Results of 2014 Staff Council Survey

August 2014

All inquiries or questions about the 2014 Staff Council Survey and this Report should be directed to the Staff Council Office, University of Vermont, 313 Waterman Building, 85 S. Prospect St., Burlington, VT 05405 or through email @ Staff.Council@uvm.edu or by phone at 802-656-4493
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Executive Summary

Background

In 2011, Staff Council completed its first comprehensive survey of non-represented staff with the assistance of the Office of Institutional Research. As a result, this effort was incorporated into the charge of the Staff Council Outreach, Assessment and University Engagement Committee so that surveys could be completed every two years to gauge Staff Council’s effectiveness and to learn about current and ongoing concerns and issues affecting Staff. The University of Vermont Staff Council conducted its second survey of the staff it represents during January 2014. The purpose of the survey was to gain a longitudinal perspective about how well Staff Council serves those it represents and if there have been improvements in areas of concern since the 2011 survey. Additionally, the survey also gleaned information about what issues are most important to our constituents. The forty-nine question survey asked non-represented staff how aware they were of Staff Council; to rate Staff Council’s effectiveness in a number of areas related to its mission; to rate how well the Staff Council website and its monthly publication, Staffline, meet their information needs; and what issues and benefits are most important to them.

1,886 staff represented by Staff Council were invited to participate, 628 completed the survey with an additional 147 incomplete surveys received. Based on completed surveys only, the survey achieved a 39% response rate resulting in a margin of error of plus or minus 3%. It is important to note that 70% of the staff at the University are female, but in the survey sample, the male to female ratio of respondents was 1 to 3 which is slightly more skewed than expected.

Awareness of Staff Council

Awareness levels of Staff Council have remained high with approximately 96% of respondents indicating that they were at least somewhat familiar with the work the organization performs. 66% of respondents indicated that they were “familiar” or “very familiar” with Staff Council, which is up from 57% in 2011 survey.

While many respondents could not pinpoint when they first learned about Staff Council, of those that did remember, 28% indicated it was through the Staffline e-newsletter and another 23% indicated it was through new employee orientation. Significant to note here is the increase in awareness that came about through new employee orientation, up by 5% from 2011 which speaks to the efforts Staff Council made to have more of a presence at orientation with materials and handouts.

Knowledge of Staff Council Representatives

- 64% of respondents indicated that they could identify their Staff Council Representative(s), up by 4% from 2011.
- 30% of respondents could not identify their Representative(s).
Communications

Awareness and use of the Staff Council website has remained high since 2011. 80% of respondents have visited the website, with 88% of those individuals rating the ease of locating information on the website as “good” or “very good.”

The use of Staffline, the Staff Council’s monthly e-newsletter, also remains high. In 2014, a combined 87% of respondents report reading Staffline, either “sometimes” or “always,” with 45% reading it “sometimes” and another 42% reading it “always.” While the 2014 results represent an 8% gain in those reading the e-newsletter “sometimes” and an 11% decrease in those reading it “always” compared to the 2011 results. Much of this shift can be attributed to the way in which Staffline is now distributed in an email format that enables readers to scan headings and summaries to find information that is relevant to them. The average number of readers during FY2014 for the first day the Staffline is distributed is approximately 730, with 991 as the highest number of first day readers for the November edition and 442 as the lowest number of first day readers for the July edition.

In 2014, 84% of respondents rated the format as “good” or “very good,” with approximately 15% rating it as “poor” or “fair.” Overall the content and format of Staffline is well liked and it remains a vital component of the Council’s outreach efforts.

Staff Council Effectiveness

The 2014 survey helped track staff perceptions about the effectiveness of the Council in a number of key areas.

Most Effective

Three key aspects of Staff Council’s performance had a high percentage of respondents rating the organization as “effective” or “very effective”:

- Organizing campus events and activities (89%)
- Communicating issues that affect staff (72%)
- Formulating recommendations to University administration (66%).

Less Effective

Five areas of Staff Council’s performance received the lowest percentage of “effective” or “very effective” responses.

- Advocating for concerns on current issues (60%)
- Advocating for professional development (60%)
- Advocating for staff University policies (60%)
- Advocating for staff benefit issues (60%)
- Advocating for staff quality of life issues (58%)

Effectiveness

The percentage of respondents rating the Council’s advocating for staff benefit issues as “effective” or “very effective” grew from 46% in 2011 to 60% in 2014.

Gains were also made in perceptions of effectiveness when advocating for professional development up from 50% in 2011 to 62% in 2014 and policy issues up from 50% in 2011 to 60% in 2014.
Ranking of Staff Council Advocacy Work

When asked to rank the fourteen issues that Staff Council had recently identified as areas of focus, respondents overwhelmingly ranked “Annual Salary Pool Recommendation” and “Benefits” as most important. These are the same areas that received the same highest rankings in 2011, suggesting that total compensation is still the highest concern for staff.

Ranking of Benefits

The Staff Council Survey asked participants to indicate how important certain staff benefits or perks were to them. This graph shows the combined percentage of those who indicated a benefit or perk as “important” or “very important.” For those who participated in the survey, it is clear that medical and dental insurance coverage are extremely important to staff, along with the Retirement Savings Plan.
Additional Questions

The 2014 survey asked a new series of questions to better understand if the long standing negative perceptions around workplace culture that are often brought to the Council’s attention were prevalent at the University. Questions focused on professional development, a sense of support and recognition, and work/life balance. Overall, the responses to these questions suggested that respondents had more positive than negative experiences, but still raised areas of concern for staff and University culture.

- 63% of respondents indicated that they are able to take advantage of the tuition remission benefit for themselves.
- 78% of respondents indicated that they are able to take advantage of professional development opportunities.
- 77% of respondents indicated that they are able to maintain a work/life balance.
- 88% of respondents indicated that they are supported in their work at UVM.
- 72% of respondents indicated that they are recognized for their work.

Themes, Challenges, and Opportunities from the 2011 Survey compared to the 2014 Survey

1. In 2011, familiarity levels with the work of Staff Council were high, but information gathered suggested that only 33% of respondents became aware of Staff Council within their first month of working at UVM. This provided an opportunity to work with Human Resource Services to enhance Staff Council exposure during new employee orientation. In 2011, 18% of respondents had found out about Staff Council through orientation, whereas in 2014, 23% remember learning about Staff Council through this Onboarding process. Additionally, in 2011, 26% of respondents found out about Staff Council through Staffline, and in 2014 this increased to 27%. This suggests that over half of the respondents learn about the organization through these two methods of outreach.

2. In 2011, 58% of respondents indicated that they never heard from their Staff Council Representative(s), with only 60% able to identify their Representative(s). In response to this, Staff Council created a Representative Update communication that could be sent via email by Representatives directly to their constituents to establish more personal contact and awareness. In 2014, 64% of respondents could identify their Staff Council Representative(s). While this this is up 6% and suggests some improvement, it leaves over 30% unaware.

Performance Appraisals

- 65% of respondents have received a performance appraisal within the last year.
- 22% received a performance appraisal in the last 2-5 years.
- 13% received their last performance appraisal more than 5 years ago.
3. In 2011, a common theme from respondents was concern about Staff Council’s ability to influence the Administration about the needs of staff at UVM. In response to this feedback, the Council began the Staff Council Annual Update Report which highlights the advocacy work of the organization, as well as areas of improvement needed to address the issues facing staff. This document is then sent to senior leaders of the University, including the Board of Trustees. In 2014, the survey indicated that overall, Staff Council is perceived to be “effective” or “very effective” in a number of key areas of advocacy work including the communication of issues affecting staff, formulating recommendations to the Administration, soliciting input on current issues, and organizing Campus events and activities.

Areas for Focus from 2014 Survey Results

1. **Increase awareness of Staff Council Representatives:** The survey results indicated that 64% of respondents knew who their Representative was, but with over 30% unaware, continued efforts to establish relationships among Representatives and their constituents is important. This is most challenging in the larger Units/Divisions or Colleges where there are multiple Representatives or those areas that have been made up of smaller departments that are not connected formally in the University organizational chart. Additional ideas on how to build relationships among Representatives and their constituents should be investigated so that there are opportunities to connect beyond the Representative Update communication that goes out monthly.

2. **Continued advocacy on staff compensation:** It is clear that respondents continue to be concerned about their salary and benefit package at the University. This is significant as respondents listed these as important in both the areas of Staff Council advocacy and what benefits they believe are most important to them. It is reasonable to assume that since the survey was completed, prior to when discussions began about potential changes to the cost share of health care benefits in spring 2014, that this is an area that will continue to need additional advocacy. This may mean a concerted effort to also advocate for more opportunities to educate staff on any changes to salary and benefits, what an individual’s total compensation looks like, and what salaries and benefits at UVM look like compared to peer institutions and other employers in the area. This may also require additional outreach to educate staff on the change to an Incentive-based Budget model.

3. **Continue advocacy on performance appraisals:** The survey results indicated that 35% of respondents have received their most recent performance appraisal in the previous two or more years. With over 1/3 of respondents stating they have not received an annual performance appraisal, there is a clear issue around accountability that must be addressed. The Council must continue to bring up this issue to ensure that planned upgrades with PeopleAdmin and the addition of modules to track performance appraisals are executed.
Methods

The survey was conducted online using LimeSurvey. 1,886 UVM staff members represented by Staff Council were invited to participate. The initial invitation was sent via email on January 6, 2014 and the survey concluded on January 17, 2014 with reminders sent on January 8, 13, and 16. The survey contained 49 questions, but not all were required and the length of time to complete the survey differed based on how a respondent answered questions within the survey. 628 staff completed the survey, with an additional 147 incomplete surveys received. Based on completed surveys only, the survey achieved a 39% response rate resulting in a margin of error of plus or minus 3%.

Data was analyzed using PASW 18 statistical software. Statistical significance was tested using cross-tabulations and the Pearson Chi-Square test.

Note: In 2011, the Staff Council survey was sent to 1,938 individuals and had a 44% participation rate. This participation rate may have been impacted by two incidents that occurred near to when the survey was sent out: A new Dean of the College of Business was hired at a controversial level of compensation and the fact that no salary increases were budgeted for FY 2012 was announced to staff. In 2014, without any major incidents impacting staff, there was a participation rate of 39%, a marked decrease in participation, but a sign that Staff were engaged to participate without additional issues impacting their responses.
Results

The following charts and descriptions outline the results from the 2014 Staff Council Survey and provides further context as to why a question was asked and what efforts may have impacted responses.

Awareness of Staff Council

Familiarity with Staff Council’s Work

How familiar are you with the work that Staff Council does?

The Staff Council continues to enjoy high familiarity among staff. 66% of respondents indicated that they were “familiar” or “very familiar” with the organization which is up from 57% in 2011.

Timing

How did you first find out about the Staff Council?

The majority of respondents are not aware of when they first learned about Staff Council, but it is clear that continued communication through Staffline and new employee Onboarding has had an impact. Staff Council worked with Human Resource Services – Learning Services to make sure that Staff Council materials were available for new staff members during orientation so as to establish a connection from the beginning of their employment at the University.
Staff Council Website

Visits

In 2011, nearly one in four respondents had never visited the Staff Council website. In 2014 this had decreased to one in five respondents. Given that the margin of error is 3%, the drop of 4% is statistically significant which suggests that the web site has gained more visibility. This could be a result of the new formats for Staffline and Representative Updates that use e-newsletter templates which have news stories and links directly connected to information found on the Staff Council website.

Ease of Locating Information

The website continues to receive good ratings for its navigational ease. There is no noticeable change between the two surveys indicating that the update of the website in 2013 had neither a negative impact nor a positive one.
**Staffline**

**Readership**

In 2011 the *Staffline* was still produced in a traditional newsletter format and sent out as a .pdf document. While this was well liked and readership was at approximately 56% for “always” and 35% for “sometimes,” it was not an efficient use of the Staff Council Office’s time or energy and did not allow readership to be tracked per month. An e-newsletter template was adopted to connect the website, e-newsletter, and social media in a way that would align the Staff Council’s communication tools with the rest of the University. At the time of the change, Staff Council received feedback from many older and long-time employees who preferred the previous format. However, the new format allows individuals to scan information in a way that allows them to only read the information that is relevant to them. In 2014 readership for “always” was 45% and “sometimes” was at 42%. While there was nearly an 11% decrease in the respondents who said “always” and a gain of 8% in “sometimes,” this may speak more to the way the University has increased communication with *News You Should Know* so that employees are receiving information from multiple sources. The average number of readers during FY2014 for the first day the *Staffline* was distributed stood at approximately 730, with 991 in November as the high and 442 in July as the low.

**Content and Format**

In 2011, the survey only asked about the content of *Staffline* and not the format. In 2011, 83% of respondents indicated that they rated the content as “very good” or “good.” In 2014, this had increased to 85% so there was no significant change. In 2014, 84% of respondents rated the format as “very good” or “good” with approximately 15% rating it as indicating “fair” or “poor.” Overall the content and format of *Staffline* is well liked.
Staff Council Performance

In the 2014 survey, Staff Council received responses that were similar to those gathered in 2011 when respondents were asked to rate the effectiveness of the organization in fulfilling its mission as it related to nine areas of focus. Previous data suggested that Staff Council was less effective in its advocacy when compared to its operations, and while comparing each area against the others this remains true, when looking at each area of focus, there are some positive shifts around specific areas of advocacy.

Here respondents were asked to rate the Staff Council as “not effective,” “somewhat effective,” “effective,” and “very effective.” Two prevailing trends emerged. First, the combined “not effective” and “somewhat effective” is generally smaller in 2014 than 2011 which indicates a small but positive improvement. Second, when looking at “effective” and “very effective” responses, sometimes the increase in one tends to be offset by the decrease in the other over time even though collectively when combined there is an overall increase.

This graph shows the combined percentage of “effective” and “very effective” responses from respondents.

The following graphs highlight each of the nine areas of focus for rating Staff Council effectiveness in alphabetical order:
In 2011, 58% of respondents indicated that Staff Council was “effective” or “very effective” in addressing staff concerns on current issues. In 2014, that had increased to approximately 60%. However, the number of respondents indicating that Staff Council was “very effective” decreased. This is the largest decrease in the “very effective” category out of the three instances where such a decrease occurred. Interesting to note is how the perception of “somewhat effective” remained the same between surveys.

In 2011, 46% of respondents indicated that Staff Council was “effective” or “very effective” in advocating for Staff Benefit issues. In 2014, that has increased to approximately 60%. This is the biggest shift in perception among Staff as to the Council’s direct advocacy.

In 2011, 50% of respondents indicated that Staff Council was “effective” or “very effective” in advocating for Staff Professional Development. In 2014, that had increased to approximately 62% which suggests another positive shift in perceptions of the Council’s effectiveness.
In 2011, 51% of respondents indicated that Staff Council was “effective” or “very effective” in advocating for Staff Quality of Life Issues. In 2014, that had increased to approximately 58%.

In 2011, 50% of respondents indicated that Staff Council was “effective” or “very effective” in advocating for UVM Policy Issues. In 2014, that has increased to approximately 60% with an increase in the perception of the Council as “very effective”.

In 2011, 71% of respondents indicated that Staff Council was “effective” or “very effective” in communicating issues that affect Staff. In 2014, that remained the same with minimal shifts within each ranking. This question only asked about important issues and does not speak to communication in general, which has increased in the amount and scope since 2011.
In 2011, 66% of respondents indicated that Staff Council was “effective” or “very effective” in formulating recommendations to the Administration. In 2014, that remained the same with minimal shifts within each ranking.

In 2011, 81% of respondents indicated that Staff Council was “effective” or “very effective” in organizing campus events and activities. In 2014, this had increased to 89% which suggests that the fine tuning of events and the addition of new programming that better reflects the interests of staff have had a positive impact of staff perceptions.

In 2011, 64% of respondents indicated that Staff Council was “effective” or “very effective” in soliciting Staff input on current issues. In 2014, that remained the same with minimal shifts within each ranking.
Staff Council Representative Awareness

Do you know who your Staff Council Representative(s) is?

When the 2011 Staff Council survey was created, there was a perception that Staff did not know who their Staff Council Representative was and so this question was asked to find out whether or not Representatives were doing a good job of reaching out to their Units/Divisions or Colleges. Since that time, a Representative Update has been designed for Representatives to send via email to their colleagues. In 2011, only 60% of respondents knew who their Staff Council Representatives are whereas, in 2014, this recognition level is at 64%. Unfortunately, there is still more work to be done here as over 30% still do not know who their Representatives are.

Do you read the monthly Staff Council updates sent by your Representative(s)?

In the survey, 38% of respondents indicated that they “always” read the Staff Council updates sent by their Representatives with 37% stating they “sometimes” read it. An additional 10.5% of respondents “seldom” read it, 13% “never” read it, and 1.5% provided “no answer.” With 75% of respondents stating that they “always” or “sometimes” read the updates, it could be argued that this has some impact on the increased awareness of how Staff become aware of who their Staff Council Representatives are.

Can you identify ways that your Staff Council Representative(s) could serve you better?

Of the respondents who participated in the survey 20% provided additional feedback. The majority of the 134 responses fell into one of several themes:

- Satisfaction with the way Staff Council Representative(s) serve their constituents
- Concern about a lack of communication from Staff Council Representative(s) or knowledge of who Representatives are
- A lack of understanding about the role of Staff Council Representative(s) and the Council as a whole
- Concern about the efficacy of Staff Council Representative(s) and the Council as a whole

Taken together, the responses seem to indicate that Staff Council and Staff Council Representative(s) need to ensure that their outreach and communication efforts are reaching all
staff, develop new ways for Representative(s) to have more meaningful interactions with their constituents, and increase awareness of Staff Council’s effective advocacy by providing more information about our accomplishments and achievements on specific areas of focus.
Ranking of Important Issues for Non-Represented Staff

In the Staff Council Survey completed in 2014, a salary pool recommendation and benefits were perceived by staff as the most important issues on which Staff Council was currently working. This suggests that issues of compensation are at the forefront of staff concerns. It also suggests that we need to find ways to better advocate the needs of staff so that salary increases can be made and employees are recognized for their superior work and dedication to the institution.

Issues by Importance Level for Non-Represented Staff: Percentage of Very Important and Important Responses

The Staff Council Survey also asked participants to indicate how important certain staff benefits or perks were to them. This graph shows the combined percentage of those who indicated a benefit or perk as “important” or “very important.” For those who participated in the survey, it is clear that medical and dental insurance coverage are extremely important to our staff community, along with the Retirement Savings Plan. This highlights the importance of providing clear, articulate, and contextual information when communicating about benefits and remaining sensitive to the way staff perceive the significance of their benefits to their overall compensation package.
While the margins of change from 2011 to 2014 are small, in many cases, for benefits such as free bus ride, access to UVM services, flexible spending accounts, UVM perks/discounts, the percentages of “important” and “very important” responses have increased. This arguably shows that UVM staff members are somewhat under financial stress and have to marshal all available resources.

The following graphs are for each item:

**Dental Insurance**

- Not Important
- Somewhat Important
- Important
- Very Important

**Health insurance**

- Not Important
- Somewhat Important
- Important
- Very Important
Post Retirement Medical Benefits
In 2011, Post-Retirement Medical Benefits was not listed as an option for respondents to consider. As a result there is no data to show comparisons. However, in 2014, approximately 87% of respondents indicated Post-Retirement Medical Benefits as “important” or “very important.”

Retiree Health Savings Plan
In 2011, Retiree Health Savings Plan was not listed as an option for respondents to consider. As a result there is no data to show comparisons. However, in 2014, approximately 66% of respondents indicated the Retiree Health Savings Plan as “important” or “very important.”
General Questions

In addition, the Staff Council survey asked a new series of questions to better understand if the long standing negative perceptions around workplace culture that are often brought to the Council’s attention were prevalent at UVM. These survey questions focused on professional development, a sense of support and recognition, and work/life balance. Overall, the responses to these questions suggested that respondents had more positive than negative experiences, but still elicited some unique responses that spoke to areas of concern for staff and University culture.

Have you ever taken advantage of tuition remission for yourself?

In 2013, Staff Council worked to ensure staff members were not unreasonably denied access to the tuition remission benefit for themselves. In collaboration with Human Resource Services (HRS), an appeals process was created so that if a supervisor did deny an employee the flexibility to take a course for personal or professional development, the employee would be able to work with Employee Advisors in HRS to potentially resolve the difference of opinion.

In the 2014 survey, 63% of respondents indicated that they had been able to take advantage of the tuition remission benefit for themselves, with 37% indicating they were unable to do so.

Those who said they had not been able to take advantage of this benefit indicated a lack of time as the most impactful factor.

Have you ever been able to take advantage of professional development (on or off-campus) while employed at UVM?

In 2013, Staff Council heard from a number of staff members indicating that the availability of professional development opportunities were not granted or given. In some instances, Staff alleged that their supervisors continually provided opportunities to the same people and that equal access to funds were not occurring. In the 2014 Staff Council Annual Update, the Council raised concerns about not having guidelines for supervisors to follow in regards to dividing up professional development funds and providing equitable opportunities. This concern is one that seems more important as we move towards an Incentive-based Budget model where funds will
be managed by Units/Divisions and Colleges and different perspectives on professional development could create inequities across the University.

In the survey, 78% of respondents indicated that they had been able to take advantage of professional development opportunities, with 22% indicating they were unable to do so.

Those who said they had been able to take advantage of professional development cited that they did so in order to gain skills, knowledge and training to perform the responsibilities of their position. In addition, respondents also indicated that funding and supervisor also impacted their ability to gain professional development. Others also noted that they had participated in courses offered through Human Resource Service – Learning Services at UVM.

Those who said they had not been able to take advantage of professional development said a lack of time was the biggest factor impeding their ability to gain new skills, knowledge, and training.

Are you able to maintain a healthy Work/Life balance?

Since 2009 and the layoffs that occurred at the beginning of that year, Staff Council has heard from many staff members indicating that they are doing more work without receiving additional compensation. In some of these instances, concerns were raised about outdated position descriptions that did not represent the body of work an employee was currently doing and that the position was no longer classified in the correct job family due to the degree of responsibility. This has led to a perception that the majority of staff are doing more with less. The Council wanted to know if staff were able to maintain a Work/Life balance in light of these perceptions so as to better understand what helps or does not help staff maintain in this balance.

In the survey, 77% of respondents indicated that they had been able to maintain a Work/Life balance, with 23% indicating they were unable to do so.

Those who said they were able to maintain balance cited a flexible schedule and no overtime along with exercise, diet, and other activities as contributing factors. In addition, prioritization of work was also listed as assisting in maintaining balance.

Those who said they had not been able to maintain balance indicated that their workloads and feeling overworked impacted them directly. Interesting to note here were the number of responses that indicated they were exempt status staff members who have no defined limits as to how much work is too much work.

Are you supported in your work at UVM?

Over the years, Staff Council has learned about challenging professional relationships between staff and supervisors. As a result, the Council wished to get a better understanding about how staff perceive the level of support they felt at the University to see if there was an underlying concern around the climate and culture between staff and supervisors.
In the survey, 88% of respondents indicated that they had been supported in their work at UVM, with 12% stating otherwise.

Those who said they were supported cited having a flexible schedule, working with a supportive team of coworkers and supervisors, and being able to take advantage of professional training and development opportunities as reasons they felt supported in their work. Examples of these are seen in the comments below:

- “A flexible schedule allows me to carpool.”
- “Flexible schedule allows me to accommodate for personal visits (doctor appointments, etc.)”
- “Fabulous flexibility in how I get my job done and a very supportive team”
- “Have been flexible with scheduling when necessary so I can take for-credit classes”
- “Very supportive supervisors and co-workers help address issues as they come up, and address workload issues, etc.”
- “I feel that my supervisor and colleagues and I work as a team and while we each have our own special role, it all contributes to the same goal.”
- “The department I work in is very much team oriented. We support each other as well as my manager is very supportive.”
- “I appreciate and take advantage of staff educational opportunities”
- “I have been able to obtain training and explore many different facets of my position in order to support the work of our department.”
- “My supervisor is very supportive in any classes that I would like to take to improve myself or my work.”

Those who said they were not supported reflected upon workload levels, financial constraints, and having no sense of long term career trajectory as issues that negatively influence their feeling of support at UVM. Some of the comments include:

- “Positions in my department have been eliminated, but the work has not been reevaluated to decrease the department workload.”
- “Performing my job well and efficiently is not enough to move up in this field. People who don’t perform well are the ones who get promoted here.”
- “I am capable of much more, my position does not require it and I am limited by the position because taking on more would be to step on people’s toes.”
- “Too much work to complete within allotted hours.”
- “There needs to be improved guidance about what is reasonable and expected of exempt level positions regarding hours to get the job done.”
- “Lack of staffing resources”
- “Lack of funding – position is grant funded so dependent on funding being available”
- “On many levels I feel supported. However, it seems to always come down to budget – there is no money for upgrading, changing, learning, or hiring someone to facilitate a change.”
Are you recognized for your work at UVM?

Similar to the previous question about support, the Council wanted to know if people were recognized for their efforts at the University.

In the survey, 72% of respondents indicated that they have been recognized for their work, with 28% stating otherwise.

Comparing the perceptions of support to recognition suggests that perhaps staff are not being acknowledged for the work that they do, but do feel they are supported.

Those who said they were recognized cited feedback from supervisors and colleagues as contributing factors.

- “My work is acknowledged by supervisors and colleagues when applicable, and I’m made to feel an integral part of my team”
- “Lots of praise but no monetary reward”

Those who said they were not recognized indicated that their work is not rewarded with compensation and inequities within the work environment.

- “I love my job and have been doing it for years. The harder I work, the more responsibility I get, but my salary is never increased on merit, only what the standard University rate is. I am at the lower end of the pay scale and it is frustrating to say the least.”
- “Feel overlooked and undervalued. Frustrations, inequities remain despite knowledge of issues/leadership.”

When was your last performance appraisal?

Over the years Staff Council has been made aware of many instances of long term employees never receiving a performance appraisal or only receiving sporadic appraisals. In 2013, Staff Council presented a recommendation to President Sullivan regarding performance appraisals and supervisory training in an attempt to build more accountability among supervisors to complete the tasks associated with their own positions. This recommendation was endorsed by President Sullivan and sent to Wanda Heading-Grant, Vice President for Human Resources, Diversity and Multicultural Affairs to execute. The Council wanted to better understand how pervasive the lack of performance appraisals was at the University in order to do a better job of advocating on this front.

In the survey, 65% of respondents indicated that they had received a performance appraisal in the last year, 19% within the last 2-3 years, 3% within the last 4-5 years, and 13% stating more than 5 years ago.
While 65% of the respondents indicated they had received a performance appraisal in the last year, this leaves 35% not receiving an annual review. More significant is the 13% of respondents indicating that their last performance appraisal was more than 5 years ago which suggests that some long term employees may not receive the feedback to improve their performance or the acknowledgement of their successes.

What is your preferred method of receiving internal communications?

Staff Council has been concerned about internal communications for some time and has been advocating for more information to be shared with the UVM community in ways that Staff can access it appropriately. These concerns have resulted from information not being disseminated appropriately or widely when it is sent from Senior Leaders to their Units/Divisions or Colleges and then the departments within these different areas. Concerns have also resulted from external media reporting on issues prior to when a University-wide communication is provided. The Council has been pleased with developments to address internal communications, but recognizes that more work is needed. The Council wanted to better understand how Staff preferred to receive information so as to focus future outreach within the appropriate medium.

Nearly 80% of respondents indicated that email is their preferred method of receiving internal communications. While other University Communications like News You Should Know, This Week @ UVM, and UVM Today are sent by email, they are not preferred methods of having information disseminated. This suggests that internal communications sent via email or through these other methods need to be balanced so that the most important information is shared in a manner that reaches the most people.
**Demographics**

**Gender Composition**

It is important to note that 70% of the staff at the University are female, but in the survey sample, the male to female ratio is one to three, which is slightly more skewed than expected.

- Male: 24.5%
- Female: 74.7%
- Genderqueer: .3%
- Transgender (M to F): 0.1%
- Transgender (F to M): 0%
- Other: 0.4%

There is virtually no change in the gender ratio when comparing this survey to the previous one in 2011. Female perspectives are slightly over-represented.

**Length of Service at UVM**

8% of respondents had worked at UVM less that 1 year; 24% for 1 to 5 years; 22% for 6-10 years; 23% for 11 to 20 years; 20% for more than 20 years; and 3% provided no answer.

**Income**

8% of respondents made less than $30,000 a year; 28% made $30,000 - $39,999; 24% made $40,000 to $49,999; 25% made $50,000 to $74,999; 7% made $75,000 to $100,000; 1% made more than $100,000; and 7% provided no answer.
Appendix I – 2013 Staff Council Survey

This is the 2014 Staff Council Survey of all staff represented by Staff Council.

Please take the time to complete this survey so Staff Council can determine how well it is fulfilling its mission to "...serve as an advocate for staff by seeking out and responding to their ideas and concerns, representing them to the University administration, and keeping staff informed of University initiatives."

The survey should only take about 10 to 15 minutes to complete and will be available until the end of the day on January 17, 2014. You may save your responses at any time and return to the process at a later time. Reminders will be sent to those who have not yet completed the survey.

Although Staff Council serves as the voice and advocate for all staff, it does not have the same function as the Collective Bargaining Units to which some members of the UVM staff belong. Those staff who belong to UE Local 267 are not permitted to participate in Staff Council at the request of their union and are therefore not eligible to take this survey. Those staff who belong to Chauffers, Teamsters, Warehousemen and Helpers Union No. 597 are also not eligible to take this survey.

The survey is anonymous, but your responses will help direct the focus of Staff Council in the coming years to better serve UVM staff.

Welcome to the 2014 Staff Council Survey. Your responses will be used to determine how well the Staff Council is fulfilling its mission to "...serve as an advocate for staff by seeking out and responding to their ideas and concerns, representing them to the University administration, and keeping staff informed of University initiatives."

The survey should take about 10 to 15 minutes to complete. You may save your responses at any time and return to the process at a later time. While there are 49 questions in the survey, you will answer fewer than this number as you will skip some questions based upon your answers to previous questions. Not all of the questions are mandatory. We appreciate your willingness to share your thoughts with us.

There are 49 questions in this survey

Basic Demographic Questions

[1]What is your gender? *

Please choose all that apply:

- [ ] Male
- [ ] Female
- [ ] Genderqueer
- [ ] Transgender (M to F)
- [ ] Transgender (F to M)
• ☐ Other:

[2] What is your job family? *

Please choose all that apply:

• ☐ Administrative Support
• ☐ Maintenance
• ☐ Professional
• ☐ Service
• ☐ Skilled Craft
• ☐ Specialized
• ☐ Technical
• ☐ I don't know

Staff Council Awareness

[3] How familiar are you with the work that the Staff Council does? *

Please choose only one of the following:

• ☐ Very Familiar
• ☐ Familiar
• ☐ Somewhat Familiar
• ☐ I am Not Familiar with Staff Council

[4] How did you first find out about the Staff Council? *

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
Answer was NOT 'I am Not Familiar with Staff Council' at question '3 [A3]' (How familiar are you with the work that the Staff Council does?)

Please choose only one of the following:

• ☐ At New Employee Orientation
• ☐ My Staff Council Representative
• ☐ Another UVM Staff Member
• ☐ The Staff Council Website
• ☐ Staffline e-Newsletter
• ☐ I don't remember
• ☐ Other
[5] Have you ever visited the Staff Council website? *

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
Answer was NOT 'I am Not Familiar with Staff Council' at question '3 [A3]' (How familiar are you with the work that the Staff Council does?)

Please choose only one of the following:

- Yes
- No

[6] How many times did you visit the Staff Council website during the past 12 months? *

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
Answer was 'Yes' at question '5 [A5]' (Have you ever visited the Staff Council website?)

Please choose only one of the following:

- 1 - 3 times
- 4 - 6 times
- 7 - 9 times
- 10 - 12 times
- 13 or more times

[7] How would you rate the ease of locating information on the Staff Council website? *

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
Answer was 'Yes' at question '5 [A5]' (Have you ever visited the Staff Council website?)

Please choose only one of the following:

- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very Poor

[8] How can we improve the Staff Council website?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
Answer was 'Yes' at question '5 [A5]' (Have you ever visited the Staff Council website?)

Please write your answer here:
[9] Do you read Staffline, the Staff Council monthly e-newsletter? *

Please choose only one of the following:

- □ Always
- □ Sometimes
- □ Seldom
- □ Never

[10] How would you rate the content in Staffline? *

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
Answer was 'Always' or 'Sometimes' or 'Seldom' at question '9 [A9]' (Do you read Staffline, the Staff Council monthly e-newsletter?)

Please choose only one of the following:

- □ Very Good
- □ Good
- □ Fair
- □ Poor
- □ Very Poor

[11] How would you rate the format of the new e-newsletter version of Staffline? *

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
Answer was 'Always' or 'Sometimes' or 'Seldom' at question '9 [A9]' (Do you read Staffline, the Staff Council monthly e-newsletter?)

Please choose only one of the following:

- □ Very Good
- □ Good
- □ Fair
- □ Poor
- □ Very Poor

[12] How can we improve Staffline?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
Answer was 'Always' or 'Sometimes' or 'Seldom' at question '9 [A9]' (Do you read Staffline, the Staff Council monthly e-newsletter?)

Please write your answer here:
[13] Please share with us why you read *Staffline*.

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**
Answer was 'Always' or 'Sometimes' or 'Seldom' at question '9 [A9]' (Do you read Staffline, the Staff Council monthly e-newsletter?)

Please write your answer here:

[14] Please share other ways that we can reach you to provide updates.

Please write your answer here:

**Staff Council Performance**

[15] Please rate how effective you feel the Staff Council is in each of the following areas: *

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Not Effective</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
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<tr>
<td>Addressing staff concerns on</td>
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<td>current issues</td>
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<td>Advocating for staff on benefits</td>
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<td>Advocating for staff on personal</td>
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<td>development issues</td>
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<td>Advocating for staff on professional</td>
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<td>of life issues</td>
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<td>Advocating for staff on University</td>
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<td>policy issues</td>
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<td>Service</td>
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<td>Not Effective</td>
<td>No Opinion</td>
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<td>Communicating with staff regarding issues that affect them</td>
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<td>Formulating recommendations to the University administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organizing campus events and activities (e.g., bus trips, the Annual Holiday Bazaar, Staff Art Exhibit)</td>
<td>○</td>
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<td>Soliciting staff input on current issues</td>
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</table>

[16] Do you know who your Staff Council Representative(s) is (are)? *

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ I am currently a Staff Council Representative

[17] Do you read monthly Staff Council updates sent by your Representative(s)? *

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ○ Always
- ○ Sometimes
- ○ Seldom
- ○ Never

[18] Can you identify ways that your Staff Council Representative(s) could serve you better?

Please write your answer here:
What's Important to You

[19] Please rank the following issues that Staff Council is currently addressing in their order of importance to you. *

Please number each box in order of preference from 1 to 14

- Annual Salary Raise Pool Recommendation
- Benefits
- Deferred Maintenance (i.e., a backlog of necessary infrastructure repairs and upgrades)
- Diversity
- Educating Staff on UVM's Budget
- Environmental Sustainability
- Nursing Mother Facilities
- Personal Development
- Professional Development
- Standardized Performance Appraisals
- Standardized Supervisory Training
- Transportation and Parking
- Tuition Remission
- Volunteerism

[20] Please list any additional issues that you would like Staff Council to consider or know more about.

Please write your answer here:

[21] Please rate how important the following Benefits or Perks are to you. *

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability to ride CCTA buses for free (e.g., the College Street Shuttle, Commuter buses))</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to UVM services and recreational opportunities</td>
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<td>(e.g., athletic facilities, computer repair, fitness center, libraries, outing club equipment rental)</td>
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<td>Important</td>
<td>Somewhat Important</td>
<td>Not Important</td>
<td>No Opinion</td>
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<td>Dental Insurance</td>
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<td>Flexible Spending Accounts</td>
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<td>Grievance and Mediation Policy - Staff (Non-Represented)</td>
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<td>(i.e., this is the policy for staff who are not members of collective bargaining units)</td>
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<td>Health Care Insurance</td>
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<td>Healthy Lifestyle/Work-Life Balance Opportunities</td>
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<td>Long-Term Disability Insurance</td>
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<td>Perks &amp; Discounts (e.g., cell phone service and Bookstore discounts)</td>
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<td>Post-Retirement Medical Benefits</td>
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<td>Retiree Health Savings Plan</td>
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<td>Retirement Savings Plan (403b)</td>
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<td>Benefit</td>
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<td>Staff Emergency Loan Fund</td>
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<td>Tuition Remission</td>
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<td>Wellness Corporation Services</td>
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[22] Please list any additional "Benefits" or "Perks" that you would use if they were available (e.g., Professional Development Funds, Short-Term Disability, Childcare, etc.).

Please write your answer here:

**General Questions**

[23] Have you ever taken advantage of tuition remission for yourself? *

Please choose only one of the following:

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

[24] If no, why not? *

**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**
Answer was 'No' at question '23 [G1]' (Have you ever taken advantage of tuition remission for yourself?)

Please choose all that apply:

- ☐ Degree not available
- ☐ Major not available
- ☐ Lack of knowledge about the benefits
- ☐ Lack of support from supervisor/department
- ☐ Lack of time
- ☐ Scheduling conflict
- ☐ Program/Certificate not eligible for tuition remission
- ☐ Other:
[25] Have you been able to take advantage of professional development (on or off-campus) while employed at UVM? *

Please choose only one of the following:

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

[26] If yes, why?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
Answer was 'Yes' at question '25 [G2]' (Have you been able to take advantage of professional development (on or off-campus) while employed at UVM?)

Please write your answer here:

[27] If no, why not?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
Answer was 'No' at question '25 [G2]' (Have you been able to take advantage of professional development (on or off-campus) while employed at UVM?)

Please write your answer here:

[28] Are you able to maintain a healthy Work/Life balance? *

Please choose only one of the following:

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

[29] If yes, how?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
Answer was 'Yes' at question '28 [G3]' (Are you able to maintain a healthy Work/Life balance?)

Please write your answer here:
[30] If no, why not?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
Answer was 'No' at question '28 [G3]' (Are you able to maintain a healthy Work/Life balance?)

Please write your answer here:

[31] Are you supported in your work at UVM? *

Please choose only one of the following:

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

[32] If yes, how?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
Answer was 'Yes' at question '31 [G4]' (Are you supported in your work at UVM?)

Please write your answer here:

[33] If no, why not?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
Answer was 'No' at question '31 [G4]' (Are you supported in your work at UVM?)

Please write your answer here:

[34] Are you recognized for your work at UVM? *

Please choose only one of the following:

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

[35] If yes, how?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
Answer was 'Yes' at question '34 [G5]' (Are you recognized for your work at UVM?)

Please write your answer here:
[36] If no, why not?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
Answer was 'No' at question '34 [G5]' (Are you recognized for your work at UVM?)

Please write your answer here:

[37] When was your last performance appraisal? *

Please choose only one of the following:

- [ ] Within the last year
- [ ] Within the last 2 - 3 years
- [ ] Within the last 4 - 5 years
- [ ] More than 5 years ago

[38] What is your preferred method of receiving internal University communications? *

Please number each box in order of preference from 1 to 9

- [ ] Email
- [ ] MyUVM web portal
- [ ] News You Should Know
- [ ] UVM Today
- [ ] Print Media
- [ ] Social Media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- [ ] This Week at UVM
- [ ] Verbally from my supervisor
- [ ] Websites

[39] Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

Please write your answer here:

Additional Demographics

[40] I have been on staff at UVM for

Please choose only one of the following:

- [ ] Less than 1 year
- ○ 1 to 5 years
- ○ 6 to 10 years
- ○ 11 to 20 years
- ○ More than 20 years

[41] My full time equivalency (FTE) is

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ○ 100%
- ○ 75% to 99%
- ○ 51% to 74%
- ○ 50%
- ○ Less than 50%
- ○ I don't know

[42] I currently work

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ○ 12 months
- ○ 11 months
- ○ 10 months
- ○ 9 months or less

[43] My annual base pay is

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ○ Less than $30,000
- ○ $30,000 to $39,999
- ○ $40,000 to $49,999
- ○ $50,000 to $74,999
- ○ $75,000 to $100,000
- ○ More than $100,000

[44] My age is

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- ○ Less than 25 years
- ○ 25 to 34 years
- ○ 35 to 44 years
- ○ 45 to 54 years
- ○ 55 to 64 years
- ○ 65 years or more
[45] My highest level of education is

Please choose only one of the following:

- [ ] Less than high school
- [ ] High school diploma/GED
- [ ] Some college
- [ ] Associate's Degree
- [ ] Bachelor's Degree
- [ ] Master's Degree
- [ ] Doctoral Degree

[46] My ethnicity and/or cultural identity is/are

Please choose all that apply:

- [ ] American Indian/Alaskan Native
- [ ] Asian
- [ ] Black or African-American
- [ ] Hispanic/Latino
- [ ] Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- [ ] White
- [ ] Other:

[47] My sexual orientation is

Please choose all that apply:

- [ ] Asexual
- [ ] Bisexual
- [ ] Gay
- [ ] Heterosexual
- [ ] Lesbian
- [ ] Pansexual
- [ ] Polysexual
- [ ] Queer
- [ ] Other:

[48] Are you able-bodied?

Please choose only one of the following:

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No
Do you require ADA accommodations?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
Answer was 'No' at question '48 [D9]' (Are you able-bodied?)

Please choose only one of the following:

- Yes
- No

Thank you for completing the 2014 Staff Council Survey. Your opinions are important to us and we look forward to sharing the results of the survey with you in the future.

If you have questions or concerns about the 2014 Staff Council Survey, please contact the Staff Council at Staff.Council@uvm.edu or 656-4493.

You can find more information about the Staff Council on our website: www.uvm.edu/staffcouncil

20.01.2014 – 14:49

Submit your survey.
Thank you for completing this survey.