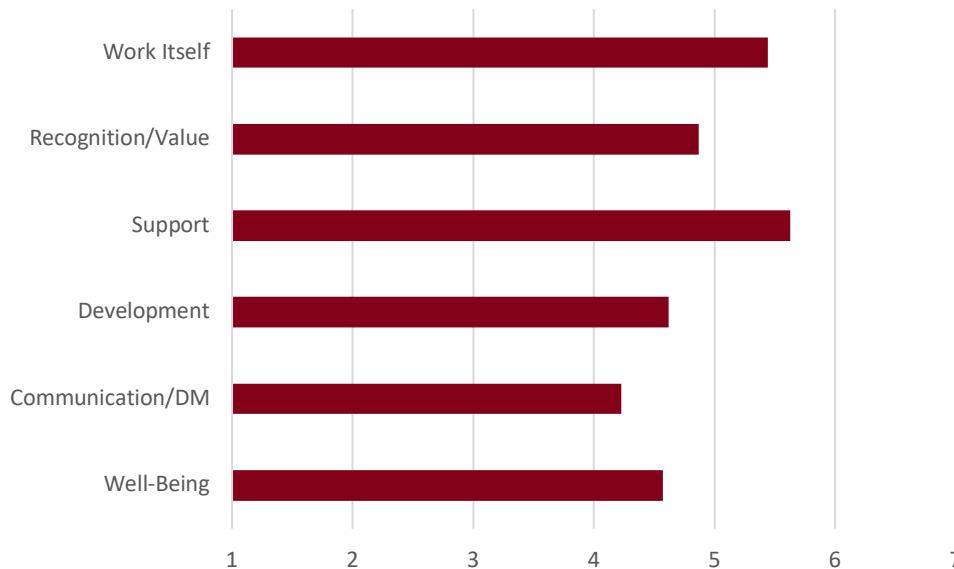
Drivers of Engagement: Item Level Results

'Drivers of Engagement' scores for all employees, by item, are presented in the following tables. The colored shading of scores may serve to indicate current areas of relative strength and potential problem areas, campus-wide. Following the patterns apparent in dimension-level results, the majority of negative and neutral item-level responses occur within communication & decision-making, well-being, and growth & development. In addition, one item within the recognition & value dimension yielded markedly negative responses (on average).

The Work Itself

Item Text	Mean	SD
Working at UWL, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.	5.11	1.52
I have appropriately stimulating and challenging work.	5.46	1.48
I know what is expected of me at work.	5.74	1.27
I have the authority to do my job as I see fit.	5.31	1.56
I have freedom in how I accomplish my work objectives.	5.55	1.41

Recognition & Value

Item Text	Mean	SD
The mission of UWL makes me feel my job is important.	5.01	1.49
I feel very useful in my job.	5.67	2.27
Doing my job well really makes a difference.	5.88	1.22
I feel like a key member of UWL.	4.61	1.70
The work I do is very valuable to UWL.	5.60	1.38
I rarely feel my work is taken for granted.	4.10	1.76
UWL recognizes the significance of the contributions I make.	3.94	1.72
In the past month, I have received praise and recognition for a job well done.	4.19	1.99

Support from Supervisor/Chair/Division Head

Item Text	Mean	SD
My [supervisor] generally appreciates the way I do my job.	5.72	1.47
My [supervisor] makes me feel my contributions are valued.	5.54	1.62
My [supervisor] is supportive of my ideas and ways of getting things done.	5.58	1.57
My [supervisor] backs me up on decisions I make at work.	5.67	1.50
My [supervisor] recognizes the value of my work.	5.65	1.56

Growth & Development

Item Text	Mean	SD
In the last 6 months, someone at work has talked to me about my own development.	4.48	1.96
I have opportunities to learn and grow at work.	5.09	1.65
I feel that UWL encourages my development.	4.66	1.70
I receive appropriate training and development to help me do my job well.	4.68	1.65
There are sufficient opportunities to network and learn from one another at UWL.	4.61	1.59
I am excited about the opportunities for professional growth I have at UWL.	4.20	1.76

Communication & Decision-Making

Item Text	Mean	SD
At UWL, my opinions seem to count.	4.25	1.70
I feel appropriately involved in decision making at work.	4.59	1.73
I feel comfortable voicing my ideas in meetings.	4.93	1.67
Decisions and policies at UWL are applied consistently across employees.	3.45	1.81
Explanations for decisions and policies at UWL seem reasonable.	3.88	1.71
I am treated with respect at work.	5.32	1.53
There is good communication between faculty, staff, and administration at UWL.	3.96	1.71
UWL allocates appropriate budgetary resources toward achieving important objectives.	3.88	1.70
UWL allocates appropriate staff resources toward achieving important objectives.	3.81	1.66

Well-Being

Item Text	Mean	SD
UWL promotes the health and well-being of employees.	4.85	1.51
I am happy with my work-life balance.	4.68	1.78
UWL has appropriate family-friendly policies.	4.76	1.54
UWL really cares about my well-being.	4.33	1.57
I am not overloaded with work to do.	3.83	2.01
I have the appropriate resources to do my job well.	4.65	1.76
I feel supported by others at work.	5.21	1.52
I rarely feel required to do tasks that fall outside of my formal job responsibilities.	4.35	1.93

Engagement Results: Comparisons by Work Role and Division/College

In this section, dimension scores for engagement, satisfaction, and the 6 drivers of engagement are examined by work role and then by division/college[3]. In the work role comparison for all employees, the three groups compared are Faculty/Instructional Academic Staff (IAS), Academic Staff, and University Staff. Faculty/IAS are then further divided into 3 appointments: IAS, Tenure-Track Faculty, and Tenured Faculty. University Staff are then also divided into 3 divisions: Facilities/Maintenance Staff, Professional Staff, and Administrative Support Staff. Finally, all employees are examined by comparing across 10 divisions and colleges.
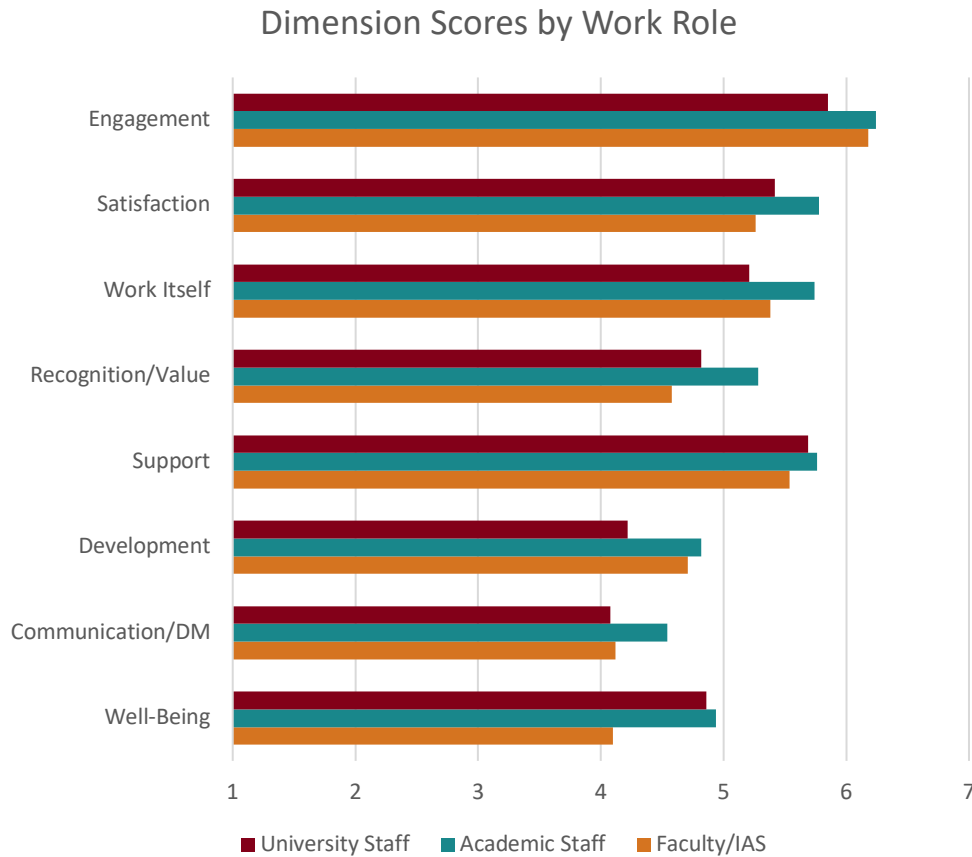
Work Role Comparison

A comparison of dimension scores for all employees by work role categorization reveals statistically significant differences for all dimensions except 'Support from Supervisor/Chair/Division head' indicating that there may be fundamentally different employee experiences based on work role. Across all dimensions, Academic Staff reported the most positive employee perceptions, most often followed by Faculty/IAS, with University Staff reporting the most negative employee perceptions in all dimensions except 'Well-Being'. These results are presented in the table below and graph on the following page.

Dimension	Faculty/ IAS	Academic Staff	University Staff
Engagement*	6.18 (.65)	6.24 (.60)	5.85 (.71)
Satisfaction*	5.26 (1.34)	5.78 (.99)	5.42 (1.12)
Work Itself*	5.38 (1.21)	5.74 (.94)	5.21 (1.08)
Recognition & Value*	4.58 (1.19)	5.28 (1.00)	4.82 (1.13)
Support from Supervisor/Chair/Division Head	5.54 (1.45)	5.76 (1.47)	5.69 (1.36)
Opportunities for Growth & Development*	4.71 (1.36)	4.82 (1.32)	4.22 (1.52)
Communication & Decision-Making*	4.12 (1.35)	4.54 (1.24)	4.08 (1.35)
Well-Being*	4.10 (1.32)	4.94 (1.20)	4.86 (1.22)
*differences between group scores are statistically significant			

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[3] Please refer to Appendix B for a comparison of item-level scores by work role.

The following graph provides another visualization of the differences in dimension scores by work role.

Dimension Scores by Work Role

University Staff   Academic Staff   Faculty/IAS

Faculty/IAS Appointment Comparison

Within the Faculty/IAS work role category, dimension scores for the 3 appointments are compared. While there are noticeable patterns in the data, please note that none of the differences were statistically significant (indicating that while scores vary by position, they vary at least as much at an individual level, within a given position). Still, tenured faculty tend to have the lowest scores in terms of engagement and satisfaction, as well as the lowest average scores on 4 of the 6 drivers of engagement (the work itself, value/recognition, opportunities for development, communication and decision-making). IAS had the lowest average score in terms of perceived support from department chairs, and tenure-track faculty had the lowest average score in terms of well-being. These results are presented in the table and graph on the following page.

Dimension	IAS	Tenure-Track	Tenured
Engagement	6.28 (.54)	6.27 (.51)	6.09 (.76)
Satisfaction	5.48 (1.30)	5.22 (1.45)	5.15 (1.32)
Work Itself	5.54 (1.25)	5.37 (1.24)	5.31 (1.21)
Recognition & Value	4.73 (1.13)	4.59 (1.08)	4.49 (1.30)
Support from Supervisor/Chair/Division Head	5.36 (1.65)	5.70 (1.30)	5.51 (1.44)
Opportunities for Growth & Development	4.71 (1.48)	4.92 (1.37)	4.63 (1.31)
Communication & Decision-Making	4.24 (1.34)	4.13 (1.29)	4.05 (1.42)
Well-Being	4.48 (1.40)	3.91 (1.31)	4.01 (1.27)
differences between group scores are not statistically significant for any dimension			

Dimension Scores by Faculty/IAS Appointment

Tenured   Tenure-Track   IAS
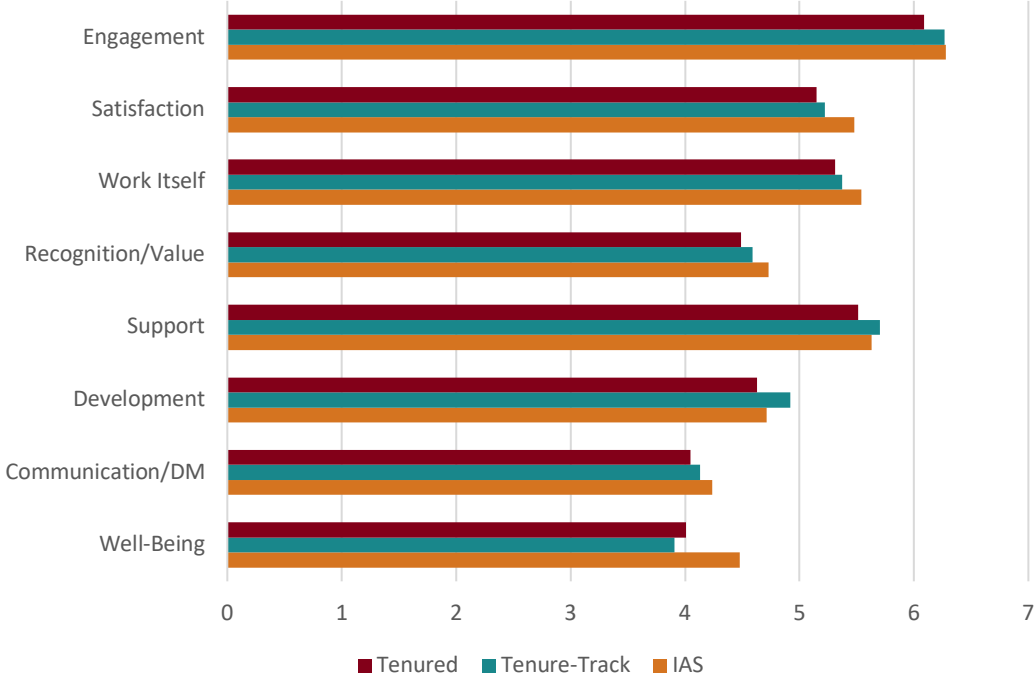
University Staff Division Comparison: Results by Dimension

Within the University Staff work role category, dimension scores for the 3 divisions are compared. Interpretation of this data should include the caveat that the strong majority of University Staff participants were Administrative Support Staff, with noticeably lower numbers of Professional Services Staff and Facilities/Maintenance Staff. Still, even with such discrepancy of sample size, there are noteworthy patterns in the results and some group differences are statistically significant. Specifically, Administrative Support Staff have the most negative experiences across dimensions, followed by Facilities/Maintenance Staff (with the exception of well-being, for which Facilities/Maintenance Staff have the most positive responses.) Professional Services Staff seem to have the highest levels of engagement and satisfaction and also the most positive experiences regarding the drivers of engagement and satisfaction (with the exception of well-being).

Dimension	Professional Services	Admin. Support	Facilities Maint.
Engagement	6.08 (.76)	5.89 (.67)	5.84 (.89)
Satisfaction	5.87 (.54)	5.30 (1.09)	5.45 (1.57)
Work Itself	5.71 (.96)	5.03 (1.08)	5.34 (1.12)
Recognition & Value	5.15 (.97)	4.72 (1.07)	4.80 (1.47)
Support from Supervisor/Chair/Division Head	5.86 (.73)	5.65 (1.46)	5.73 (1.49)
Opportunities for Growth & Development*	5.14 (1.09)	3.94 (1.52)	4.47 (1.74)
Communication & Decision-Making*	4.95 (1.05)	3.85 (1.23)	4.11 (1.78)
Well-Being	5.00 (1.27)	4.72 (1.19)	5.17 (1.25)
*differences between group scores are statistically significant			

Dimension Scores by University Staff Division
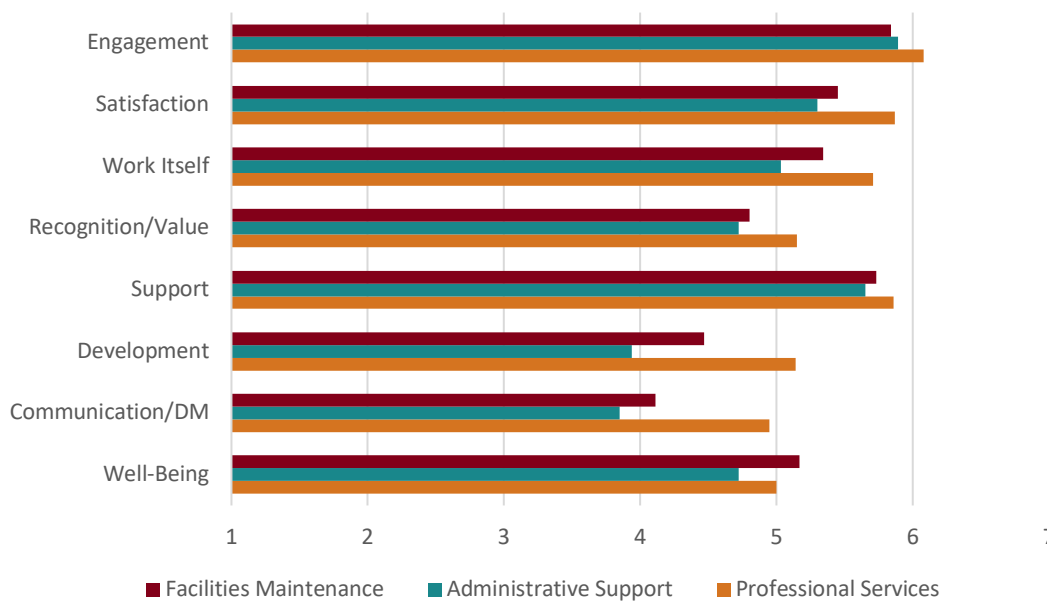
Dimension Scores by College/Division

Results for all employees are compared according to participant college/division. Noteworthy patterns from this analysis include the relatively negative perceptions held by employees working in the CBA, School of Education, and Diversity & Inclusion as well as the relatively positive perceptions held by employees in Academic Affairs & Provost Units, Administration & Finance, and University Advancement.

Dimension	CBA	CLS	CSH	School of Ed.	Academic Affairs & Provost Units	Admin. & Finance	Univ. Advance-ment	Student Affairs	Diversity & Inclusion	Other
Engagement	6.06 (.62)	6.19 (.70)	6.24 (.54)	6.04 (.79)	6.03 (.76)	6.07 (.57)	6.14 (.65)	6.19 (.66)	5.83 (.69)	6.13 (.70)
Satisfaction	4.76 (1.55)	5.51 (1.15)	5.43 (1.25)	4.73 (1.76)	5.85 (.76)	5.83 (1.06)	5.73 (1.11)	5.63 (1.11)	5.37 (.80)	5.29 (1.34)
Work Itself	5.03 (1.35)	5.46 (1.24)	5.51 (1.04)	4.75 (1.78)	5.79 (.79)	5.55 (.87)	5.41 (1.15)	5.56 (1.06)	5.18 (1.08)	5.58 (1.12)
Recognition & Value	4.30 (1.07)	4.79 (1.24)	4.73 (1.06)	4.26 (1.53)	5.47 (1.04)	5.23 (.97)	5.22 (1.10)	4.92 (1.19)	4.60 (.85)	5.07 (1.12)
Support from Supervisor/Chair/ Division Head	5.36 (1.70)	5.82 (1.26)	5.63 (1.39)	4.29 (2.46)	6.15 (.93)	5.61 (1.18)	5.66 (1.67)	5.64 (1.51)	5.44 (1.70)	4.61 (2.18)
Opportunities for Growth & Development	4.20 (1.48)	4.70 (1.46)	4.80 (1.18)	4.05 (2.01)	4.89 (1.23)	4.88 (1.32)	5.12 (1.18)	4.66 (1.28)	3.67 (1.48)	4.31 (1.93)
Communication & Decision-Making	3.30 (1.39)	4.35 (1.33)	4.32 (1.25)	3.89 (1.68)	4.66 (1.07)	4.62 (1.38)	4.62 (1.40)	4.42 (1.15)	3.52 (1.24)	4.06 (1.74)
Well-Being	3.88 (1.30)	4.25 (1.27)	4.50 (1.38)	3.74 (1.90)	5.09 (1.10)	5.20 (1.11)	4.77 (1.26)	4.67 (1.10)	4.41 (1.22)	4.99 (1.31)

Engagement Results: Comparisons by Demographic Characteristics

In the following section dimension scores for engagement, satisfaction, and drivers of engagement are explored according to additional employee demographics including years at UWL, supervisor designation, age, and gender. Although the survey collected information on racial/ethnic identity, there was insufficient representation of non-white respondents to allow for confidential analysis. Similarly, although participants indicated if they were full-time or part-time there was not sufficient representation of part-time employees to allow for accurate and meaningful comparison of scores across the two groups. Approximately 10%-20% of participants elected not to answer each of the demographic questions (and were thus excluded from these results).

Results by Years at UWL

Plotting engagement and satisfaction scores by years at UWL, the results suggest that while there are not statistically significant differences, generally speaking the newest employees are among the most satisfied and among the least engaged. Employees with 21+ years at UWL report the highest levels of engagement.
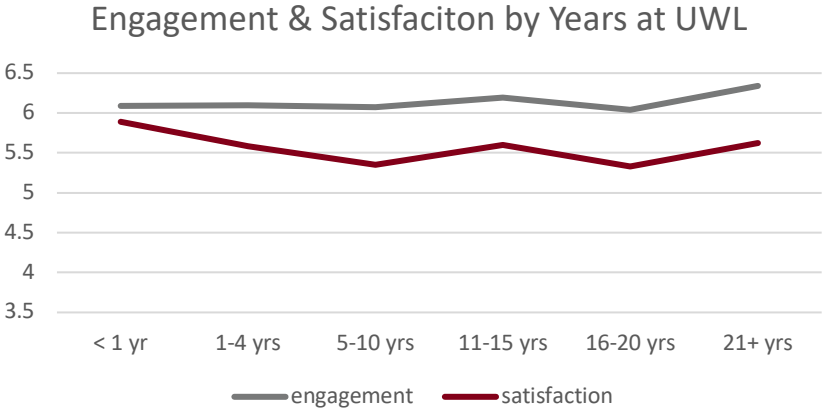
An examination of the drivers of engagement by years at UWL highlights a fairly consistent pattern, in that the newest employees often have among the most positive perceptions, perceptions tend to get more negative through the 5-10-year mark, and then more positive for employees who have been at UWL for more than 10 years. The differences by group were statistically significant for communication/decision-making and well-being.

Drivers of Engagement by Years at UWL
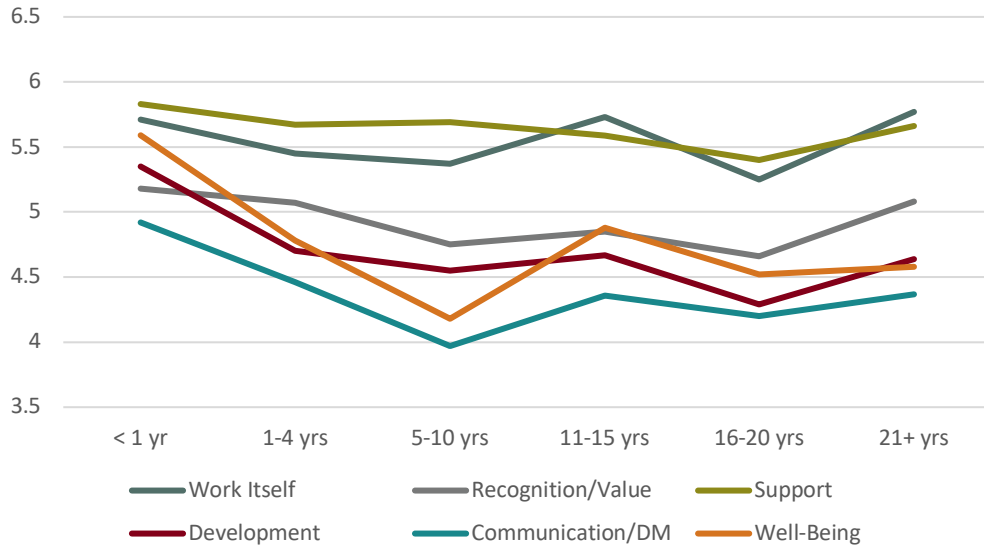
Results by Supervisor Designation

In comparing dimension scores for supervisors and non-supervisors, a very clear trend emerges from the data. Generally speaking, supervisors are more engaged and satisfied than non-supervisors and supervisors have more positive experiences regarding the drivers of engagement than non-supervisors with one noteworthy exception of well-being. Supervisors actually tend to have lower levels of well-being perceptions than non-supervisors (although this difference is not statistically significant).

Dimension Scores by Supervisor Designation
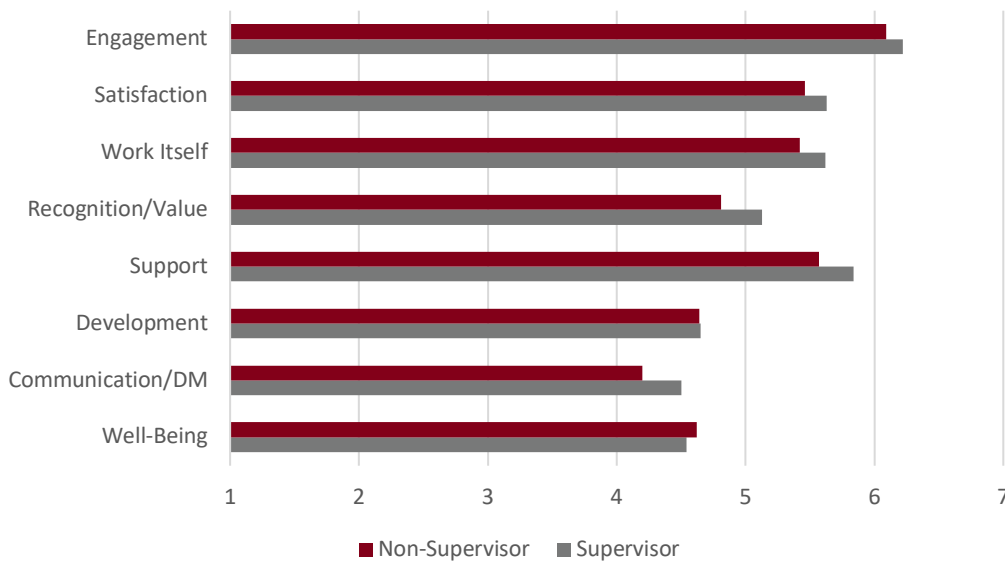
Dimension	Supervisor	Non-Supervisor
Engagement	6.22 (.64)	6.09 (.67)
Satisfaction	5.63 (1.02)	5.46 (1.22)
Work Itself	5.62 (1.03)	5.42 (1.13)
Recognition & Value*	5.13 (1.20)	4.81 (1.12)
Support from Supervisor/Chair/Division Head	5.84 (1.19)	5.57 (1.53)
Opportunities for Growth & Development	4.65 (1.26)	4.64 (1.45)
Communication & Decision-Making*	4.50 (1.21)	4.20 (1.34)
Well-Being	4.54 (1.24)	4.62 (1.31)

differences between group scores are statistically significant

## Additional Demographic Comparisons

A comparison of scores for participants who identified as male and female revealed **no difference based on gender**, with scores differing by close to 0.1 for most dimensions and no differences even approaching statistical significance. It is worth considering in the gender-based results, though, that a large number of participants did not identify as male or female (most indicating they preferred not to answer the question) and thus the results are limited to only those who provided this information.

While there does seem to be some difference in perceptions by age, the pattern of results varies by dimension and differences are largely not statistically significant. **The two dimensions that do yield statistically significant differences by age are opportunities for development and well-being**. Generally speaking, younger employees have more positive perceptions regarding their opportunities for growth and development than older employees (with a fairly linear, negative trend relating age and perceptions on this dimension). In terms of well-being, the pattern is non-linear. Employees between 21 and 30 years of age reported the most positive perceptions regarding well-being, employees between 31 and 40 reported the most negative perceptions regarding well-being, and employees age 41 and higher reported more mid-range perceptions of well-being. These two dimensions are represented in the graph below.

Dimension Scores by Age
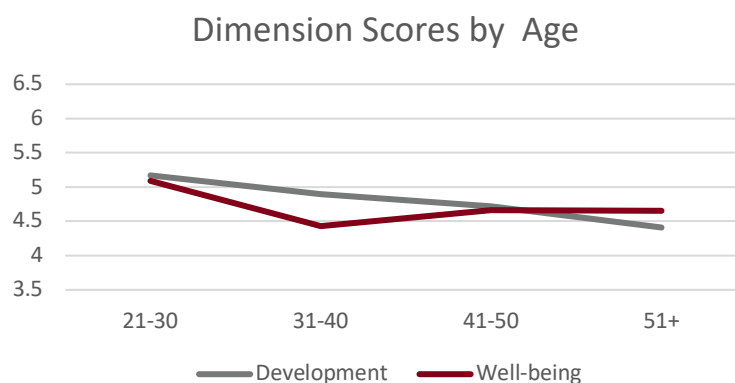
Engaging Solutions

In addition to collecting employee perceptions regarding current levels of engagement and satisfaction, as well as perceptions according to the 6 drivers of engagement, employees were asked to provide thoughts on the most impactful potential solutions UWL could enact to positively influence their own work experiences. Specifically, the survey provided a list of 12 potential 'engaging solutions' that research suggests have a positive impact on employee engagement, as well as ideas that emerged from the open-ended survey calling for such ideas at UWL conducted in Spring 2017. Participants were asked to indicate what they considered their 'top 3' solutions, and also had the opportunity to write in an 'other' solution to capture ideas not included in the list of 12.

Solution Rankings: All Employees

The clear top 2 engaging solutions for all employees (regardless of work role or college/division) are providing more professional development opportunities and increased support for work-life balance.

	Frequency in Top 3	1st choice	2nd choice	3rd choice
Professional development opportunities	187	75	74	38
Support for my work-life balance (e.g., flexible work arrangements)	176	94	48	34
Loyalty/tenure-based recognition or gifts	114	32	35	47
Networking within and/or outside of UWL	105	29	43	33
Personal, specific recognition/appreciation from administration	102	34	37	31
Support for my own well-being (e.g., increased access to healthy eating or exercise opportunities)	101	26	39	36
Additional discounts on or off-campus	91	25	19	47
Supervisor training programs	77	18	36	23
Personal, specific recognition/appreciation from my supervisor	75	28	25	22
UWL community building events (e.g., 'UWL day at the park' or team-building activities)	51	4	14	33
Personal, specific recognition/appreciation from my peers	30	7	11	12
Other (please specify) – *write-in responses for this category are discussed further on the following page*	127	51	27	49

Employee Generated Solutions

In addition to the solutions provided to employees on the survey, participants identified 127 'other' solutions they believed would positively impact their experience working at UWL. Of these solutions, 100 (nearly 80%) can be captured in 11 broad solution ideas, represented in the following table. The most popular 'other' solution by far was increased pay.

	Frequency in Top 3	1st choice	2nd choice	3rd choice
Increased pay (paying to match peer institutions or market conditions; paying to recognize years of service and/or performance)	31	14	10	7
Reducing work overload	9	7	1	1
Fair treatment & respect (often in reference to a specific role/employee group on campus)	9	5	3	1
Increased effectiveness of administration (e.g., in general, in transparency in decision-making, in determining and allocating budget/resources)	8	1	2	5
Specific opportunities for professional growth/development (including developing knowledge/skills and opportunities for promotion)	9	3	1	5
Specific perks (e.g., free/discounted parking, child care, and fitness memberships)	8	3	2	3
Tuition waivers for family members	6	1	1	4
Increased resources relevant to job/tasks (e.g., adequate staffing, administrative support, physical space)	6	4	2	-
Enhanced methods for process change and decision-making	6	3	2	1
Reasonable, balanced, and clear expectations within a role and across a department/division	6	3	2	1
Listening to and supporting employees more generally (e.g., taking action based on this survey)	3	2	1	-

The prioritization of solutions for all employees is largely consistent across each work role (Academic Staff, Faculty/IAS, and University Staff) in general patterns if not in specific prioritization. For Academic Staff and Faculty/IAS, the most common '1st choice' solution is support for work-life balance, followed by professional development opportunities. For University Staff, these solutions are simply reversed, with the most common '1st choice' solution for this employee group being professional development opportunities, followed by support for work-life balance. These 1st and 2nd preferences are then flipped for the '2nd choice' responses. No significant discrepancies in preferences are apparent beyond such specific orderings.

Employee Confidence in Positive Action Post-Survey

In addition to asking employees what they felt would most positively impact their experience at UWL, we also asked a question to gauge employee confidence in this survey process and what results might follow. Specifically, we asked one question: Do you believe the results of this survey will be used to make positive changes at UWL? Responses ranged from 1 (definitely not) to 5 (definitely yes), with 3 indicating a neutral response (might or might not).

The mean score for this item across all employees is 3.09 (SD = .92), indicating that while there is noticeable variation in employee confidence at the individual level, **employees on average feel the results might or might not be used to make positive changes in their work experiences**.

Key Takeaways

Insights to be drawn from the results may best be understood according to the 2 set goals of the survey: to assess the current state of employee engagement and work-related attitudes, and to inform actionable change that positively impacts employees' experiences, engagement, and job satisfaction.

What is the current state of employee engagement and work-related attitudes?

Generally, UWL employees are engaged in their work and hold many positive perceptions regarding their work experiences, including a general satisfaction with their jobs, enjoying and/or finding meaning in their work, and feeling supported by their supervisors/chairs/division heads. Employee groups who seem to have the most positive perceptions (relatively speaking) of their work experiences overall include Academic Staff, while the most engaged employees seem to work in CLS, SCH, Student Affairs, and University Advancement.

Areas of potential concern regarding employee perceptions are represented by low scores on specific drivers of engagement, namely communication/decision-making and support for employee well-being, followed by opportunities for growth/development and recognition/value. University Staff seem to perceive more negative aspects of their work experience than the other two employee work role groups, with the exception of perceived support for employee well-being (which was rated lowest by Faculty/IAS). Further, employees working in the CBA, School of Education, and Division of Diversity & Inclusion seem to have relatively more negative perceptions than other employee groups.

What do results suggest regarding what to do next?

The results of this survey suggest a number of ideas to explore in order to drive positive change in the UWL work experience. Specifically, the following actions are supported, and may serve as the basis for more detailed investigation and discussion of post-survey action:

- Increasing transparency in decision-making and resource allocation procedures
- Addressing experiences of work overload
- Providing resources, policies, and support for employee work-life balance
- Creating and supporting opportunities for professional growth and knowledge/skill development
- Signaling employee value at the university level

Although current levels of engagement and general satisfaction are positive, the relatively low employee scores across many of the 6 drivers of engagement indicate the current levels of engagement and satisfaction are not sustainable. Over time, these results suggest employees will likely experience burnout, contribute to a more cynical work environment, decrease their engagement and performance levels on the job, and ultimately will be more likely to leave UWL (see Griffeth et al., 2000; Macey et al., 2009).

Conclusion

The results from this UWL Employee Engagement Survey should be viewed as a launching point for targeted, continuous improvement to the employee experience. The perspectives and ideas gathered from survey participants provide a 'finger on the pulse' and indicate key areas of strength and opportunities to improve for UWL as an employer. Further, this survey provides direction for actionable change to sustain and increase employee engagement in the long term. It cannot be overstated that this survey is not the solution to 'investing in our people' at UWL, but it can be a promising first step.

Contact Information

For additional analyses, questions about the development and validation of this engagement survey, and to discuss the results of this engagement survey further, please contact Christa Kiersch: ckiersch@uwlax.edu.

The UWL Employee Engagement Survey and this report were conducted and produced in collaboration with members and partners of the Investing in Our People Strategic Action Team.

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Appendix A: Employee Groups within each College/Division

College/Division	Who's included?
CBA	6 CBA departments and the CBA deans' office
CLS, with School of Arts & Communication	12 CLS departments, 4 School of Arts & Communication departments, and associated administrative offices
CSH	11 CSH departments and the CSH deans' office
School of Education	Continuing Education & Extension, the Department of Educational Studies, and Professional Studies in Education, including Field Experience employees
Academic Affairs & Provost Units	International Education and Engagement, Murphy Library, CATL, Enrollment Services Units, Research & Sponsored Programs, Institutional Research – Assessment & Planning, and Graduate Studies
Administration & Finance	Budget Office, Business Services, Facilities Planning & Management, Human Resources, Information Technology Services, and University Police & Parking Services
University Advancement	Alumni Relations, Development, Foundation, Legislative Relations, Planned Giving, and University Communications
Student Affairs	Campus Child Center, Counseling & Testing, Intercollegiate Athletics, Recreational Sports, Residence Life, Student Health Center, Student Life, and University Centers
Diversity & Inclusion	Campus Climate, Access Center, LGBTQQ, Multicultural Student Services, Student Support Services, and Upward Bound
Other	Chancellor's division and any employees who did not identify with one of the listed colleges or divisions

Appendix B: Results by Item, Work Role Comparison

*Note: * indicates the differences between group scores are statistically significant for 1 or more work role group*

Engagement Items

Item Text	Faculty/ IAS	Academic Staff	University Staff
My job inspires me.*	5.58 (1.29)	5.70 (1.14)	4.81 (1.51)
I am excited about my job.*	5.47 (1.37)	5.76 (1.19)	5.01 (1.46)
I am proud of the work I do.*	6.25 (.94)	6.54 (.54)	6.08 (.99)
I find my work interesting.*	6.09 (.99)	6.24 (.87)	5.59 (1.12)
I try my hardest to perform my job well.	6.53 (.76)	6.63 (.55)	6.53 (.60)
I devote a lot of energy to my job.*	6.70 (.63)	6.54 (.69)	6.28 (.92)
I put my full effort into my job.	6.47 (.78)	6.48 (.61)	6.38 (.70)
At work, I focus a great deal of attention on my job.*	6.48 (.78)	6.43 (.67)	6.24 (.86)
At work, my mind is focused on my job.	6.22 (.96)	6.14 (.83)	6.07 (.87)
At work, I am absorbed by my job.*	6.02 (1.10)	5.89 (1.07)	5.47 (1.19)

Satisfaction Items (N=440)

Item Text	Faculty/ IAS	Academic Staff	University Staff
Overall, I am very satisfied with my job.*	5.17 (1.51)	5.63 (1.30)	5.15 (1.52)
In general, I don't like my job. (*reverse-coded*)*	5.67 (1.43)	5.95 (1.16)	5.48 (1.50)
In general, I like working at UWL.*	5.29 (1.45)	5.89 (1.02)	5.76 (1.08)
I would recommend UWL to others as a good place to work. *	4.89 (1.67)	5.63 (1.20)	5.30 (1.40)

The Work Itself

Item Text	Faculty/ IAS	Academic Staff	University Staff
Working at UWL, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.*	4.95 (1.56)	5.60 (1.28)	4.87 (1.55)
I have appropriately stimulating and challenging work.*	5.58 (1.41)	5.87 (1.13)	4.74 (1.69)
I know what is expected of me at work.	5.63 (1.31)	5.94 (1.06)	5.79 (1.27)
I have the authority to do my job as I see fit.	5.29 (1.60)	5.52 (1.50)	5.21 (1.43)
I have freedom in how I accomplish my work objectives.	5.49 (1.47)	5.74 (1.34)	5.44 (1.29)

Recognition & Value

Item Text	Faculty/ IAS	Academic Staff	University Staff
The mission of UWL makes me feel my job is important.*	4.85 (1.61)	5.32 (1.30)	4.89 (1.46)
I feel very useful in my job.*	5.57 (1.36)	5.97 (1.06)	5.45 (1.32)
Doing my job well really makes a difference.*	5.60 (1.38)	6.26 (.91)	5.83 (1.15)
I feel like a key member of UWL.*	4.25 (1.73)	5.16 (1.51)	4.54 (1.64)
The work I do is very valuable to UWL.*	5.32 (1.51)	6.05 (1.06)	5.51 (1.25)
I rarely feel my work is taken for granted.*	3.70 (1.73)	4.51 (1.67)	4.09 (1.73)
UWL recognizes the significance of the contributions I make.*	3.73 (1.70)	4.30 (1.69)	3.76 (1.67)
In the past month, I have received praise and recognition for a job well done.*	3.59 (1.97)	4.69 (1.91)	4.44 (1.79)

Support from Supervisor/Chair/Division Head

Item Text	Faculty/ IAS	Academic Staff	University Staff
My [supervisor] generally appreciates the way I do my job.	5.63 (1.44)	5.82 (1.47)	5.86 (1.32)
My [supervisor] makes me feel my contributions are valued.	5.42 (1.61)	5.68 (1.64)	5.63 (1.48)
My [supervisor] is supportive of my ideas and ways of getting things done.	5.50 (1.55)	5.70 (1.58)	5.62 (1.45)
My [supervisor] backs me up on decisions I make at work.	5.63 (1.49)	5.81 (1.44)	5.60 (1.48)
My [supervisor] recognizes the value of my work.	5.51 (1.55)	5.77 (1.54)	5.76 (1.49)

Growth & Development

Item Text	Faculty/ IAS	Academic Staff	University Staff
In the last 6 months, someone at work has talked to me about my own development.*	4.35 (2.03)	4.84 (1.86)	4.16 (1.98)
I have opportunities to learn and grow at work.*	5.37 (1.41)	5.31 (1.55)	4.35 (1.85)
I feel that UWL encourages my development.*	4.84 (1.66)	4.84 (1.52)	4.15 (1.84)
I receive appropriate training and development to help me do my job well.	4.80 (1.59)	4.72 (1.68)	4.51 (1.60)
There are sufficient opportunities to network and learn from one another at UWL.	4.63 (1.62)	4.76 (1.50)	4.38 (1.63)
I am excited about the opportunities for professional growth I have at UWL.*	4.27 (1.67)	4.43 (1.72)	3.78 (1.84)

Communication & Decision-Making

Item Text	Faculty/ IAS	Academic Staff	University Staff
At UWL, my opinions seem to count.*	4.08 (1.72)	4.71 (1.51)	3.99 (1.73)
I feel appropriately involved in decision making at work.*	4.47 (1.69)	4.98 (1.58)	4.28 (1.84)
I feel comfortable voicing my ideas in meetings.	4.91 (1.79)	5.21 (1.50)	4.71 (1.56)
Decisions and policies at UWL are applied consistently across employees.	3.34 (1.75)	3.72 (1.84)	3.28 (1.75)
Explanations for decisions and policies at UWL seem reasonable.*	3.67 (1.69)	4.22 (1.71)	3.78 (1.63)
I am treated with respect at work. *	5.20 (1.55)	5.60 (1.37)	5.25 (1.47)
There is good communication between faculty, staff, and administration at UWL.*	3.89 (1.73)	4.24 (1.63)	3.72 (1.69)
UWL allocates appropriate budgetary resources toward achieving important objectives.	3.78 (1.69)	4.09 (1.68)	3.82 (1.70)
UWL allocates appropriate staff resources toward achieving important objectives.	3.63 (1.67)	4.04 (1.62)	3.86 (1.62)

Well-Being

Item Text	Faculty/ IAS	Academic Staff	University Staff
UWL promotes the health and well-being of employees.*	4.56 (1.60)	5.12 (1.37)	4.98 (1.43)
I am happy with my work-life balance.*	4.01 (1.83)	5.11 (1.36)	5.23 (1.56)
UWL has appropriate family-friendly policies.*	4.35 (1.60)	5.16 (1.43)	4.91 (1.46)
UWL really cares about my well-being.*	3.82 (1.58)	4.77 (1.47)	4.53 (1.48)
I am not overloaded with work to do.*	2.92 (1.78)	4.25 (1.98)	4.68 (1.77)
I have the appropriate resources to do my job well.*	4.19 (1.79)	4.89 (1.66)	4.93 (1.77)
I feel supported by others at work.*	4.98 (1.54)	5.53 (1.38)	5.20 (1.47)
I rarely feel required to do tasks that fall outside of my formal job responsibilities.*	3.99 (1.98)	4.68 (1.78)	4.47 (1.96)