2015 Quality of Work Life Survey Summary Results

For the sixth time since 2000, Mason’s Quality of Work Life Task Force (a presidentially appointed group) conducted a survey of Mason faculty and staff. In April of 2015, all employees were invited to participate. In total, 2,027 of 6,514 -- or 31 percent of faculty and staff -- responded to the survey, which is conducted every three years. Responses are statistically significant for all Faculty and Classified roles. While Adjunct Faculty and Non-Student Wage response rates were quite low, both groups provided valuable information from their distinct perspectives. Figure 1, shows the percent of responses by job type.

In support of Mason’s strategic goal to, “Become a model well-being university that allows all of its members to thrive,” new questions were added to the 2015 survey to set a baseline for measuring our faculty and staff well-being. Our baseline ratings were quite positive. On the factors said to make up employee well-being, our mean ratings were as follows: Mastery 4.35, Autonomy 4.03, Trust/Relationships 3.92, Grit 3.68 and Vitality 3.51. As Mason continues to enhance and grow its well-being programs, these measures will help us to continue to measure their impact.

Consistent with past surveys, faculty and staff rated Mason highest in categories related to diversity and inclusion. Questions about: “A campus that embraces a culture of diversity and inclusion” and “opportunity to interact with individuals from diverse backgrounds” were among the most positively rated. “Relationships with co-workers” and then “relationships with supervisors” were also highly rated.
Dissatisfaction Levels Up

Faculty and staff satisfaction ratings declined, specifically “Overall job satisfaction,” and in our two key composite measures: Perceived Organizational Support (POS – a measure of the degree to which employees feel the organization values their contributions and cares for their well-being), and Affective Organizational Commitment (AOC - the degree to which employees feel connected to the university). The declines in these composite ratings are based, in part, on weaker ratings on questions about satisfaction with salary, promotional opportunities and input into decision processes. Respondents also indicated high levels of stress related to university budget concerns, institutional procedures, and workload and career-growth opportunities.

These initial results were shared with the senior management team earlier this month. Meetings are underway with the Quality of Work Life Task Force to develop an action plan to help address faculty and staff concerns in these important areas.

The senior leadership and QWL Task Force want to hear your suggestions on ways to make Mason an even better workplace. We are collaborating on next steps and will coordinate a plan to reach out to faculty and staff for suggestions over the coming months. In the meantime, if you would like to share your thoughts, please email worklife@gmu.edu. Your comments will be shared with the Task Force and members of the senior leadership.