

Our Best Work Environment

Assessment Team Summary

Team Objective: The OBWE Assessment Team was tasked with developing and piloting a survey instrument for University of Arizona Stakeholders (particularly employees) to replace the organizational health index as a measure of workplace climate.

Team Members: The Assessment Team was comprised of faculty and staff volunteers from a variety of units across campus:

- **Ahn Le**, Senior Director of Finance and Administration, Research Innovation & Impact
- **Beverly Perez-Mercado**, Administrative Assistant, Human Resources
- **Casey Hamm**, Senior Business Manager, Social and Behavioral Sciences
- **Chante Martin**, Interim Senior Vice President, Human Resources
- **Cynthia Malbrough**, Director of Business-Finance, Social and Behavioral Sciences
- **Damian Baca**, Associate Professor of English, Social and Behavioral Sciences
- **Erica Ortiz**, Manager Grants and Contracts, Social and Behavioral Sciences
- **Jessica Hamar Martinez**, Associate Research Scientist, Social and Behavioral Sciences
- **Jessica Summers** (Team Chair), Professor of TLS, Education
- **Lucas Schalewski**, Director of Assessment-Research, Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management
- **Marcela Kepic**, Faculty of DPS, Education
- **Mark Trommer**, Senior Organizational Consultant, Human Resources
- **Marisa Michaels**, Faculty of Business Communications, Eller
- **Michael Sulkowski**, Associate Professor of DPS, Education
- **Michelle Sogge**, Senior Coordinator of Assessment, Thrive Center
- **Raina Williams** (Team Graduate Assistant), Doctoral Student, EDP, Education

Team Process: The Assessment Team met for the first time in early February, 2020 to generate/review a list of [currently administered UArizona climate surveys](#) in order to identify commonalities/gaps and to make recommendations based on current practice at external institutions. Based on this analysis, the committee agreed that the tool that best matched our needs was the [Virginia Tech Campus Climate Survey](#). Once this assessment tool was identified as an appropriate model for piloting at UArizona, the team proposed the following timeline:

Submitted by Jessica J Summers, Ph.D.

1/27/2021

1. Develop assessment tool – mid March
2. Organize focus group(s) to review tool – end of March
3. Revise and administer tool to quota sample – early April
4. Analyze tool for reliability and validity – late April/early May
5. Draft and submit report to Administrators – late May

An adapted version of the Virginia Tech Campus Climate survey (i.e., language was changed to be university specific) was manually entered into Qualtrics and shared with a variety of UArizona employees that comprised six focus groups. The Chair and Student Assistant met with each group the week of April 6 via Zoom, taking detailed notes/feedback from participants (having seen the survey beforehand), reviewing/discussing each item in the survey. Participants received \$20 Amazon gift cards for their contributions. The Chair and Student Assistant's review of transcriptions yielded the following summary of participant comments:

- **What participants liked:** short form; questions about equity, inclusion, and safety; leadership questions are separated by group; items are more in line with university workplace
- **What they would like to change:** all items should have "does not apply" or "I don't know" response choices; text box should be available at the end to express suggestions; more questions about professional development; some terms need better definitions

These comments were implemented in a [revised version of the survey](#) that we recommended for piloting and were shared with the Assessment Team at our final meeting in April 2020. Piloting did NOT take place as planned in the original timeline for the following reasons:

- Concern was raised from the Assessment Team that employees are currently under too much stress from Covid-19 related issues to take a survey
- Survey results will be affected by uncertainty of employment and furlough/pay reduction program
- Results will be accurate, but may not provide a good baseline for actionable issues

Now that the furlough program is concluded and people will be returning to regular workplace activities in fall 2021, this may be a good time to plan a baseline pilot test of the revised instrument in order to establish reliability and validity metrics.