ERAU Faculty & Staff Climate Survey
Fall 2002
Comments
University Administration

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<u>**BACKGROUND AND OVERALL UNIVERSITY SUMMARY**</u>

The Fall 2002 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 799 employees who responded to the survey, 337 (42%) chose to comment.

Employees elaborated on a broad range of topics. While analysis of qualititative 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). Note that the most frequent theme, "wages/salary/benefits" garnered approximately 80 mentions out of 337 total comments; this demonstrates how varied the topics were.

Wages/salary/benefits (~80 comments, 24% of all comments).

Poor/Lack of facilities (~48 comments, 14% of all comments).

Climate Survey results/actions (~44 comments, 13% of all comments).

Diversity (~40 comments, 12% of all comments).

Unrealistic/Overwhelming work load (~39 comments, 12% of all comments).

Lack of respect/trust with senior leadership/organization (~39 comments, 12% of all comments).

Climate Survey opportunity/frequency (~28 comments, 8% of all comments).

Lack of understanding/knowledge of strategic planning/assessment (~26 comments, 8% of all comments).

Poor/Lack of communication (~24 comments, 7% of all comments).

Ineffective/Poor computer technology (~23 comments, 7% of all comments).

Poor/Lack of University organizational structure (~21 comments, 6% of all comments).

Poor structure of University Website/Blackboard (Internet & intranet) (~20 comments, 6% of all comments).

UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION SUMMARY

Of the 59 University Administration employees who responded to the survey, 19 (32%) 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).

Wages/salary/benefits (~9 comments, 47% of UA comments). "Compensation compression is still a problem, especially highlighted when new people are hired."

Climate Survey results/actions (~8 comments, 42% of UA comments). "What was accomplished by the task teams that were formed as a result of last year's Climate Survey? Don't keep asking the opinions of the University community if you don't plan on taking any action."

Climate Survey opportunity/frequency (~5 comments, 26% of UA comments). "This survey should continue (annual or biannual), if only to be allowed the opportunity to comment on key university issues."

Unrealistic/Overwhelming work load (~5 comments, 26% of UA comments). "My workload has increased 100% during the past year, my timelines have become nearly impossible, and for what? If you want a high performance organization, it comes with a price."

Good place to work (~5 comments, 26% of UA comments). "ERAU is a great place to work and people care."

Diversity (~4 comments, 21% of UA comments). "We have much work to do for diversity. In my dept, I am ostracized because I don't join in the flirting/dirty joking. I'm tired of being called 'girl' even though I'm well over 40. I'm tired of the stereotypes that women are 'aggressive' if they bring up ideas at meetings, while men are 'assertive' in the same situation."

Happy with job (~3 comments, 16% of UA comments). "I love my job."

No job evaluations (~3 comments, 16% of UA comments). "For the first time in over 10 years I did not receive an evaluation from my supervisor. The University needs to come up with an employee evaluation system that is supported by its upper management. In times of economic difficulty when not much monetary reward is available, annual evaluations are important."

Poor/Lack of communication (~3 comments, 16% of UA comments). "Communication in the dept is poor."

Poor/Lack of University organizational structure (~3 comments, 16% of UA comments). "How can anyone honestly say how the organization is and how it works until you learn more about the different organization levels, such as the colleges. Do we know why these changes were made, do we know how it will affect us or what changes it will cause in the overall running of the organization and how it will affect student

service."

Lack of respect/trust with senior leadership/organization (~3 comments, % of UA comments). "Leaders in my dept do not treat others in accordance with university value statements."

Poor structure of University Website/Blackboard (Internet & intranet) (~3 comments, 9% of UA comments). "We need better coordination between the Communications dept with their external website and IT with ERAU Online and all the university depts that have current websites with content. There's too much confusion about where to find dept websites and content."

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 seven, are shown in their original format. Of the seven edited comments, four were modified simply to exclude "signatures" provided by the respondent; these instances are noted with the text "[edited – signature removed]". The remaining three edited comments originally included derogatory language that was deemed inappropriate for mass distribution; these instances are noted with the text "[edited]". Even in these 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 included in the three comments that were edited for content.

Job Comments

For the first time in over 10 years I did not receive an evaluation from my supervisor. The University needs to come up with an employee evaluation systems that is supported by its upper management. In times of economic difficulty when not much monetary reward is available, annual evaluations are important.

Leaders in my dept do not treat others in accordance with university value statements. Communication in the dept is poor. People play games with critical information and deliberately withhold it from those who need it to perform their jobs or complete projects. Motivations for withholding and burying information include misguided turf protecting, glory-grabbing, and fear of other talented employees. The manager and other leaders encourage this unhealthy state of operations, and they themselves fail to communicate basic information (such as when they will be away on extended vacation). All of this behavior impacts the university's bottom line, in how we meet our customers' needs and how we treat our people.

I love my job :-)

My job is constantly changing. Yet my job description remains the same. I am constantly "challenged" if by that you mean I am always asked to do more than I am trained for, more than I am paid for, and more than I have the resources (time/materials) to accomplish.

My manager rarely consults her technical staff for opinions, consistently makes technical decisions based upon emotion (or preconceptions), and generally tends to micro-manage the operations of the department. Needless to say, this doesn't tend to promote a lot of trust between management and technical staff nor does it satisfy the needs of our customers as effectively as could otherwise be done.

Having to work with ineffective equipment and the inability to upgrade my systems to meet the requirements of my work is frustrating, particularly so when I'm held responsible for timeliness of work and the equipment defeats that for me. In terms of a high performance organization and creation of a sense of urgency, while I support these concepts the timelines should remain realistic, and allow for a person to plan their work, not everything being required yesterday and being put behind the eight ball before I even get a chance to begin the projects.

Absolutely great.

It's been three years since my last "annual" performance evaluation.

Communication is non-existent in me department - hear from my direct supervisor once a month if I am lucky. Else it may be two or more months to hear what is happening.

6. I am neutral on #6 because I do not agree that formal evaluations are that helpful in my job. I perform the same sort of tasks all of the time and evaluations are redundant. I prefer that my supervisor let me know if I do something that displeases him - when it happens - so that I can correct it immediately.

Somehow my job duties keep on growing, but my job description doesn't. hmmmm

ERAU is a great place to work and people care

TOO MUCH WORK, NEED HELP - NEED TO HIRE SOMEONE

I enjoy my job however, feel that ERAU has not been able to make the communication between the different groups at the University easy enough to make everyone other than the administration has say in what the University will do next or go next. It would be much nicer to feel you were an active stakeholder in the operation and not "one of the hired help".

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

1. IT frequently makes classroom computers overly difficult to use, even inaccessible. Examples: browser stuck on Blackboard, locked Windows accessibility features such as cursors or colors to be more readable, clumsiness using RF mouse. Does this violate ADA rules for faculty and students to make full use of accessibility features that have been blocked off? 4. Opinions do not count, e.g. the Chancellor's office has a closed mind on issues that relate to employee issues such as an ombudsperson and opportunities for women. Deans often do not support faculty/staff opinions against higher autocracy.

Organization Comments

I don't care about progress toward hiring more women and members of underrepresented groups into management and faculty positions. We need the best person for the job, period.

We have much work to do for diversity. In my dept, I am ostracized because I don't join in the flirting/dirty joking. I'm tired of being called "girl" even though I'm well over 40. I'm tired of the usual stereotypes that women are "aggressive" if they bring up ideas at meetings, while men are "assertive" in the same situation. Compensation compression is still a problem, especially highlighted when new people are hired.

Strategic planning needs to result in an adequate understanding of resources that will be required to accomplish goals. Quite often, the plans are there but the resources to back them up are not. Progress towards improving pay seems to have come to a halt from the President's message several months ago stating that we were paid to scale. It leads one to believe that we are 'done' reviewing and updating salaries, and, especially, job descriptions.

Regarding 5: The assessment process may be "well defined", however, it is generally ineffective in evaluating the actual work performance of employees. Productivity and skill are made secondary to emotional intangibles. Regarding 16: too often this is seen/implemented as a double-standard. Highly qualified individuals who do not meet the quota for "underrepresented groups" are passed over, allowing less effective individuals into these positions.

On #14 - I believe in the budgeting process that priorities are given to some unnecessary areas at the expense of Academics, which should be our most important priority.

How can anyone honestly say how the organization is and how it works until you learn more about the different organization levels, such as the colleges. Do we know why theses changes were made, do we know how it will affect us or what major changes it will cause in the overall running of the organization and how it will affect student service.

Seen growth in the hiring of women not underrepresented groups. Questions should be split out.

I believe that serious priority should be given to solving the strife between the admin and the faculty if this institution is to survive, even if it means a stern warning about the dangers of faction, and then removing the continuing troublemakers at every level with good cause. I think cancer could be used as an excellent metaphor.

Many in the university's management group think our benefits are "great". They may be great compared to other companies in Daytona, but they really aren't very good. Maybe if our health premiums were decreased instead of increased each year - we might actually believe the line in the president's email that "we are compensated well". Just recently saw an article regarding my exact position in the news journal and was gratified to see that I was not being paid at the bottom of the scale - actually an entire $2000 above the bottom of the scale and $25,000 from the top. I don't believe their is equity in staff wages and or bonuses. There is a lot of spending going on in the university, but it should be directed towards rewarding the faculty and staff who make the university the outstanding institution it is.

My salary is a joke. Hopefully, I can return the favor by leaving here soon. My boss does not appreciate all of the things I have done for this University. There is NO incentive (financial or otherwise) to do a good job, yet I continue to do so because that is the type of person I am! What a waste on an unappreciative boss.

I continue to witness growing inequities between what is required of me and what this organization is willing to provide me. My workload has increased 100% during the past year, my timelines have become nearly impossible, and for what? If you want a high performance organization, it comes with a price. It would be nice if someone would be able to realize that with all of these great minds around here.

Just look at the results of the last 3 years of senior level hires (all white male) when all were open and available several times.

In reading the Vision and Goals, it seems as if the university wishes to reach for excellence , yet we only want to "Compensate our employees fairly and equitably"". The university's goal is to provide "superior" faculty and staff, but give them "adequate" office space. A little one-sided I would say.

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

A good part of our administration is in constant flex. This does not allow to make decisions. If we did, we would make identical errors as was done by Dr. Price. He was not in a position to make desisions on faculty since he was barely 3 month on the job. Thus, the prudent decision is to listen to the people who KNOW the person.

#16 - I believe we are heading in the right direction regarding diversity and affirmative action, however; I also believe that there are departments and department heads that would rather not see these plans in place. I believe that favortism exists in each department and that accountability is the key to our success.

Environment Comments

We need better coordination between the Communications dept with their external website and IT with ERAU Online and all the university depts that have current websites with content. There's too much confusion about where to find dept websites and content.

I believe that communications among campuses has improved over the years, but we're not there yet. I marked Agree on #20 because I feel respected and trusted and I generally trust the University, but I know that feeling is not always shared by others.

From my experience, Embry-Riddle is not only a "good" place to work, it is - by a wide margin - the "best" institution of higher learning for employment. The extraordinary quality of ERAU's students, its singular

mission, and the modern facilities on both residential campuses keep Embry-Riddle ahead of all its potential competitors, even when examined in a global context.

The physical facilities have been improving every year and efforts to make it a better place to work is proceeding in some areas, however, I still think the amount of attention to actual classrooms is lacking. The majority of the classrooms are too small for the increased number of students allowed into each class.

One of the better benefits of working at ERAU is that the facilities are so well kept up (to a large degree). I also appreciate the extra benefits that HR has been putting together lately - the Bank of America accounts, the cruise discounts. Every little bit helps!!

Decisions are often made with Daytona campus-centric biases within my department: the "not invented here" syndrome is rampant to the detriment of the needs of the other campuses.

The University seemed to be a better place to work years ago when I was not aware of all of the politics involved. Now that I know, it's just as bad as any other organization.

ERAU needs to do a better job of updating the staff/faculty/community of events/activities/news on a daily and regular routine.

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

I believe certain departments look down on other departments and this causes animosity between university employees.

Climate Comments

So far the administration has requested the surveys be done, however, have not shown how many of their actions have been undertaken because of the responses of the climate survey or just because they were part of the overall plan. How can we say we think the survey is useful without the feedback showing what changes were implemented because of our participatory suggestions on the survey. Surveys which are ignored are a waste of everyone's time. Assessment of effectiveness of the survey would be so helpful.

What was accomplished by the task teams that were formed as a result of last year's Climate Survey? Don't keep asking the opinions of the University community if you don't plan on taking any action.

Should actually be held every six months. Therefore we could see if there were any positive reactions to the survey

No one cares about the results of this survey. Nothing was done last time, so I honestly believe that nothing will happen again. What's the point?
Like to see /hear more of the actions that took place from last year's survey and see the measurables. Did we indeed improve communication between the colleges? If we think so, how is that measured? Merely by answers to a survey question? We're all familiar now with the 5-step planning, would like to see the results of plans and actions published. See the 'measurables'.

This survey should continue (annual or biannual), if only to be allowed the opportunity to comment on key university issues.

This is the best climate survey I have seen since joining ERAU. Quick, concise. It was obviously well thought out.

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

I hope that the feedback from this survey will lead to results.

No, I do not believe that the online climate survey is a good method. The majority of people know that web-based information is easily traced, thus, they will NOT provide the answers you should be looking for. We don't seem to have an open door policy anymore, as we used to have under Dr. Sliwa.

Additional Comments

Stop spending money like we are a Harvard or even University of Florida. Then at the end of the fiscal year, when all the money is spent, tell staff and faculty that they are fairly compensated. Don't be surprised next time your raise tuition rates in a bad economy, that enrollment declines. First the unfortunate incidents of Sept 11, then the stock market plunges taking many American's savings with them. Many companies, including local ones in the central Florida area, start laying off people. Embry-Riddle does not do this, which was fantastic, but they raised an already high tuition and then were surprised that enrollment was down.

Please USE results from this survey to better the university and let us know what is being done. What happened last time???

Nicely done survey - quick, effortless, clear, concise. Took exactly 2 minutes!!!

This is still a very good place to work. But it is still a bit frustrating to have to accomplish much with and for little.

Appreciate the anonymity.

Being a staff member I have almost no use for Blackboard (ERAU Online). Faculty apparently get more use out of it. The new website still stinks - I can't find anything! Supervisors should be held to higher standards. I know of some pretty dirty office politics and hiring/promoting practices going on at ERAU and no one seems to care.

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

I enjoy my job at Embry-Riddle and the department for which I work. I, like everyone else, would like to see a more competitive salary, but I believe the overall compensation/benefits package is above average.

Additionally, we might consider age ranges 21-30; 31-40, etc.