

ERAU Faculty & Staff Climate Survey, Fall 2003

Comments – University Administration

BACKGROUND AND OVERALL UNIVERSITY SUMMARY

The Fall 2003 Faculty & Staff Climate Survey included a space at the end of each section (job, ERAU organization, ERAU environment, and climate survey) for employees to offer additional, free-form comments. Of the 730 employees who responded to the survey, 323 (44%) chose to comment.

Employees elaborated on a broad range of topics. While analysis of qualitative data such as this is a subjective exercise, an effort was made to summarize the most frequently cited issues by reviewing all comments and identifying common themes. Comments from all campuses were examined to determine the overall themes at Embry-Riddle. These themes are listed below. The themes are sorted by the number of comments which cited the theme (from most frequent to least frequent).

- **Raise/Wages/Salary (~144 comments, 45% of all comments).**
- **Lack of respect/trust with senior leadership/organization (~126 comments, 39% of all comments).**
- **Climate Survey results/actions (~91 comments, 28% of all comments).**
- **Diversity (~70 comments, 22% of all comments).**
- **Unrealistic/Overwhelming workload (~67 comments, 21% of all comments).**
- **Poor/Lack of facilities (~54 comments, 17% of all comments).**
- **Allocation of resources (~51 comments, 16% of all comments).**
- **Poor/Lack of communication (~47 comments, 15% of all comments).**
- **Poor/Lack of University organizational structure (~46 comments, 14% of all comments).**
- **Low/Poor morale (~43 comments, 13% of all comments).**
- **Benefits (~42 comments, 13% of all comments).**
- **ERAU is a good place to work (~35 comments, 11% of all comments).**
- **Ineffective/Poor computer technology (~35 comments, 11% of all comments).**
- **Working against University mission/goals/vision (~34 comments, 11% of all comments).**
- **No “One University”/Unequal campuses (~33 comments, 10% of all comments).**

UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION SUMMARY

Of the 50 University Administration employees who responded to the survey and 13 employees who did not indicate a campus affiliation, 21 (42%) and 8 (62%), respectively, chose to comment. Themes are listed below, along with excerpts from actual comments. The themes are sorted by the number of comments which cited the theme (from most frequent to least frequent).

Raise/Wages/Salary/ (~12 comments, 41% of UA/No Campus comments). “I think a 1.3% raise is a slap in the face, especially when it is across the board. It means that the employee who does very little work gets the same ‘raise’ that I and others get when we work well beyond expectations.” “The salary range allowable to bring in highly skilled

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new hires is sufficient. However, the dilemma is that salaries of current employees with greater experience and of higher valuable to the university evidently cannot be adjusted.”

Lack of respect/trust with senior leadership/organization (~7 comments, 24% of UA/No Campus comments). “The University Leadership gives the frequent impression that they care little for the views of the faculty, and unfortunately seek to impose top-down solutions to perceived problems.”

Climate Survey results/actions (~4 comments, 14% of UA/No Campus comments). “Excellent survey instrument -- and the process is VERY important.” “I hope the effort that is put into the Climate Survey nets improvement! This has yet to be seen.”

Benefits (~4 comments, 14% of UA/No Campus comments). “Extend the Tuition exchange benefit to include spouses as well as children.” “I was very disappointed to learn that the computer acquisition program was cancelled for ERAU employees.”

Unrealistic/Overwhelming workload (~4 comments, 14% of UA/No Campus comments). “While I’m extremely busy, usually behind the curve on University projects, I have been able to meet every due deadline - with significant weekend work and late evenings.”

Happy with job (~3 comments, 10% of UA/No Campus comments). “I enjoy the work I do and I feel appreciated and valued by my supervisors.”

Job classification process/JET (~3 comments, 10% of UA/No Campus comments). “When there are supervisors rated at the same level as their subordinates, there's a definite problem.”

Assessment/Planning/Budget process (~3 comments, 10% of UA/No Campus comments). “There seems to be no direct tie into the budgeting process and strategic planning. The two become disconnected along the way.”

Improvements seen in physical facilities (~3 comments, 10% of UA/No Campus comments). “The recent landscaping around Spruance Hall is a great step towards adding more vegetation to the campus.”

Poor/Lack of facilities (~3 comments, 10% of UA/No Campus comments). “The A, B, C, and W academic buildings are outdated, small, and poorly designed.”

Low/Poor morale (~3 comments, 10% of UA/No Campus comments). “With all the firings that have occurred in the past year, some are fearful of the lack of job security. Many were fired under the banner of ‘restructuring’. That affects morale.”

Hiring process/quota filling (~3 comments, 10% of UA/No Campus comments). “Hiring should be based on excellence rather than political considerations.”

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FORMAT FOR DISTRIBUTION OF ALL COMMENTS

The comments are organized by “location”, and are available in four separate MSWord documents:

University Administration
Daytona Beach
Prescott
Extended Campus

Each location-specific document contains the same background and overall university summary along with a location-specific summary. The comments in each report are specific to those made by employees of that location only. Comments are listed in random order by survey section (job, ERAU organization, ERAU environment, and climate survey). No distinctions are made as to the gender, employment status, or position of the respondent, unless somehow alluded to by the respondent within his/her own comment. Comments made by each respondent are contained in a single paragraph; a blank line between paragraphs represents a comment made by a different respondent.

Across all campuses, individual comments, with the exception of a very few, are shown in their original format. The edited comments were modified either to (1) exclude “signatures” provided by the respondent (noted as “[edited – signature removed]”) or (2) remove the identity of individuals named by name in comments containing language deemed inappropriate for mass distribution (noted as “[edited]”). Even in the latter cases, only a subset of the text was removed or edited so that the context of the comment remained intact. Readers should note that comments regarding ERAU’s senior management are listed as provided by the respondent; these were not edited.

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Job Comments

With the use of Oracle and Noetix in the field every site should be equipped with high-speed connection Internet access.

I have no expectations for automatic approval of request for additional resources or training, but – with a well documented presentation, and some persistence, I can usually obtain what I feel will help me and my staff be more efficient and effective.

The purchasing process (and the time it takes to get things as a result of it) is often counterproductive to getting things done on time.

I enjoy the work I do and I feel appreciated and valued by my supervisors.

Question 3. It is hardly possible to keep one's head above board with a 12-hour weekly teaching load.

While I'm extremely busy, usually behind the curve on University projects, I have been able to meet every due deadline - with significant weekend work and late evenings. I haven't had a performance evaluation completed on me for three years.

I am 6 months new to the University and have not yet had a performance review, thus cannot comment on #6 above.

I love my job!

My workload continues to increase and is too demanding to participate in any committee work or volunteer activities for the university. I had a full plate before I was assigned additional duties. These duties are pushed down from above - not from my immediate supervisor who understands how full my plate is, but from senior management who is out of touch and, by increasing the workload, sends the message that my hard work is not enough and is not appreciated. You can't wring everything out of your employees without causing resentment and alienation... I wish it mattered to senior management that morale is so low... it is clear that it doesn't matter.

Work needs to be done on the method used to evaluate job classifications. I do not know if it is the inexperience HR personnel or structure of the JET committee but the values assigned to job classifications are without corroborating evidence. Favoritism comes to mind.

My job includes responsibilities for Prescott, Daytona and Extended Campus however, I report to a Daytona person. This makes the job difficult in that their priorities are usually only the DB Campus and not the University as a whole.

I have only been here for two months.

The following Job Comments were made by employees who did not indicate a location:

The current teaching workload for faculty is too heavy if faculty are expected to engage in quality research as well. You cannot expect to keep and/or attract faculty who excel in both teaching and research while paying a below average salary. Reducing the teaching workload will help immensely in rectifying this problem.

Not doing the job I was hired for.

The CRJ program is currently suffering seriously because of lack of funding for the CRJ CBT. It hampers our ability to teach the course affectively thus hurting the students as well.

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I'm not sure who is my 'direct supervisor' [edited].

Responsibilities unclear with new Center Faculty Chair still responsible for his performance, but have no authority over him.

Organization Comments

I think a 1.3% raise is a slap in the face, especially when it is across the board. It means that the employee who does very little work gets the same "raise" that I and others get when we work well beyond expectations. It sickens me to see new furniture and renovations all over Spruance Hall and new positions being created in the "palace", yet other departments are constantly being told no. There is no equity on this campus. Clearly it is the haves and the have-nots.

16 - Why are domestic partners of different sex excluded from benefits? Is the new rule not reverse discrimination?

There is clear evidence that value for the knowledge, experience and skill required for the "job description" has greatly increased. The salary range allowable to bring in highly skilled new hires is sufficient. However, the dilemma is that salaries of current employees with greater experience and of higher value to the university evidently cannot be adjusted. Thus, I have a (20 year) outstanding employee with a BA making only 5% more than a new employee with a BA and 2 years experience in the field. As for myself, I am the department manager with an MBA, 25 years experience in the field and 13 years with the university. I currently make < 20% more than the new hire. I realize that the current financial climate makes salary increases difficult and that it is great progress to have the base and range increased, but people feel the injustice of the inequity and feel injured.

Question 7. Poorly posed question; I strongly support the mission and goals, but not necessarily the vision of the President. Question 18. This university should not follow a racist or sexist quota system. Hiring should be based on excellence rather than political considerations.

I do not pay attention to the gender of those being hired. It is more important to consider qualifications and the abilities of that person.

Resource allocation has diminished funding for academics, the heart of higher education.

Extend the Tuition exchange benefit to include spouses as well as children. The most recent (tiny) pay raises were a joke, but no one is laughing.

13. Assessments for departments aren't worth much when they're based on objectives that the department is unable to control. In other words, why are some departments setting objectives on factors/outputs/results that they do not govern?

Adequate compensation? Diversity? Are you joking? As for direction for the university, we used to be a proud organization with focus and direction... we are floundering and the outside world is noticing. We have such great students and faculty and staff... set some goals and provide adequate budgets and staff to meet those goals. Quit shifting course and expecting to make progress without commitment of necessary resources. There should be more accountability from senior management.

There seems to be no direct tie into the budgeting process and strategic planning. The two become disconnected

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along the way. Recent budget approvals of capital with no operational funding and constant changes in the rules for what is and what is not capital fail to provide a path to achieve what is approved in the planning process.

(16) I cringe every year when it is "open enrollment" time for benefits because the information we get from Human Resources is always so disorganized and unclear. Why can't they create a coherent, itemized list of everything we need to know for enrollment? Why do we have to physically attend some "open house" to get information about the insurance plans? (17) The job classification system has obvious flaws in the way it is being administered. Personal politics and agendas still have a heavy hand in the process, and the relative inexperience of certain administrators is detrimental. When there are supervisors rated at the same level as their subordinates, there's a definite problem. And there are more fundamental problems than will be listed here. Human Resources and the JET group definitely have some work to do and issues to discuss.

A female was recently hired to replace a male department head with equal qualifications. She is making considerably less (approximately \$10,000 per year less) than her male predecessor. It is very difficult for me to believe that the University is encouraging more women professionally when the pay structure does not support that claim. It is extremely disappointing.

The following Organization Comments were made by employees who did not indicate a location:

It is evident by the participation at World Wide that there are many women in management - lower and middle-positions. It is also evident that the pay for these positions is okay as a secondary income, but not enough to be a primary income. The upper management and above see few women in positions.

I have seen NO progress toward improving the pay afforded me for my work. Embry-Riddle staff members are the people that interact with students every day and keep this university running. We work hard and are expected to do much, yet the wages and annual raises for university staff members are incredibly low.

I was very disappointed to learn that the computer acquisition program was cancelled for ERAU employees. I have already purchased one computer using this program and have completed payments on it. Due to faults of other employees this program is now gone.

Environment Comments

The A, B, C, and W academic buildings are outdated, small, and poorly designed. The administrative offices should all be located within the same building - financial aid, bursar, registrar, administration.

Question 23. The University Leadership gives the frequent impression that they care little for the views of the faculty, and unfortunately seek to impose top-down solutions to perceived problems.

The recent landscaping around Spruance Hall is a great step towards adding more vegetation to the campus. I would very much like to see additional plantings further back on the campus, and would especially like the addition of shade trees throughout

(21) We don't have department meetings, so it's hard to know what's happening. The communication is so poor that work and effort are needlessly replicated by multiple people. If we want to know about university and campus news that affect our work, I guess we're supposed to hang out at the coffee machine and see what gossip is going around. Or maybe read the student newspapers and hope they get the facts right. No matter which way you look at it, the situation is really unproductive. With all the firings that have occurred in the past year, some

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are fearful of the lack of job security. Many were fired under the banner of "restructuring." That affects morale. This used to be a great place to work.

While at the top the "One University" mantra is stated, yet at the campus level it has never been worse. The we/they attitude between campuses seems to be at an all time high, and there is no reason to cooperate for a "One University" solution to any issues. If you happen to work under "University Administration" you feel like you are often left brokering global peace talks or trying to ensure you given equal attention to all needs regardless of whether it makes sense (or cents) from a "One University" view.

The University is an excellent place to work; however there is an undertone that women are not valued.

The following Environment Comments were made by employees who did not indicate a location:

I am about to enjoy benefits from the Eagle Look project, and I am sure my surroundings will be much better! No longer having to kick one drawer in my desk to open another will be a treat!

There is not sense of any respect for the faculty by the president, chancellor, or any of the senior administration.

Lack confidence in the president and the people he has hired, who appear afraid to voice opinions he does not want to hear. Believe the President is unqualified and unable to lead the university

As an adjunct, I am pleased to have my own desk and place to work and feel I'm treated very well.

Survey Comments

I am appalled at the request for an increase in tuition when our salaries are so low. We are nowhere near the cost of living.

The survey will be used to justify whatever action the university leadership has predetermined.

Excellent survey instrument -- and the process is VERY important.

I hope the effort that is put into the Climate Survey nets improvement! This has yet to be seen.

I don't believe that anything will be done to increase woman's salaries to that of their male counterparts. Although if there were such increases morale would certainly improve.