Communicators Climate Survey Takeaways

As part of our committee’s work, we obtained and analyzed communicators’ responses to the Duke-wide climate survey administered in April 2021 by Institutional Research (IR).

We defined communicators broadly as anyone subscribed to the Duke communicators’ listserv in order to include anyone who self-identifies as doing communications work. That definition allowed us to include responses from those whose job includes communications duties but who may not be in officially recognized communications positions.

We believed doing so was important in order to investigate structural inequalities in pay scales, promotion opportunities, and other concerns relevant to our task.

We further analyzed survey responses by comparing differences between communicators and the rest of Duke, as well as men and women and under-represented minorities (URM) and others within communicators.

Sample Sizes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicator</td>
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<td>298</td>
<td>419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>5301</td>
<td>8557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>5599</td>
<td>8976</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>URM</th>
<th>Non-URM</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>385</td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1465</td>
<td>7066</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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Primary Takeaways

- The most significant issues among communicators seem to be unclear advancement criteria and feeling underpaid.
• In many cases (though not the above), female communicators and URM communicators expressed higher levels of satisfaction and lower levels of negative experiences than their counterparts across Duke as a whole.
• Around a quarter of female and URM communicators reported experiencing discrimination or microaggressions at Duke within the past year.
• Women and URM are consistently less positive than men and non-URM.
• Communicators report high levels of participation in events, discussions, etc., with high satisfaction, but that hasn’t translated to positivity about Duke’s diversity overall.

Promotions and Hiring
• Only 36.8% of communicators think advancement criteria are clear, compared to 54.3% for the rest of Duke
  o The problem is exacerbated for women (34.4%) and URM (36.2%), compared to men and non-URM.
• URM communicators are very positive on hiring practices (85.2%) compared to non-URM communicators (60%).
• On most questions asked about having a voice in the department, feeling valued, and similar topics, communicators were around 75 or 80% positive.

Equal Opportunities
• Overall, the biggest concern for communicators is the opportunities provided to URM. Only 58.8% of communicators and 42.6% of URM communicators said opportunities for URM are as good as majority groups.
• However, communicator groups tend to be more positive than their counterparts across the rest of Duke
• 64.6% of communicators feel underpaid, but rates of dissatisfaction very similar across all subgroups

Experiences of Discrimination and Microaggressions
• 27.7% of communicators have been negatively impacted by microaggressions or discrimination, including 31.4% of female communicators and 31% of URM communicators.
• Overall communicators experience same levels of discrimination and microaggressions as the rest of Duke, but URM communicators report less than their counterparts at the rest of Duke.
  o Rates for women are fairly similar when comparing communicators to rest of Duke.
• In the past year, 12.8% of URM communicators and 10.5% of female communicators experienced discrimination from a Duke community member and 34.4% of URM communicators and 31.5% of women communicators experienced microaggressions.

Other Sources of Discrimination
• 54.1% of communicators who reported experiencing discrimination or microaggressions said they believed it was based on age, and 51% said it was based on “something else.”
  o The only form of discrimination reported more often than age was discrimination based on sex (69.5%)
To ensure anonymity, staff at IR did not provide free text answers. However, they did provide their analysis of those answers for all of Duke, which they categorized as follows:

- Status in the organizational hierarchy: 44%
- Interpersonal differences or dislike: 21%
- Parental status: 15%
- Education level: 15%
- Personal beliefs (e.g., being an anti-vaxer): 6%

- Race (79.9%) and sex (65.4%) were the biggest factors in discrimination that communicators reported witnessing, but there were other sources reported by a significant number, including:
  - Age: 48.1%
  - Political orientation: 44.6%
  - National origin: 30.2%
  - Gender identity/expression: 29.8%
  - Social class: 29%
  - Sexual orientation (29.9%)

Satisfaction with Duke

- Overall 79% of communicators are satisfied with the community at Duke. However, on many specific measurements, they are less satisfied than the rest of Duke.
- In particular, only 44.9% of communicators are satisfied with the diversity of faculty and 54.5% with the diversity of staff.
- Only 42.7% of communicators are satisfied with diversity of their specific unit.
- Women and URM less positive on all accounts

Responses to Diversity Programming

- 91.5% of communicators attended some kind of diversity programming in the past year, compared to 81.1% of the rest of Duke.
- The most popular type of programming or intervention was active learning workshops (60.6% of communicators said they would be helpful), followed by social opportunities with other members of the department (55.6%)
  - Handouts (12.9%), mediation (18.1%) and books/articles (26.5%) were among the lowest rated options.
- Communicators not very high on books, reading, etc., but want interaction in workshops and such.
- There were two notable differences within communicators:
  - 43.8% of women said seminars would be helpful, compared to only 25.4% of men
  - 31.3% of URM said mediation would be helpful, compared to only 17% of non-URM

Conversations about Diversity

- The vast majority of communicators report having meaningful conversations with people who differ from them across most facets of identity
  - The least frequent were conversations with people of a different disability status—24.3% of communicators said they never did so.
Only 54.1% of communicators said they felt safe reporting concerns of discrimination or microaggressions, including only 45.5% of women and 53.1% of URM.