

# Summary of CAS Staff/Faculty Relations Questionnaire Responses

**Total number of staff responses:** 100

**OA/Staff numbers:** 36 OA / 64 Classified

**Unit climate ratings:** Generally good scores in 6-10 range on a 1-10 scale, but significant scores below average in each category.

- **How would you rate your unit's overall current climate?**
  - Out of 90 responses, 20 in 1-5 range
- **How would you rate your unit's overall staff/faculty working relationship?**
  - Out of 90 responses, 21 in 1-5 range
- **How comfortable are you with communicating concerns about climate or working relationships to your unit?**
  - Out of 88 responses, 30 in 1-5 range
- **How would you rate your unit's ability to address concerns about your unit's climate or faculty/staff relations?**
  - Out of 88 responses, 40 in 1-5 range

**ALL of these faculty behaviors that cause problems with climate/relationships were listed as happening at least "occasionally":**

## **Most frequent/less frequent**

- Not respecting deadlines (turning in things after the due date and/or needing multiple reminders)
- Not respecting the timing of processes for staff to accomplish tasks (asking for things the "day of" because of inadequate planning)
- Asking staff to disregard university policies ("We've always done it this way in the past," "Can't you just . . . ?")
- Being unresponsive to requests (no response to an email)
- Interrupting breaks, lunch breaks, or office closures (coming in five minutes before closing time, approaching staff about work during breaks or lunch hours)
- Going over staff's head to another office or person to get a "yes" after being told "no" by the assigned department staff
- Not thinking about costs or consequences of decisions or requests
- Penalty for excellence (always going to same person in the unit for every request because "they're so efficient," creating uneven workloads)
- Raised voices, tempers, or anger directed towards staff
- Raised voices, tempers, or anger expressed in the presence of staff
- Inappropriate jokes, innuendos, or familiarities (using nicknames like "hon" or "sweetie")
- Inappropriate touching or invasions of personal or work space (coming behind someone's desk without being invited back)
- Inappropriate language in the office (cursing, offensive language, etc.)
- Manipulation under veiled compliments ("you're so great, I know you can accomplish my request today")

- Casual or obvious racism, sexism, homophobia, ageism, bigotry, religious, or other bias (often in the form of generalizations about a group)
- Questions that imply criticism of work product rather than genuine curiosity (“Why did you format it THIS way?!”)
- Patronizing comments (“I’m so proud of you for getting this project done”)

**Major themes of contributors to negative climate/relationships in text answers:**

- Faculty not respecting time of staff (last minute requests, expecting staff to stay late, weekend requests, etc.)
- Faculty violating or disregarding policies and procedures (and asking staff to do same)
- Reimbursement issues with ethical implications
- Negative comments on work product that are not constructive
- Excessively time-consuming/complex projects
- Disrespectful behavior and comments (talking over staff or interrupting them)
- Complaints about staff addressed by head with no investigation or input from staff member in question
- No way to hold faculty accountable
- Faculty looking for ways to circumvent policies, while staff are held accountable for not adhering to policy
- Email requests not being responded to
- Disparaging remarks to or about staff with no one in department standing up for them
- Faculty not understanding the general role of staff or individual roles of staff in their unit
- Faculty asking staff to do things outside of their job description
- Faculty resistance to change—new ideas to improve the program/student experience, technology updates (the email migration, upcoming duo login, increased password changes, etc.), new institutional policies/procedures, etc.—that gets directed at staff

**Most frequent faculty behaviors that create good climate/relationships:**

- Performance praise (not followed by a request)
- Performance praise that translates to one’s review or merit recommendation
- Respect of staff time by providing timely information or requests with reasonable expectations
- Consulting staff about reasonable timelines and expectations for a task
- Finding a good balance between the professional and the personal (developing a cordial relationship with staff but not interrupting staff work time with personal stories or questions)
- Working together with staff to solve a problem or develop something new
- Trusting staff expertise on a project/subject/policy and listening to their advice
- Respecting staff’s opinions about work-related matters and being responsive to their perspective or ideas
- Keeping commitments and not making others wait for them for meetings, deadlines, or information
- Owning up to their mistakes; not making excuses for themselves or placing blame on others when things go wrong
- Staying calm and composed in a difficult situation

- Standing up for staff when they overhear or witness mistreatment or inappropriate behavior

**Major themes of contributors to positive climate/relationships in text answers:**

- Praise or recognition
- Thanks for their work
- Merit recognition
- Awards
- Inclusivity – feeling a part of a team
- Consulting staff for their expertise in an area
- Professional development opportunities
- Ample discussion and planning surrounding travel, contracts, events, projects, etc.
- Giving credit to staff for their ideas or input
- Talking through problems, respecting alternate opinions and discussing concerns

**Most demoralizing moments summary:**

- Insulting tones and insinuations
- Unnecessary, negative comments on work product that was complex and time-consuming. (“This is a ‘disaster’!”)
- Faculty blaming their own mistakes on a staff member as a “clerical error”
- Faculty threatening staff person for doing their job correctly (threatening to involve an attorney or union)
- Staff member being cut off by faculty member while talking in a group setting
- Unprofessional behavior from faculty for which faculty are never held accountable or have to face consequences
- Asking staff to run personal errands
- Imposing a deadline and then being unresponsive to emails or follow ups
- Disregarding UO policy and expecting staff to find workarounds
- Having an unreasonable expectation or request of staff because faculty member does not understand their role in the department
- Damaging credibility of staff with other departments or units, often in resistance to a departmental decision
- Venting to staff over frustration with UO or CAS policy, reimbursement issue, etc.
- Yelling at staff over frustration with UO or CAS policy, reimbursement issue, etc.
- Being told that if faculty do not like a staff member, they will make their life miserable until they leave
- Behavior or communication that demonstrates faculty thinking they are superior because they have a PhD
- Being put down or belittled because they did not understand what faculty member was trying to explain
- Being treated like someone who has no authority or knowledge when trying to explain University policy
- Faculty disregarding UO Policy after they were given clear steps to follow to stay in compliance with policy. Because of the blatant disregard for policy, staff can feel at risk of losing job.

- A faculty member announced in a department meeting that "staff should stay in their lane when it comes to these types of things," and not one faculty member bothered to speak out against the comment
- Not trusting staff to work through issues with understaffing; overreactive to temporary situations
- Faculty throwing 'temper tantrums' and directing negativity towards staff because they couldn't have something done in the time frame they wanted or in the way they wanted
- Faculty members' inability to manage their time and workloads negatively impacting the whole department
- Faculty inability to compartmentalize emotions and take any form of criticism as a personal attack
- Lack of interest and/or total resistance to working with other faculty, graduate students, and staff to reshape or just evaluate the department to create a better student experience
- Not all faculty value staff's time or understand how much work their (seemingly) simple request adds to staff workload or that it's multiplied by the number of faculty that each staff member or OA serves

#### **Most encouraging moments summary:**

- Patterns of acknowledgement and respect for staff work
- Being a part of a committee with both faculty & staff that made department decisions together
- Being nominated for or selected for employee awards
- When staff suggestions are seriously considered or implemented
- Getting an equity/merit raise for hard work
- Faculty saying a sincere thank you for handling requests, mentioning that they were bragging about us at a meeting with other departments, stopping by to pass on appreciation from one of the colleagues that we interacted with
- When human mistakes are accepted with levity
- Leaving appreciation notes or acknowledging staff as people with life event cards (congratulations, sympathy)
- Being consulted by faculty about a decision that would affect staff work
- Staff given for credit for their ideas
- Positive, substantive annual reviews
- Frequently, after a very long project, there will be an email of thanks sent out to the department or a round of applause and the next departmental gathering.
- Our faculty have sometimes come together to help in times of need.
- Working with faculty to solve issues and understand setbacks
- Faculty have thanked staff for running a successful event, especially when the staff had tried something new at the event and the faculty were initially opposed to the change

#### **Inappropriate Requests examples**

- Faculty asking staff to do work that's "below their pay grade"

- Asking for help with an application due in two hours because the other staff person who is responsible is unavailable
- Asking staff to participate in unethical activities (making a false invoice, turning in a falsified receipt for reimbursement, veiling personal travel as business travel, paying personal expenses under “something else” to be reimbursed, etc.)
- Asking staff to write recommendation letters for students
- Requests to bypass and/or not respect university policies
- Not following UO policies and leaving staff to be held accountable for the errors
- Ignorance or ignoring of UO policy even though faculty have been told policy multiple times
- Providing invoices for making a contract-level agreement with vendors without having prior approval and then asking staff to push it through
- Asking staff member to work an issue on weekend using their personal cell phone number to reach them outside of the workplace/business hours
- Wanting "an exception" to a written rule/policy/law without any business purpose to justify such an exception or by fabricating the business purpose
- Trying to hire (as assistant or as a vendor) someone they have personal connection to (college-age child, family friend) without disclosing that connection or getting necessary approvals
- Asking staff to do personal errands "as a favor"
- Being asked to hide/ignore some information so that faculty can get reimbursed for something that is not allowed per university policy
- When faculty treat the office staff as a one-stop-shop. For example, if faculty have ongoing issues with technology (whether a university-issued office computer/laptop, or classroom technology), they should schedule an appointment to meet with CMET and/or CASIT. Appropriate campus departments and resources need to be used for in-depth explanations or ongoing issues.