

Designing and Empowering Your Unit's IDEAL Climate Survey Engagement Team

Establishing your Engagement Team

The UO is committed to creating a welcoming and respectful campus environment where everyone can succeed and achieve while feeling affirmed, valued, and respected. As you establish your unit's engagement team, ensuring diverse representation, including underrepresented marginalized groups is essential. You should consider representation across the spectrum: employees with disabilities, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, age, duration of employment and employee type (e.g., SEIU, OA, faculty ranks, and graduate employees). Your engagement team size should be large enough to be diverse, but small enough to be nimble. It should also include the chair and/or members of your unit's diversity committee. The work of your engagement team members must be considered as part of their day-to-day responsibilities; supervisors will need to create space for this effort in the employee's workday. This is a challenging proposition, especially given the vacancies that many of us and our teams are already managing. Yet, this work has to be integrated into the fabric of our unit's priorities and processes. We recommend communicating with your team about how to engage and involve others without overwhelming them.

Once you've established your engagement team, hold a kick-off meeting to review the scope of the work and the charge for the group, answer questions, invite the team to brainstorm about what it needs to be successful, and demonstrate your support. If you have identified a data person, invite them to this meeting and introduce them as a resource for the team.

Scope of Engagement Team Effort

As a first step, the engagement team will begin its work by understanding your unit's climate survey data in its totality. After the engagement team has had an opportunity to read and metabolize the results, use the guidance document for engaging with your unit (forthcoming) and communication template (forthcoming) to begin the process in mid-Winter term to outreach with the members of your unit. It is important to be transparent with the findings and name the challenges as well as opportunities with forthrightness and integrity. This process of analysis, communication and engagement will provide insights on areas where your unit is doing well and where it can do much better. Engage your data person to support your engagement team or ask for resources if needed.

The engagement team is the conduit to give voice to your community. This team will actively engage employees at all levels via in-person and virtual sessions to collect feedback, insights, and ideas on specific actions to improve your unit. The survey highlighted that some employee types feel uncomfortable speaking out. It will be vital to provide multiple ways for employees to participate in this process. We have prepared a Guidance Document on Inclusive Meetings and, below, are examples of organizational engagement strategies.

Once the engagement team has collected your unit's ideas, you may have them assist you and your leadership team with prioritizing and developing your unit's specific actions. The scope and timeline for your actions will be outlined in your unit's Action Steps Document that focuses on 2 or 3 items rather than trying to manage every opportunity or address every possible issue. We will provide a template for the Action Steps Document.

Example Organizational Engagement Strategies

- **Faculty/Staff/Team Meetings**
 - In-person: provide paper/pens for handwritten feedback and collect at the end.
 - Use the Guide to Inclusive Meetings to help facilitate meetings where people feel welcomed to contribute.
 - Virtual: small group breakout room discussions with a participant recording, captioning and reporting out on the collective feedback/ideas for the group (without attribution)
- **External Facilitator**
 - DEI in partnership with colleagues in the Office of the General Counsel, Ombuds and OICRC has vetted a group of leadership coaches, organizational systems coaches, academic leaders from other Research I institutions who can help with facilitating conversations, serving as a confidential sounding board for your team and providing access to best practices in corporate and higher education environments.
- **Small Group Meetings**
 - Consider separate meetings by employee type as well as group meetings that allow employees to understand diverse voices across your unit.
- **1x1 Meeting option with one of the engagement team members (employee's choice)**
- **Suggestion Box**
 - In-person: locate in the mailroom or out of main traffic areas
 - Virtual: Qualtrics survey (or other similar tool)

Acknowledgements: Many thanks to Christy Long for drafting the initial version of this guidance sheet, which benefitted from edits and input from Marcilynn Burke.