University of Michigan School of Dentistry

Climate Study: Final Report

April 2015

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

CURTIS CENTER PROGRAM EVALUATION GROUP

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Curtis Center Program Evaluation Group

The Curtis Center Program Evaluation Group trains and professionally prepares students and recent social work graduates in program evaluation by providing evaluation services to a broad range of community-based agencies. Established in September 2011, the Program Evaluation Group at the University of Michigan School of Social Work engages the community to provide professional evaluation services and matches students' educational goals with projects. The Program Evaluation Group uses a utilization-focused approach to evaluation, highlighting the need for stakeholder engagement throughout the evaluation process. The Program Evaluation Group provides high-quality, professional evaluation services through a social work lens.

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The University of Michigan School of Dentistry (UMSD) launched a Climate Study in the summer of 2014 to gather information about the School's "climate," or interpersonal environment among staff, students and faculty at the UMSD. The purpose of this Study was to produce a set of recommendations that would be made formally to Dean McCauley and the executive team. In early 2014, several UMSD administrators reached out to the University of Michigan School of Social Work Curtis Center Program Evaluation Group (CC-PEG) to serve the project as independent evaluators.

The evaluation team took a collaborative, utilization-focused approach in order to gain buy-in from the stakeholders and to develop recommendations that would be the most useful to all members of the UMSD. A utilization-focused evaluation approach emphasizes the usefulness of its findings by engaging stakeholders in making key decisions throughout the process. To facilitate this approach, the evaluation team assisted with establishing a Climate Study Steering Committee. This committee was comprised of UMSD administrators and met every other week. The Steering Committee recruited a diverse group of 19 students, staff and faculty members to establish a Climate Study Advisory Committee that met every week. Members of the Steering Committee also participated in the Advisory Committee. Both Climate Study Committees assisted in developing and facilitating the multi-step, multi-method Study.

This executive summary briefly summarizes the process and findings from the 2014-2015 UMSD Climate Study. The subsequent report and appendices will provide further detail on the process, data collection tools and results from the Study.

Organization of Final Report

The final report provides an overview of the study, followed by a description of the development of the two Climate Study Committees. The report then details each data collection effort and the key findings that informed the subsequent collection effort. The final recommendations are then presented, along with additional data supporting each recommendation. Finally, the report explains the strengths and limitations of the current study, along with next steps.

Background of the Climate Study

The UMSD conducted two previous climate studies in 1994/1995 and 2006/2007. Both studies, called 'cultural audits,' included surveys consisting of closed and open-ended questions. The 2014/2015 Climate Study included several questions relating to diversity and inclusion, learning environment, and respondent demographics from the prior two audits (see Appendix E2).

The 2014/2015 Climate Study was designed to be more stakeholder-driven, participatory, and utilization-focused than the prior audits. This approach was intended to result in recommendations that have would have greater buy-in and would be of greater use to the stakeholders, which would ultimately contribute to the successful implementation of the recommendations to improve the UMSD climate.

Study Design and Methodology

The Climate Study used a multi-step, mixed-methods, utilization-focused approach. To begin the survey design process, the Climate Study Committees recruited six individuals (1 student, 1 recent graduate, 2 faculty and 2 staff) for key informant interviews. The Committees used the results of these interviews to develop the main sections of the school-wide survey and a few specific questions.

The school-wide survey was administered electronically to all UMSD staff, faculty and students. A total of 685 respondents completed the survey, a 53% completion rate. The evaluation team conducted a preliminary analysis of the results. These results were presented to the Climate Study Committees for interpretation.

Interviews

Survey

Focus groups

The Climate Study Committees used the results from the survey to inform the development of the four focus group protocols. The evaluation team conducted these focus groups: (1) students, (2) staff, (3) faculty members, and (4) a group recruited by the Multicultural Affairs Committee and was intentionally comprised of members from underrepresented groups.

Final Recommendations

Results from all three of these data collection efforts were synthesized and presented to the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee participated in a month-long process of developing and ranking their recommendations, which led to a final voting process to establish the Committee's final nine Climate Study recommendations (see table 9).

The top 5 recommendations were presented to the UMSD community at two town hall meetings. During the town hall meetings, members of the Advisory Committee shared their own experiences in the process, thoughts about the results from the Study and finally, their plans to develop a Climate Study Implementation Committee.

The evaluation team developed this schematic to conceptually represent the recommendations. The pyramid includes two foundational categories (resources to foster inclusion and structures to improve communication) and the top category to "increase diversity of staff, faculty and students." The five recommendations are presented next by category.

Increase diversity of staff, faculty and students

Increase resources that foster an inclusive environment

Create structures to **improve communication** across the school
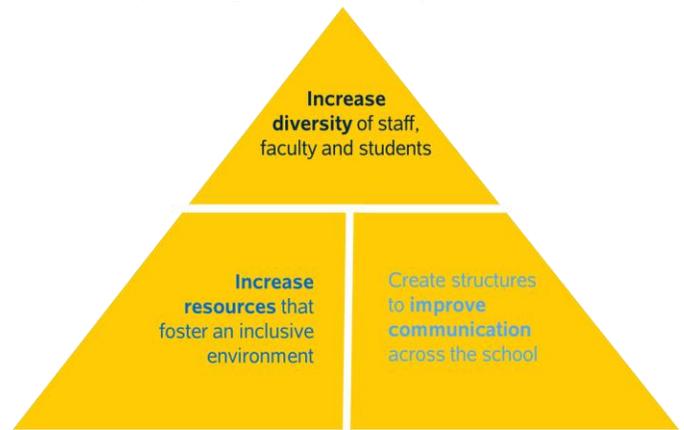
Increase Resources that Foster an Inclusive Environment	R1. Implement cultural sensitivity training. R2. Provide internal cultural sensitivity training.
Create Structures to Improve Communication across the School	R3. Create think tanks made up of students, faculty and staff. R4. Create a clear, safe place to report incidents of micro-aggressions.
Increase Diversity	R5. Increase diversity of staff, faculty and students

Table Contents

Study Overview

The purpose of the UMSD Climate Study was to assess the humanistic environment and learning environment in the School of Dentistry for staff, faculty, and students. The evaluation team facilitated the year-long process and collaborated with students, faculty and staff from the UMSD through the Climate Study Steering and Advisory Committees.

The UMSD Climate Study was developed through a utilization-focused evaluation process and using a mixed-methods approach. The utilization-focused evaluations engage stakeholders throughout the study process to ensure that the study will generate useful and relevant results. Key stakeholders in UMSD were invited to participate on the Climate Study Steering and Advisory Committees.

The Study collected data using three methods: key informant interviews, a school-wide survey and focus groups. Each method included faculty, students and staff respondents. The findings were discussed and interpreted by the Climate Study Committees. Data gathered from each method informed the subsequent data collection effort. For example, several respondents in the key informant interviews discussed issues pertaining to diversity and inclusion at the UMSD, which informed questions on the school-wide survey. The data from the school-wide survey was analyzed and interpreted thematically. Focus group questions were created to better understand the survey themes.

While the interview and focus group results helped inform the final recommendations, the school-wide survey results were the most informative. The Study findings and recommendations will be reviewed and reported as part of the UMSD's re-accreditation process, due in 2016.

Data from all three methods was presented, discussed, and synthesized by the Committees to establish the top five recommendations. The recommendations were presented to the UMSD at two Town Hall meetings. Dean McCauley introduced the Climate Survey at the Town Hall meetings and participated in a question and answer session at the end of both meetings. The key themes and the climate areas of interest from the key informant interviews, school-wide survey and top recommendations are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Key Themes and Areas of Interest

Key Informant Interviews→	School-wide Survey→	*Top Recommendations*
Hierarchy issues	Humanistic environment	*Increase communication across the School*
Diversity and inclusion	Learning environment	
Learning environment	Diversity and inclusion	*Increase resources that foster a more inclusive environment*
Lack of administrative support	Microaggression and bullying	
	Activities and space	*Increase diversity*

Steering Committee and Advisory Committee

In the summer of 2014, a Steering Committee and Advisory Committee were formed to begin the Climate Study process. Four leaders at the UMSD- the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the Associate Dean for Student Services, the Director of Diversity and Inclusion and the Curriculum Specialist- collaborated with the evaluation team in the initial steps of the evaluation. This team, which later became the Steering Committee, guided the development of the larger Advisory Committee, which included 15 diverse staff, students, and faculty members from the UMSD.

Participants in the Climate Study Steering Committee and Advisory Committee represented students, faculty and staff and were from diverse backgrounds and positions within the UMSD. Both Committees played a significant role in developing the survey, interpreting key data, and preparing the final recommendations.

The Steering Committee met every other week and was influential in guiding the direction of the Climate Study project. This work included making decisions about the best use of the Advisory Committee's limited time, carefully reviewing draft communications to be shared with the School community, and determining the timeline for the Study. This group was also key in framing the context of the Climate Study within the UMSD, which informed important decisions, such as when to launch the survey, how to communicate information with administrators, and strategies for increasing credibility and buy-in.

The Advisory Committee met weekly from July 2014 until March 2015, with the facilitation of the CC-PEG evaluation team. In the first few months, the Committee was involved in developing a logic model, critiquing data collection methods, identifying key informants and pilot participants for the survey, contributing to and reviewing draft survey questions. After the data was collected, the Committee interpreted survey and focus group data, planned for the survey launch and Town Hall meetings, and synthesized data to develop recommendations. The Advisory Committee members proved to be a steadfast and committed group – they dedicated their thoughtful attention and dozens of hours to the tasks required for the Study.

Table 2. Committee Responsibilities

Steering Committee	Advisory Committee	Both Committees
Met every other week	Met every week	Reviewed survey questions
Created timelines	Created logic model	Interpreted survey results
Interpreted key informant interview results	Reviewed interview and focus group protocols	Planned Town Hall meeting
Decided on Advisory Committee's responsibilities	Interpreted focus group data	
Communicated with and engaged Dean throughout Study	Conducted outreach and awareness building throughout the School	

Key Informant Interviews

To inform the development of the school-wide survey and increase the usefulness of its results to school, the evaluation team conducted key informant interviews. The Steering Committee and evaluation team developed the interview protocols. The interview included questions about the interviewees' past experience with climate surveys, their feelings about the UMSD's humanistic environment and overall experience as a student, staff or faculty member. Interviewees were also asked for suggestions on new questions or topics that they would like to see captured with the school-wide survey administration.

The Steering Committee identified two staff, two faculty, one student, and one recent graduate as key informants. A diverse group of interviewees were selected based on a number of factors. Faculty and staff who had a long tenure at UMSD or were involved in past climate surveys were selected. Students who were involved in different academic programs or extracurricular activities were selected for interviews. The evaluation team conducted in person interviews in September and October, 2014.

Key Informant Interview Results

Responses to interview questions were categorized into five main themes: **hierarchy issues, diversity and inclusion, learning environment, and lack of administrative support**. Unlike the survey and focus group data, responses were not organized by faculty, staff, and students, but rather all responses were presented aggregately by theme. Table 2 lists the theme, number of responses and a few illustrative quotes. A full listing of key informant interview responses can be found in Appendix B2.

Table 2. Key Informant Interview Themes

Theme	Number of Responses	Illustrative Quotes
Hierarchy Issues	10	Some staff may feel intimidated by the knowledge and training that faculty have.
Diversity and Inclusion	11	White men seem to dominate the environment at the School
Learning Environment	5	We'd write our opinions about courses, how they were run. Frustrating part was you never knew if anyone read it, reacted, responded.
Lack of Administrative Support	2	Trying to get people involved in multicultural/diversity events is difficult.

Examples of Suggestions for Survey Questions from Interviewees

What would it take for people to become fully engaged in working toward a humanistic environment?

Do faculty feel their work is appreciated and rewarded?

In what ways, if any, could the School of Dentistry better foster a "humanistic environment"? (Please list up to three.)

School-Wide Survey

Response Rates

The 2014/2015 Climate Study had the highest completion rate of the three studies.
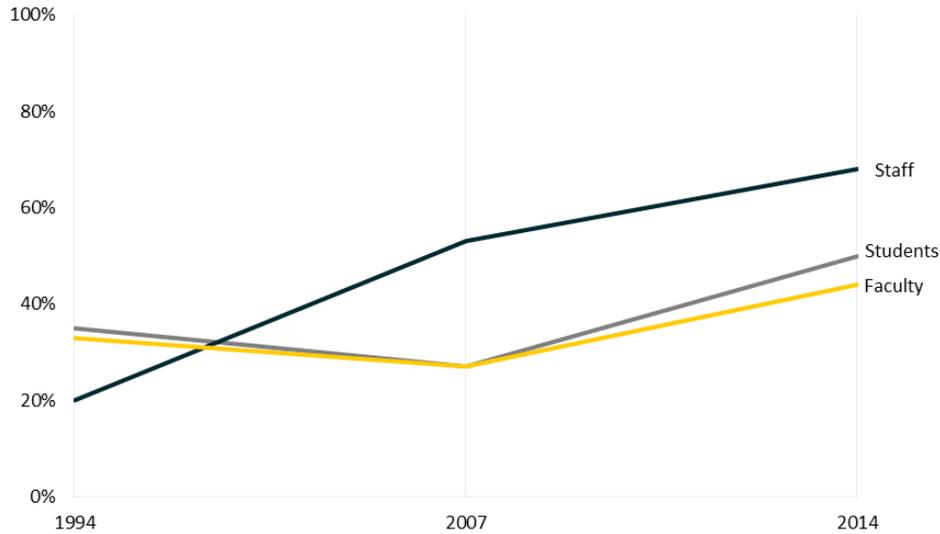
Survey Development and Dissemination

Several themes emerged from the key informant interviews. For example, several informants discussed issues at the school pertaining to diversity and inclusion. The Advisory Committee decided to develop a section in the survey to examine respondent feelings about diversity and inclusion at the UMSD. Questions from previous climate surveys were used again if they addressed issues mentioned by the key informant interviewees. One example of a question repeated from previous surveys was the extent to which individuals at UMSD believe the school has an "honest interest/concern for diversity."

Developing Survey Questions

The evaluation team and the Advisory Committee collaborated to create a School-wide survey using the previous climate survey in addition to themes collected from the key informant interviews. The Committees identified five main areas for the survey:

1. Humanistic Environment
2. Learning Environment
3. Diversity and Inclusion
4. Microaggression and Bullying
5. Activities and Space

Each section was comprised of quantitative and qualitative questions that were developed by the evaluation team and reviewed by the Climate Study Committees. After interpreting the data, the Advisory Committee decided to present the recommendations and information from the Activities and Space section in separate memos to the Dean and the Multicultural Affairs Committee (refer to Appendices H3 and H4). The survey also captured respondent demographics.

Three versions of the survey were developed and administered in Qualtrics with questions specific to staff, faculty, and students. All Dental School members could access the survey through a link on MiTools. The survey was live from November 10-25, 2014.

Survey Results

Response Rates

The survey was completed by a total of 685 responses: fifty percent (50%) of students (n=319), forty-four percent (44%) of faculty (n=148), and sixty-eight percent (68%) of staff (n=218) responded to the survey. Overall, fifty-three percent (53 %) of individuals at the UMSD responded to the survey.

Analyzing and Presenting Qualitative Data Results

The evaluation team manually analyzed response to the survey open-ended questions for major themes and sub-themes. The themes were quantified and presented with supporting illustrative quotes. The major themes with quotes are presented in this report. Major themes often had three or more subthemes. Consequently, it was difficult to select one quote to support one theme. All percentages of mentions are approximate.

The following section includes the first four domains of the survey. A sample of results from both the qualitative and quantitative questions are presented for each domain. The survey can be found in Appendix C and a complete list of quantitative results in Appendix D1.

An overview of qualitative result themes and supporting quotes was also presented in the data interpretation slides, Appendix G2.

Humanistic Environment

Early in the Study, the Advisory Committee adopted a definition of the humanistic environment that members believed the UMSD should strive to achieve. The Advisory and Steering Committee decided on the definition using several sources from the literature, meeting discussions, and information gained through the key informant interviews. The following is the agreed-upon definition.

A **humanistic environment** is one in which individuals promote the respect, tolerance, understanding and concern for all members; and community members continually work to create a supportive and inclusive environment.

Students, staff and faculty experience freedom from intimidation and judgment, close professional relationships, freedom to explore their environment, the opportunity to take appropriate risks within the environment, the development of trusting and accepting relationships between members, regardless of institutional position or diversity of background.

The humanistic environment section of the survey included 10 close-ended questions that asked respondents to rate their level of agreement on whether they experience different components of the humanistic environment at the UMSD. The follow are some key findings from the humanistic environment section.

Almost all respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it is important that the UMSD community work towards creating humanistic environment.

Faculty	96%
Staff	95%
Students	93%

Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that individuals experience a humanistic environment at UMSD.

Staff	72%
Faculty	71%
Students	61%

However, fewer respondents agreed or strongly agreed that individuals have the opportunity to develop trusting relationships with others, regardless of their institutional position.

Staff	71%
Faculty	61%
Students	52%

In the humanistic environment section of the survey, respondents were also asked to describe ways that the UMSD is currently not meeting the definition of a humanistic environment. Table 3 contains the common themes.

Table 3. Themes from "How is the School currently not meeting the definition of a humanistic environment?"

	Student (n=141)	Staff (86)	Faculty (63)
Unsupportive, individualistic environment	**36.9%**	**45.3**	**34.9**
Intimidation and bullying	34	15.9	14.3
A lack of intergroup/inter-department interaction	8.5	12.8	15.9
Hierarchy Issues	-0-	18.6	14.3

Quotes from Theme: Unsupportive, individualistic environment

Students   [UMSD] is an environment that pins us against each other

Staff   Staff feel disrespected and underappreciated by many of the faculty they work for.

Faculty   Seems to be a lack of intra-professional collaboration, respect, understanding, and education within the school among the disciplines

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Learning Environment

The Advisory Committee, through discussion, also developed a working definition for a learning environment to use in the survey, which was: "the **learning environment** encompasses opportunities for staff, faculty, and students to experience professional growth and advancement."

In addition to the definition of the learning environment, the survey listed the elements of the learning environment, which included items such as interactions with patients, meetings and retreats and lunch and learns. Respondents rated the importance of different components of the learning environment. Respondents were then asked whether they ever felt dissatisfied with the learning environment. If the respondent answered "yes," they were then asked to select their top areas of dissatisfaction.

On average, the three groups listed interactions with others as "important" or "very important" to the learning environment over events or activities at the UMSD.

Interactions with faculty	69%
Interactions with students	68%
Interactions with staff	66%
School-sponsored presentations	38%
University-wide presentations	33%
Receptions, parties, and other social events	29%
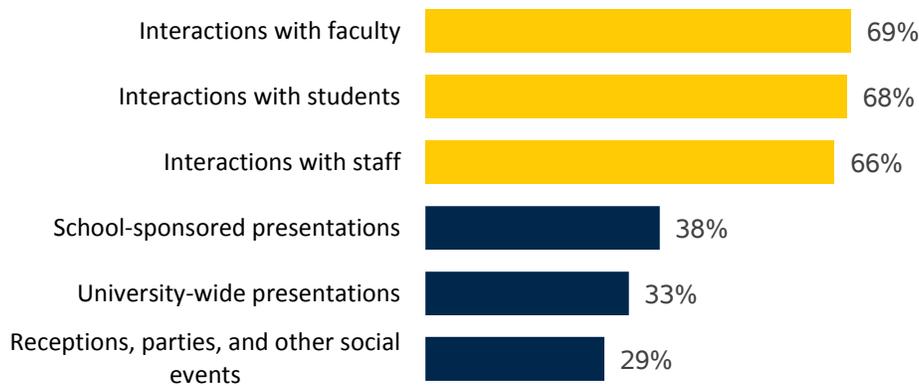
Students, faculty and staff varied in whether they were dissatisfied with the learning environment or not.

Students	64%
Faculty	41%
Staff	37%

Percent who reported "yes" to being dissatisfied
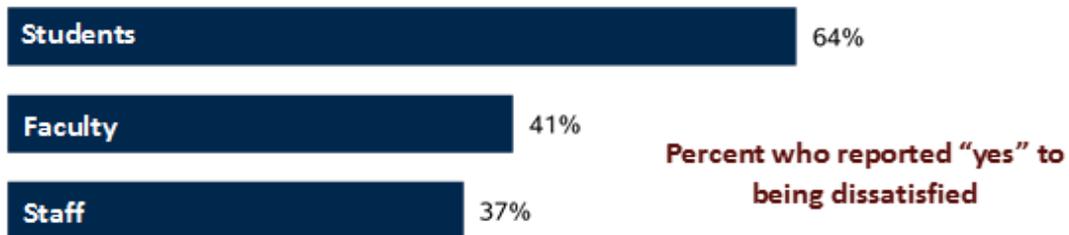
Staff and faculty both rated opportunities for advancement and opportunities for mentoring as top areas of dissatisfaction.

Staff

Opportunities for advancement	65%
Opportunities to learn and explore about areas of interest	53%
Opportunities for mentoring	41%

Faculty

Opportunities for advancement	59%
Opportunities for mentoring	48%
Support from department chair or administration to learn about and explore areas of interest	48%
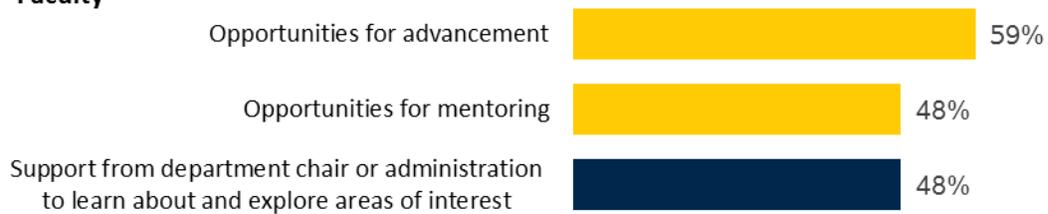
Students' top areas of dissatisfaction differed from faculty and staff members.

Students

Curriculum requirements	65%
Interactions with faculty	62%
Course requirements	52%

Respondents were then asked in what ways the learning environment could be improved to better support student learning.

Table 4. Themes from "In what ways could the learning environment at the School of Dentistry be improved to better support student learning?"

|	**Major Themes**		**Quotes**
Students (n=140)	Improving interactions with faculty	35%	Pre-clinical faculty members need to try to be nicer when students come up to them to ask a question.
	Critiques on Pathways	23	Pathways program should have more structure or options/freedom between the three tracks
	Improving teaching techniques	19	More hands on, less PowerPoints
Faculty (n=38)	Improving professional development	55	A formal faculty mentoring program.
	Improving communication	13	Facilitate interactions across departments…get away from a silo mentality.
	Improving teaching quality	11	Better pedagogical approaches. Avoid lectures. Replace MCQs. Use small group, team and online learning.
Staff (n=53)	Improving professional development	86	Better coverage/release opportunity to attend activities

Diversity and Inclusion

In the section on Diversity and Inclusion, respondents reported their satisfaction with the UMSD's commitment to diversity and the extent to which respondents felt that diverse groups are comfortable in the school.

While at least 71% of all three groups agreed or strongly agreed that UMSD administrators are concerned about diversity in the School, fewer agreed or strongly agreed that most persons are satisfied with the present state of diversity.

Legend:
- Administrators have an honest interest/concern for diversity
- Most persons are satisfied with the present state of diversity

Student: 71% / 61%
Faculty: 84% / 53%
Staff: 73% / 57%
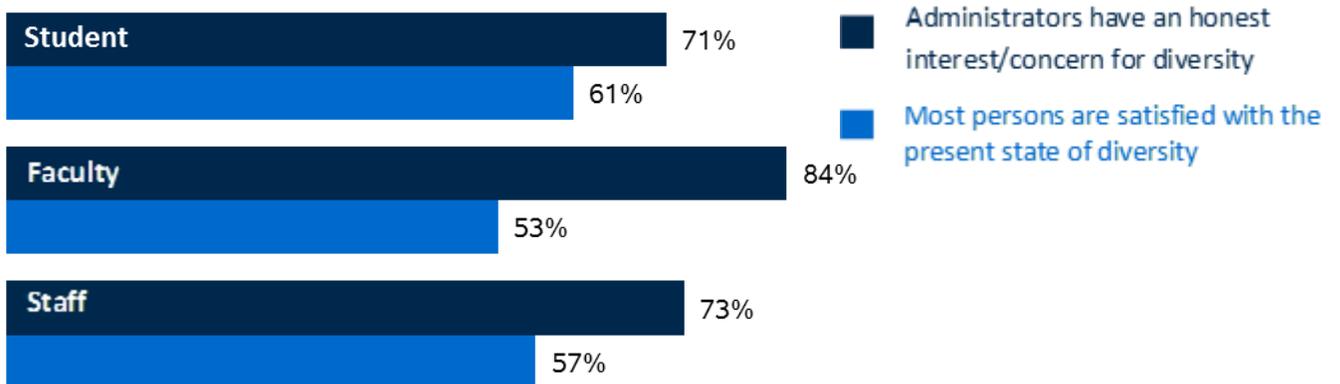
When asked in what ways members of the School of Dentistry currently supported, events and organizations stood out as a major theme across all three groups.

Table 5. Themes from "In what ways are staff members, students and faculty members in the School of Dentistry currently supported and included in the School community?"

	Student (n=99)	Staff (67)	Faculty (51)
Events and organizations	**63%**	**85**	**73**
Support and Development	16	21	20
Commitment to diversity	11	3	6

Quotes from Theme: Events and Organizations

Students	Ice cream social; Alliance for Inclusion; [MAC] support[s] the underrepresented and the normally unheard voice heard
Staff	You Make the Difference; Staff retreat; Events through office for Diversity and Inclusion, such as MAC; …invited to sit on committees at all levels
Faculty	Chiliumpkin; I believe there is an effort to include everybody, especially from the multi-cultural affairs committee; retreats

Microaggressions and Bullying

The following definition of microaggression and bullying was presented to survey respondents before they were asked to provide their input.

Microaggressions are brief exchanges, made intentionally or unintentionally, that invalidate or hurt a marginalized group. Examples may include:

- Non-inclusive statements (e.g. "Women are better hygienists." "Why doesn't he learn to speak English?")
- Non-inclusive actions (e.g. failing to invite individuals of a certain race/gender/religion to a study group)

Bullying may include verbal bullying (e.g. teasing, taunting), physical bullying (pushing, hitting), or intimidation.

Respondents were then asked if they had ever experienced microaggressions and bullying at the UMSD.

40-50% of respondents had experienced a microaggression at the UMSD.

Students 50%

Faculty 43%

Staff 40%

"Yes" responses
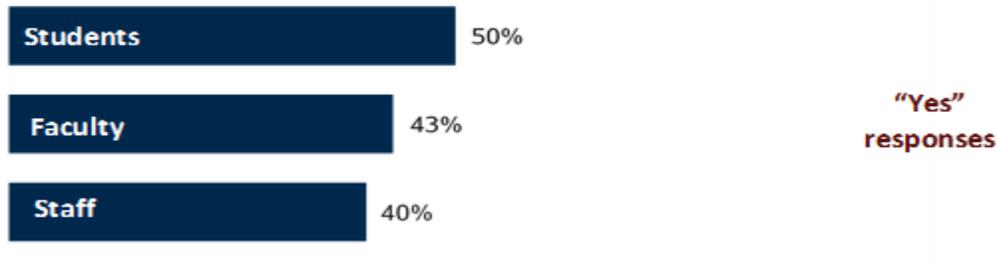
When asked to describe the microaggressions they experienced or witnessed at the UMSD, language differences/barriers and cultural/religious discrimination were the most common themes that were identified across all three groups.

Table 6. Themes from "If you have experienced or witnessed microaggressions at the School of Dentistry, please describe the incident(s)."

	Student (n=120)	Staff (40)	Faculty (48)
Language differences/barriers	**18%**	**23**	**8**
Cultural/religious discrimination	**8**	**13**	**8**
Dental v. dental hygiene	20	5	-
Gender discrimination	33	-	10
Hierarchy issues	-	20	13

Quotes from Theme: Language differences/barriers

Students Students criticizing a professor's accent (which was difficult to understand)

Staff Language barriers are sometimes not understood/tolerated

Faculty [There is a] low tolerance for faculty who do not have good command of English language

20% or more of respondents in all three groups had experienced bullying at UMSD.

Group	%
Staff	36%
Faculty	28%
Students	20%

"Yes" responses
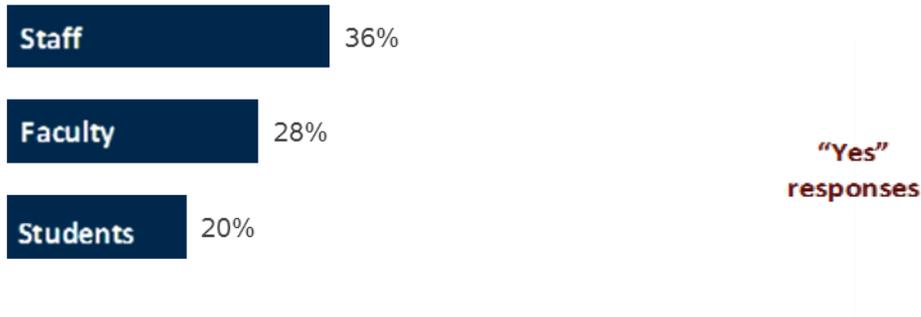
When asked to describe the incidents of bullying that they had experienced or witnessed, all three groups mentioned verbal harassment.

Table 7. Themes from "If you have experienced or witnessed bullying at the School of Dentistry, please describe the incident(s)."

	Student (n=45)	Staff (52)	Faculty (32)
Verbal harassment	**11**	**10**	**25**
Intimidation based on hierarchy	-	46	31
Mocking and taunting	22	23	-

Quotes from Theme: Verbal harassment

Students	Students blatantly insulting each other
Staff	Talk down or show disrespect to others
Faculty	Verbal bullying by other faculty members

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Focus Groups

After the survey data was collected, the evaluation team organized and presented the preliminary results to the Advisory and Steering Committee. The Committees then began the process of interpreting the data. From the data interpretation meetings, the Committees identified several areas in need of more detail, including communication. The focus group questions were designed to gather this additional data. The Committees and evaluation team collaborated to identify focus group questions in each of the six domains (for a complete list of questions, see Appendix F3).

The main suggestions and concerns that arose from each focus group are presented next. Every group did not always have suggestions or concerns for each of the five areas of interest.

Due to time constraints, none of the focus groups were able to discuss suggestions specific to activities. Themes specific to activities were presented in a stand-alone memo to the UMSD administrators.

Because the data collected on space was not used to inform the final recommendations, the space related themes were presented in a stand-alone memo to the UMSD administrators (for a complete list of suggestions and issues, see Appendix H4). Not all of the focus groups developed suggestions for each of the domains. A sample of the suggestions made by each focus group are listed in Table 8.

Table 8. Examples of Suggestions from Focus Groups

Area of Interest	Suggestions/Concerns
1. Learning Environment	
Students	Video demonstrations should be shorter or watched prior to clinic
	UMSD Pathways program should be more clinically oriented
Faculty	Make teaching resources more accessible to adjunct and clinical faculty
	Good communication with students has to go both ways
MAC-nominated Group	Students use school resources to improve communication with faculty
	Support teaching more
2. Diversity and Inclusion	
Students	Classes are not a good way to integrate DH and DS students
Staff	Support staff in working with diverse patients and students increase awareness of translation services
Faculty	Healthy, diverse environment
	Dental hygiene program be integrated into diversity efforts
	Develop students' knowledge of each other's professions
3. Microaggressions and Bullying	
Staff	Increase mandatory multicultural trainings
Faculty	Provide interpersonal training for faculty
MAC-nominated Group	Define microaggressions and bullying
	Need for a safer place to report microaggressions and bullying
4. Communication	
Students	Increasing communication among faculty in order to better align class assignments
	Make mass emails optional
	Using in-person communication to share information about changes in protocol, events, and other important news
Staff	Increase direct communication to staff
	Address the lack of timeliness of emails from faculty
	Create trainings for students led by staff
MAC-nominated Group	Improve communication across silos
	Increase representation of different groups within UMSD
	Staff to be better utilized

Advisory Committee Recommendations

After all of the focus group and survey data was collected and interpreted, the Advisory Committee held several meetings to identify their top recommendations. Through a multi-step voting process (see appendix H2 for more detail on the voting process), Committee members selected the top 9 recommendations that they considered most important for the Dean and her executive team to consider. The evaluation team presented on the top five most voted-on recommendations at the Town Hall meetings.

Table 9. Final Recommendations

Communication	Create think tanks made up of staff, faculty and students
	Increase support for interdepartmental interaction
	Improve employee orientation. Make it more thorough and timely.
Learning Environment	Provide internal HR course for interpersonal skills, leadership, team building
	Implement more interactive lectures
Diversity and Inclusion	Invest in bringing Change It Up into the School for students, faculty and staff
	Increase diversity of staff, faculty and students in and beyond race/ethnicity, ie SES
	Measure cultural competency before and after cultural sensitivity training
Microaggressions and Bullying	Create a clear, safe place for students, faculty and staff to report incidents of microaggressions and bullying

Table 9. Top 5 Recommendations

Improve Inclusion	R1. Implement cultural sensitivity training
	R2. Provide internal courses for interpersonal skills, leadership and team building
Improve Communication	R3. Create think tanks made up of students, faculty and staff
	R4. Create a clear, safe place to report incidents of microaggressions and bullying
Increase Diversity	R5. Increase diversity of staff, faculty and students

Improve Inclusion

R1. Implement cultural sensitivity training

In order to create a more inclusive environment, the Advisory Committee suggested implementing a cultural sensitivity training in the School that would be open to faculty, students and staff. The Committee also suggested measuring cultural competency before and after the training.
This recommendation came out of results both in the quantitative and qualitative portions of the survey under the diversity and inclusion section. For example, in the open-ended question asking respondents how inclusion could be improved in the school, many listed creating a diversity or cultural sensitivity training.

When asked how to improve inclusion and support in the school, many respondents suggested creating diversity trainings.

	Number of Mentions	Quotes
Students	11	[Provide] instruction focusing on more modern schisms in social acceptance instead of old standards
Staff	6	An ability to have more honest discussion on what is diversity and how it is defined in different areas. (seems to be an almost taboo topic)
Faculty	4	Learning opportunities where we gain knowledge about each other

,,

R2. Provide internal courses for interpersonal skills, leadership and team building

In the open-ended questions, all three groups suggested providing additional training that related to leadership or other nonclinical skills. For example, when asked how to improve the learning environment, 13 staff members mentioned increasing training opportunities, such as one staff member who suggested "more diverse seminar subjects." When asked how the School could better foster a humanistic environment, one faculty member suggested "give preparation and training to faculty that provides educational methodology and pedagogy."

In the same question, five student respondents suggested improving teaching or hiring practices, such as one student who said "require instructors to take a teaching course to better perfect their ability of inviting a learning atmosphere."

Require instructors to take a teaching course to better perfect their ability of inviting a learning atmosphere."
-Student

"

Additionally, when asked to disagree or agree on whether it is easy for individuals to feel comfortable regardless of different identities or backgrounds, answers varied between groups and identities. Particularly striking was that respondents were least likely to agree or strongly agree with the statement "It is easy to for people to feel comfortable in this School regardless of their position in the School." This demonstrated a need for leadership training at all levels in the School.

The highest percentage of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it is easy to feel comfortable in the School of Dentistry regardless of gender; however rated position in school as the lowest.
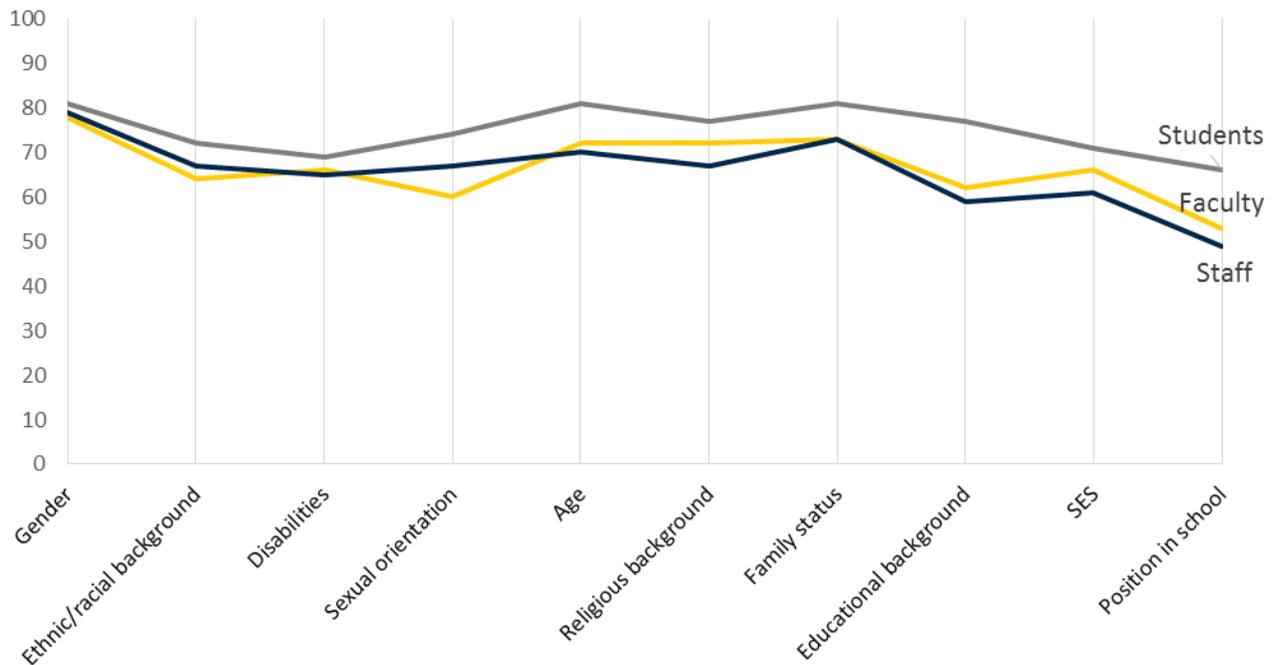
Improve Communication

R3. Create think tanks made up of students, faculty and staff

In order to improve communication across the school, the Committee suggested creating think tanks with staff, faculty and student members.

When asked how to increase support and inclusion in the School, increasing avenues for interactions across the three groups was a major theme.

	Number of Mentions	Quotes
Staff	10	The school seems to have 3 separate communities, students, clinical and research. They need to be brought together.
Students	8	It would be nice if there was room for faculty to meet with students outside of the classroom setting…
Faculty	4	Full representation in the school with avenues of having voices that are heard.

The Advisory Committee expressed some interest in this recommendation in part due to their own experience on the Committee. One Advisory Committee member said "we might be biased because we are [a think tank made up of students, faculty and staff.]" Other members expressed that they felt the Committee was successful and that they would like to see that replicated in other areas of the UMSD.

R4. Create a clear, safe place to report incidents of microaggressions and bullying

In addition to creating think tanks, the Committee also suggested creating a reporting system for microaggressions and bullying. In addition to the quantitative data that found that many individuals had experienced or witnessed a microaggression but were unaware of what to do about it, this recommendation was also directly suggested in both the focus groups and the open-ended questions in the survey. For example, when asked how to improve inclusion in the School, one staff member suggested "create a confidential place to bring concerns that are not influenced by the "good old boy" network."

Create a confidential place to bring concerns that are not influenced by the "good old boy" network.

-Staff Member

Increase diversity

R5. Increase diversity of staff, faculty and students

Increase diversity of staff, faculty and students was the most voted recommendation by the Committee. Several different areas in the Study supported the recommendation to increase diversity in in the UMSD. When asked if respondents believed that people were satisfied with the present state of diversity at the School, only a little over half in each group reported "yes."

Only a little over half believed that most people were satisfied with the present state of diversity at the school.

Student	61%
Faculty	57%
Staff	53%

"Yes" responses
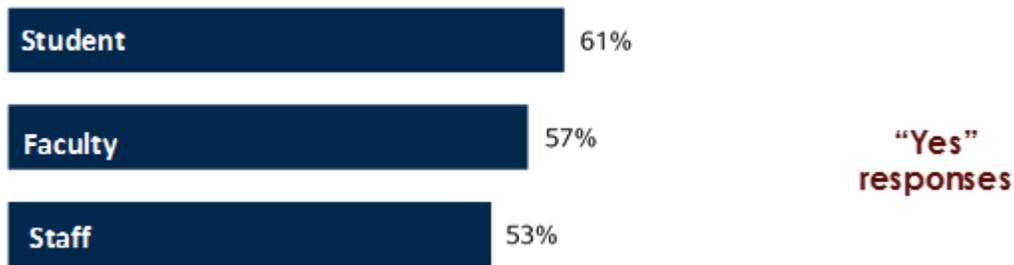
When asked how individuals could be better supported and included, increasing diversity was a theme across all three groups.

	Number of Mentions	Quotes
Staff	6	There needs to be more diversity among staff, faculty, etc. and more support of the minority members of the community.
Students	6	Be proactive in recruiting a racially diverse student body by creating programs to advertise and recruit qualified, racially diverse students."
Faculty	4	[It] would be better if we increased the level of diversity among all members of the community, faculty staff and students.

Town Hall Meeting

During the survey development process, members of the Climate Advisory Committee indicated the importance of sharing the survey results with the UMSD community at large. The committee planned two Town Hall meetings at which all UMSD staff, faculty, and students were invited to hear about the survey results and the recommendations that the Advisory Committee would be passing on to the Dean (for the Town Hall presentation, refer to the Appendix I1). The town hall meetings were open to all members of the UMSD and held at the School in late March/Early April, 2015.

During the town hall meetings, members of the Advisory Committee were invited to share their own experiences with the process of the study and their thoughts about the Study results. They also responded to feedback from the audience. For example, when discussing implementing a system for reporting incidents of microaggressions and bullying, one Advisory Committee members shared with the audience "I didn't know what a microaggression was before [this process]." The two student Advisory Committee members present shared their support for implementing leadership training by mentioning findings from the qualitative data that found that many students, staff and junior faculty often felt intimidated by senior faculty.

A member of the Steering Committee also discussed plans to create an implementation committee. He also described how the goals of the Climate Study of increasing diversity overlapped with the goal of the School's current strategic plan.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

Strengths

The main strength of the Study come from the collaboration between the evaluation team and the members of the Climate Advisory and Steering Committees. The members of these groups represented a diverse range of perspectives throughout UMSD. Another significant strength of this study were the high response rates across all groups, particularly compared to the previous climate audits in 1994 and 2007. Additionally, key informant interviews conducted prior to the survey provided a diverse, in-depth historical perspective of UMSD from faculty, staff, and student perspectives.

Limitations

The breadth of perspectives in the focus groups was limited by small numbers of participants and lack of diversity in some focus groups. This may have limited some individuals' comfort with sharing during the group. In addition, some individuals, such as those not located at UMSD or adjunct faculty with limited time, may have had less opportunity to participate in some aspects of the climate study, such as Town Halls and focus groups.

Next Steps for UMSD

In addition to the main recommendations, the Committees further recommended that an Implementation Committee be formed to further consider, develop, and execute the proposed recommendations. During discussion in the Advisory Committee meetings, several members suggested that the Implementation Committee be a sub-committee under the MAC, but that members of the Implementation Committee did not necessarily have to also be members of the MAC.

Advisory Committee members reported that they planned to make this final report available to the entire UMSD community. Several members also indicated interest in developing a publication for an academic journal that discussed the Climate Study's collaborative, stakeholder-based approach.