UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

UWSPH
2018 CLIMATE
SURVEY RESULTS

September, 2018

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Executive Summary

This report summarizes key findings from the 2018 Annual Climate Survey administered by the School of Public Health (SPH) from April 5 to 20, 2018. The survey asked about the learning and working environment, perceptions of climate for diverse groups, and respondents' experiences with harassing or exclusionary conduct in the school.

The first SPH climate survey was completed in 2008. In 2017, a second climate survey was administered by an outside consultant. This year's survey is the third in 10 years. Despite the lower response rates for this year's survey compared to prior years, results follow a consistent pattern. ***The climate ratings remained about the same as previous years, and in fact, there is no evidence to demonstrate that it has improved in the last decade.*** A number of people are consistently telling us that they are less than 100 percent comfortable in SPH, especially women, people of color and those from low-income backgrounds.

Twenty two percent of respondents reported having personally experienced intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct (harassing behavior). The most common behaviors reported were based on a combination of identity factors: race and ethnicity, gender, position/rank and age. Microaggressions were the most common offense reported. Not far behind are the number of people who said that they were excluded from certain activities. Many people who experienced exclusionary behavior ignored it, avoided the person, or did not report it. One respondent stated, "The silence and looking the other way is profound." Feeling excluded and feeling unsafe to say anything are symptoms of a climate that needs immediate attention.

What happens now?

First, the Office of the Dean is sponsoring multiple and ongoing training for Department Chairs and administration leadership designed to help us move the needle towards creating a more positive climate for equity, diversity and inclusion.

Second, the School has developed policies to guide the confidential reporting of harassment, intimidation, microaggressions, and other behaviors that contribute to an unsafe climate. These reporting procedures are in place and can be utilized immediately.

Third, the climate survey will be used to help guide the design of school-wide focus groups so we can dig deeper and find out more about why the climate is the way it is, and what we can tangibly do to improve it.

There is great potential to examine over time the impact of change after the hiring of the Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Director of the Center for Anti-Racism and

Community Health, and while necessary, there is no guarantee that these two actions alone will sufficiently create and sustain the climate we expect from a school of public health.

We are all responsible. None of us can claim to be at our best when people feel unsafe to speak their truth and tell their story.   Through individual, departmental, and school-wide approaches, we must address the underlying forces of racism, sexism, ageism, elitism and other -isms that drive our current policies and practices and begin the process of co-creating a climate of mutual respect, humility and collaboration in the School.

Introduction

Background

The first SPH climate survey was done in 2008 by the Climate Assessment Subcommittee (Bridget Doyle, Christine Edgar, Celeste Chung, and Kate Murray). Their "Report of the Dean's Diversity Task Force Climate Assessment Initiative" in November 2008 serves as one of the benchmarks for this climate survey.

In the spring of 2017, in the wake of several incidents, SPH conduct a climate survey administered by consultants ORS Impact. Based on survey results and focus-group feedback from staff, students and faculty, the consultants made a number of recommendations, including the creation of a new position to direct the School's equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives.

During the 2017-18 academic year, the Office of the Dean administered a follow-up climate survey. Questions originated from the previous survey and focused on specific aspects of the climate and culture of SPH.

Survey Aims

The aims of this survey were to understand:

1. The School's learning and working climate,
2. Perceptions of climate for diverse groups,
3. And respondent's experiences with harassing or exclusionary conduct in the school.

Methods

Survey Procedures

The 2018 SPH Climate Survey was administered from April 5 to 20, 2018 online. Outreach to the entire SPH community was done through email reminders, in-person reminders, and communication from departmental leaders.

Survey Questions

A Likert scale of 1 = "very uncomfortable' to 5 "very comfortable" was used for the climate questions.

Results

Survey Participants

Demographics

A total of 360 individuals responded – 98 faculty, 7 post docs, 112 staff and 145 students. The greatest number of respondents were primarily affiliated with Health Services (n=126). The least number of respondents were primarily affiliated with Biostatistics (n=15.)

Diversity

Survey Respondents' nomination of diversity by School of Public Health affiliation:

- 61 out of 143 students (42.6 percent) endorsed diversity statements (Racial/ethnic minority, differently abled person, U.S. Military Veteran, first person in family to go to college or first generation, International student, and/or Non-native English speaker).
- Fewer than 10 percent were endorsed at the staff level and of faculty 31 out of 98 (32 percent) endorsed diversity statements (a differently abled person, Non-native English speaker, and U.S. Military Veteran.)

Table 1: Survey Demographics

Department	N	%
Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences	64	17.8
Biostatistics	15	4.2
Epidemiology	40	11.1
Global Health	59	16.4
Health Services	126	35.0
Office of the Dean	26	7.2
Other[1]	26	7.2
Missing	4	1.1
Affiliation		
Faculty[2]	98	27.2
Staff[3]	112	31.1
Student & Post Doc Fellows[4]	150	41.6
Gender Expression		
Female	236	65.6
Male	107	29.7
Prefer not to Answer or Non-Binary	17	4.7
Sexual Orientation		
LGBTQIA	56	15.5
Race/Ethnicity		
Caucasian/White – Not Latino(a) /Hispanic	212	59
Mixed Race[4]	60	16.7
Asian	34	9.4
Black	13	3.6
Hispanic/Latinx	11	3.1
Other[5]	6	1.7
Prefer Not to Answer	15	4.2
Missing	8	2.2
Age Range Under 25	43	
25-39	148	
40-54	78	
55+	87	

1 Includes Public Health Major, COPHP, School of Medicine, and iPHG

2 47% of Faculty Respondents were Full Professors

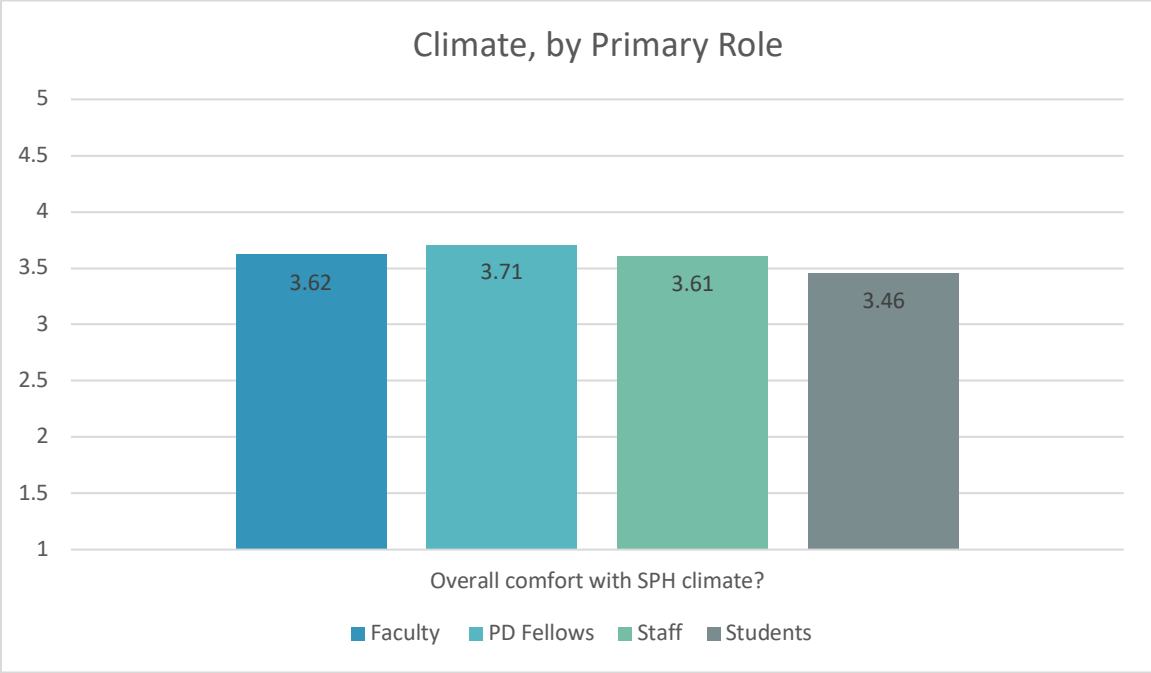3 67% of Staff Respondents were in Administration of Department, Program, or School

4 Defined as any respondent's endorsement of more than one race/ethnicity options and/or other and reported

5 Includes Caribbean, Middle Eastern, American Indian/Alaskan Native

SPH Climate Key Findings

Chart 1: Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very uncomfortable and 5 being very comfortable, during the 2017-2018 school year, how comfortable have you been with the climate at the SPH?

Climate, by Primary Role

Overall comfort with SPH climate?

- Faculty: 3.62
- PD Fellows: 3.71
- Staff: 3.61
- Students: 3.46

The average climate rating for the school was 3.55 out of a 5 point scale. Most of the responses fell between the "indifferent" and "comfortable" ranges. Students rated the climate lowest of all the groups.

The following are mean ratings of the school climate by respondents who endorsed diversity nominations, i.e. how do individuals from these backgrounds rate the SPH climate (using a scale of 1 = very uncomfortable to 5 = very comfortable)?

Table 2. Climate, as reported by members of diverse groups

| Dimensions of climate (Positive/Negative for…)	N	Mean	SD
Overall climate score	350	3.55	1.03
Accessible for those with Disabilities	234	3.35	1.25
Positive/Negative for Historical Oppressed Populations[1]	288	3.20	1.20
Pos/Neg for International staff/student/faculty	237	3.67	1.08
Pos/Neg for LGBTQIA	246	3.87	1.01
Pos/Neg for Low SES	257	2.97	1.20
Pos/Neg for Non-Native English Speakers	183	3.25	1.25
Pos/Neg for People of Color[2]	273	2.91	1.44

[1]Historically Oppressed Populations are respondents who endorsed diversity statements (Racial/ethnic minority, *differently abled person, U.S. Military Veteran, first person in family to go to college or first generation, International student, and/or Non-native English speaker*)

[2]People of Color includes Black, Latinx, American Indian/Alaska Native, Pacific Islander, Haitian, Middle Eastern and Asian

People of color rated the SPH climate the lowest of all the groups. Respondents who identified as Low SES also rated the climate poorly.

Chart 2: Based on the following dimensions, please rate the overall climate in SPH?

Climate Dimensions Exploration, by primary role

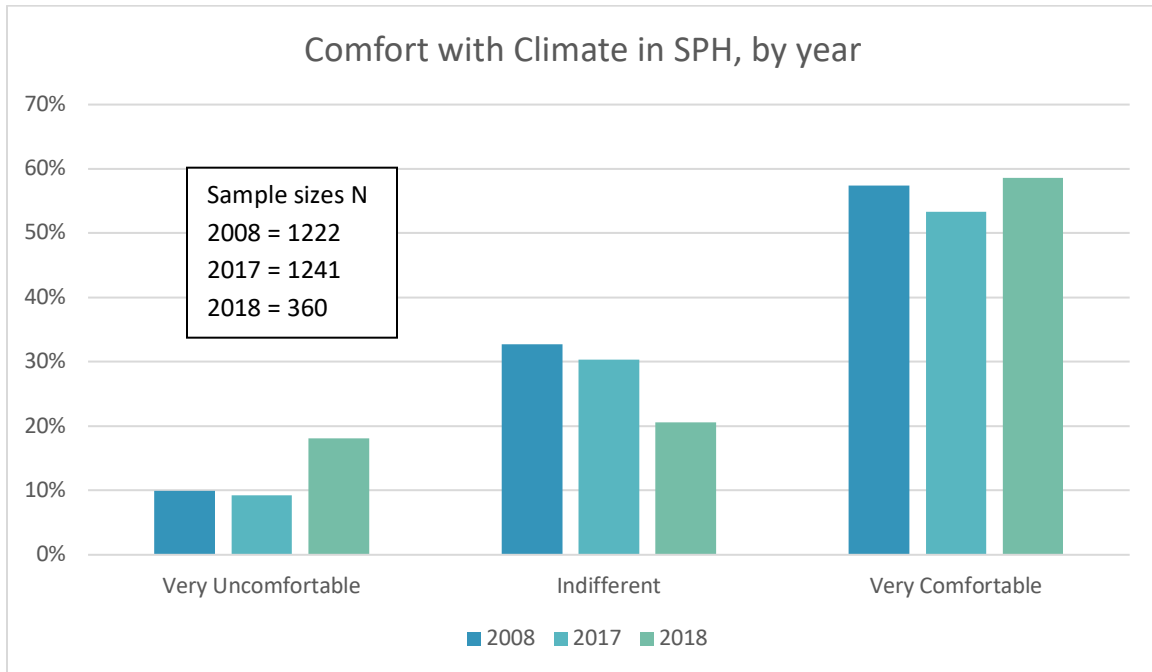Legend: ■ Faculty ■ PD/Fellows ■ Staff ■ Students
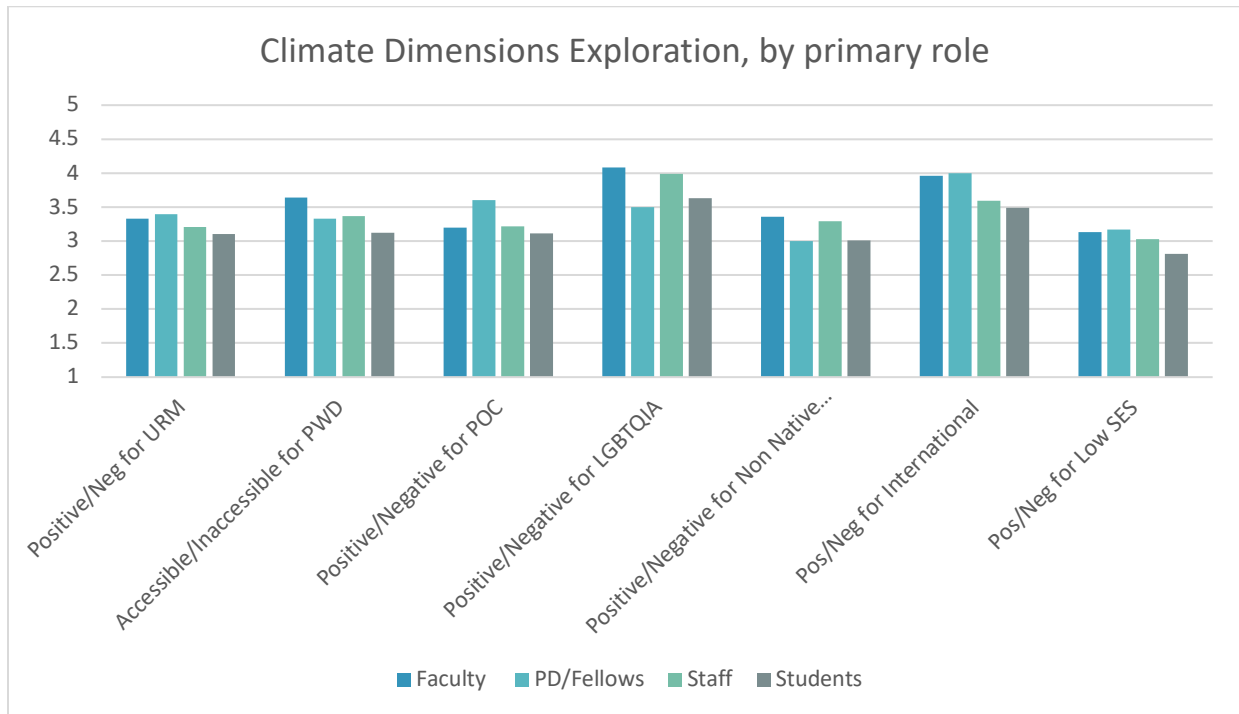
Perceptions of climate by all respondents are lowest for low income and non-Native English speakers. Further exploration may need to be done to examine whether language issues and elitism are prevalent in SPH and how these are impacting the learning and working environment. Of all the groups, students gave consistently lower climate scores across all dimensions.

"Expectations of having cell phones, etc, for staff who have high rents to pay. Higher paid faculty seem out of touch."

"Public Health should include all citizens - perhaps the differently abled most of all. It runs counter to the basic Public Health ethic to impose additional hardships on either employees or visitors to a Public Health space. I hope that…they look into issues of equity as well and functionality for this School."

Chart 3. SPH Climate, by year

Comfort with Climate in SPH, by year

Sample sizes N
2008 = 1222
2017 = 1241
2018 = 360

Categories: Very Uncomfortable, Indifferent, Very Comfortable

Legend: ■ 2008 ■ 2017 ■ 2018

The percentage of respondents from this year's survey who felt "comfortable" or "very comfortable" has not changed substantially from 2008 (57.4%) to 2018 (58.6%). However, the percentage of respondents who rated the climate as "very uncomfortable" and "uncomfortable" increased by 83% from 9.9% in 2008 to 18.1% in 2018.

Chart 4. Climate, by Underrepresented (URM) groups

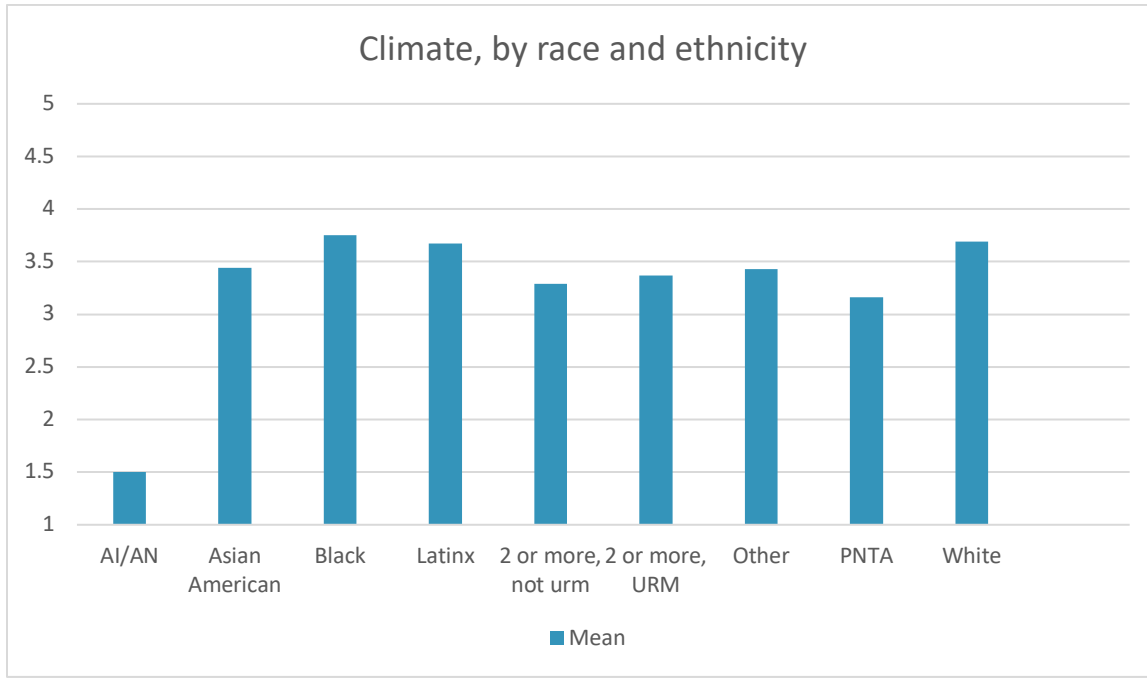### Climate, by URM

Mean scores

Legend: ■ URM ■ non URM
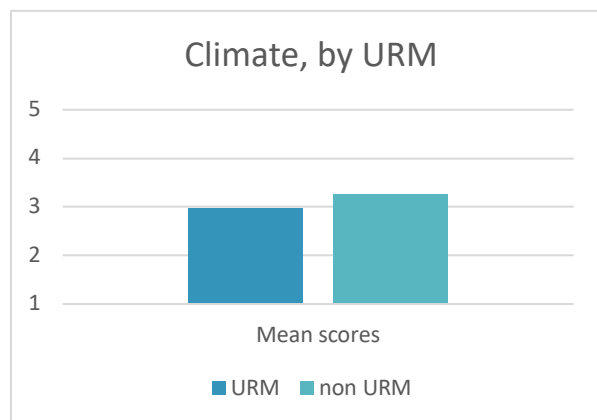
Underrepresented respondents (Black, Latinx, American Indian/Alaska Native, Pacific Islander) rate the SPH climate lower than non-URM respondents.

"SPH leadership should treat students, especially students of color, with respect and professionalism."
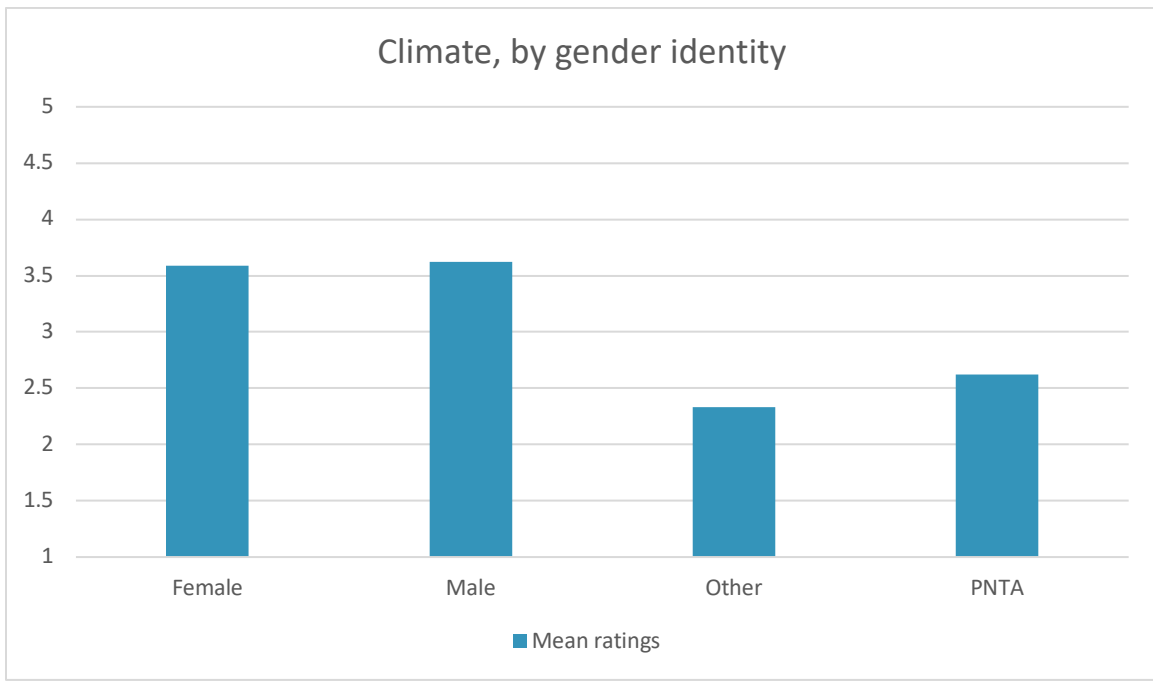*– 2018 SPH Climate Survey*

Chart 5. Climate by race and ethnicity

Climate, by race and ethnicity

American Indian/Alaska Native respondents rated the climate lowest.   Black and White respondents rated the climate highest.

Chart 6. Climate, by gender identity

Chart 6. Climate, by gender identity

Non-binary individuals rated the climate lower than male and female identified respondents.

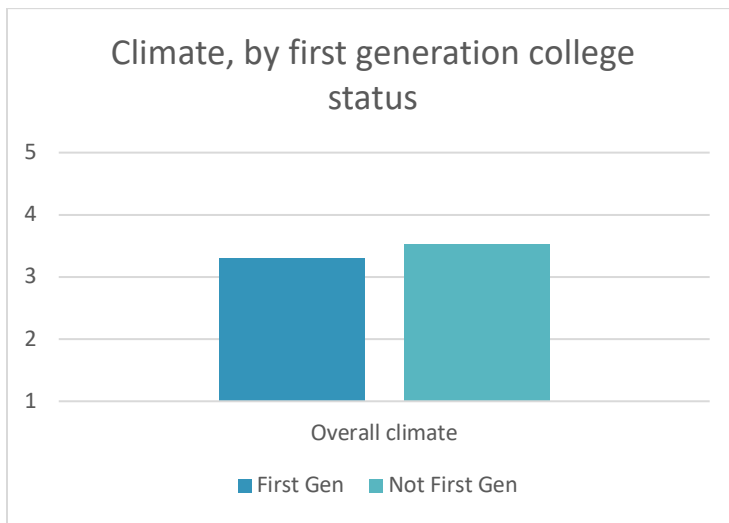> *"SPH is very male dominated, with less recognition for women."*
>
> *-2018 SPH Climate Survey*

Chart 7. Climate, by sexual orientation

Climate, by sexual orientation

*(bar chart: Heterosexual ≈ 3.6, LGBTQIA ≈ 3.4; legend: Mean ratings)*
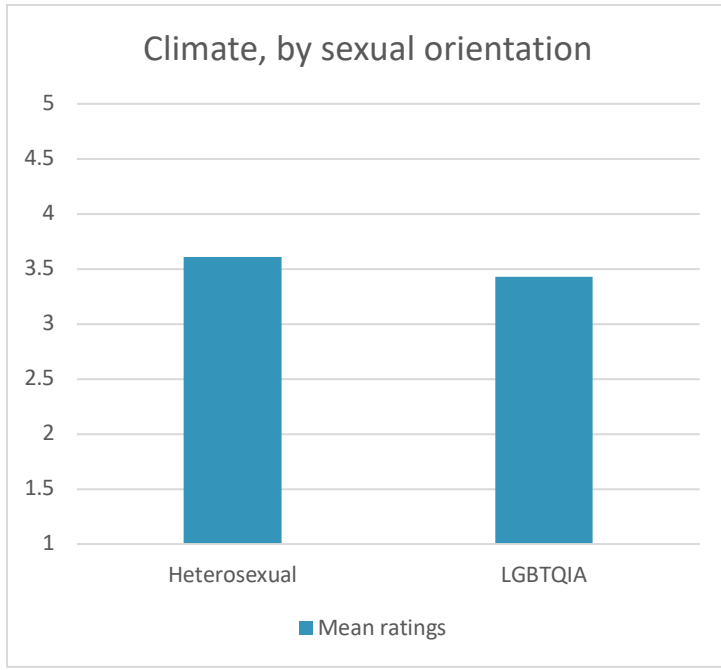
Respondents who identified as LGBTQIA rated the climate slightly lower than heterosexual respondents.

Chart 8. Climate, by first generation college status

Climate, by first generation college status

(bar chart: Overall climate — First Gen ≈ 3.3, Not First Gen ≈ 3.5; legend: First Gen, Not First Gen)

Respondents who identified as first generation college students rated the climate as "indifferent".
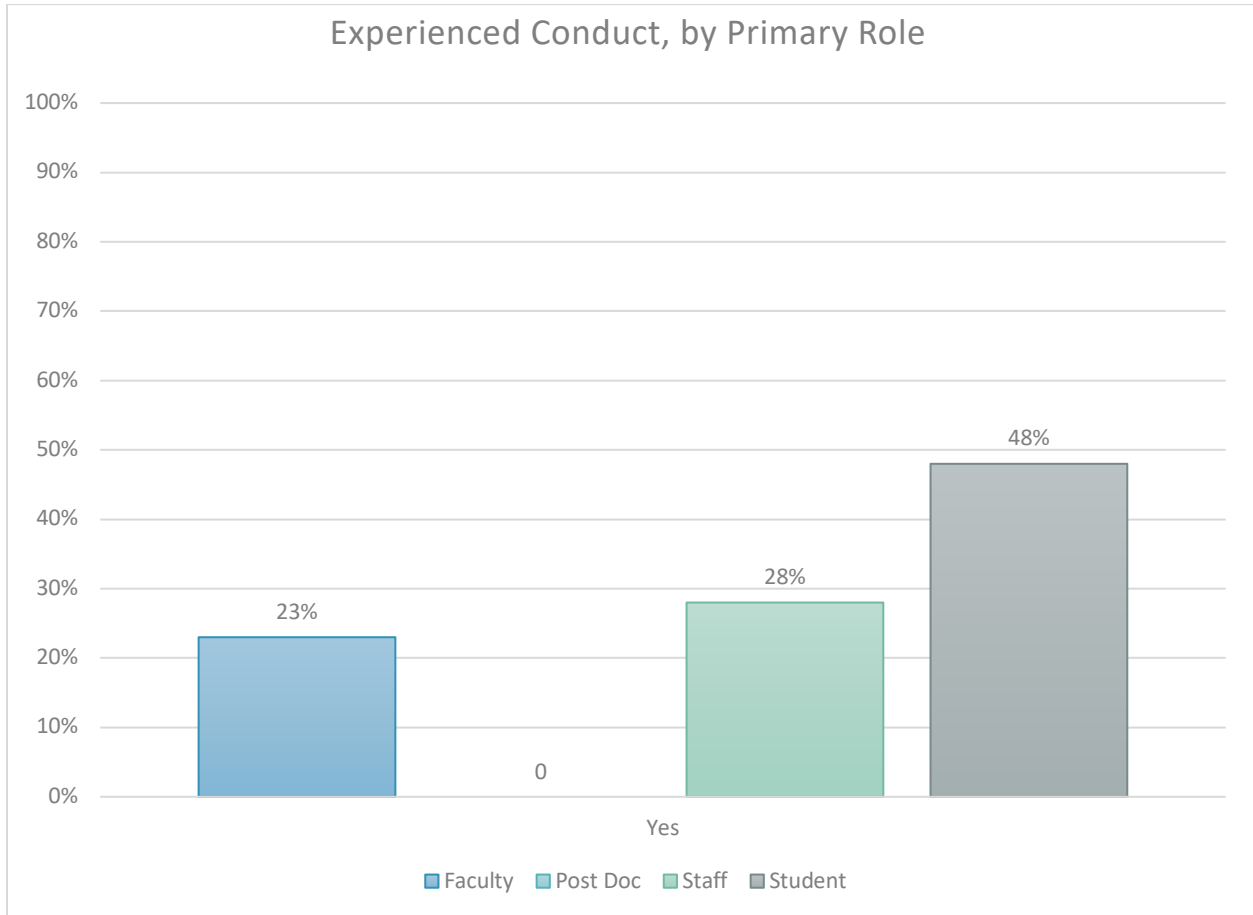
Of the 360 respondents, 80 (22.2%) reported having experienced exclusionary, offensive, and/or hostile conduct. This rate is consistent with reports of hostile conduct from previous years' surveys. Of those 80 respondents, 54 (67.5%) stated that the conduct interfered with their work or study.

> *"We need more student involvement in the decision making process on issues that concern students. We are part of the SPH community! Include us and LISTEN TO US!"* *- 2018 Climate Survey*
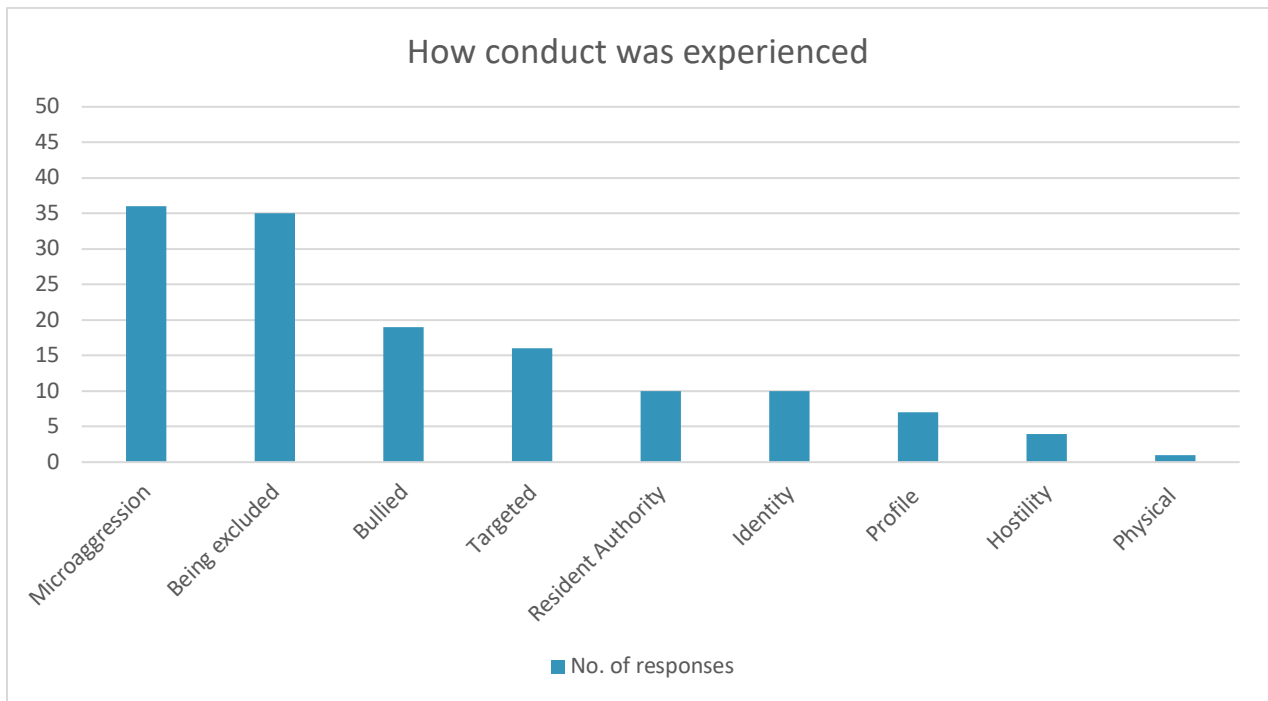
Conduct based on....
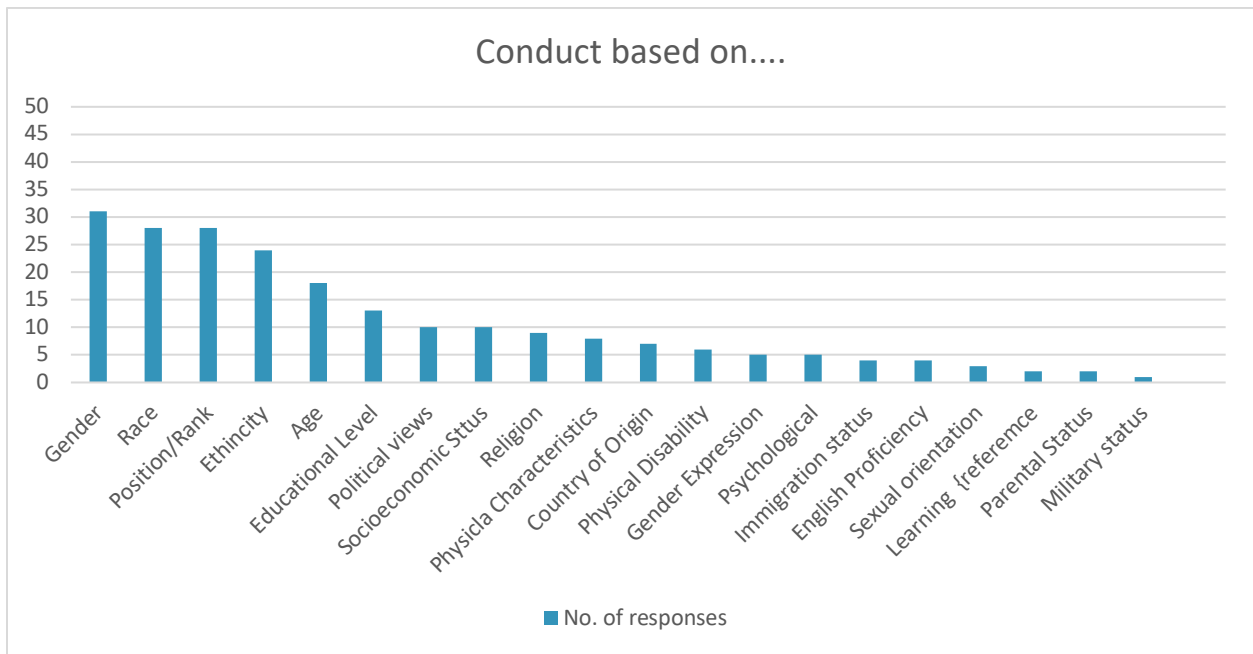
Intersectionality

A total of 27.5% of respondents who experienced exclusionary conduct felt that the conduct was based on combinations of 4 or more aspects of identity. The most common exclusionary behaviors were based on race, ethnicity, age, and gender.

"The higher up the academic privilege ladder the worse it gets with more micro and macro aggression against those with less power (junior faculty, staff, and students). And nothing is really done about it. If a faculty is lower down (lecturer or new) they might get talked to, but that's it. The behavior continues. Some senior faculty... They can always just run out of $$$ if you speak up. You are then out of a job and often a career. Essentially you have to suck it up."
-   2018 SPH CLIMATE SURVEY

"Here at the UW SPH, there are huge gender pay gaps, load gaps based on gender, gaps in who gets asked to write recommendation letters, gaps in who gets asked to do tasks for no FTE etc..."
-2018 SPH Climate Survey
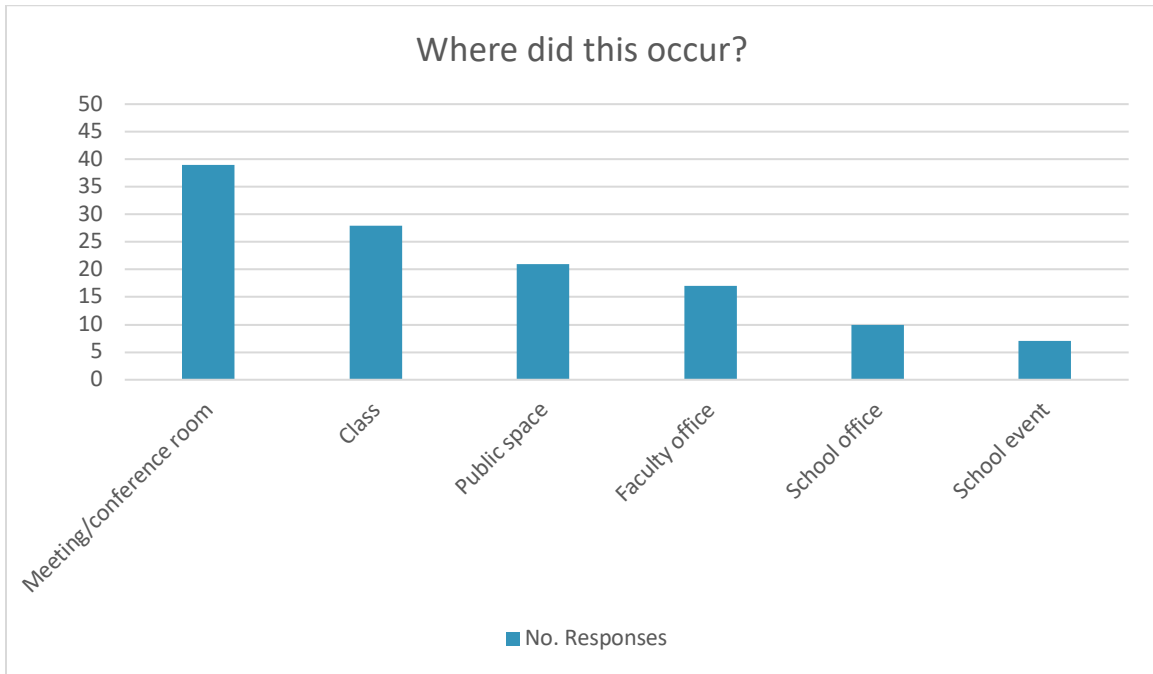
How conduct was experienced

Microaggressions are the most common form of harassing and exclusionary conduct, according to the survey. The number of people who report "being excluded" is also high and runs counter to the principles of inclusion and community building.

A faculty member that I work with was continually asking me to do things that were not part of my job and below my position. The commands were often made in short and directive emails which felt passive aggressive or…in a dismissive way when I tried to bring up ideas for the team….-2018 SPH Climate Survey

"The silence and looking the other way is profound. The bottom line is that this contributes to poor morale, siloing, and a much more stressful work environment."-2018 SPH Climate Survey
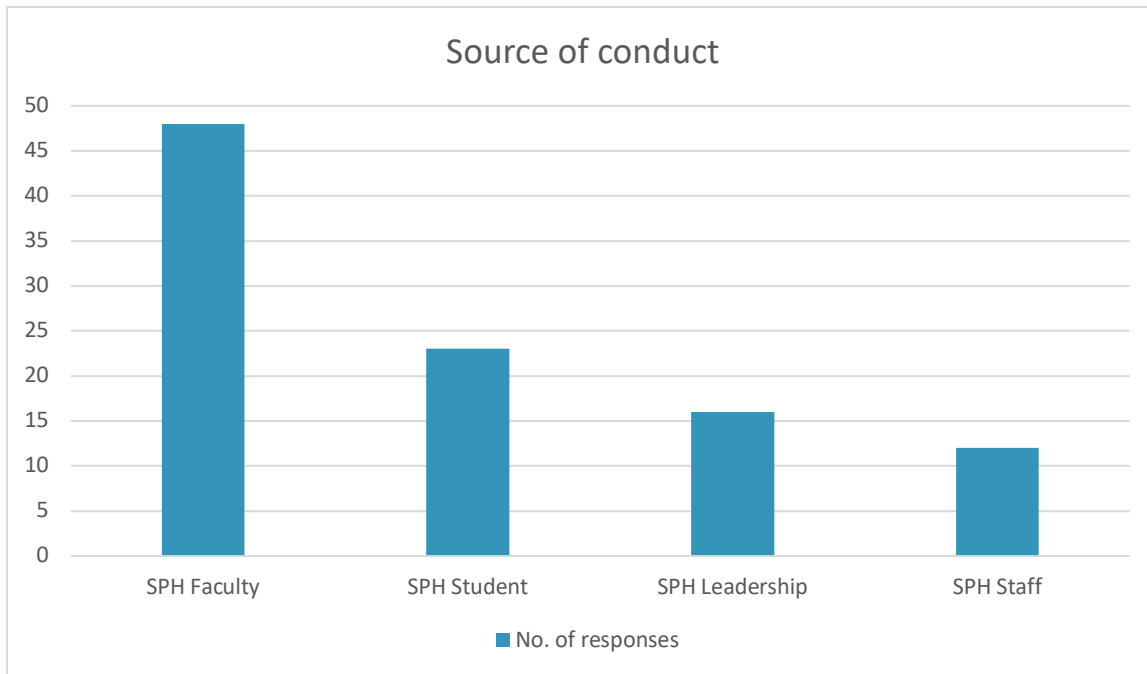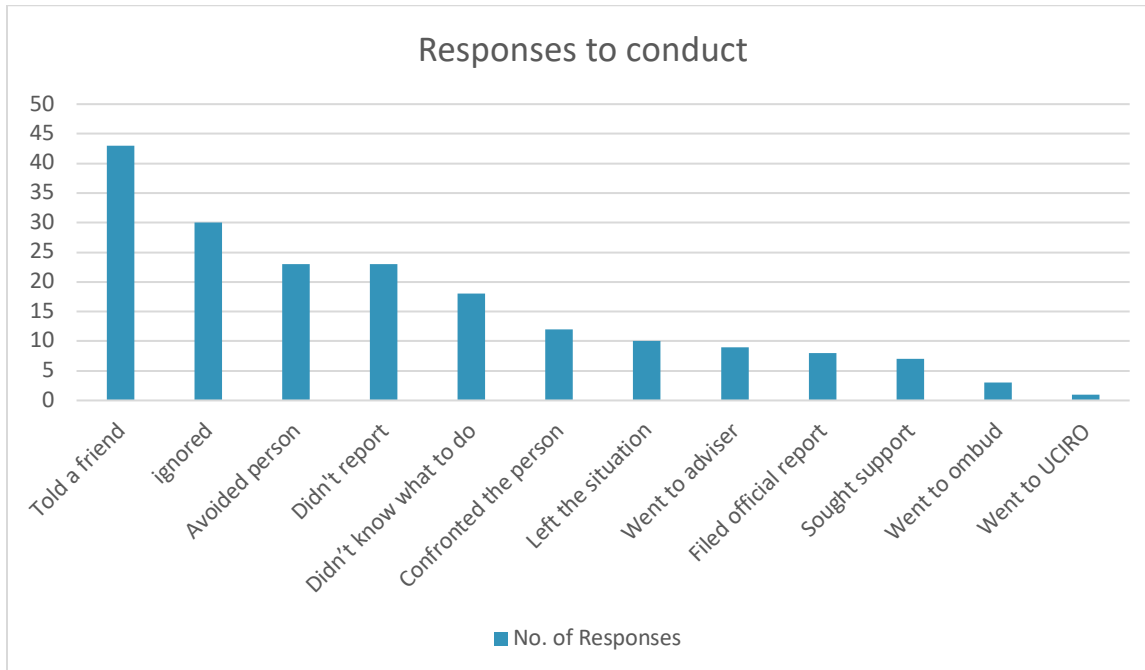
Where did this occur?

A little over half (54.9%) of all exclusionary or harassing conduct occurred in a meeting or class.

Chart 13: Who was the source of this conduct?

Source of conduct

Faculty are the most common source of harassment, exclusionary behavior, or discriminatory conduct (about 48.4%).

About 23% said that they told a friend. Almost half (45.9%) of all respondents reacted by "ignoring", "avoiding the person" "leaving the situation" or "didn't report." The predominance of the latter responses is concerning and may be indicative of the discomfort that exists in SPH to confront conflict, have difficult conversations, give and receive constructive feedback.

Themes

Open ended comments were collected and analyzed for themes. Appendix A contains a short list of excerpts that represent the themes. These are the most common themes from the survey:

Ablesim
Abuse/Misuse of Position/Rank
Lack of accountability
Elitism
Exclusionary Behavior
Gender/Sexism
General Climate
Microaggressions
Racism and Racial Profiling
Survey Fatigue

Discussion

Key Findings

Survey aim 1: School's learning and working climate

The School's learning and working climate needs to improve. The 2018 climate survey shows that the overall climate has not improved substantially from 2017 to 2018 and reveals an ongoing pattern of continued discomfort with the climate in SPH. The percentage of people who felt "very uncomfortable" or "uncomfortable" increased by 83%, which is disturbing. Measures to improve the climate need to be taken immediately and consistently every year to reverse this trend.

Survey aim 2: Perceptions of climate for diverse groups

Underrepresented groups, low income, and non-Native English speakers, perceive the climate as less comfortable than other groups. Attention needs to be paid to the needs of American Indian/Alaska Native individuals who also rated the climate lowest. On-going assessments of the climate such as periodic focus groups, may be needed to understand the factors that lead to this perception, and facilitate changes that can improve the climate for all members of the SPH community, especially for marginalized groups.

Survey aim 3: Respondent's experiences with harassing or exclusionary conduct in the school

About 22% of respondents reported that they personally experienced harassing or exclusionary conduct in SPH. Most of these experiences occurred in a meeting or in class by faculty. When this behavior occurred, respondents reported ignoring, leaving the situation, and avoiding the person. In other words, the behavior is not addressed and change doesn't happen.

SPH has developed Student Concern and Faculty Concern policies that can help facilitate the reporting of such incidents. Staff concerns can be directed to their unit human resources representatives. Reducing the number of harassing behaviors, including being more respectful and intentional about inclusion, can help build a more positive climate for SPH. Training programs that help departments achieve greater inclusion can be valuable.

Reporting of bias incidents and discriminatory behavior should be tracked and monitored by school leadership so that the behavior can be addressed, and the individuals concerned held accountable.

Acknowledgments

Cathea Carey

Denis Brasfield

Uli Haller

And the Office of the Dean staff for their assistance and support!

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Appendix A

Selected Survey Quotes & Themes

Theme: Ableism

"The differently abled questions are about access and that normally implies physical barriers. This question leaves out the hidden differences, including mental and physical health and illness."

"It has taken a long time for me to process the experience, but at this point I have become quite perturbed about the situation - not only for myself, but potentially for many others Taking into account the aging population and the increasing rates of chronic diseases in the US populations, it runs counter to the basic Public Health ethic to impose additional hardships on either employees or visitors to a Public Health space. I hope that this issue will be raised with the committee as they look into issues of equity as well and functionality for this School. "

"The planning for the new Public Health Building revealed an actively hostile attitude towards persons with disabilities - at least in terms of mobility issues. When the planning committee met with various stake holders…I asked about plans for accessible disabled parking and so on, I was met with a dismissive and frankly contemptuous response. The words used were - "we have the legal number of disabled spots for visitors." When I tried to pursue the question for employees who may need accommodation, my questions were dismissed summarily. Clearly, there is a major blind-spot, or worse, complete lack of compassion around employee well-being in this context."

Theme: Abuse/Misuse of Position/Rank

"The relationships with virtually all staff and almost all students is fantastic. Faculty is another matter. The higher up the academic privilege ladder the worse it gets with more micro and macro aggression against those with less power (junior faculty, staff, and students). And nothing is really done about it. If a faculty is lower down (lecturer or new) they might get talked to, but that's it. The behavior continues. Some senior faculty... well what can be done. They can always just run out of $$$ if you speak up. You are then out of a job and often a career. Essentially you have to suck it up."

"A faculty member that I work with was continually asking me to do things that were not part of my job and below my position. The commands were often made in short and directive emails which felt passive aggressive or…in a dismissive way when I tried to bring up ideas for the team…."

"Certain department administrators chose to interact with me via email in ways that were demeaning and degrading, and humiliating in that they cc'd others on the communications that I'd never met before, including faculty who would be in positions of power over me in the future."

"This past experience was with my supervisor, a senior high level faculty. When a junior faculty repeatedly and publicly bullied several staff members this year I did speak up. I discussed how I was bullied with my faculty supervisor, other staff, and the department administrator. This junior faculty has not changed the behavior despite being counseled by supervisors…I was encourage to not take this any further and I didn't because I didn't think it would make any difference."

"During a meeting with students and faculty members…other students and I were yelled at by 2 faculty members when we tried to give constructive feedback about a community project experience. Not only were our suggestions not heard, we were shamed, accused of not working hard enough, told that our actions were responsible for tarnishing the reputation of our program… After being yelled at … for nearly an hour, our faculty member told us they were no longer willing to support us in completing our work when our quarter ended weeks ago."

Theme: Accountability

"The SPH and my department have been inactive on many of these issues and I feel like it's only when a public incident has occurred…the school cares about these issues because they do not want the bad press. It really sets a bad tone, when the school is more reaction-based than proactive. I also feel like the SPH should invest more resources into addressing issues of diversity (and by resources I mean funds.) It seem like all the URM events are volunteer-based. We get cookies and coffee thrown at us, and they feel very informal with little effort invested. I do not mind having informal events, but would like the school to host at least one or two formal events where they provide dinner and discuss issues of race, inclusion, discrimination, and tools for addressing issues in the SPH."

"Do Faculty have mandatory management/supervisor training? Is people and financial management part of the job performance/ review? If there aren't leadership at the top and enforcement, this issue will not go away. Why do we have faculty left in place that misuse funds, can't keep graduate students (they find a new advisor or leave graduate studies), and don't support students? Of course this isn't all faculty, but the silence and looking the other way is profound. The bottom line is that contributes to poor morale, siloing, and a much more stressful work environment than is healthy"

"Transparency!!! The discrepancy between what was said by one individual faculty/staff and what is being done. Lack of accountability by faculty. They get tenure, then they kick back and do nothing as far as student support/mentoring. Teach a class or two and call it good."

"As a program, we say that we're committed to anti-racism. But when concerns are brought to faculty, students sometimes receive an answer that is unprofessional, defensive, and combative."

" Lack of follow-up from both faculty and staff on student concerns and actions. "

Theme: Elitism

"Expectations of having cell phones, etc. for staff who have high rents to pay. Higher paid faculty seem out of touch."

"Elitism from faculty to staff; disrespectful treatment of staff by faculty"

Theme: Exclusionary Behavior

"SPH leadership should treat students, especially students of color, with respect and professionalism. We didn't select this school to be treated this way. In my program, graduate students come from different backgrounds and areas of expertise, do not treat us like we came out of high school last year. We need more student involvement in the decision making process on issues that concern students. We are part of the SPH community! Include us and LISTEN TO US!"

"In classes and in discussions with faculty (e.g., at orientation day, other), I have felt my viewpoints and experiences are not valued because I am not an international student--even though I have worked extensively in other countries in the global health field. It is great to hear from our colleagues that come from those countries, but those of us who do not come from those countries also have things to contribute to discussions."

"Advisors and authority figures who are supposed to look out for students have repeatedly pigeonholed me, and made me feel inadequate by suggesting I need to be constantly protected from myself. I feel tired always needing to explain myself on behalf of my community. I don't trust faculty and feel the need to hide when I am not in classes. I don't feel like diversity is truly valued, only there to check off boxes."

"Most staff members don't even look you in the eye, ignore, don't greet, or even bother to acknowledge a greeting. They behave as if one does not exist."

Theme: Gender/Sexism

"I said this last year and it didn't get fixed this year. This survey lacks attention to gender. Here at the UW SPH, there are huge gender pay gaps, load gaps based on gender, gaps in who gets asked to write recommendation letters, gaps in who gets asked to do tasks for no FTE etc...that are all by gender and yet every other dimension gets asked in this survey. This survey HAS to include more emphasis on gender or you are missing one of the biggest problems here that is not being addressed in any way or shape or form on this campus. I'm so tired of this being left out."

"There is a...senior male faculty member who insists on always putting his hand on my leg or arm or shoulder."

"SPH is very male dominated, with less recognition for women."

"Faculty member said I was cute; several faculty touch me way more than I want to be touched."

"Lesbian, gay and bisexual people seem fine, but there is some discomfort with trans folks if the transitioning is happening and the change to a different gender identity is awkward for some."

Theme: General Climate

"I dare you to try to achieve actual tolerance and mutual respect. I dare you. I know you won't. Why would you? It's so much easier and politically expedient to ignore what I have said and continue riding the train that is intersectional politics."

"Some of the students act in a combative way towards the faculty as well, contributing to a "students vs. faculty" climate."

"We need to re-write or re-evaluate our anti-racism commitment and get an independent evaluation of program's efforts towards creating a more equitable program to identify areas for improvement."

"I feel like the school's climate is improving but still has a long way to go. A lot will depend on the new dean and how effective Victoria's role is."

"I shared my views with an employee of the SPH during a discussion that I was guaranteed was a safe place to share openly. After I did, the SPH employee was and continues to be especially cold and distant. Also, in classes, open disdain for conservative values and opinions, white skin, and the male gender is normal. A plethora of assumptions are made about me because of my skin color and gender, none of them fair. The country of my origin, the United States, is constantly and unfairly disparaged without any real discussion. It's taken as gospel by leftists that the U.S. is evil, white men are privileged and oppressive, and that displaying disdain for

them openly is not only acceptable, but a ticket to being wrapped in the warm blanket of the "I'm the tolerant person" label. The hypocrisy is tragic and sad."

Theme: Microaggressions

"Snarky remarks regarding certain political affiliation."

"In my time at the SPH, I've been subject to a few instances of microaggressions from different admin and faculty. I've taken part in workshops and training that I've seen different faculty around school have difficulty grasping the concepts. There are very few measures in place to ensure EDI across the board from student retention, to faculty/staff hiring and retention practices."

Theme: Racism and Racial Profiling

"Someone assumed I was admitted or hired because of my identity."

"A professor used an example of black men and African men as being more sexual - a stereotype often perpetuated by white people. And then we had a homework assignment related to this study and I was so offended it was difficult for me to work on the assignment. I gave this feedback to the professor to stop using this example and assignment."

"The professor made huge assumptions about black males' behaviors. If a person of that level of leadership base his analysis on these stereotypes, we are not training students for public health but for public hate. I could not concentrate much for the rest of the class because I had to think how to address this issue without being labeled as a person of color overreacting. Many of my international colleagues of color didn't speak up for fear of retaliation in a country where black people are treated as criminals just because of their skin color. "

"(A Faculty member) yelled at me twice, one time when in his office and another on the phone. First time, he slammed his coffee cup on the table to intimidate me. Second time, he threatened to take away my funding which he did…. Instead of helping me, the staff person handed me a list of tasks to complete with deadlines….this Dept is extremely racist, sexist and hostile."

Theme: Survey Fatigue

"As I don't fall into most of the categories, my ratings are meaningless. One can only speak to their own experiences and those that they know about. Therefore asking about the overall climate of the school will produce results that have little meaning."

"This survey can be an example of how long it will take to get results to people. Most likely won't hear anything about this survey until sometime in 2019."