



Kent State University Key Findings Report

April 9, 2025



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Introduction

The campus climate¹ at Kent State University (Kent State) shapes the lives of everyone within the Kent State community. As such, a deep understanding of the varied experiences of Kent State community members is crucial for the University to continue enhancing its efforts toward fostering a more inclusive and equitable campus environment. Acknowledging the necessity of such understanding, the senior administration at Kent State recognized the need for a comprehensive tool that would provide engagement and well-being metrics on the experiences and perceptions of its students, faculty, and staff. Such data would serve as a foundation for building on Kent State's strengths while focusing on opportunities for growth and change.

In spring 2024, Kent State contracted with Rankin Climate, LLC, to conduct a university-wide survey that was administered in fall 2024. All members of Kent State's community were encouraged to complete the *Engagement and Well-Being Survey*, which consisted of 113 questions, including 12 open-ended questions aimed at soliciting respondents' commentary. This report summarizes the key findings of data collected through the survey. Both general descriptions and statistically significant differences are summarized in the pages that follow. When available, themes developed from qualitative comments are included to add a voice to the quantitative findings.

Notably, the current socio-political climate provides an important context for interpreting the findings of Kent State's Engagement and Well-Being survey. National and global events, such as the increased politicization of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives, ongoing debates around academic freedom, the 2024 U.S. Presidential election, and heightened tensions related to international conflicts like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, may influence the perceptions and experiences of students, faculty, and staff. Additionally, broader societal trends, including discussions on mental health and well-being, economic uncertainty, and evolving expectations of higher education institutions, likely intersect with the lived experiences of the Kent State community. These external factors, combined with internal university dynamics, underscore the complexity of understanding campus climate and provide a critical lens for interpreting the data and commentary shared by survey respondents.

¹ Climate is defined as "Current attitudes and behaviors of faculty, staff, administrators, and students, as well as institutional policies and procedures, that influence the level of respect for individual needs, abilities, and potential." (Rankin Climate)

Methodology

The survey was constructed based on Rankin Climate's prior work and in collaboration with students, staff, and faculty in Kent State Climate Study Working Group (CSWG). Throughout this report, statistically significant distinctions between groups are noted. Those findings were derived from statistical analyses^{2,3}, specifically ANOVA and t-tests, that were conducted on various demographic categories as determined by the CSWG. To ensure respondents' confidentiality, demographic groups with small numbers of responses were combined into larger categories as approved by the CSWG. Additionally, the report includes descriptive overviews of certain items. Comprehensive data tables summarizing the results of all quantitative survey items are provided in the Tableau dashboard.

Enhancing the quantitative data, several survey questions invited respondents to describe their experiences at the institution, elaborate on their responses, and provide additional thoughts. These written comments were analyzed to determine common themes, some of which are represented in this summary report. The qualitative methods used in identifying themes from participant comments, as well as the results of the qualitative analysis, are offered in Appendix A.

² We conducted significance testing at the .05 level, meaning there is a 5% probability that the observed results occurred by chance. In other words, a p-value of less than .05 indicates that the difference or relationship observed in the data is considered statistically significant.

³ We report Eta Squared (η^2) throughout this report as a measure of effect size, which indicates the proportion of variance explained by a particular variable in an analysis. To focus on meaningful findings, we only present moderate-to-large ($\eta^2 \geq .06$) and large ($\eta^2 \geq .14$) effect sizes, as defined by conventional guidelines.

Overview of Findings

The following report presents key findings, including both strengths and opportunities, from the *Engagement and Well-Being Survey* conducted in fall 2024. Topics covered will include:

- Comfort with climate overall, in departments and work units, and in classes.
- Student, Faculty, and Staff *Sense of Belonging* at Kent State.
- Student experiences at Kent State.
- Faculty and Staff experiences with and perceptions of workplace climate and unjust employment-related practices.
- Respondents who seriously considered leaving Kent State as well as those who experienced exclusionary conduct.
- Respondents who indicated they never seriously considered leaving and why they decided to stay.
- *Mental Health* and *Resilience* among Kent State survey respondents.
- Student experiences with unwanted sexual misconduct at Kent State.
- Institutional support, including contributions and barriers to success among Students, Faculty, and Staff at Kent State.

The key findings outlined in this report can provide a roadmap to not only strategically address challenges, but also build on strengths to continue to create a more inclusive and supportive campus environment for students, faculty, and staff at Kent State.

Selected Demographics and Response Rates

A total of 4,889 Kent State students, staff, and faculty completed the survey, resulting in an overall response rate of 14%. Of the respondents, 50% ($n = 2,463$) were Undergraduate Students, 8% ($n = 407$) were Graduate/Professional Students, 14% ($n = 694$) were Faculty, and 27% ($n = 1,325$) were Staff.

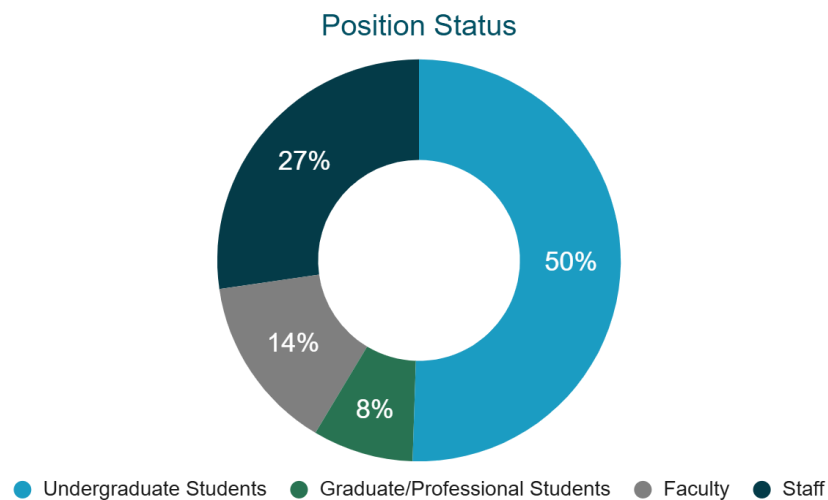


Figure 1. Survey Sample by Position Status

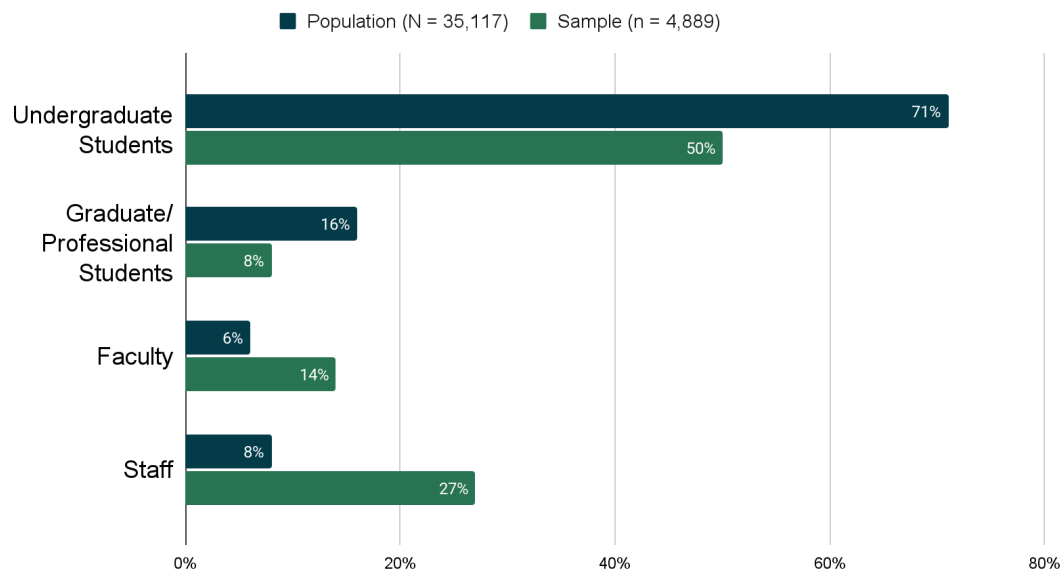


Figure 2. Population and Sample Overview by Position Status

The response rate for undergraduate students was 10%, while 7% of graduate/professional students participated. Thirty-four percent of Kent State faculty and 48% of staff responded to the survey.

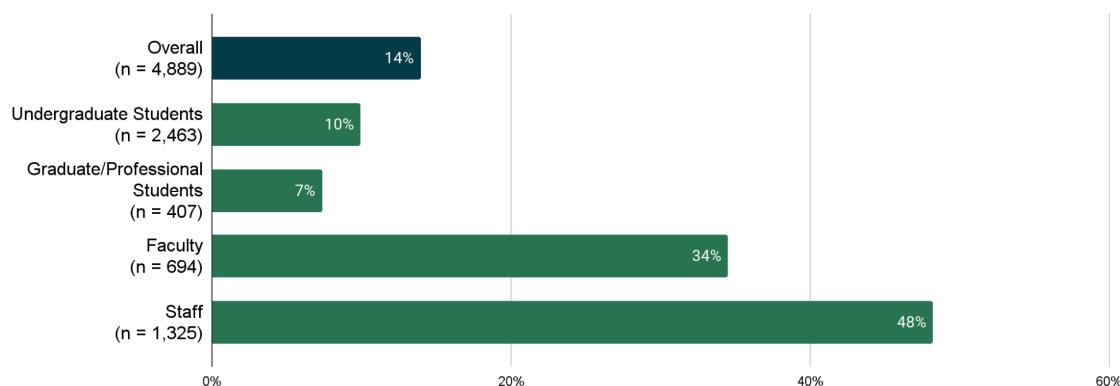
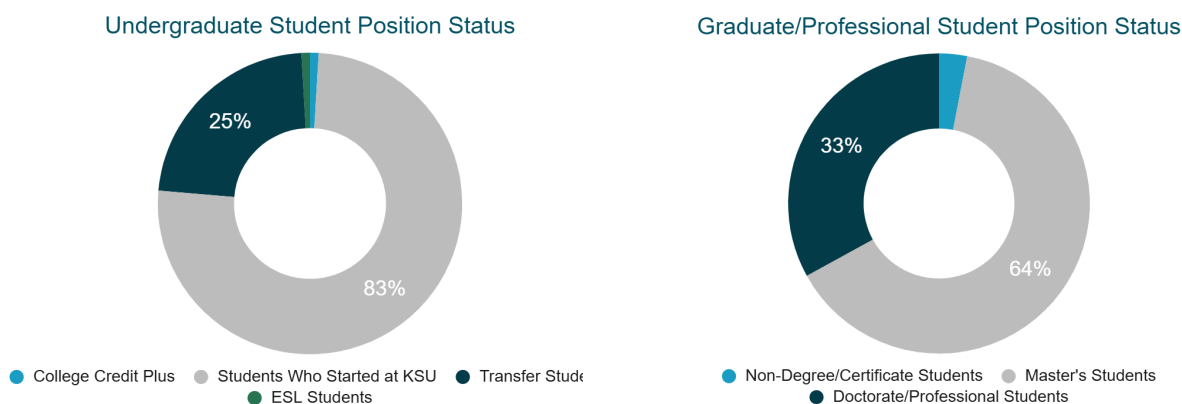


Figure 3. Response Rates by Position Status

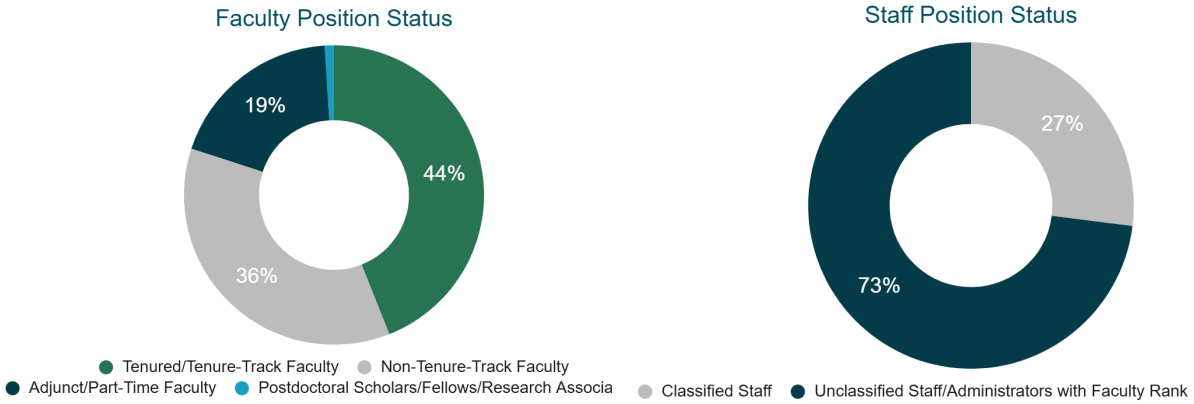
Among the undergraduate student sample, 1% ($n = 34$) were College Credit Plus students, 83% ($n = 2,033$) were Students who Started at Kent State,⁴ 15% ($n = 368$) were Transfer Students, and 1% ($n = 28$) were ESL Students. The graduate/professional student sample consisted of 3% ($n = 11$) Non-Degree/Certificate Students, 64% ($n = 260$) Master's Students, and 33% ($n = 136$) Doctorate/Professional Students. The faculty sample included 44% ($n = 302$) Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty, 36% ($n = 252$) Non-Tenure-Track Faculty, 19% ($n = 133$) Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty, and 1% ($n = 7$) Postdoctoral Scholars/Fellows/Research Associates. The staff sample was made up of 27% ($n = 361$) Classified Staff and 73% ($n = 964$) Unclassified Staff/Administrators with Faculty Rank.



Note: Data labels for small percentages may not display.

Figure 4. Survey Sample by Undergraduate Student and Graduate/Professional Student Position Status

⁴ Students who Started at Kent State are inclusive of students who completed CCP prior to enrolling as a degree-seeking student.



Note: Data labels for small percentages may not display.

Figure 5. Survey Sample by Faculty and Staff Position Status

In terms of gender identity, the majority of respondents identified as Women (65%, $n = 3,159$), followed by Men (28%, $n = 1,371$), and Gender Expansive⁵ individuals (6%, $n = 297$). Because gender identity data is not captured for all Kent State community members, accurate response rates are not available.

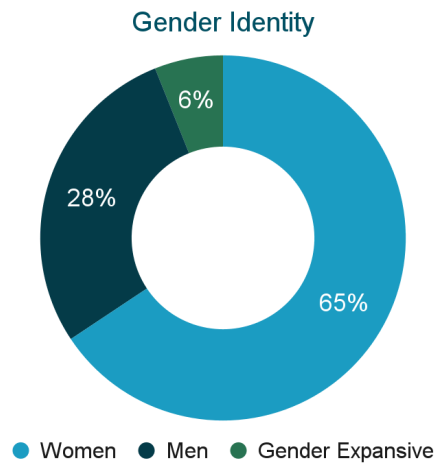
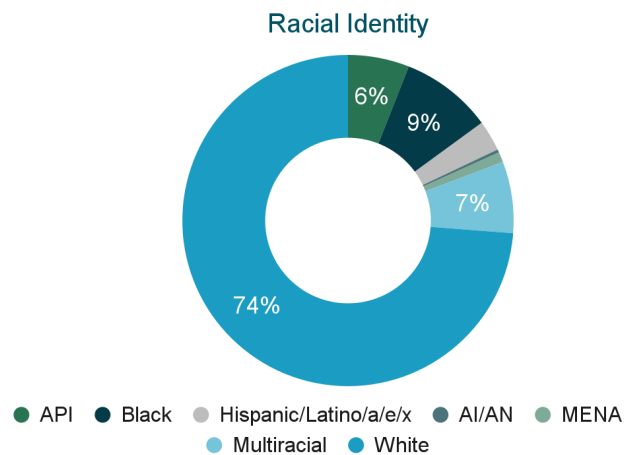


Figure 6. Survey Sample by Gender Identity

⁵ "Gender Expansive" includes respondents who indicated that they were Agender, Non-Binary, Transgender, Genderfluid, or a write-in gender outside the gender binary.

Respondents had the option to select multiple racial/ethnic identities. Of the respondents who provided their racial/ethnic identity, 7% ($n = 262$) chose more than one racial/ethnic identity and were subsequently categorized as Multiracial. Of the respondents who selected a single racial/ethnic identity, 74% ($n = 2,665$) identified as White. Six percent ($n = 222$) of the sample was Asian/Asian American/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander/South Asian (API), 9% ($n = 337$) of respondents were Black, 3% ($n = 94$) were Hispanic/Latino/a/e, less than 1% ($n = 11$) were Alaska Native/American Indian/Native American/Indigenous (AI/AN), and 1% ($n = 29$) were Middle Eastern/North African (MENA).



Note: Data labels for small percentages may not display.

Figure 7. Survey Sample by Racial Identity

The response rate for White members of the Kent State community was 10%. Twenty percent of API individuals, 11% of Black individuals, 6% of Hispanic/Latino/a/x/e individuals, 24% of AI/AN individuals, and 21% of Multiracial individuals at Kent State responded to the survey. Population data for MENA members of the Kent State community are unavailable, preventing the calculation of a response rate for this group.

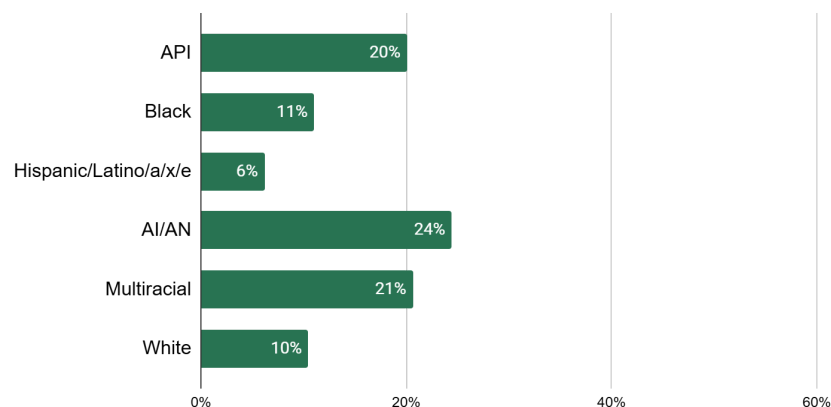


Figure 8. Response Rates by Racial Identity

Variables for Analysis

Statistical analyses were performed to identify any significant differences in responses among participants from different demographic groups. Owing to the large amount of data resulting from the survey administration, the Kent State Climate Study Working Group (CSWG) determined the following demographic variables by which analyses were conducted for this report. Results are only shown for analysis groups that have statistically significant differences; results for all analysis groups are available on the Tableau dashboard.

Variable	Analysis Groups					
All Respondents						
Position	Undergraduate Students		Graduate/Professional Students		Staff	Faculty
Gender Identity ⁶	Gender Expansive		Man		Woman	
Racial/Ethnic Identity ^{7, 8}	API	Black	Hispanic/Latino/a/x/e	MENA	Multiracial	White
Campus	Kent Campus			Regional Campuses		
Disability Status ⁹	Neurodivergent	Another Disability	Multiple Disabilities		No Disability	
	Student Respondents					
First-Gen Status	First-Generation			Continuing Generation		
Sexual Identity ¹⁰	Asexual	Bisexual	Queer-Spectrum		Heterosexual	

⁶ Where group size was too small, analyses were done comparing Men and Women.

⁷ Due to the small size of the AI/AN sample, we were unable to include these individuals in statistical analyses comparing the experiences of specific racial/ethnic groups. However, AI/AN respondents were included in overall analyses as well as analyses with more aggregated minoritized racial/ethnic identity groups (e.g., Minoritized Racial/Ethnic Identities). We acknowledge this as a significant limitation of quantitative methods, which can marginalize smaller populations. We encourage readers to engage with the unique perspectives and experiences of Kent State's AI/AN respondents through the data dashboard, emphasizing the importance of amplifying voices that are often underrepresented in research.

⁸ Where group size was too small, analyses were done comparing (1) API, Black, Additional Racial/Ethnic Identities (including AI/AN Hispanic/Latino/a/x/e, and MENA), Multiracial, and White; (2) Minoritized Racial/Ethnic Identities (including AI/AN, API, Black Hispanic/Latino/a/x/e, and MENA), Multiracial, and White; or (3) Minoritized Racial/Ethnic Identities (including Multiracial) and White.

⁹ Where group size was too small, analyses were done comparing (1) Single Disability, No Disability, and Multiple Disabilities or (2) At Least One Disability and No Disability.

¹⁰ Where group size was too small, analyses were done comparing Queer-spectrum (including Asexual and Bisexual) and Heterosexual.

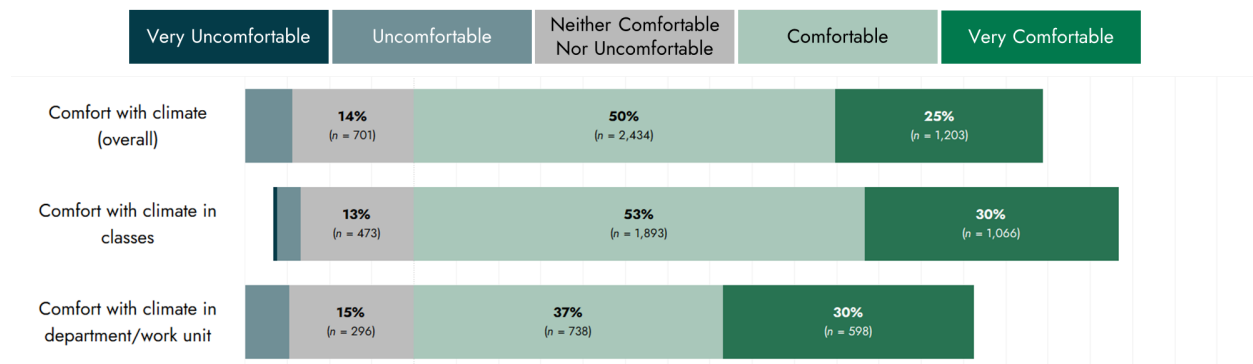
Variable	Analysis Groups			
	Employee Respondents			
Faculty Position Status	<i>Tenured/ Tenure-Track</i>	<i>Non-Tenure-Track</i>	<i>Adjunct/ Part-time</i>	<i>Administrator with Faculty Rank (when relevant)</i>
Staff Position Status	<i>Classified Staff</i>		<i>Unclassified Staff/ Administrator with Faculty Rank (when relevant)</i>	
Years Employed ¹¹	<i>Less Than 6 years</i>	<i>6-15 Years</i>	<i>More Than 15 Years</i>	

¹¹ Due to a programming error, Classified Staff members were not asked about their years of employment at Kent State. Consequently, any analyses of staff responses by years of employment are based solely on data from Unclassified Staff/Administrators with Faculty Rank. Classified staff are included in all other analyses.

Comfort with Climate at Kent State

The survey posed questions regarding respondents' level of comfort with the Kent State campus climate. The majority of survey respondents were "comfortable" or "very comfortable" with the overall climate at Kent State, with the climate in their department or work unit, and for faculty and students, the climate in their classes.

This section will focus on the results from the three "comfort with climate" questions: comfort with overall climate, comfort with climate in department or work unit (Faculty and Staff respondents only), and comfort with climate in classes (Students and Faculty respondents only). Three-quarters (75%, $n = 3,637$) of respondents were "comfortable" or "very comfortable" with the overall Kent State climate. When asked about their comfort with the classroom climate at Kent State, 83% ($n = 2,959$) of Student and Faculty respondents indicated that they were "comfortable" or "very comfortable." Just over two-thirds (67%, $n = 1,336$) of Faculty and Staff respondents were "comfortable" or "very comfortable" with the climate in their departments or work units.



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 9. Comfort with Climate at Kent State

While most respondents indicated that they were "comfortable" or "very comfortable" with aspects of Kent State's climate, the survey results reveal opportunities for improvement. Building on research on campus climate—which has traditionally focused on the experiences of students, staff, and faculty from historically underserved social, community, and affinity groups¹² (e.g., women, individuals with minoritized racial/ethnic identities, people with disabilities, queer-spectrum and/or gender expansive individuals, and veterans)—several

¹² Garvey et al. (2015); Goldberg et al. (2019); Harper & Hurtado (2007); Jayakumar et al. (2009); Johnson (2012); Means & Pyne (2017); Rankin (2003); Rankin & Reason (2005); Soria & Stebleton (2013); Walpole et al. (2014)

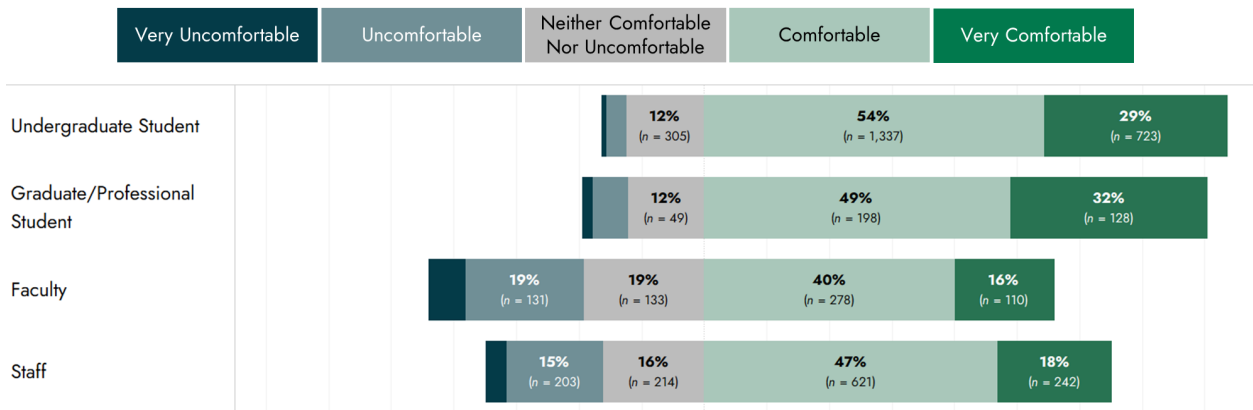
groups at Kent State reported feeling less comfortable than their peers. Statistically significant differences are detailed below.

Overall Climate

Seventy-five percent ($n = 3,637$) of respondents were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with the overall climate at Kent State. However, differences emerged by position status, gender identity, racial/ethnic identity, disability status, student sexual identity, and years of employment as reported below.¹³

Position Status

- **Faculty** respondents (56%, $n = 388$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the overall Kent State climate than **Undergraduate Student** respondents (83%, $n = 2,060$), **Graduate/Professional Student** respondents (81%, $n = 326$), and **Staff** respondents (65%, $n = 863$).¹⁴
- **Staff** respondents (65%, $n = 863$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the overall Kent State climate than **Undergraduate Student** respondents (83%, $n = 2,060$) and **Graduate/Professional Student** respondents (81%, $n = 326$).¹⁵



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

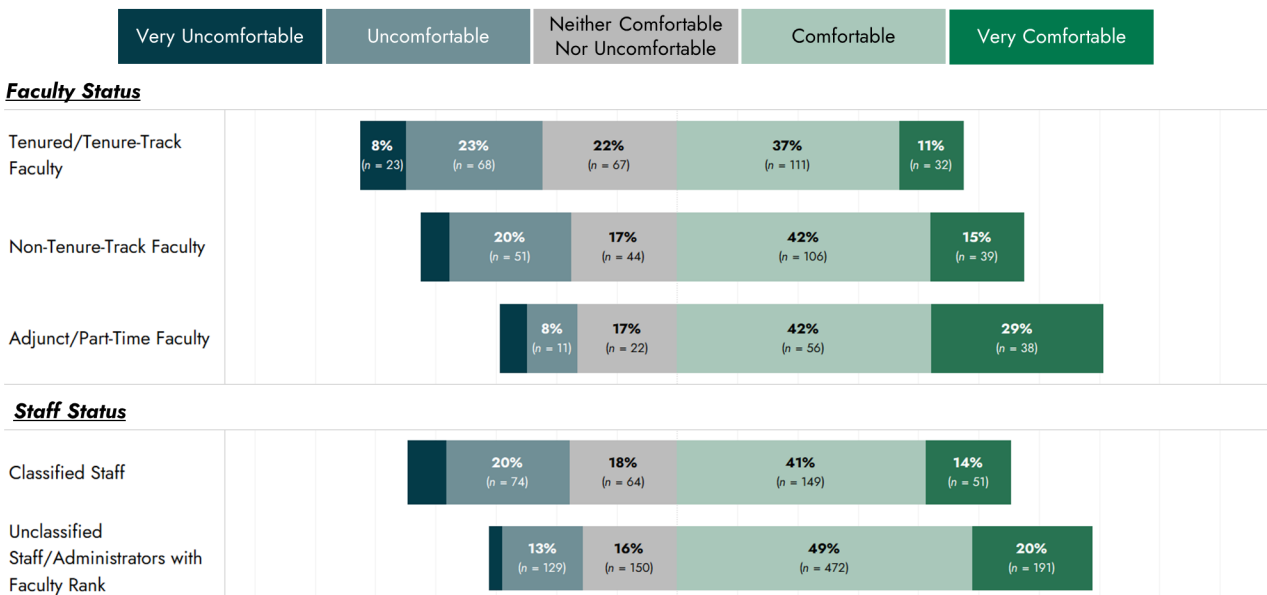
Figure 10. Comfort with Overall Climate at Kent State by Overall Position Status

¹³ All percentages in the sections that follow reflect the combined total of respondents who indicated that they were “comfortable”/ “very comfortable” with the overall climate at Kent State.

¹⁴ Analyses of overall climate by overall position status revealed an eta squared of 0.078, indicating a medium effect size.

¹⁵ Analyses of overall climate by overall position status revealed an eta squared of 0.078, indicating a medium effect size.

- **Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty** respondents (48%, $n = 143$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the overall Kent State climate than **Non-Tenure-Track Faculty** respondents (57%, $n = 145$) and **Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty** respondents (71%, $n = 94$).
- **Non-Tenure-Track Faculty** respondents (57%, $n = 145$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the overall Kent State climate than **Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty** respondents (71%, $n = 94$).
- **Classified Staff** respondents (55%, $n = 200$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the overall Kent State climate than **Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank** respondents (69%, $n = 663$).

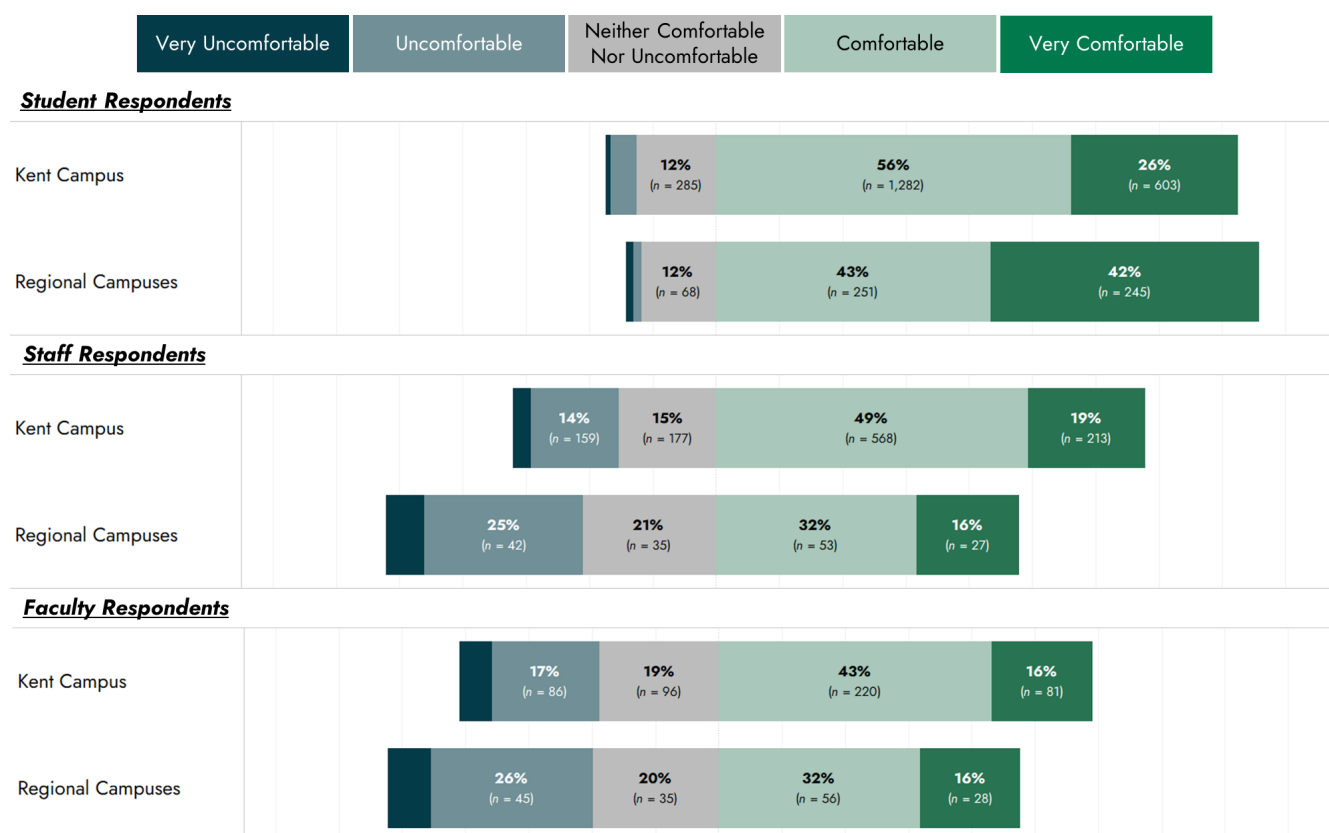


Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 11. Comfort with Overall Climate at Kent State by Faculty and Staff Position Status

Campus

- **Kent Campus Student** respondents (82%, $n = 1,885$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the overall Kent State climate than **Regional Campus Student** respondents (85%, $n = 496$).
- **Regional Campus Staff** respondents (48%, $n = 80$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the overall Kent State climate than **Kent Campus Staff** respondents (68%, $n = 781$).
- **Regional Campus Faculty** respondents (48%, $n = 84$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the overall Kent State climate than **Kent Campus Faculty** respondents (59%, $n = 301$).

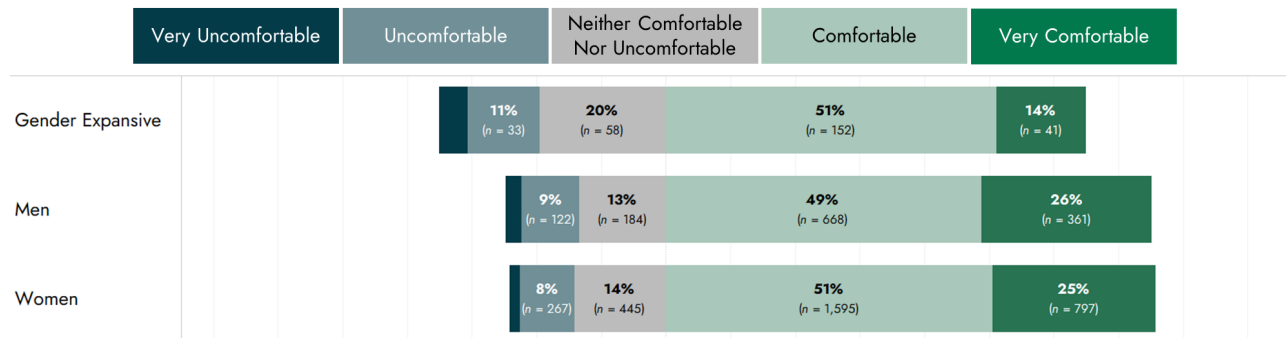


Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 12. Comfort with Overall Climate at Kent State by Gender Identity

Gender Identity

- **Gender Expansive** respondents (65%, $n = 193$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the overall Kent State climate than **Women** respondents (76%, $n = 2,392$) and **Men** respondents (75%, $n = 1,029$).

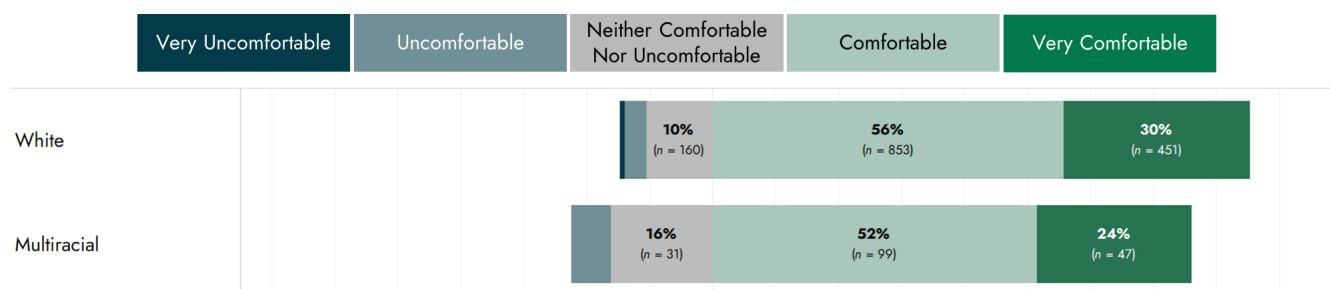


Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 13. Comfort with Overall Climate at Kent State by Gender Identity

Racial/Ethnic Identity

- **Multiracial Student** respondents (76%, $n = 146$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the overall Kent State climate than **White Student** respondents (86%, $n = 1,304$).

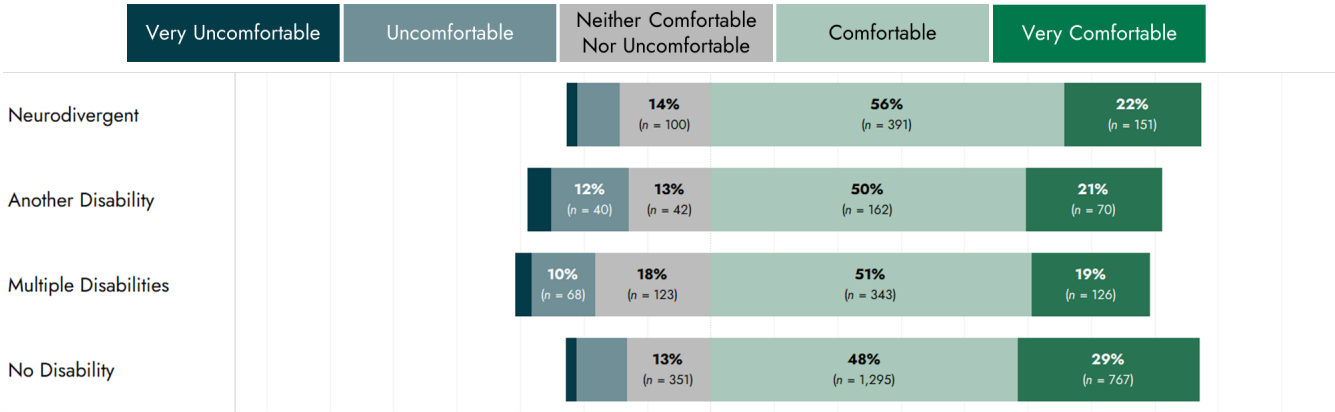


Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 14. Comfort with Overall Climate at Kent State by Student Racial/Ethnic Identity

Disability Status

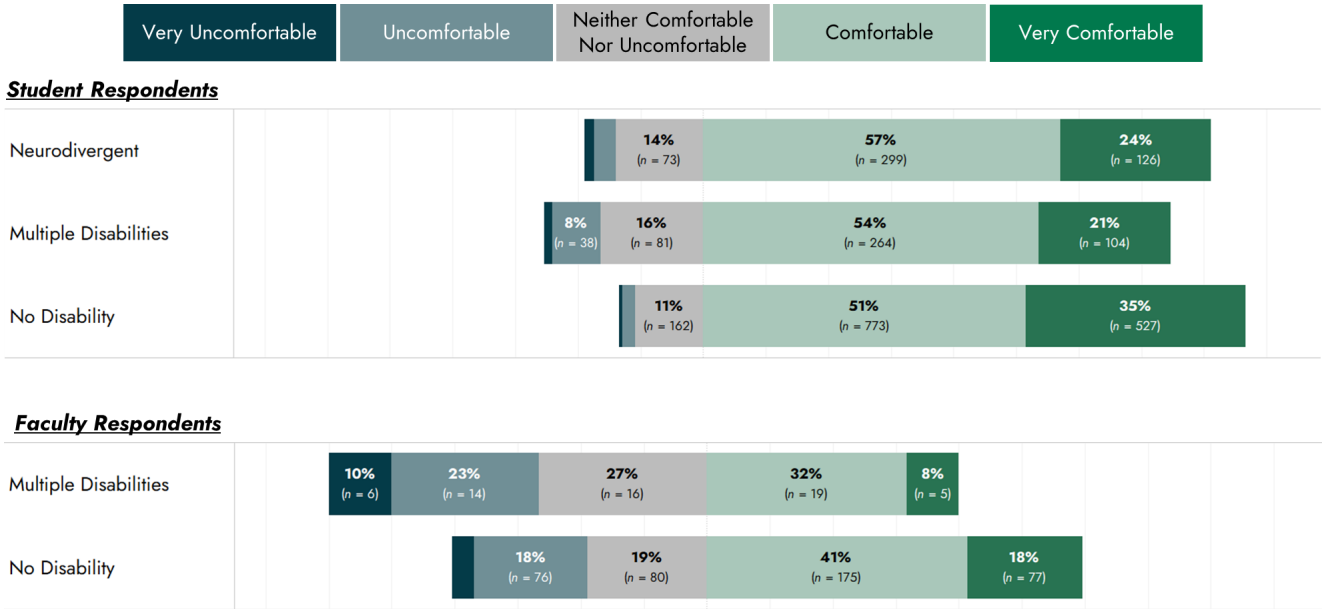
- **Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (70%, *n* = 469) had *lower* levels of comfort with the overall Kent State climate than **Neurodivergent** respondents (78%, *n* = 542).
- **Respondents with Another Disability** (71%, *n* = 232) and **Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (70%, *n* = 469) had *lower* levels of comfort with the overall Kent State climate than **Respondents with No Disability** (77%, *n* = 2,062).



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with *n* < 5 are not shown above.

Figure 15. Comfort with Overall Climate at Kent State by Disability Status

- **Neurodivergent Student** respondents (81%, *n* = 425) and **Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (75%, *n* = 368) had *lower* levels of comfort with the overall Kent State climate than **Student Respondents with No Disability** (86%, *n* = 1,300).
- **Faculty Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (40%, *n* = 24) had *lower* levels of comfort with the overall Kent State climate than **Faculty Respondents with No Disability** (59%, *n* = 252).

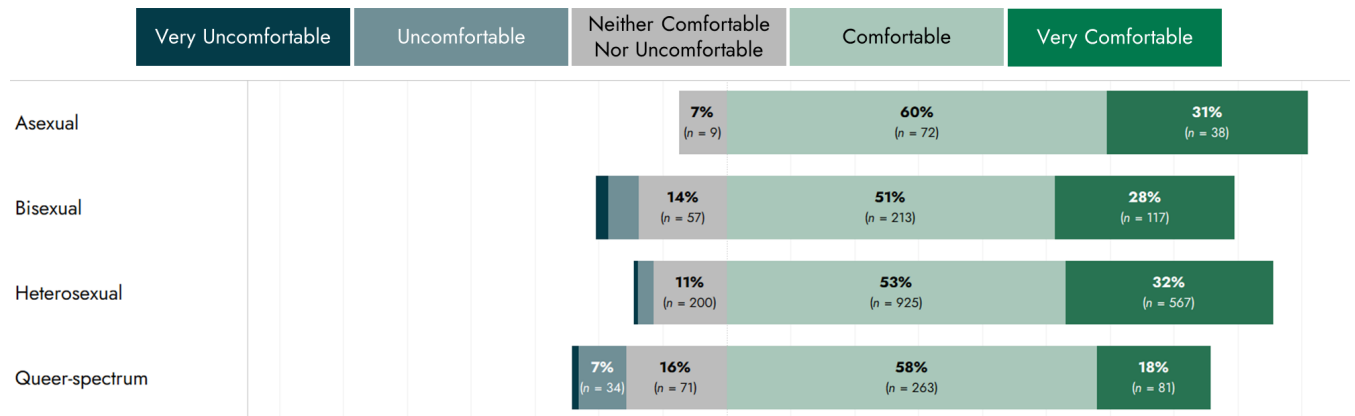


Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 16. Comfort with Overall Climate at Kent State by Student and Faculty Disability Status

Student Sexual Identity

- **Bisexual Student** respondents (79%, $n = 330$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the overall Kent State climate than **Asexual Student** respondents (91%, $n = 110$) and **Heterosexual Student** respondents (85%, $n = 1,492$).
- **Queer-spectrum Student** respondents (76%, $n = 344$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the overall Kent State climate than **Asexual Student** respondents (91%, $n = 110$), **Bisexual Student** respondents (79%, $n = 330$), and **Heterosexual Student** respondents (85%, $n = 1,492$).

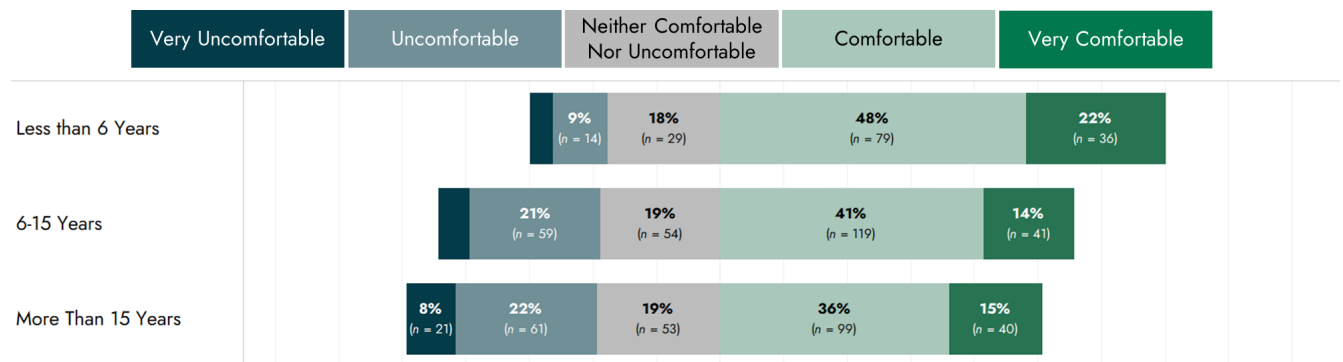


Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 17. Comfort with Overall Climate at Kent State by Student Sexual Identity

Faculty and Staff Years of Employment¹⁶

- **Respondents Employed at Kent State 6-15 Years** (55%, $n = 160$) and **Respondents Employed at Kent State More Than 15 Years** (51%, $n = 139$) had lower levels of comfort with the overall Kent State climate than **Respondents Employed at Kent State Less Than 6 Years** (70%, $n = 115$).



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 18. Comfort with Overall Climate at Kent State by Years of Employment

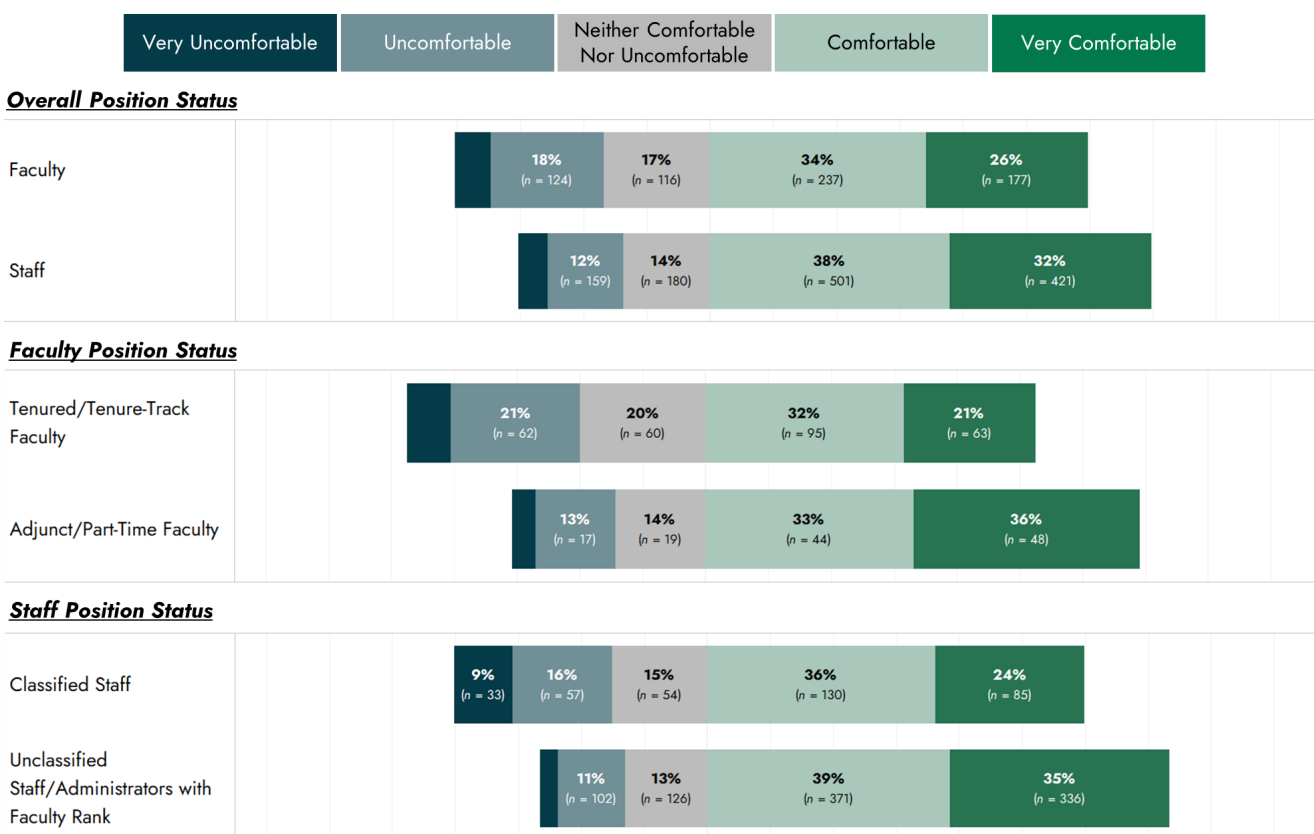
¹⁶ Due to a programming error, Classified Staff members were not asked about their years of employment at Kent State. Consequently, analyses of responses by years of employment are based solely on data from Faculty and Unclassified Staff/Administrators with Faculty Rank.

Department or Work Unit Climate

Approximately two-thirds (67%, $n = 1,336$) of Faculty and Staff respondents were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with the climate in their departments or work units. Significant differences emerged by overall position status, faculty position status, gender identity, racial/ethnic identity, disability status, and years of employment.

Position Status

- **Faculty** respondents (60%, $n = 414$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the climate in their department or work unit than **Staff** respondents (70%, $n = 922$).
- **Tenure/Tenure-Track Faculty** respondents (53%, $n = 158$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the climate in their department or work unit than **Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty** respondents (69%, $n = 92$).
- **Classified Staff** respondents (60%, $n = 215$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the climate in their department or work unit than **Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank** respondents (74%, $n = 707$).



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 19. Comfort with Department/Work Unit Climate at Kent State by Position Status

Gender Identity

- **Gender Expansive Employee** respondents (46%, $n = 19$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the climate in their department or work unit than **Men Employee** respondents (69%, $n = 443$).
- **Gender Expansive Faculty** respondents (32%, $n = 6$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the climate in their department or work unit than **Women Faculty** respondents (60%, $n = 265$) and **Men Faculty** respondents (64%, $n = 139$).

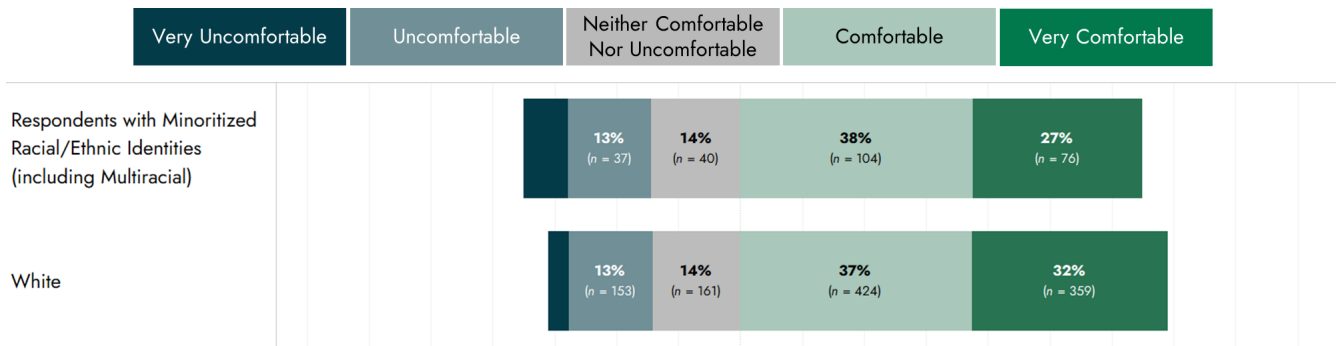


Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 20. Comfort with Department/Work Unit Climate at Kent State by Gender Identity

Racial/Ethnic Identity

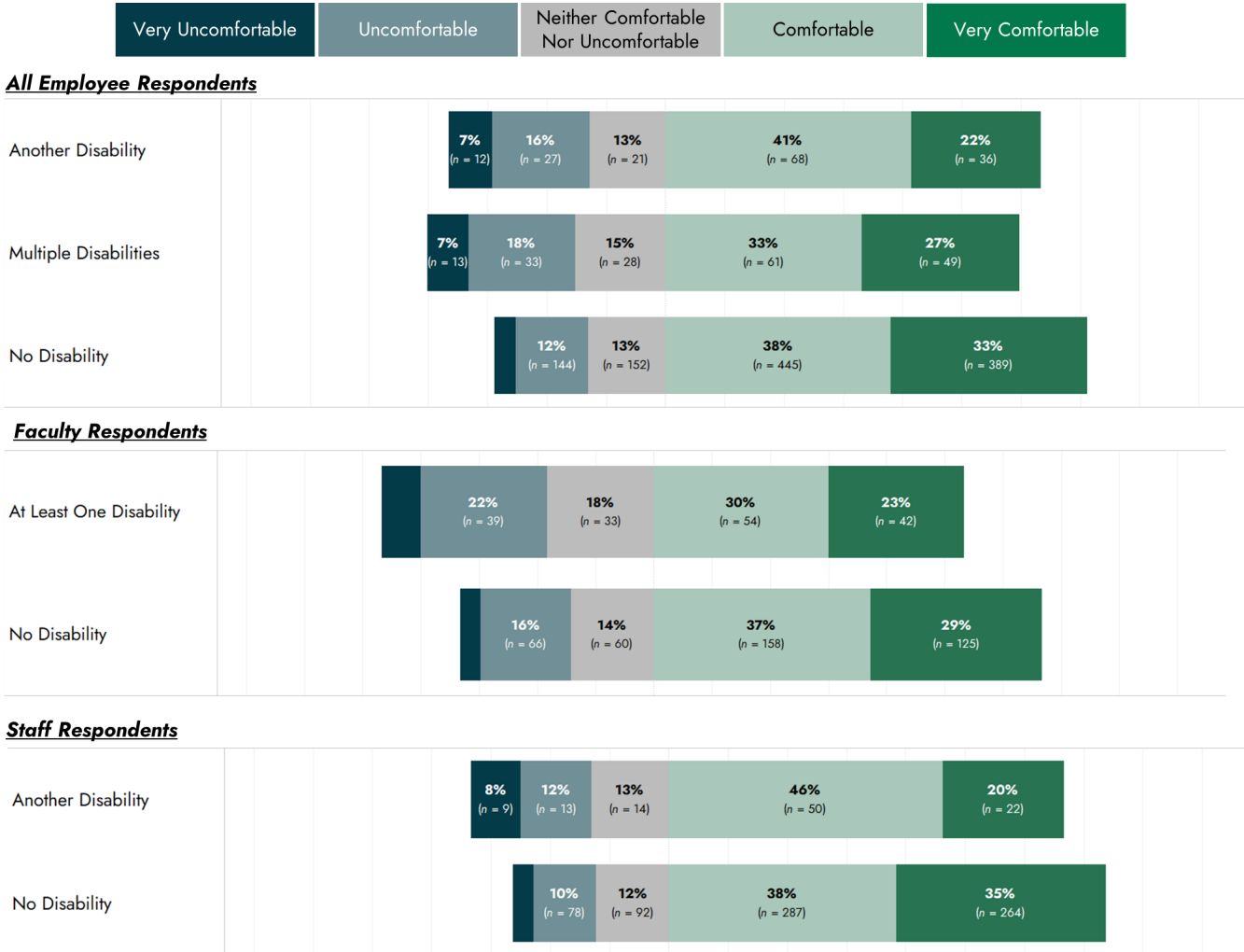
- **Employee Respondents with Minoritized Racial/Ethnic Identities (including Multiracial)** (65%, $n = 180$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the climate in their department or work unit than **White Employee** respondents (69%, $n = 783$).



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.
Figure 21. Comfort with Department/Work Unit Climate at Kent State by Racial/Ethnic Identity

Disability Status

- **Employee Respondents with Another Disability** (63%, $n = 104$) and **Employee Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (60%, $n = 110$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the climate in their department or work unit than **Employee Respondents with No Disability** (71%, $n = 834$).
- **Faculty Respondents with At Least One Disability** (53%, $n = 96$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the climate in their department or work unit than **Faculty Respondents with No Disability** (66%, $n = 283$).
- **Staff Respondents with Another Disability** (66%, $n = 72$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the climate in their department or work unit than **Staff Respondents with No Disability** (73%, $n = 551$).



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

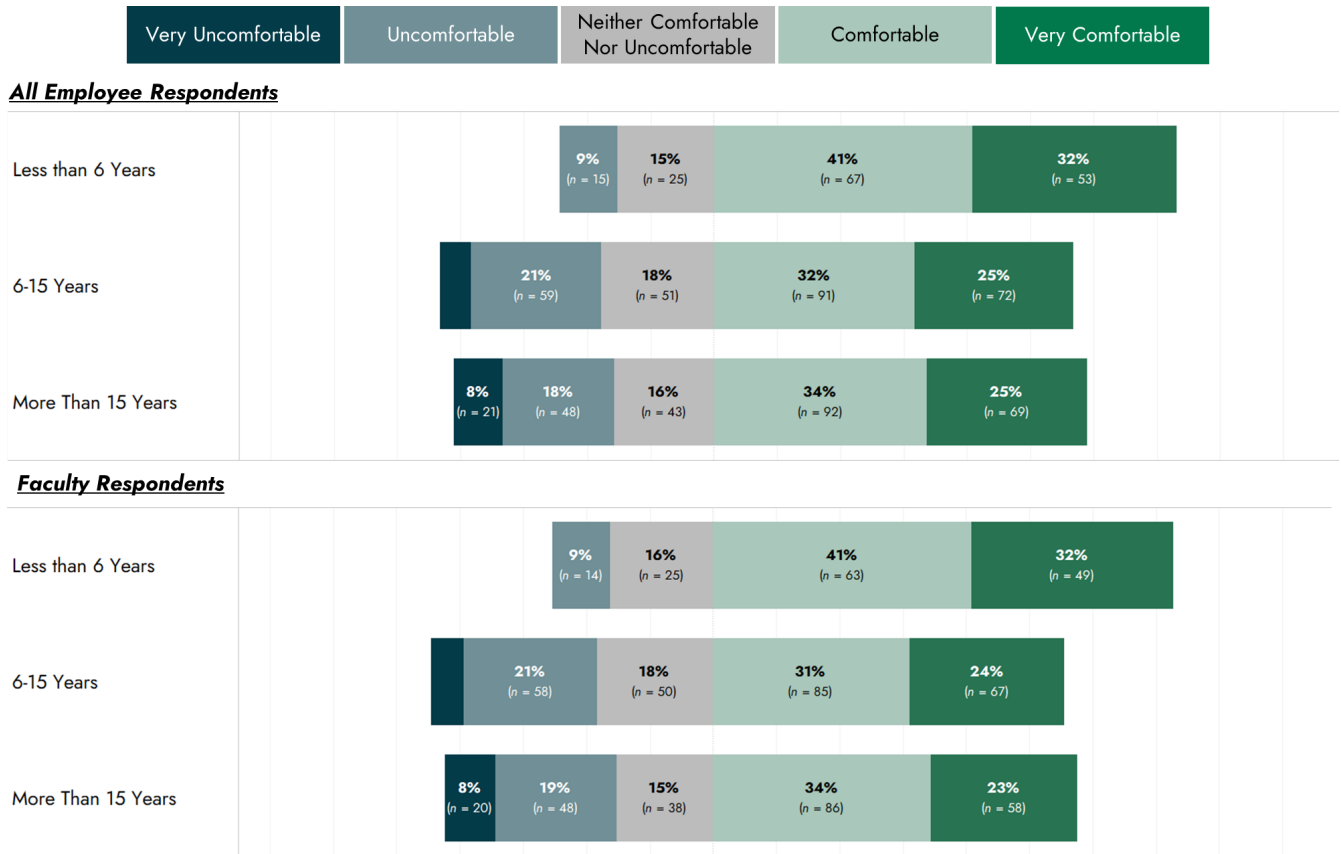
Figure 22. Comfort with Department/Work Unit Climate at Kent State by Disability Status

Faculty and Staff Years of Employment¹⁷

- **Respondents Employed at Kent State 6-15 Years** (57%, $n = 163$) and **Respondents Employed at Kent State More Than 15 Years** (59%, $n = 161$) had lower levels of comfort with the climate in their department or work unit than **Respondents Employed at Kent State Less Than 6 Years** (73%, $n = 120$).
- **Faculty Respondents Employed at Kent State 6-15 Years** (55%, $n = 152$) and **Faculty Respondents Employed at Kent State More Than 15 Years** (57%, $n = 144$) had lower levels of comfort with the climate in their department or work unit

¹⁷ Due to a programming error, Classified Staff members were not asked about their years of employment at Kent State. Consequently, analyses of responses by years of employment are based solely on data from Faculty and Unclassified Staff/Administrators with Faculty Rank.

than **Faculty Respondents Employed at Kent State Less Than 6 Years** (73%, $n = 112$).



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

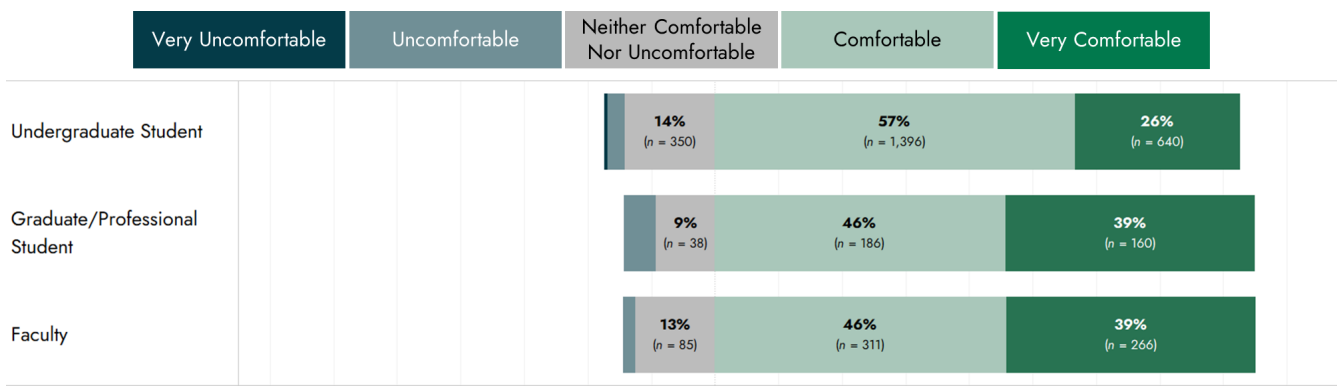
Figure 23. Comfort with Department/Work Unit Climate at Kent State by Years of Employment

Classroom Climate

Eighty-three percent ($n = 2,959$) of Student and Faculty respondents indicated that they were “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with the climate in their classes at Kent State. Additional analyses revealed differences by position status, campus, gender identity, racial/ethnic identity, disability status, and student sexual identity.

Position Status

- **Undergraduate Student** respondents (83%, $n = 2,036$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the classroom climate at Kent State than **Graduate/Professional Student** respondents (85%, $n = 346$) and **Faculty** respondents (85%, $n = 577$).

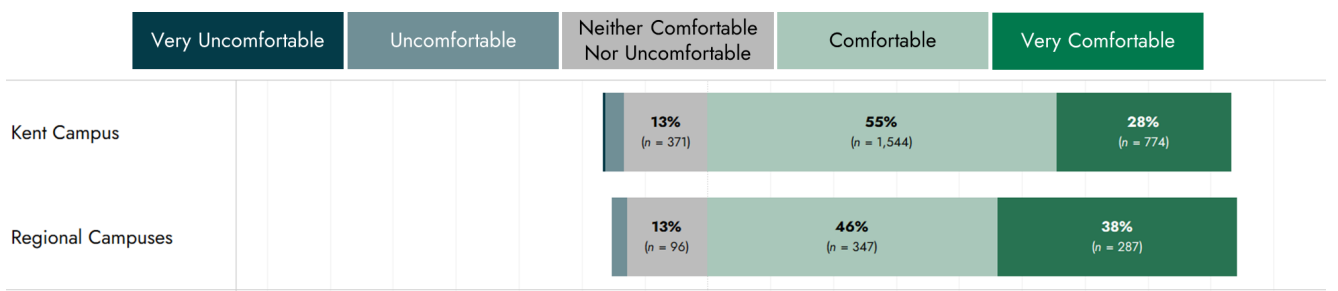


Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 24. Comfort with Classroom Climate at Kent State by Position Status

Campus

- **Kent Campus Faculty & Student** respondents (83%, $n = 2,318$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the classroom climate at Kent State than **Regional Campus Faculty & Student** respondents (84%, $n = 634$).

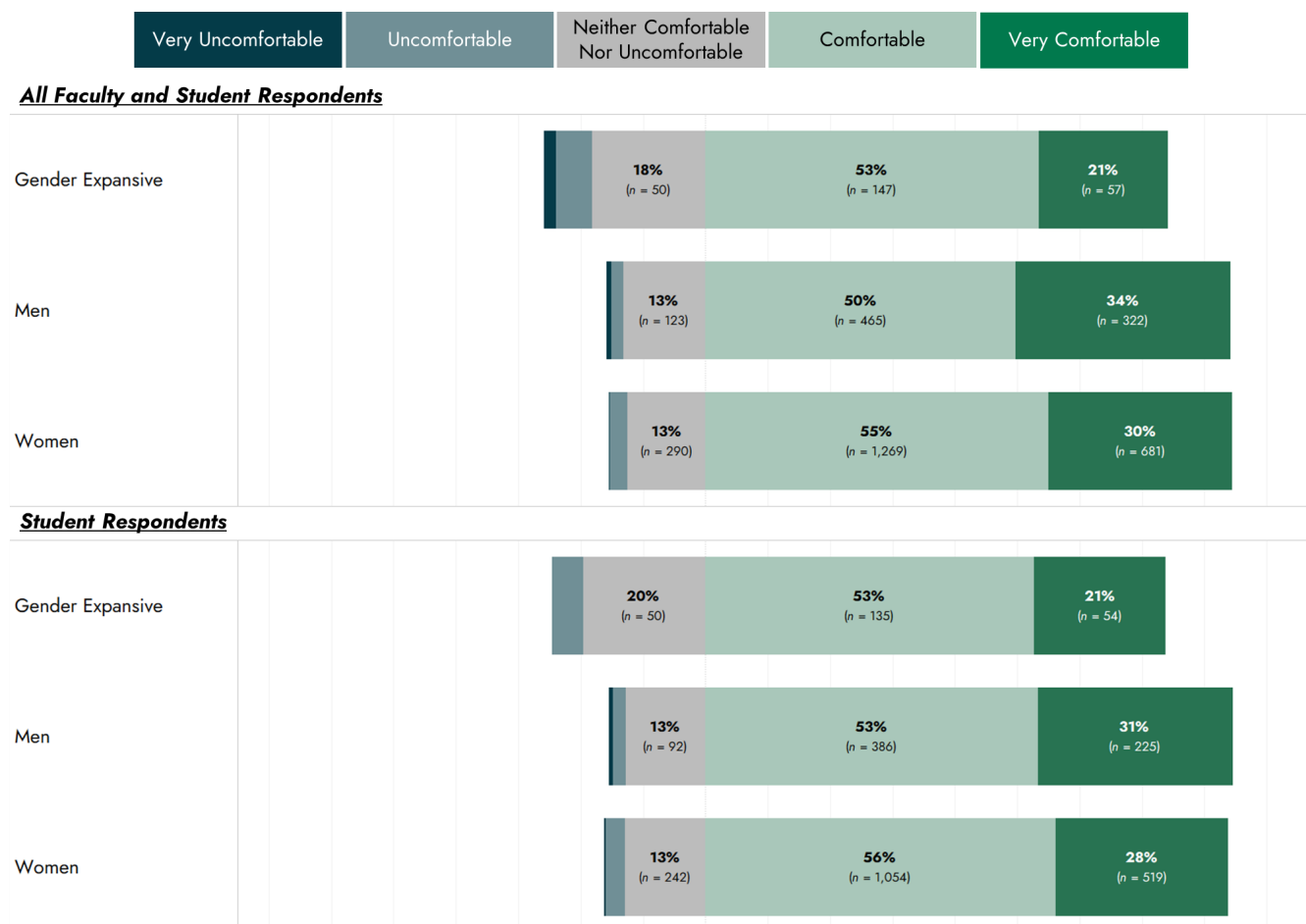


Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 25. Comfort with Classroom Climate at Kent State by Campus

Gender Identity

- **Gender Expansive Faculty & Student** respondents (74%, $n = 204$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the classroom climate at Kent State than **Women Faculty & Student** respondents (85%, $n = 1,950$) and **Men Faculty & Student** respondents (84%, $n = 787$).
- **Gender Expansive Student** respondents (74%, $n = 189$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the classroom climate at Kent State than **Women Student** respondents (84%, $n = 1,573$) and **Men Student** respondents (84%, $n = 611$).



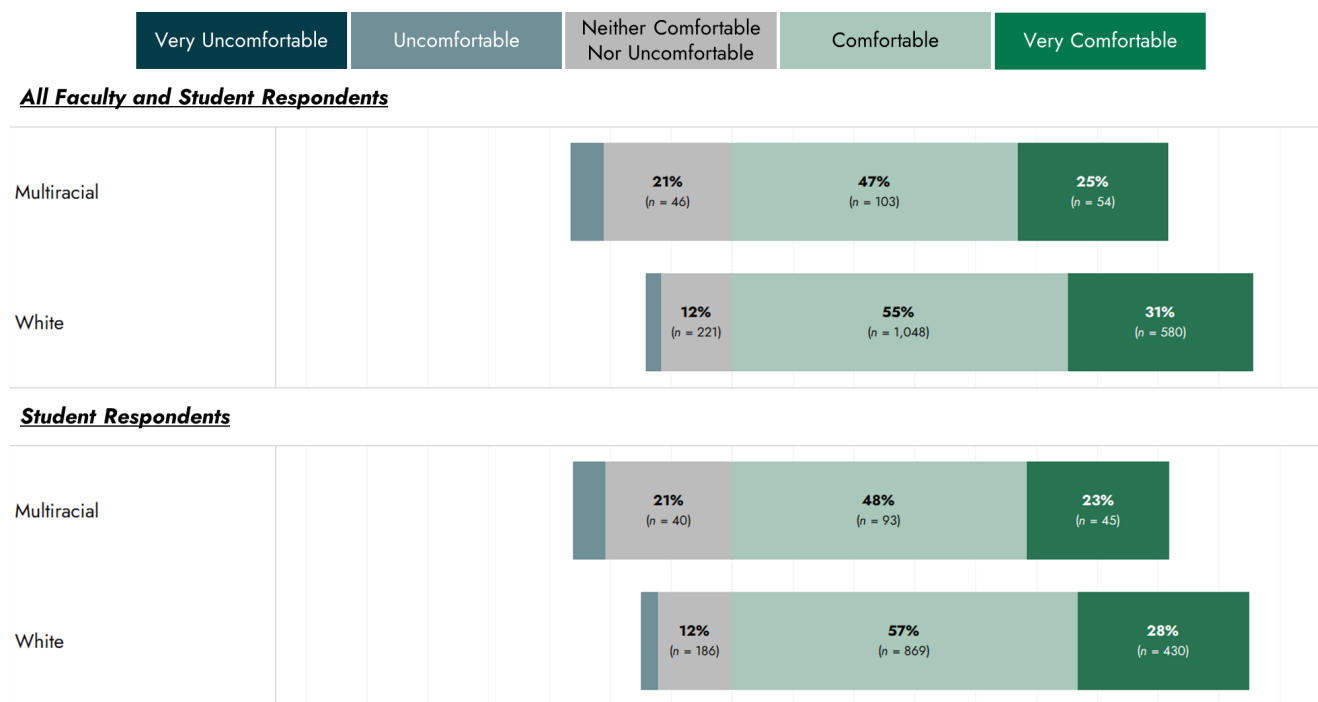
Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 26. Comfort with Classroom Climate at Kent State by Gender Identity

Racial/Ethnic Identity

- **Multiracial Faculty & Student** respondents (72%, $n = 157$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the classroom climate at Kent State than **White Faculty & Student** respondents (86%, $n = 1,628$).

- **Multiracial Student** respondents (71%, $n = 138$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the classroom climate at Kent State than **White Student** respondents (85%, $n = 1,299$).

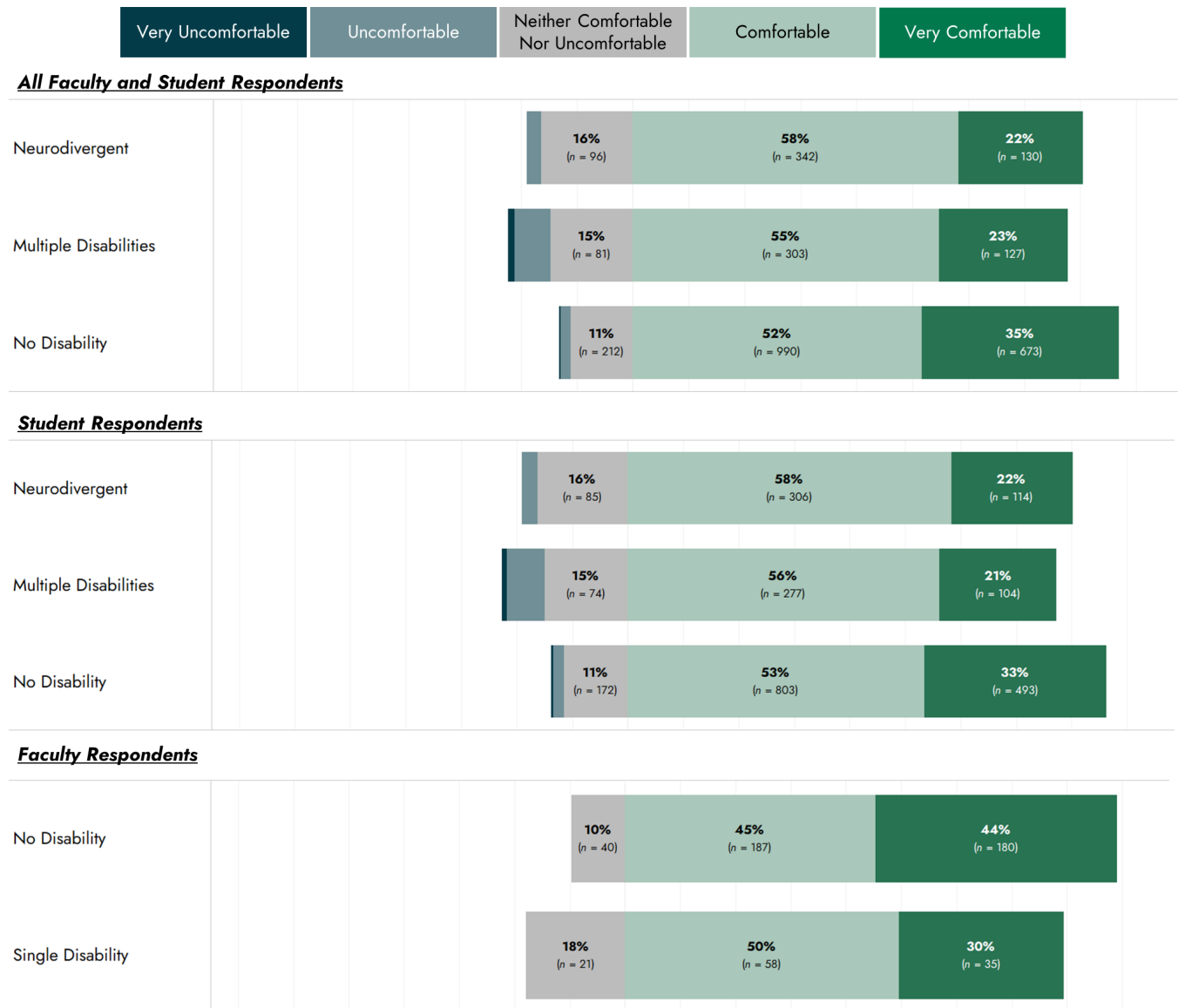


Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 27. Comfort with Classroom Climate at Kent State by Racial/Ethnic Identity

Disability Status

- **Neurodivergent Faculty and Student** respondents (80%, $n = 472$) and **Faculty and Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (78%, $n = 430$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the classroom climate at Kent State than **Faculty and Student Respondents with No Disability** (87%, $n = 1,663$).
- **Neurodivergent Student** respondents (80%, $n = 420$) and **Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (77%, $n = 381$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the classroom climate at Kent State than **Student Respondents with No Disability** (86%, $n = 1,296$).
- **Faculty Respondents with a Single Disability** (80%, $n = 93$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the classroom climate at Kent State than **Faculty Respondents with No Disability** (89%, $n = 367$).

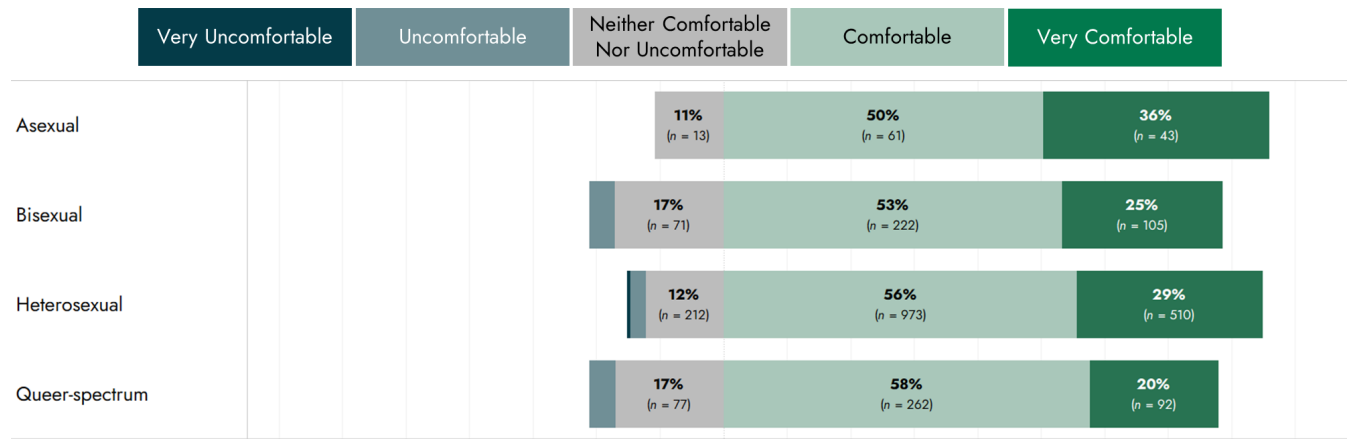


Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 28. Comfort with Classroom Climate at Kent State by Disability Status

Student Sexual Identity

- **Queer-spectrum Student** respondents (78%, $n = 354$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the classroom climate at Kent State than **Asexual Student** respondents (86%, $n = 104$) and **Heterosexual Student** respondents (85%, $n = 1,483$).
- **Bisexual Student** respondents (78%, $n = 327$) had *lower* levels of comfort with the classroom climate at Kent State than **Heterosexual Student** respondents (85%, $n = 1,483$).



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 29. Comfort with Classroom Climate at Kent State by Student Sexual Identity

Sense of Belonging

Campus climate influences individuals' sense of belonging within social and academic institutional environments.¹⁸ *Sense of Belonging* can be defined as one's perceived social support on campus, feeling or sensation of connectedness, and experience of mattering or importance to the campus community or others on campus.¹⁹ For many underrepresented and/or underserved faculty, staff, and students, a sense of belonging on college and university campuses is paramount. However, these individuals often experience a sense of belonging differently than their majority peers.

At Kent State, several groups varied in the extent to which they felt a sense of belonging at the University.²⁰ Specifically, **Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Sense of Belonging* than **Graduate/Professional Student** respondents. Additionally, as detailed below, significant differences in *Sense of Belonging* emerged by position status, campus, gender identity, racial/gender identity, disability status, student sexual identity, first-generation student status, and years of employment.

Undergraduate Students

For Undergraduate Student respondents, differences in *Sense of Belonging* were observed by campus, gender identity, racial/ethnic identity, disability status, sexual identity, and first-generation status.

- **Kent Campus Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Sense of Belonging* than **Regional Campus Undergraduate Student** respondents.
- **Gender Expansive Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Sense of Belonging* than **Women Undergraduate Student** respondents and **Men Undergraduate Student** respondents.
- **Multiracial Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Sense of Belonging* than **API Undergraduate Student** respondents.
- **Neurodivergent Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Sense of Belonging* than **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Another Disability** and **Undergraduate Student Respondents with No Disability**.

¹⁸ Museus et al. (2017a); Museus et al. (2017b); Rankin & Reason (2005); Strayhorn (2012, 2013)

¹⁹ Strayhorn (2012)

²⁰ See Appendix B for survey items used to assess *Sense of Belonging*.

- **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** had *lower Sense of Belonging* than **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Another Disability** and **Undergraduate Student Respondents with No Disability**.
- **Bisexual Undergraduate Student** respondents and **Queer-spectrum Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Sense of Belonging* than **Heterosexual Undergraduate Student** respondents.
- **Continuing-Generation Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Sense of Belonging* than **First-Generation Undergraduate Student** respondents.

Graduate/Professional Students

For Graduate/Professional Student respondents, differences in *Sense of Belonging* were observed by racial/ethnic identity and disability status.

- **White Graduate/Professional Student** respondents had *lower Sense of Belonging* than **API Graduate/Professional Student** respondents.²¹
- **Neurodivergent Graduate/Professional Student Respondents** and **Graduate/Professional Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** had *lower Sense of Belonging* than **Graduate/Professional Student Respondents with No Disability**.

Qualitative Findings

Student respondents were asked to elaborate on spaces where they felt safe and supported at Kent State. Many Student respondents expressed feeling secure throughout the University. One student stated, “The campus itself feels safe,” while another endorsed this sentiment by noting, “Pretty much everywhere.” This sense of security across campus could also be seen in the comment, “There aren’t any spaces where I do not feel safe.” Student respondents also recognized the University’s efforts to foster an inclusive environment, with one noting, “The campus makes an effort to include everyone of all sorts, avoiding discrimination and negative outlooks. This makes me feel safe.”

Three themes emerged from Undergraduate Student respondents: classes, professors, and library. Specifically, Undergraduate Student respondents highlighted the classroom as a positive environment, with one simply stating, “In the classroom.” Another Undergraduate Student respondent specified feeling supported “In classes that relate to my major.”

²¹ Analyses of overall climate by overall position status revealed an eta squared of 0.065, indicating a medium effect size.

Undergraduate Student respondents also readily named specific courses that they found supportive, such as “queer memoir class, all my classes honestly,” and “My honors flashes 101 class because we are all relatively the same major and can really understand and offer advice to each other.”

Undergraduate Student respondents also identified professors as a key source of support, expressing appreciation for their interactions with faculty. One student shared, “The teachers are always willing to help,” while another stated, “I feel safe and supported during office hours with my professors. They always listen to me, and I am never worried about them judging me.” Undergraduate Student respondents also acknowledged the genuine care demonstrated by professors, with one remarking, “I feel that the majority of my Profs have genuinely cared about my learning experience and came from a place of caring when approaching me about my grades or room for improvement.”

Additionally, Undergraduate Student respondents identified the library as a safe and supportive space, describing it as welcoming. One student shared, “Library, very welcoming. Everyone who works there is amazing.” Others praised its resources and atmosphere, with one noting, “The library because it is vast and there’s a good amount of resources if needed.” For some, the library provided a personal refuge, as another student remarked, “The University Library, I feel at home in my own little corner I have made for myself in the isolated part of the library.”

Faculty

For Faculty respondents, differences in *Sense of Belonging* were observed by gender identity, racial/ethnic identity, and years of employment.

- **Gender Expansive Faculty** respondents had *lower Sense of Belonging* than **Women Faculty** respondents and **Men Faculty** respondents.
- **Multiracial Faculty** respondents had *lower Sense of Belonging* than **Black Faculty** respondents and **White Faculty** respondents.
- **Faculty Respondents Employed at Kent State 6-15 Years** and **Faculty Respondents Employed at Kent State More Than 15 Years** had *lower Sense of Belonging* than **Respondents Employed at Kent State Less Than 6 Years**.

Staff

For Staff respondents, differences in *Sense of Belonging* were observed by staff position status and disability status.

- **Classified Staff** respondents had *lower Sense of Belonging* than **Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank** respondents.
- **Staff Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** had *lower Sense of Belonging* than **Staff Respondents with No Disability**.

Student Experiences at Kent State

Student Perceived Academic Success

How students perceive their academic success often contributes to their decision to persist in higher education. Research indicates that when students experience an unwelcoming campus climate, they also experience a decline in persistence and academic performance.²²

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the *Perceived Academic Success* of Student respondents.²³ **Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Perceived Academic Success* than **Graduate/Professional Student** respondents.

Undergraduate Students

For Undergraduate Student respondents, differences in *Perceived Academic Success* were observed by campus, gender identity, racial/ethnic identity, disability status, and sexual identity.

- **Kent Campus Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Perceived Academic Success* than **Regional Campus Undergraduate Student** respondents.
- **Gender Expansive Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Perceived Academic Success* than **Women Undergraduate Student** respondents and **Men Undergraduate Student** respondents.
- **Multiracial Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Perceived Academic Success* than **White Undergraduate Student** respondents.
- **Neurodivergent Undergraduate Student** respondents and **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** had *lower Perceived Academic Success* than **Undergraduate Student Respondents with No Disability**.
- **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** had *lower Perceived Academic Success* than **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Another Disability**.
- **Queer-spectrum Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Perceived Academic Success* than **Heterosexual Undergraduate Student** respondents.

²² Booker (2016); Johnson (2012); Kim & Hargrove (2013); Kutscher & Tuckwiller (2019)

²³ See Appendix B for survey items used to assess *Perceived Academic Success*.

Graduate/Professional Students

For Graduate/Professional Student respondents, differences in *Perceived Academic Success* were observed by disability status,

- **Graduate/Professional Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** had *lower Perceived Academic Success* than **Graduate/Professional Student Respondents with No Disability**.

Faculty-Student Interactions

Research on the impact of positive faculty-student interactions reveals significant benefits across various dimensions of student development, learning outcomes, and overall well-being.²⁴ Given this, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed on Students' *Faculty-Student Interactions*.²⁵ **Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Faculty-Student Interaction* scores than **Graduate/Professional Student** respondents.

Undergraduate Students

For Undergraduate Student respondents, differences in *Faculty-Student Interaction* scores were observed by campus, racial/ethnic identity, disability status, sexual identity, and first-generation status.

- **Kent Campus Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Faculty-Student Interaction* scores than **Regional Campus Undergraduate Student** respondents.
- **Multiracial Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Faculty-Student Interaction* scores than **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Minoritized Racial/Ethnic Identities**.
- **Neurodivergent Undergraduate Student** respondents and **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** had *lower Faculty-Student Interaction* scores than **Undergraduate Student Respondents with No Disability**.
- **Queer-spectrum Undergraduate Student** respondents (including Asexual and Bisexual Undergraduate Student respondents) had *lower Faculty-Student Interaction* scores than **Heterosexual Undergraduate Student** respondents.

²⁴ Cole & Griffin (2013); Pascarella & Terenzini (1980); Mayhew et al. (2016)

²⁵ See Appendix B for survey items used to assess *Faculty-Student Interaction*.

- **Continuing-Generation Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Faculty-Student Interaction* scores than **First-Generation Undergraduate Student** respondents.

Graduate/Professional Students

For Graduate/Professional Student respondents, differences in *Faculty-Student Interaction* scores were observed by gender identity, racial/ethnic identity, and disability status.

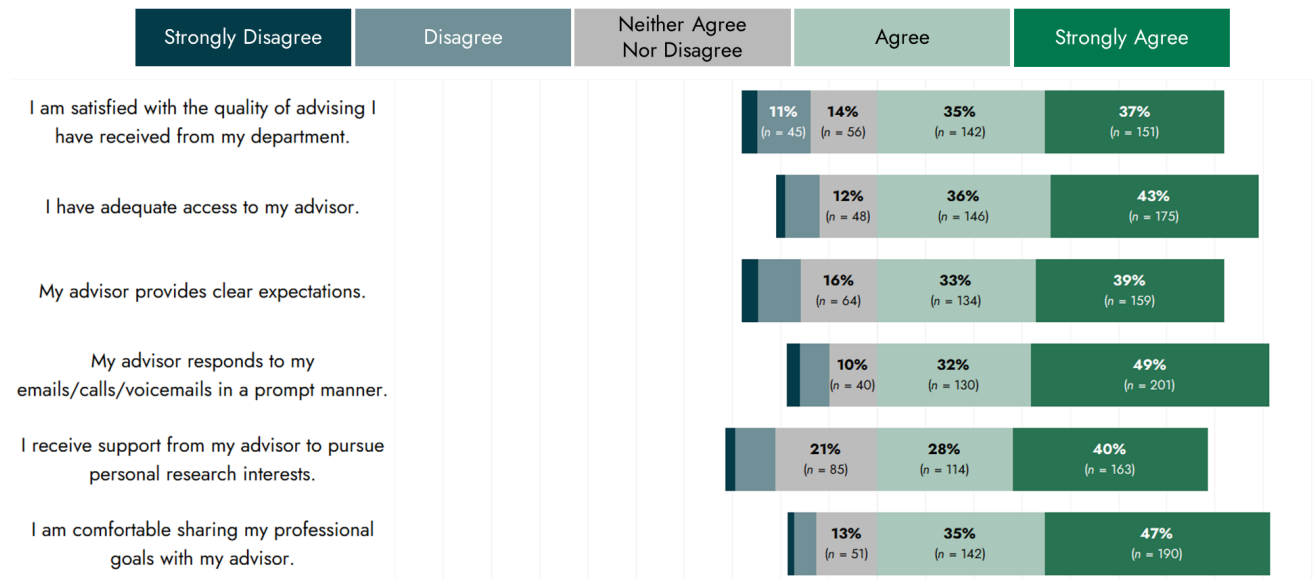
- **Women Graduate/Professional Student** respondents had *lower Faculty-Student Interaction* scores than **Men Graduate/Professional Student** respondents.
- **White Graduate/Professional Student** respondents had *lower Faculty-Student Interaction* scores than **API Graduate/Professional Student** respondents.
- **Graduate/Professional Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** had *lower Faculty-Student Interaction* scores than **Graduate/Professional Student Respondents with No Disability**.

Graduate/Professional Student Experiences

Graduate/Professional Students were asked a number of questions about elements of their Kent State graduate journey (e.g., experiences with their advisor and other department faculty members). The results identified areas of strength²⁶ upon which Kent State can build, as well as areas upon which the University can focus for improvement.

The findings reveal a generally positive perception among Graduate/Professional Student respondents regarding their advisor. Approximately three-fourths of Graduate/Professional Student respondents (72%, $n = 293$) were satisfied with the quality of advising they received from their department, and 79% ($n = 321$) felt they had adequate access to their advisor. With regard to communication from their advisor, 72% ($n = 293$) of Graduate/Professional Student respondents indicated that their advisor provides clear expectations, and 81% ($n = 331$) noted that their advisor promptly responds to emails, calls, or voicemails. Whereas a smaller majority of Graduate/Professional Student respondents (68%, $n = 277$) said they received support from their advisor to pursue personal research interests, the vast majority of these respondents (82%, $n = 332$) felt comfortable sharing their professional goals with their advisor.

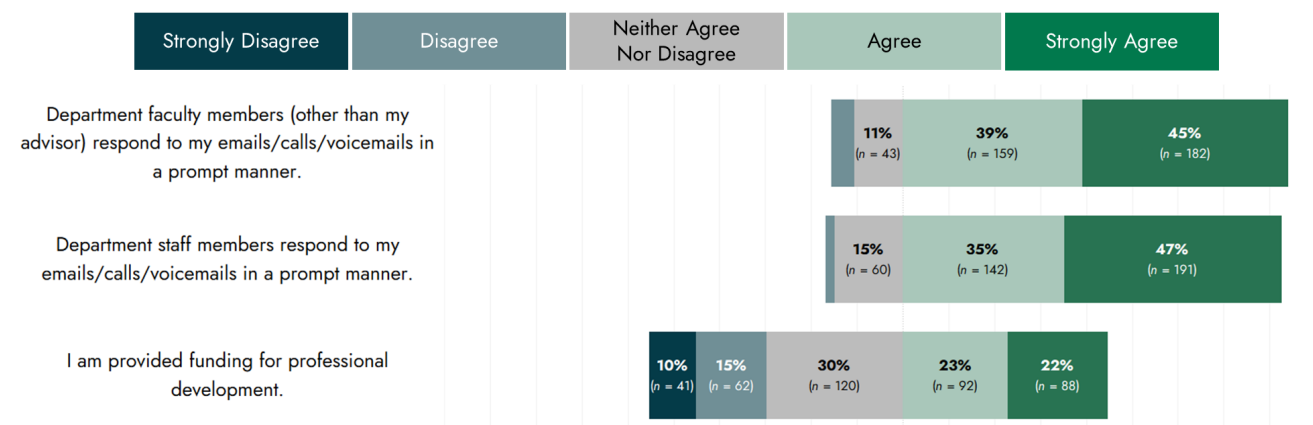
²⁶ All percentages in the sections that follow reflect the combined total of respondents who “agreed”/“strongly agreed” with the item.



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 30. Graduate/Professional Student Respondents' Positive Views About Advising

Highlighting another strength in the Graduate/Professional Student experience at Kent State, respondents expressed positive views about departmental communications. Specifically, 84% ($n = 341$) reported that non-advisor department faculty members responded promptly to emails, calls, or voicemails, and 83% ($n = 333$) indicated similar responsiveness from department staff. However, funding for professional development, such as research or conference participation, emerged as a potential area for improvement, with fewer than half of respondents (45%, $n = 180$) indicating they received such support.



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 31. Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement in Graduate/Professional Student Support

Qualitative Findings

Qualitative data from Graduate/Professional Student respondents highlighted the overall positive experience these individuals were having at Kent State. Specifically, Graduate/Professional Student respondents expressed strong appreciation for their experiences at Kent State, describing it as “a perfect place to pursue your academic goals” and sharing sentiments like “I have had a wonderful and memorable experience at Kent State and would remember and cherish my years of study life.” Some described finding a sense of belonging, with one noting, “I have had very positive experience at KSU. I belong here 😊,” while another shared, “Being my third year I feel right at home and have become close friends with some staff and have found some of my best friends here from my peers.” Respondents praised faculty and staff, highlighting individuals like Dr. Martens, who “is wonderful,” and Dr. Peer, who “understands work-life balance, while maintaining rigor, and ALWAYS responding to my needs as a student.” One respondent summarized their gratitude, “Kent State is a very good educational environment. I really appreciate the work my professors are doing to help me achieve my educational goals.”

However, several themes from these data illuminate key areas of opportunity upon which the University should focus. Namely, some Graduate/Professional Student respondents shared their frustrations with their advisors. Some respondents were unsure if they even had an advisor and made comments such as “I still don’t have an advisor,” “I am not sure who my advisor is at this point and time,” and “I have not been assigned to an advisor, so there isn’t a person I know to contact when I have questions.” Other respondents were frustrated that they had an “Extremely hard time getting a hold of my adviser.” Respondents shared comments such as “In the past two years, my advisors’ email responses have been slow (could take months),” “My original advisor was not very willing to meet in person and I struggled to get enough support from him,” and “It was [sic] been difficult at times to get them to respond to my email or provide me with clear guidance on what I should do (classes, internships, etc.).” Additionally, advisors did not offer the support that respondents wanted and expected. One respondent shared, “When I first started the program and reached out to my appointed advisor for help, she responded by saying everything I needed was in the handbook. That’s it. It was so rude and so obviously a brush off that I have not contacted her since even though I am approaching graduation.” Another respondent wrote, “My experience with my advisor has been much more hands-off than I anticipated; however, she is supportive of my goals and project ideas. There is just a lot more of me ‘steering the ship’ than I anticipated.”

Relatedly, Graduate/Professional Student respondents expressed frustration with a lack of support from faculty and staff at Kent State. One respondent noted, “Big concern with too many people being admitted into the Masters program. This causes staff/faculty to lack full support to individual students,” while another stated, “I wish the staff and students could be more personable and welcoming to each individual student.” Some faculty were seen as detached, with one respondent remarking, “Some of the Faculty here in my Thesis program do not feel like Mentors or friends...they are just here to do their job and criticize our work.” Others described interactions as “unreasonable, unkind, and inflexible,” with faculty offering “condescending comments on my competence and expertise.” Respondents also wished for better resources, noting limited access, such as, “All University resources are closed by 4-5pm...I have little to no access to any campus resources.”

Graduate/Professional Student respondents also described concerns about insufficient funding, particularly for attending conferences. They shared frustrations such as, “We are not given enough funding to go to conferences,” and, “I lack the funding to travel abroad for my research.” One respondent noted, “I have several colleagues from KSU who can’t travel for conferences due to financial constraints,” while others highlighted that any funding provided “is not adequate enough” and that covering the rest of the cost is “next to impossible...” The financial strain was compounded by low GA stipends, with one respondent stating, “Our department’s stipend is barely a living wage, to the extent that other graduate students have applied for Medicaid and/or SNAP benefits.”

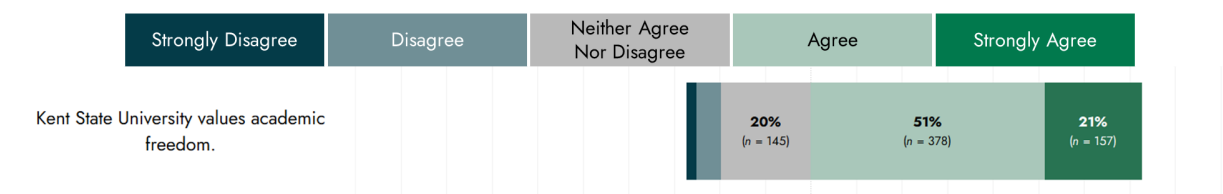
Lastly, Graduate/Professional Student respondents shared challenges with online classes and programs, often feeling disconnected from the university. One noted, “There is no outside of class interaction with remote teachers,” while another stated, “In my online program, I do not truly feel like I am a part of the university.” Respondents found online courses less engaging compared to live sessions and noted a lack of resources for online students. One advised, “I would like for there to be more resources available to online students for connecting with students and professors, as well as mental health resources.” A fully online student shared, “I feel very disconnected from the university...No advisor or faculty member has sought to get to know me or help me develop my professional goals.”

Employee Workplace Climate: Areas of Strength

Respondents were asked to answer questions about their perceptions of the workplace climate at Kent State. Items focused on topics such as clarity and fairness of policies and procedures; support and resources; work environment and equity; job satisfaction and security; workload and compensation; and work-life balance. Below are findings that reveal key strengths upon which Kent State can build.²⁷

All Faculty

Across all Faculty respondents, academic freedom at Kent State emerged as a strength. Specifically, 72% (*n* = 535) of all Faculty respondents felt that the University valued academic freedom.

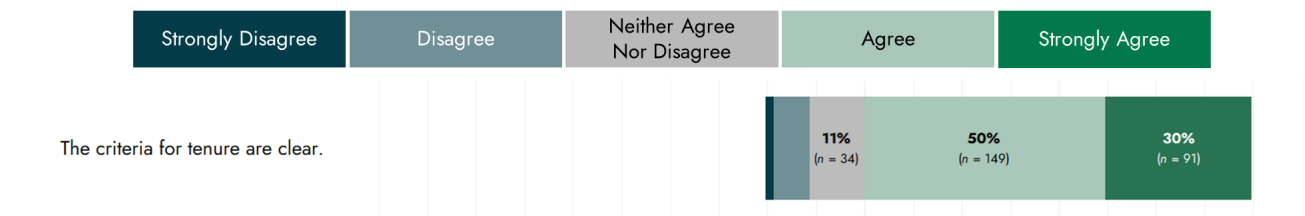


Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with *n* < 5 are not shown above.

Figure 32. Faculty Views on Academic Freedom at Kent State

Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty

Clarity of tenure criteria emerged as a strength for Kent State. Specifically, 80% (*n* = 240) of Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents indicated that the criteria for tenure were clear.



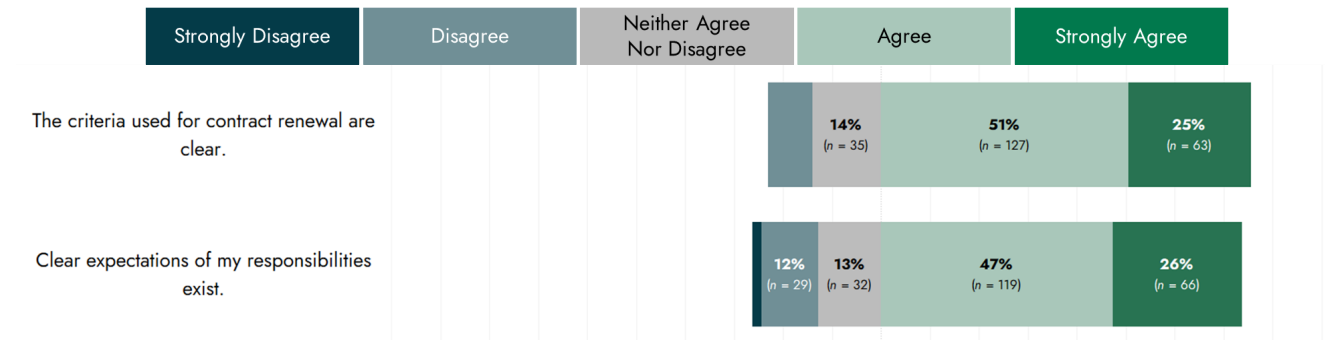
Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with *n* < 5 are not shown above.

Figure 33. Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Respondents' Positive Views About Tenure Criteria

²⁷ All percentages in the sections that follow reflect the combined total of respondents who “agreed”/“strongly agreed” with the item.

Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

A strength identified in the survey was the clarity surrounding policies and expectations for Non-Tenure-Track Faculty. Specifically, 76% of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents ($n = 190$) felt that the criteria for contract renewal were clear. Additionally, 73% of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents ($n = 185$) reported having clear expectations for their responsibilities.

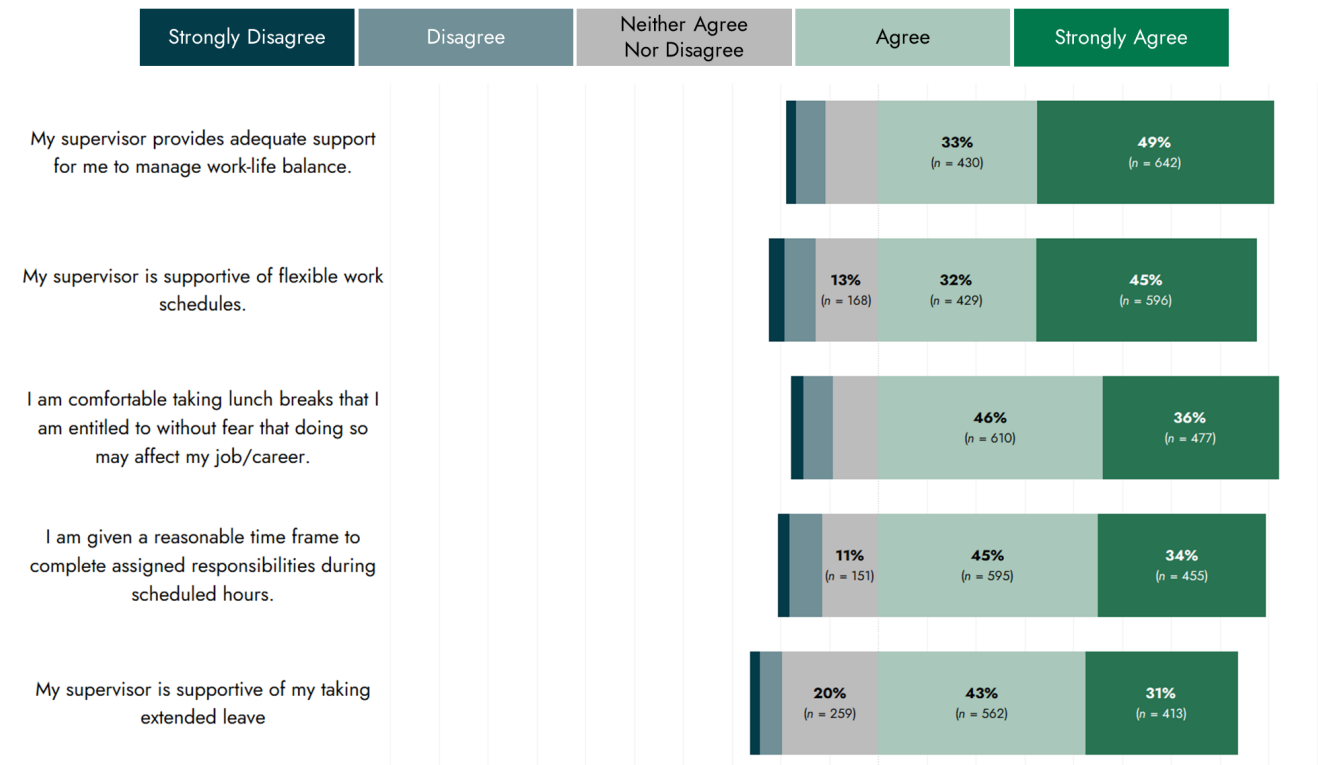


Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 34. Clarity in Policies and Expectations for Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

Staff

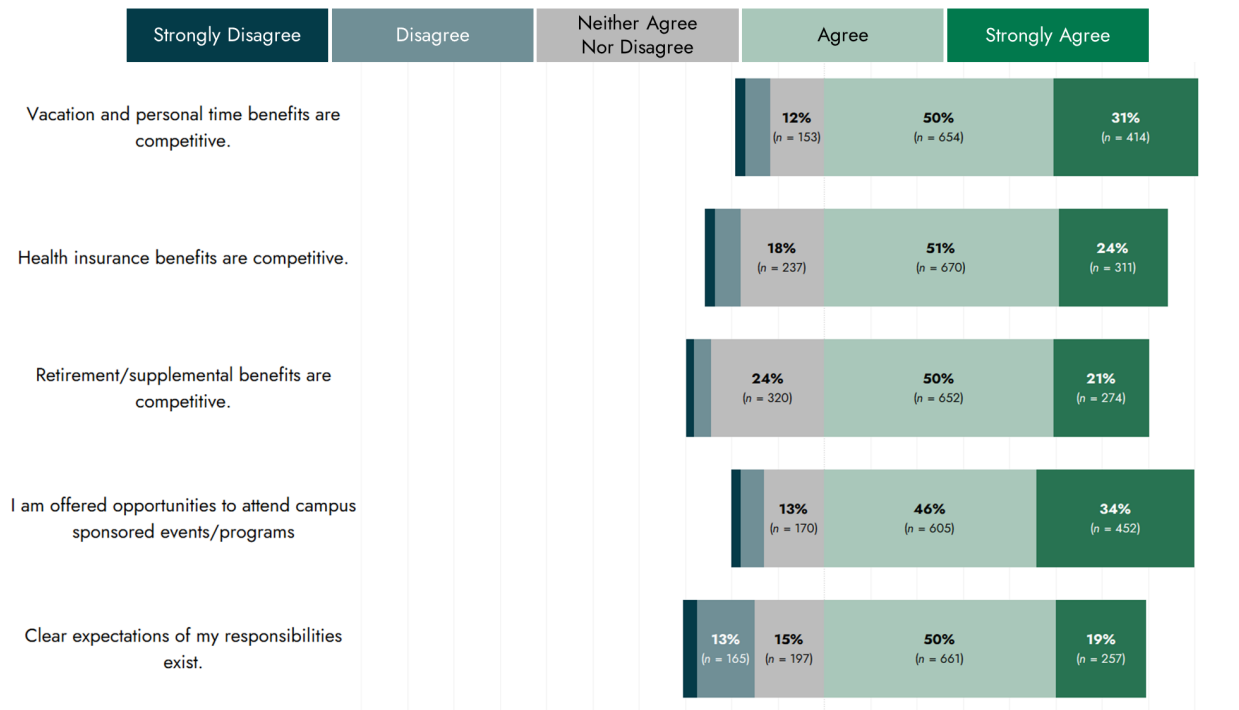
Staff perceptions of workplace support and flexibility were generally positive, with high levels of satisfaction in several areas. Eighty-two percent ($n = 1,072$) of Staff respondents felt their supervisors provided adequate support for managing work-life balance, and 77% ($n = 1,025$) noted their supervisors were supportive of flexible work schedules. Similarly, 82% ($n = 1,087$) reported feeling comfortable taking entitled lunch breaks without fear of job/career-related repercussions, and 79% ($n = 1,050$) felt they were given a reasonable timeframe to complete responsibilities during scheduled hours. Additionally, 74% ($n = 975$) agreed that their supervisors supported their use of extended leave options, such as vacation, family leave, or short-term disability.



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 35. Staff Respondents' Positive Views on Workplace Support and Flexibility

Staff respondents also held favorable views about certain benefits, workplace resources, and clarity of responsibilities. Eighty-one percent ($n = 1,068$) felt vacation and personal time benefits were competitive, while 75% ($n = 981$) and 71% ($n = 926$) rated health insurance and retirement/supplemental benefits as competitive, respectively. Opportunities to engage in campus-sponsored events/programs, such as wellness events, were noted by 80% ($n = 1,057$) of respondents. Additionally, 69% ($n = 918$) felt clear expectations of their responsibilities existed.



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.
Figure 36. Staff Respondents' Positive Views on Benefits, Workplace Resources, and Responsibilities

Qualitative Findings

Extending the quantitative findings, Staff respondents commented that “KSU as a whole is a great place to work.” One respondent shared, “I’ve worked at Kent State University for over two decades. I considered or viewed other jobs, but have found this is the best place for me.” Additional comments included, “Best job I’ve ever had,” “I very much enjoy my job here at Kent State,” and “I honestly love working at Kent State.” One respondent declared, “I cannot stress this enough. I LOVE working for Kent State,” while another respondent remarked, “I think Kent State is an amazing place to work. I have always loved my job. I don’t want to work anywhere else. I’m so grateful to be part of this family.” Some respondents extolled the people they worked with in comments such as “The department I currently work in is amazing, with all supportive and wonderful coworkers,” and “My team is phenomenal. With few exceptions, I’ve been blessed to work for wonderful people over my last 9yrs at KSU.” In particular, respondents noted when they had “a great supervisor.” One respondent wrote, “My current supervisor does such a wonderful job managing and supervising our group. He is a treasure and I enjoy everyday working with him.” Another respondent shared, “My supervisor is very supportive and accommodating. She makes me feel valued and appreciated, especially during periods where our workload is heavy.”

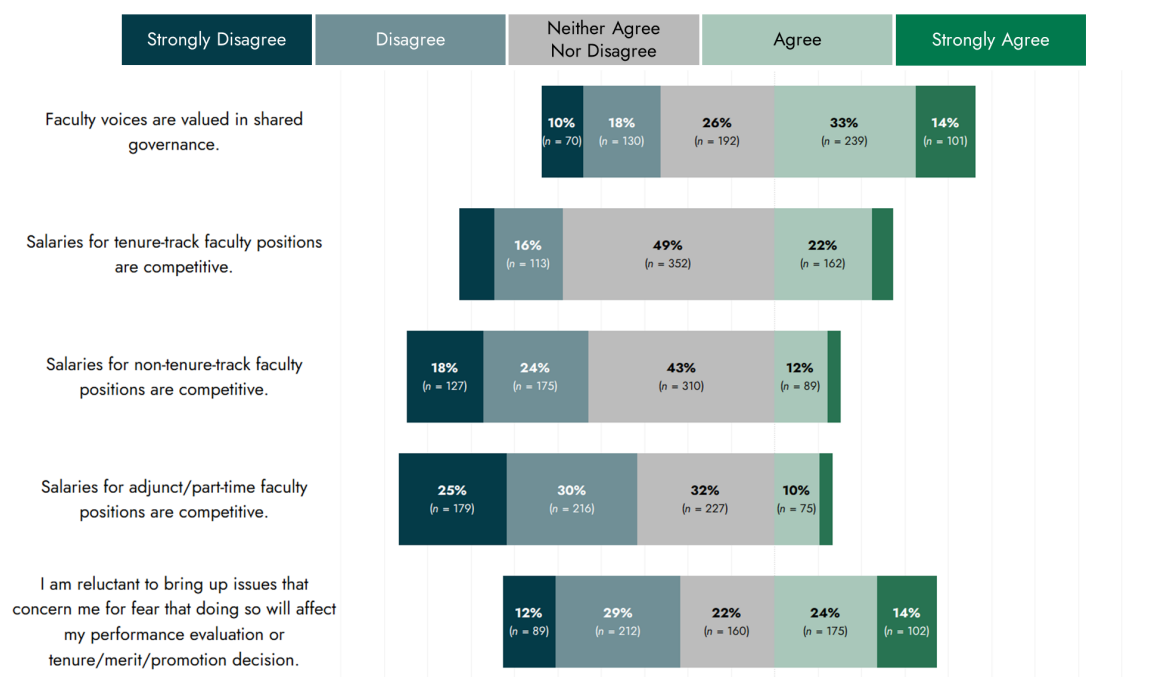
Having someone like her in a position of authority keeps me motivated and keeps the team running smoothly.”

Employee Workplace Climate: Areas of Focus

Several areas of potential focus were identified through the questions examining Employee respondents' perceptions of their workplace climate. Specifically, the findings indicate opportunities for improvement at Kent State with regard to mentorship, equity, compensation, governance, workload, recognition, and work-life balance.²⁸

All Faculty

Faculty respondents expressed significant concerns about shared governance, compensation, and their ability to voice issues without fear of repercussions. Less than half (47%, $n = 340$) felt that faculty voices were valued in shared governance. Only 27% ($n = 197$) believed that salaries for tenure-track faculty positions were competitive, 15% ($n = 111$) felt that salaries for non-tenure-track faculty positions were competitive, and 13% ($n = 96$) believed that salaries for adjunct/part-time faculty positions were competitive. Additionally, 38% ($n = 277$) of Faculty respondents reported reluctance to raise concerns, fearing it might negatively affect their performance evaluation, tenure, merit, or promotion decisions.

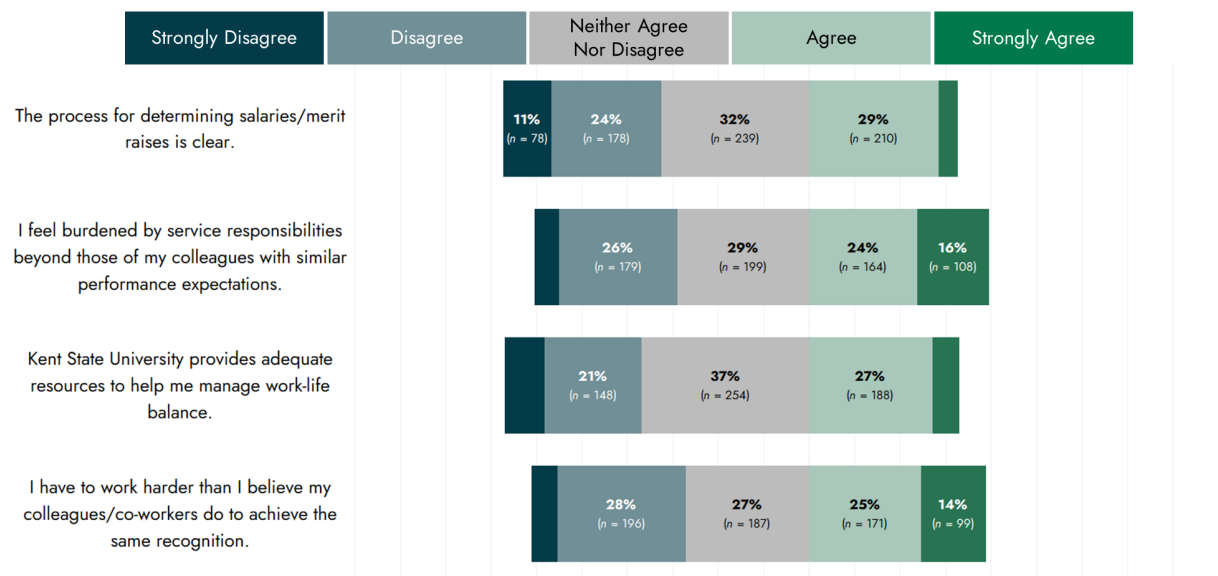


Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 37. Areas of Potential Focus Related to Faculty Perceptions of Governance, Compensation, and Raising Concerns

²⁸ All percentages in the sections that follow reflect the combined total of respondents who “agreed”/“strongly agreed” with the item.

Perceptions of institutional processes and responsibilities also highlighted challenges. One-third (33%, $n = 241$) of Faculty respondents felt the process for determining salaries or merit raises was clear, while 40% ($n = 272$) felt burdened by service responsibilities beyond those of colleagues with similar performance expectations (e.g., committee memberships, advising, departmental or program assignments, and supporting student groups or activities). Only one-third (33%, $n = 229$) agreed that Kent State provided adequate resources to help manage work-life balance, and 39% ($n = 270$) believed they had to work harder than their peers to achieve comparable recognition.

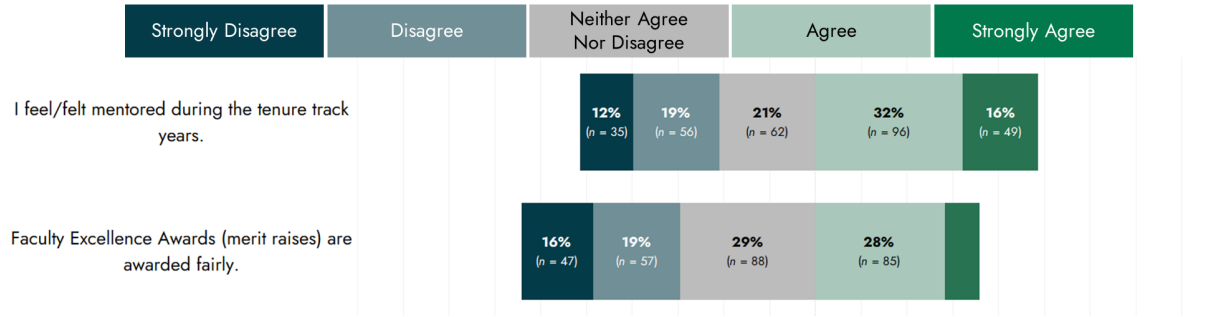


Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 38. Areas of Potential Focus Related to Faculty Perception Workload Challenges

Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty

The survey findings suggest areas where Kent State could enhance its support for Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty. Less than half of Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents (48%, $n = 145$) indicated they received mentorship during their tenure-track years. Additionally, only 36% of Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents ($n = 108$) felt that Faculty Excellence Awards (merit raises) were awarded fairly.

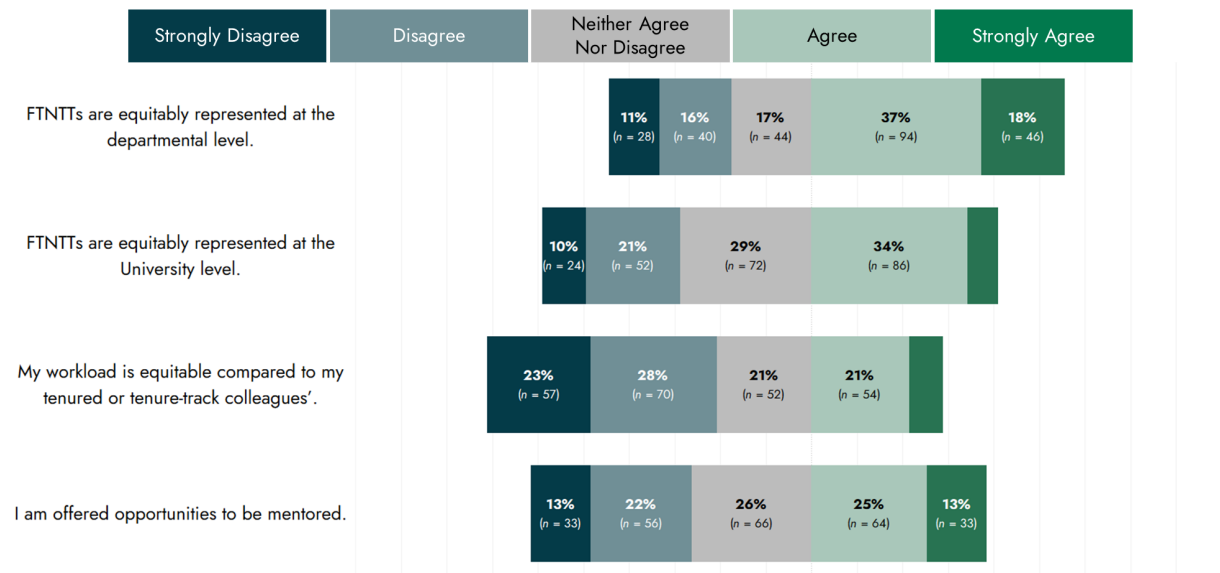


Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 39. Areas for Enhancing Support for Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty

Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

Survey findings from Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents highlight several areas of potential focus related to equity and support. Slightly more than half (55%, $n = 140$) felt that full-time Non-Tenure-Track Faculty (FTNTTs) were equitably represented at the departmental level, such as through proportional committee representation, while only 41% ($n = 103$) believed FTNTTs were equitably represented at the University level. In terms of workload equity, 29% ($n = 73$) felt their workload was comparable to that of their tenured or tenure-track colleagues, and 38% ($n = 97$) reported being offered opportunities for mentorship.



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 40. Areas of Potential Focus Related to Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Equity and Mentoring

Qualitative Findings

Faculty respondents shared their perspectives on several key topics, relevant to their workplace climate. Specifically, Faculty respondents raised significant concerns about heavy and inequitable workloads, as well as the impact of budget cuts and restructuring plans. Many described their workloads as overwhelming, with comments such as “workloads are ridiculous” and “everyone at Kent State is expected to work too much.” The problem has been exacerbated by increasing course caps and added responsibilities without adequate compensation. One respondent shared, “I received notice that the course caps for my classes were increasing by 3 students per course...making my 5-5 load essentially a 6-6 load.” Another noted, “I am also fulfilling a service role in my department that normally comes with a course release, but I have not been given that course release because of budget cuts. My work/life balance is suffering.”

Faculty respondents also highlighted inequities in workload distribution, noting that certain groups, such as non-tenure track faculty, staff, and women, bear a disproportionate burden. One respondent observed, “faculty—mostly female faculty—are asked to do a great deal more service, more than ever before, without any sort of compensation.” Others pointed out disparities in workloads within departments, between campuses, or based on the number of students in a class rather than course sections. A respondent explained, “In my department, NTT have larger class sizes and participate in more service opportunities than FTT.” Such inequities foster frustration and a sense of unfairness among faculty.

Budget concerns and restructuring plans added to faculty anxieties, with Faculty respondents describing a precarious atmosphere affecting morale and job security. Respondents criticized the lack of transparency and meaningful faculty engagement in decision-making processes, with one stating, “admin is trying to appear to value faculty input, as opposed to long-term meaningful engagement.” They worried that restructuring, including increased class sizes and reduced in-person offerings, would harm both faculty work-life balance and student outcomes. As one respondent advised, “We are an educational institution focused (per our mission) on education and research. Monies should be allocated to those areas.”

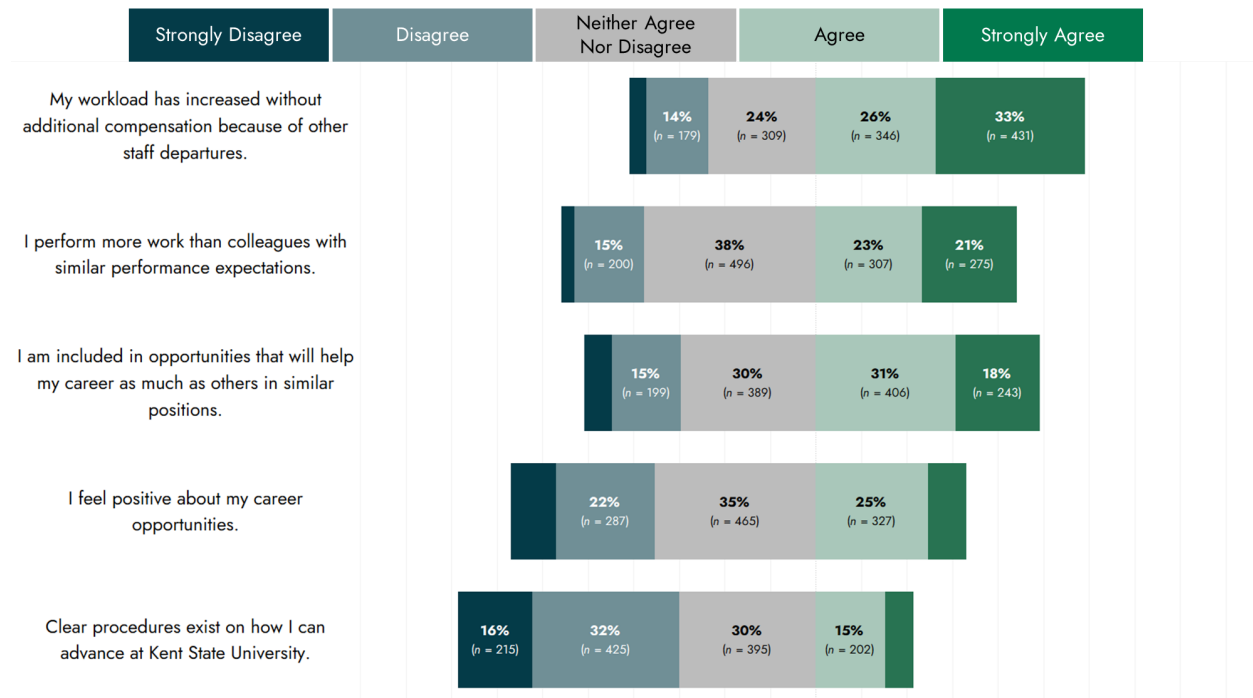
In addition to the overarching themes identified among all faculty respondents, the qualitative data revealed several issues unique to specific faculty groups. For example, Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents expressed frustration with the University’s lack of support for research, which they saw as incompatible with its aspiration to be an R1 research institution. One Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondent remarked, “We are not really an R1 when faculty have to pay for their own travel, even though it is crucial to being a

researcher. It makes no sense, and it is clear that the administration does not understand research or faculty, or graduate students.” Others criticized heavy workloads, noting, “A 3-3 teaching load at an R1 university is somewhat ridiculous,” and “Currently, we receive no dedicated research workload, which is ironic given that research productivity is a key factor in promotions.” Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty pointed to limited infrastructure and funding cuts as significant barriers, with one respondent observing, “Freezing travel for all categories, including professional conferences and other professional development activities, will likely hurt the research/publication agenda of faculty members,” and another warning that reduced departmental budgets mean “careers will dry up for lack of resources.” These challenges, respondents argued, undermine Kent State’s ability to fulfill its research mission.

Additionally, Non-Tenure-Track and Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty respondents highlighted low salaries as a significant concern, with comments such as “adjuncts are underpaid,” “the salaries for FTNTT are not a livable wage,” and “adjuncts are paid far far less than what they are worth.” Respondents emphasized that “the wage is far below other schools” and shared experiences of higher pay elsewhere, such as one respondent who noted, “Prior to last year, I was an adjunct professor at a private Ohio college and my salary was higher, so I know it is more competitive elsewhere.” Another remarked, “NTTs have routinely been paid far less than comparable positions at other schools (incoming NTTs regularly must take a significant pay cut to come here).” Respondents also pointed out disparities between their compensation and that of tenure-track faculty, with one stating, “Adjuncts [sic] underpaid and have no job security, and many TT faculty are overpaid and teach very few classes.” Another added, “FTNTTs are overworked and underpaid. Why do we have 30 workload hours while TT faculty only have 24 workload hours? That makes NO SENSE. They earn more but only have to account for 24 workload hours.”

Staff

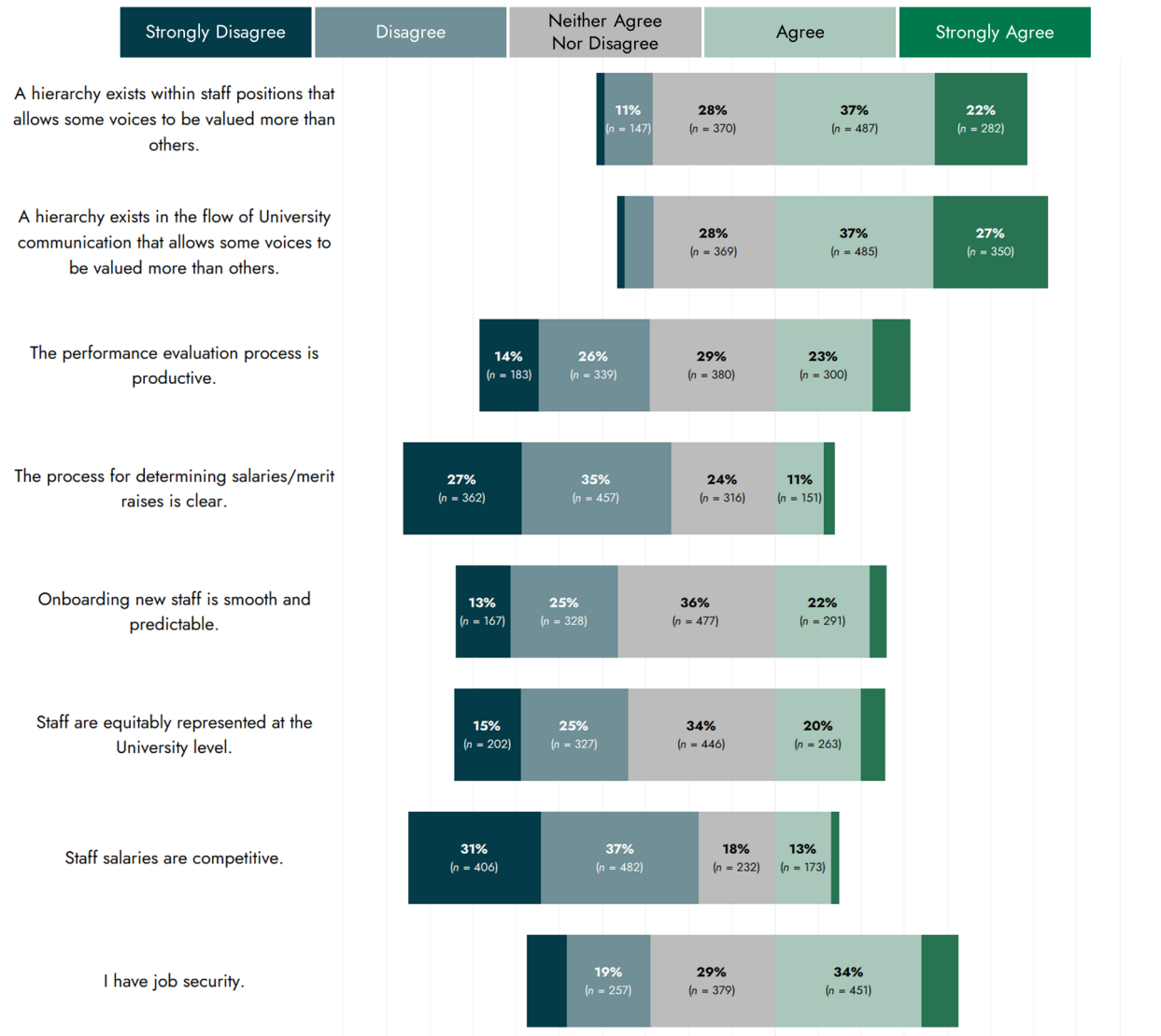
Staff respondents shared concerns about workload, equity, and inclusion within the workplace. A majority (59%, $n = 777$) felt their workload had increased without additional compensation due to staff departures (e.g., retirement positions not filled). Additionally, 44% ($n = 582$) felt they performed more work than colleagues with similar performance expectations (e.g., committee memberships, formal and informal mentoring or advising, helping with student groups and activities, providing other support). Only 49% ($n = 649$) felt they were included in career-advancing opportunities as much as others in similar roles. Similarly, just 33% ($n = 437$) expressed positivity about their career opportunities, and only 21% ($n = 283$) felt clear procedures existed for career advancement at Kent State.



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 41. Areas of Potential Focus Related to Staff Workload, Equity, and Workplace Inclusion

Among Staff respondents, perceptions of procedural and structural inequities also emerged strongly. More than half (59%, $n = 769$) felt a hierarchy existed within staff positions, with some voices being valued more than others, and 64% ($n = 835$) observed a similar hierarchy in university communication. Only 32% ($n = 415$) of Staff respondents found the performance evaluation process productive, while 14% ($n = 184$) felt the salary/merit determination process was clear. Onboarding processes were considered smooth by only 26% ($n = 343$) of Staff respondents, and just 26% ($n = 338$) felt staff were equitably represented at the University level. Concerns about compensation were evident, with only 15% ($n = 198$) of Staff respondents finding salaries competitive. Additionally, less than half of Staff respondents (43%, $n = 563$) felt they had job security.



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 42. Areas of Potential Focus Related to Staff Perceptions of Procedural and Structural Inequities

Qualitative Findings

Qualitative data shed further light on the areas meriting additional focus, with themes emerging related to salary, performance evaluations, career opportunities, staff feeling undervalued, and concerns for the future. With regard to compensation, Staff respondents expressed significant dissatisfaction with salaries, describing them as “problematic,” “lousy,” and noting that “Kent State under-pays its workers.” One respondent shared, “I have been with the university for over 25 years but I’m not even at the midpoint of my salary range,” while others pointed out that “staff salaries are not very competitive” and “the pay is way below what I would make in the private sector.” Low pay was seen as a barrier to hiring

and retention, with one respondent stating, “Staff are grossly underpaid in areas now requiring or preferring higher degrees making it impossible to hire and retain talent.” Concerns about inequities also emerged, with one respondent remarking, “My position is paid one of the lowest salaries compared to colleagues in similar positions despite comparative responsibilities, experience, education, and years at Kent State.”

Annual raises were widely regarded as insufficient, failing to keep pace with inflation or rising costs. As one respondent observed, “Annual raises that don’t match or beat inflation are a pay cut.” Another explained, “Often the annual increase is reduced by the rising cost of health insurance, so the annual increase is not an increase at all.” The financial strain was summarized by one respondent who noted, “My 2% salary increase doesn’t cover inflation,” while another expressed, “The cost of living vs. our annual raise doesn’t even compare, and to know that my increase merely covers just my insurance premium increase alone makes it harder and harder to exist financially.”

Additionally, Staff respondents were frustrated by the lack of merit-based pay, noting there is “zero opportunity for merit-based increases.” One commented, “It would be nice to be able to receive merit-based raises or bonuses,” while another questioned, “I don’t know why we do evaluations if we aren’t going to receive valuable increases.” The absence of merit pay was seen as demotivating, with respondents pointing out that “there is no difference in compensation between those with mediocre and exceptional performance” and “no rewards for those who are very good at their job.” As one Staff respondent summed up, “I often feel as though I do good work and have successes in my department, but I am not compensated as a result.”

Staff respondents also highlighted the lack of advancement opportunities, with comments such as “I have no idea how to advance in my career” and “There is absolutely no career path at Kent State.” Even when seeking guidance, respondents reported receiving little clarity, as one shared, “Over the past few years I’ve asked my boss what I need to do to be considered for a promotion and I never get an answer.” Others noted being denied promotions, with one stating, “I have not had a promotion in over 7 years. I’ve asked a number of times and have been told no,” and another adding, “My supervisor wanted to give me a promotion and merit raise, but the college dean denied it.” One respondent advised, “Transparent career paths and pay ranges to help staff chart a career path within the university should be established.”

Staff respondents emphasized feeling “underappreciated and undervalued,” with one stating, “In general, staff is very undervalued. We are not respected by leadership or

faculty. We are looked at as beneath leadership and faculty.” Many noted “a strong feeling of a class divide between faculty and staff,” sharing sentiments such as “Staff are definitely undervalued and it’s clear the faculty is king” and “As a staffer, I feel like a second-class citizen compared to faculty.” Respondents expressed frustration over being “treated as disposable and replaceable” and felt their concerns were overshadowed, with one stating, “Faculty voices often overshadow staff concerns.”

Staff also highlighted their lack of involvement in decision-making, with one respondent commenting, “Lower-level staff are silenced and their opinions do not matter.” Another observed, “Staff are not given the same opportunities to share their opinions on university changes as faculty and students are, and when we do have these opportunities, it is clear that our voices do not hold the same weight as others.” Respondents suggested that leadership should engage staff more directly, as one noted, “Division leadership should involve staff who understand the job they do every day before making important decisions that affect their day-to-day work in a significant way.”

Finally, Staff respondents expressed significant anxiety about the future of Kent State, citing concerns over financial instability, reorganization, and job security. Comments such as “I’m feeling anxious about the financial state of the university as I’m sure everyone is” and “Everyone is on edge not knowing how these re-organizations will go” reflected widespread unease. Many tied their worries to T28, describing it as “the looming doom and gloom” amid “a lot of changes going on at the university.” Talks of budget cuts and restructuring “have made it challenging to stay positive” and shifted the workplace climate. One respondent remarked, “Everyone I know always used to love working here. But as of late that has all changed. The whole mood as a group has been severely diminished.” Job security was a major concern, with respondents noting, “Budget concerns have put me in a constant state of anxiety that I am going to lose my job any day now” and “I am not comfortable in saying anyone has job security in the times we are coming into in the next several years.” The uncertainty surrounding T28 and its implications, including restructuring and layoffs, fueled further fear. One respondent explained, “We have no idea what things will look like with T28...Many staff feel the same,” while another noted, “We do not have job security for the simple reason that KSU has openly discussed budget issues, has already implemented layoffs, and abolished many positions along with the demise and declining enrollment in the foreseeable future.”

Respondents Who Seriously Considered Leaving Kent State

Campus climate research has demonstrated the effects of campus climate on employee and student retention.²⁹ Thirty-seven percent ($n = 1,800$) of respondents indicated that they had seriously considered leaving Kent State, with a *higher percentage* of **Faculty** respondents (55%, $n = 382$) and **Staff** respondents (60%, $n = 799$) than **Undergraduate Student** respondents (22%, $n = 544$) and **Graduate/Professional Student** respondents (18%, $n = 75$) seriously considering leaving Kent State.³⁰ The table below provides an overview of this finding, as well as statistical differences that emerged between constituent groups who seriously considered leaving Kent State more than their counterparts.

All	Faculty (55%, $n = 382$) & Staff (60%, $n = 799$)	>	Undergraduate Students (22%, $n = 544$) & Graduate/Professional Students (18%, $n = 75$) ³¹
Undergraduate Students	Gender Expansive Undergraduate Students (28%, $n = 66$)	>	Men Undergraduate Students (20%, $n = 118$)
	Neurodivergent Undergraduate Students (23%, $n = 108$)	>	Undergraduate Students with No Disability (17%, $n = 212$)
	Undergraduate Students with Multiple Disabilities (35%, $n = 156$)	>	Neurodivergent Undergraduate Students (23%, $n = 108$), Undergraduate Students with Another Disability (23%, $n = 33$), & Undergraduate Students with No Disability (17%, $n = 212$)
	Queer-spectrum Undergraduate Students (28%, $n = 117$)	>	Heterosexual Undergraduate Students (20%, $n = 294$)
Graduate/Professional Students	Graduate/Professional Students with Multiple Disabilities (35%, $n = 15$)	>	Graduate/Professional Students with No Disability (14%, $n = 35$)

²⁹ Blumenfeld et al. (2016); Gardner (2013); Garvey & Rankin (2018); Johnson et al. (2014); Kutscher & Tuckwiller (2019); Lawrence et al. (2014); Pascale (2018); Ruud et al. (2018); Strayhorn (2013); Walpole et al. (2014)

³⁰ Analyses of respondents who seriously considered leaving by overall position status revealed an eta squared of 0.144, indicating a large effect size.

³¹ Analyses of respondents who seriously considered leaving by overall position status revealed an eta squared of 0.144, indicating a large effect size.

Faculty	Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty (65%, <i>n</i> = 195)	>	Non-Tenure-Track Faculty (53%, <i>n</i> = 134) & Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty (38%, <i>n</i> = 50)
	Non-Tenure-Track Faculty (53%, <i>n</i> = 134)	>	Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty (38%, <i>n</i> = 50)
	Gender Expansive Faculty (90%, <i>n</i> = 17)	>	Women (54%, <i>n</i> = 236) & Men (52%, <i>n</i> = 112) Faculty
	Faculty with a Single Disability (62%, <i>n</i> = 74) & Faculty with Multiple Disabilities (67%, <i>n</i> = 40)	>	Faculty with No Disability (49%, <i>n</i> = 209)
	Employed at Kent State 6-15 Years (64%, <i>n</i> = 176) & Employed More Than 15 Years (58%, <i>n</i> = 146)	>	Employed at Kent State Less Than 6 Years (33%, <i>n</i> = 50) ³²
Staff	Regional Campus Staff (70%, <i>n</i> = 116)	>	Kent Campus Staff (59%, <i>n</i> = 677)
	Staff Respondents with Multiple Disabilities (72%, <i>n</i> = 89)	>	Staff with No Disability (56%, <i>n</i> = 416)
	Employed at Kent State More Than 15 Years (70%, <i>n</i> = 16)	>	Employed at Kent State Less Than 6 Years (<i>n</i> < 5) ³³

Below are the top reasons why each position group considered leaving Kent State. Of note, a lack of sense of belonging was highlighted among Undergraduate and Graduate/Professional Student respondents, aligning with research on student experiences that underscores sense of belonging's critical role in promoting persistence and retention.³⁴ And while nearly a third of respondents indicated that they had seriously considered leaving, a follow-up question inquired about why these respondents chose to stay at the University.

³² Analyses of Faculty respondents who seriously considered leaving by years of employment at Kent State revealed an eta squared of 0.062, indicating a medium effect size.

³³ Due to a programming error, Classified Staff members were not asked about their years of employment at Kent State. Consequently, this result is based solely on data from Unclassified Staff/Administrators with Faculty Rank. Analyses of Staff respondents who seriously considered leaving by staff position status revealed an eta squared of 0.15, indicating a large effect size.

³⁴ Booker (2016); García & Garza (2016); Hausmann et al. (2007)

Respondents Who Seriously Considered Leaving Kent State

Undergraduate Students (22%, n = 544)	
Reasons for Wanting to Leave	• Lack of Sense of Belonging (44%, n = 237) • Personal Reasons (38%, n = 208) • Financial Reasons (32%, n = 175)
Reasons for Staying	• Close to Home (32%, n = 170) • Connections to Peers or Student Organizations (24%, n = 125) • Career and Professional Development Opportunities (22%, n = 117) • A Reason Not Listed on the Survey³⁵ (22%, n = 114)
Graduate/Professional Students (18%, n = 75)	
Reasons for Wanting to Leave	• Financial Reasons (43%, n = 32) • Lack of Support Services (39%, n = 29) • Lack of a Sense of Belonging (36%, n = 27)
Reasons for Staying	• A Reason Not Listed on the Survey³⁶ (32%, n = 24) • Career and Professional Opportunities (33%, n = 25) • Personal Reasons (24%, n = 18) • Connections to Faculty/Staff (23%, n = 17)
Faculty (55%, n = 382)	
Reasons for Wanting to Leave	• Felt Unvalued Because of Low Salary/Pay Rate (50%, n = 191) • Increased Workload (43%, n = 163) • Fear of My Job Being Eliminated (35%, n = 135)
Reasons for Staying	• Relationships with Students (40%, n = 151) • Personal Reasons (28%, n = 104) • Relationships with Coworkers (24%, n = 89) • Flexibility of Work Schedule (21%, n = 80) • Opportunities to Make a Positive Contribution (21%, n = 78)
Staff (60%, n = 799)	
Reasons for Wanting to Leave	• Felt Unvalued Because of Low Salary/Pay Rate (59%, n = 470) • Limited Advancement Opportunities (45%, n = 357) • Financial Difficulties Because of Low Salary/Pay Rate (44%, n = 353)

³⁵ Undergraduate Student respondents who selected "A reason not listed" provided write-in responses such as "changed major," "friends," "too late to transfer," and "parents making me."

³⁶ Graduate/Professional Student respondents who selected "A reason not listed" provided write-in responses such as "personal motivation to continue," "sheer spite," and "was not accepted to transfer elsewhere."

Reasons for Staying	• Benefits (41%, $n = 319$) • Relationships with Coworkers (31%, $n = 238$) • Flexibility of Work Schedule (22%, $n = 169$) • Personal Reasons (22%, $n = 167$) • Relationship with Supervisor/Manager (20%, $n = 156$)
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Qualitative Findings

Many Student respondents reported seriously considering leaving Kent State due to a lack of support. They expressed feeling unsupported on both institutional and personal levels, with one respondent lamenting, “Stop pretending to care and actually do some caring,” while another remarked, “It felt like the system of the campus was working against me and others.” Students criticized various support services, particularly SAS, which several respondents described as unhelpful, with one stating, “Having SAS Kent was AWFUL at following my accommodations.” Faculty and advisor support were also significant concerns, with professors being seen as unapproachable or even belittling, and advisors giving poor guidance. One student recounted being misadvised, leading to unexpected coursework and delays, while another expressed frustration with being enrolled in unnecessary classes as a freshman, costing both time and money.

Financial concerns also played a notable role in Student respondents’ dissatisfaction, with many struggling to afford tuition and associated costs. Comments such as “Financially, I can’t really afford it” and “I’m in debt for the rest of my life just from one year here” highlight the financial strain students face. Issues with financial aid compounded these challenges, as respondents shared difficulties securing sufficient aid, scholarships, or assistance, particularly for international students. Additionally, Students respondents raised concerns about the quality of education, criticizing the lack of academic rigor and outdated programs. One respondent remarked, “Kent State does not have the same name recognition as schools that many of my former peers attended,” while another noted, “[The] Program is outdated and when I brought my concerns to the department with proof of the state laws regarding the program learning requirements it was ignored.”

Finally, Student respondents highlighted frustrations with academic offerings and challenges. Limited course availability and scheduling conflicts were recurring themes, with one student describing course registration as “the Wild West.” Others were disappointed by unmet expectations, such as degrees turning out to be fully online despite prior assurances, or program changes that disrupted their educational plans. These combined issues of support, finances, educational quality, and course availability have contributed to

dissatisfaction among Student respondents and have prompted many to consider leaving the institution.

Employee respondents at Kent State shared several reasons why they had seriously considered leaving, with salary concerns being a major issue. Many described their pay as “shamefully low,” “unliveable,” and insufficient to cover the cost of living. Frustrations extended to the lack of meaningful pay raises, with one respondent stating, “raises do not cover the cost of living increases, let alone the increase in medical coverage costs.” Several noted that their salaries had not kept pace with inflation, reducing their purchasing power over time. Many also pointed out that they could earn significantly more elsewhere, with one respondent observing, “I can make \$50,000 more per year in industry,” and another remarking, “My pay rate is \$20,000 below what is the market rate for my position.”

A lack of feeling valued also drove employees to consider leaving. Respondents expressed sentiments such as “I feel neither appreciated nor valued,” and noted that this sentiment was shared across faculty, staff, and adjuncts. Specific grievances included Regional Campus faculty being treated as “second class.” Workload was another common concern, with respondents describing it as “unsustainable” and noting that increased responsibilities were often not accompanied by raises or promotions. One respondent shared, “Our department has continued to lose people, and their workloads continued to pile on me with no end in sight.”

Concerns about restructuring initiatives and poor leadership further contributed to dissatisfaction. Employees described the T28 and “Reimagining” initiatives as morale-destroying and anxiety-inducing, with fears of job elimination and diminished trust in administration. Leadership was criticized as “visionless,” with decisions described as “questionable” and “recklessly spending money.” Respondents also lamented a negative work environment, citing issues such as bullying, cliques, and toxic communication. Staff respondents specifically highlighted the impact of terrible supervisors and the lack of advancement opportunities, with one respondent noting, “I considered leaving when we were told that there were no opportunities for promotional growth in our department.”

Personal Experiences of Exclusionary Conduct

Several empirical studies reinforce the importance of the perception of non-discriminatory environments for positive learning and developmental outcomes.³⁷ Research also underscores the relationship between hostile workplace climates and subsequent productivity.³⁸ For the purposes of this study, “exclusionary conduct” was defined as “any exclusionary (e.g., shunning, ignoring), intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile (e.g., bullying, harassing) behavior at Kent State.”

Nineteen percent ($n = 907$) of respondents indicated that they experienced exclusionary conduct within the past year at Kent State, with a *higher percentage* of **Faculty** respondents (28%, $n = 193$) and **Staff** respondents (25%, $n = 333$) than **Undergraduate Student** respondents (13%, $n = 328$) and **Graduate/Professional Student** respondents (13%, $n = 53$) experiencing exclusionary behavior in the past year. Additional analyses revealed the following group differences.

Undergraduate Students

- A *higher percentage* of **Kent Campus Undergraduate Student** respondents (15%, $n = 284$) than **Regional Campus Undergraduate Student** respondents (8%, $n = 43$) experienced exclusionary conduct in the past year at Kent State.
- A *higher percentage* of **Gender Expansive Undergraduate Student** respondents (31%, $n = 74$) than **Women Undergraduate Student** respondents (12%, $n = 197$) and **Men Undergraduate Student** respondents (9%, $n = 54$) experienced exclusionary conduct in the past year at Kent State.
- A *higher percentage* of **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Minoritized Racial/Ethnic Identities (including Multiracial)** (16%, $n = 85$) than **White Undergraduate Student** respondents (13%, $n = 170$) experienced exclusionary conduct in the past year at Kent State.
- A *higher percentage* of **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (27%, $n = 122$) than **Neurodivergent Undergraduate Student**

³⁷ Dugan et al. (2012); Garvey et al. (2018); Hurtado & Ponjuan (2005); Kim & Hargrove (2013); Mayhew et al. (2016); Oseguera et al. (2017); Pascarella & Terenzini (2005); Strayhorn (2012)

³⁸ Bilimoria & Stewart (2009); Costello (2012); Dade et al. (2015); Eagan & Garvey (2015); Garcia (2016); Hirshfield & Joseph (2012); Jones & Taylor (2012); Levin et al. (2015); Rankin et al. (2010); Silverschanz et al. (2008)

respondents (15%, $n = 70$), **Undergraduate Respondents with Another Disability** (10%, $n = 15$), and **Undergraduate Student Respondents with No Disability** (8%, $n = 96$) experienced exclusionary conduct in the past year at Kent State.

- A higher percentage of **Neurodivergent Undergraduate Student** respondents (15%, $n = 70$) than **Undergraduate Student Respondents with No Disability** (8%, $n = 96$) experienced exclusionary conduct in the past year at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Queer-spectrum Undergraduate Student** respondents (26%, $n = 109$) than **Asexual Undergraduate Student** respondents (10%, $n = 9$), **Bisexual Undergraduate** respondents (17%, $n = 63$), and **Heterosexual Undergraduate Student** respondents (9%, $n = 137$) experienced exclusionary conduct in the past year at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Bisexual Undergraduate** respondents (17%, $n = 63$) than **Heterosexual Undergraduate Student** respondents (9%, $n = 137$) experienced exclusionary conduct in the past year at Kent State.

Graduate/Professional Students

- A higher percentage of **Graduate/Professional Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (33%, $n = 14$) than **Graduate/Professional Student Respondents with Another Disability** ($n < 5$) and **Graduate/Professional Student Respondents with No Disability** (11%, $n = 27$) experienced exclusionary conduct in the past year at Kent State.

Staff

- A higher percentage of **Classified Staff** respondents (33%, $n = 119$) than **Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank** respondents (22%, $n = 214$) experienced exclusionary conduct in the past year at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Gender Expansive Staff** respondents (55%, $n = 12$) and **Women Staff** respondents (28%, $n = 234$) than **Men Staff** respondents (19%, $n = 80$) experienced exclusionary conduct in the past year at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Staff Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (43%, $n = 52$) than **Staff Respondents with No Disability** (20%, $n = 149$) experienced exclusionary conduct in the past year at Kent State.

Faculty

- A higher percentage of **Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty** respondents (37%, $n = 110$) than **Non-Tenure-Track Faculty** respondents (25%, $n = 63$) and **Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty** respondents (14%, $n = 19$) experienced exclusionary conduct in the past year at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Non-Tenure-Track Faculty** respondents (25%, $n = 63$) than **Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty** respondents (14%, $n = 19$) experienced exclusionary conduct in the past year at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Gender Expansive Faculty** respondents (58%, $n = 11$) than **Men Faculty** respondents (23%, $n = 49$) experienced exclusionary conduct in the past year at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Faculty Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (46%, $n = 27$) than **Faculty Respondents with No Disability** (25%, $n = 103$) experienced exclusionary conduct in the past year at Kent State.
- Higher percentages of **Faculty Respondents Employed at Kent State 6-15 Years** (30%, $n = 81$) and **Faculty Respondents Employed at Kent State More Than 15 Years** (33%, $n = 82$) than **Faculty Respondents Employed at Kent State Less Than 6 Years** (14%, $n = 22$) experienced exclusionary conduct in the past year at Kent State.

Respondents who said that they experienced exclusionary behavior within the past year at Kent State were also invited to indicate the basis of the behavior. The following table offers the top bases for each position group.

Position	Top Bases of Conduct
Undergraduate Students (13%, $n = 328$)	• Sexual Identity (26%, $n = 83$) • Gender/Gender Identity (24%, $n = 77$) • Do Not Know (18%, $n = 57$) • Gender Expression (18%, $n = 59$) • Political Views (17%, $n = 56$)
Graduate/Professional Students (13%, $n = 53$)	• Position (26%, $n = 14$) • Racial Identity (23%, $n = 12$) • Gender/Gender Identity (21%, $n = 11$) • Age (17%, $n = 9$) • Political Views (17%, $n = 9$)

Staff (25%, <i>n</i> = 333)	• Position (52%, <i>n</i> = 171) • Do Not Know (22%, <i>n</i> = 71) • A Reason Not Listed on the Survey³⁹ (22%, <i>n</i> = 71) • Age (16%, <i>n</i> = 52) • Gender/Gender Identity (16%, <i>n</i> = 51)
Faculty (28%, <i>n</i> = 193)	• Position (33%, <i>n</i> = 63) • A Reason Not Listed on the Survey⁴⁰ (27%, <i>n</i> = 51) • Do Not Know (20%, <i>n</i> = 38) • Gender/Gender Identity (16%, <i>n</i> = 30) • Educational Credentials (e.g., BS, MS, Ph.D.) (15%, <i>n</i> = 29)

Qualitative Findings

Qualitative data yielded two themes from Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank respondents, Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents, and Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents: lack of accountability and a lack of faith in reporting systems. With regard to accountability, respondents expressed frustration when reporting problematic behavior. One respondent noted, “the toxic behavior is often ignored.” When issues were reported, respondents believed behaviors were “not addressed at all or poorly.” This lack of follow-through contributed to a perception that the University is not willing to address issues, as seen in the comment, “I don’t believe this university actually cares what happened to me or anyone else that complains as long as it stays silent.”

The theme of “lack of faith” emerged strongly among Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank respondents, Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents, and Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents, highlighting a pervasive lack of trust in Kent State’s reporting systems. One respondent shared, “I gave up. No one cared about what happened to me. After months of fighting, I gave up,” reflecting deep frustration and resignation. Another noted, “Biases are not confronted by the administration (e.g., those who supervise the actors), especially when these behaviors are not publicly done in a group.” This disillusionment was further reinforced by a perceived lack of accountability, as one individual explained, “I do

³⁹ Staff respondents who selected “A reason not listed” provided write-in responses such as “appearance,” “not part of the click,” “personality differences,” and “willingness to speak up and ask questions.”

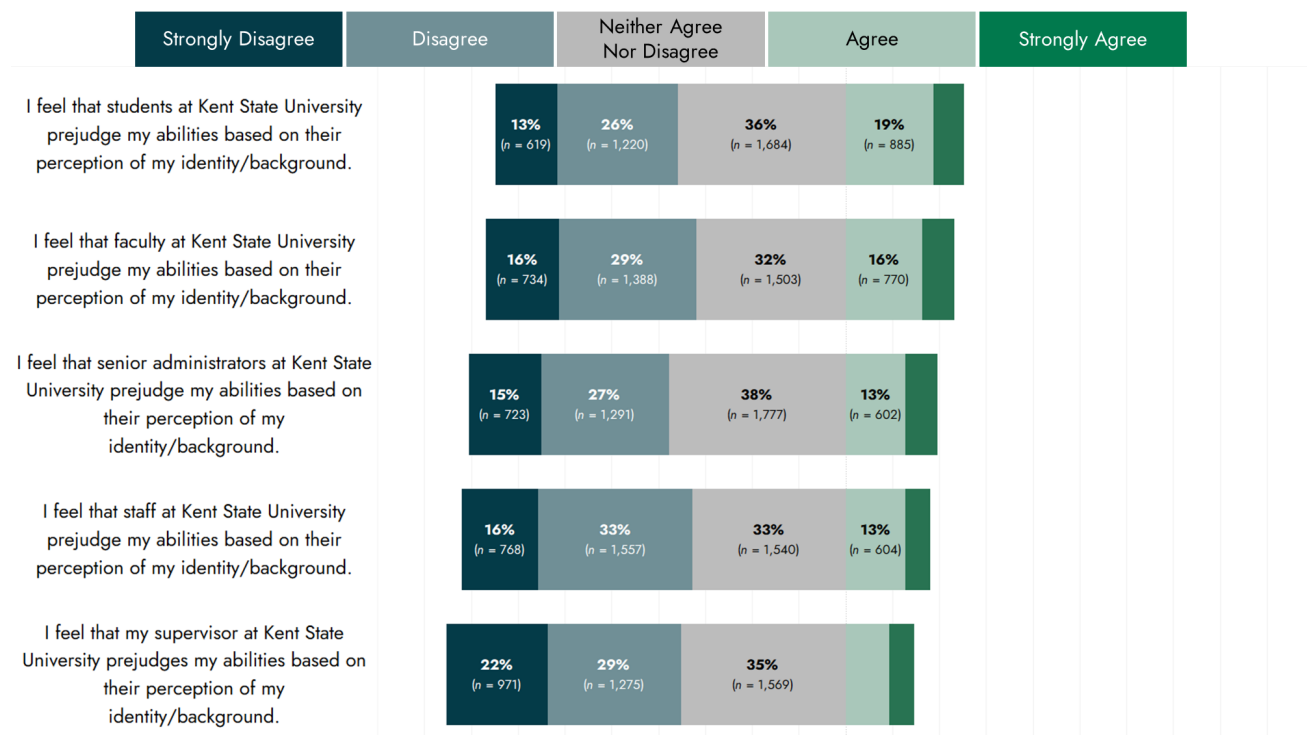
⁴⁰ Faculty respondents who selected “A reason not listed” provided write-in responses such as “department conflict,” “disagreeing with those in power,” “not being tenure track,” “the person who I have witnessed bullying people seems to bully or browbeat everyone.”

not feel that anything has been done about it. I feel that I am fighting a losing battle and no one is listening. No one outside of our department is monitoring anyone within our department."

Prejudgment Experiences

The survey asked respondents to express their level of agreement with the idea that certain members of the Kent State community prejudged their abilities based on perceived aspects of their identity or background. Specifically, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that Kent State faculty, staff, students, senior administrators, and their supervisor (if applicable) made prejudgments about their abilities based on identity or background.⁴¹

- 26% (*n* = 1,192) of respondents felt that Kent State students prejudged their abilities.
- 23% (*n* = 1,095) of respondents felt that Kent State faculty prejudged their abilities.
- 20% (*n* = 926) of respondents felt that Kent State senior administrators (e.g., dean, vice president, provost, RC administrators) prejudged their abilities.
- 18% (*n* = 852) of respondents felt that Kent State staff prejudged their abilities.
- 14% (*n* = 658) of respondents felt that their Kent State supervisor (if applicable) prejudged their abilities.



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with *n* < 5 are not shown above.

Figure 43. Prejudgment Experiences at Kent State

⁴¹ All percentages in the sections that follow reflect the combined total of respondents who “agreed”/“strongly agreed” with the item.

Regional Campus Respondents

The survey asked Kent State Regional Campus respondents whether they felt prejudged due to their campus location. Thirty-six percent ($n = 334$) of Regional Campus respondents indicated that they feel prejudged due to their campus location.

Qualitative Findings

Regional Campus respondents were invited to share more about their experiences. Data from Classified Staff, Faculty, and Undergraduate Student respondents revealed a theme of negative perception, reflecting a sense of marginalization associated with being from a regional campus. One respondent shared, “Some people seem to think that those from regional campuses don’t know as much, or are less-than because we are from a regional campus.” This sentiment was echoed by others who highlighted longstanding biases, with one noting, “Kent Main campus faculty usually looks down on regional campuses. This has been an issue, not for this year but over 20 years.” Additionally, respondents pointed to a lack of appreciation for regional campuses’ contributions, as reflected in the comment, “There is still a strong belief on X Campus that those at the regionals are only there because they can’t cut it at Kent Campus...Rarely are administrators on KC positive about the regionals. Sad. We bring Kent to areas that couldn’t otherwise have these opportunities.”

Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank respondents, along with Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents, expressed feeling undervalued and overlooked by the Kent Campus. One respondent stated, “Regional campus faculty, staff, and programs are undervalued by Kent Campus.” This sentiment was echoed by another who shared, “Salem has always been a campus that was warm and inviting. We always tried to do what was best for our students, but now it all goes down to the bottom line. I do not feel valued at all.” The sentiment of not feeling valued can also be seen in the comment, “Regional Campus faculty are devalued by Kent Campus faculty/administrators in a significant number of cases. Our pay is lower, and our opinions are not as valued except in a very few departments/schools.”

Likewise, a theme of being treated as second-class emerged from Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank respondents, Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents, and Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents. As one respondent remarked, “With all the changes happening to Regional Campuses, I definitely feel like we are treated as second-class citizens. I often feel that if the Regionals disappeared tomorrow, no one at the Kent Campus would care or notice.” Another shared, “The regionals are treated as less than

at times. We do the same work, often with more workload, but it is not looked at like that.” Experiences of being disregarded were also noted, with one respondent stating, “Regional faculty members are often dismissed, excluded, and ignored. When presenting ideas, they are frequently overlooked by Kent Campus department peers.” Frustration was further expressed over policies and programs that fail to address Regional Campuses’ specific needs, as one respondent commented, “It feels as if regional campuses are a lower priority than the Kent campus. Sometimes I feel as if policies and programming don’t consider the unique circumstances of students and employees at the regional campuses.”

In particular, Unclassified Staff/Administrator respondents commented on pay disparities. As one respondent shared, “Kent State has shown me my value by choosing to pay less than the competitive scale for my education and experience.” Others pointed to significant pay gaps between Regional and Main Campus employees, with one noting, “The pay isn’t equal on regional campuses as it is to Kent campus, meanwhile we get 100% Kent campus students here for help because they can’t get help from Kent campus.” This disparity was further emphasized by a respondent who stated, “Regional campus unrepresented classified employees are paid less than these same employees at main campus.”

Lastly, qualitative data from Undergraduate Student respondents highlighted perceived limited opportunities. One Undergraduate Student respondent expressed feeling a lack of engagement, stating, “There are not many clubs or activities. I understand it is a branch campus, but wish there was more ‘togetherness.’” Others noted the impact of these limitations on their overall college experience, with one sharing, “I feel sometimes as though my experience might be more enriching if I was on an actual campus.” Another Undergraduate Student respondent noted taking steps to address this when they shared, “Transferring to main campus because the stark campus has little social aspect and campus life.” Additionally, some shared examples of exclusionary incidents, with one stating, “Just last year, an email was sent out with an invitation to a free skate night on Kent Campus with free snacks and drinks. Minutes later the regional people were told that was mistakenly sent to us, so we were uninvited. Womp womp to you Regionals!”

Unjust Employment-Related Practices

Kent State employees were asked about their observations of unjust employment practices over the past year. For the purposes of this study, “unjust employment practices” was defined as “hiring practices (e.g., hiring supervisor bias, search committee bias, lack of effort in diversifying recruiting pool); faculty promotion, tenure, reappointment, and/or renewal or staff promotion and/or reclassification practices; or employment-related discipline or action, up to and including dismissal.”

Twenty-five percent ($n = 489$) of Employee respondents indicated that they observed unjust employment practices within the past year at Kent State. Specifically, 26% ($n = 334$) of Staff respondents and 23% ($n = 155$) of Faculty respondents observed such practices. No statistical differences emerged between Faculty and Staff respondents in terms of observing such practices; however, additional analyses revealed the following group differences.

Staff

- A higher percentage of **Classified Staff** respondents (34%, $n = 118$) than **Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank** respondents (23%, $n = 216$) observed unjust employment practices in the past year at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Women Staff** respondents (27%, $n = 222$) than **Men Staff** respondents (21%, $n = 92$) observed unjust employment practices in the past year at Kent State.

Faculty

- A higher percentage of **Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty** respondents (28%, $n = 85$) than **Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty** respondents (14%, $n = 18$) observed unjust employment practices in the past year at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Faculty Respondents with Racial/Ethnic Identities (including Multiracial)** (28%, $n = 32$) than **White Faculty** respondents (18%, $n = 67$) observed unjust employment practices in the past year at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Faculty Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (45%, $n = 27$) than **Neurodivergent Faculty** respondents (22%, $n = 14$), **Faculty Respondents with Another Disability** (20%, $n = 11$), and **Faculty Respondents with No Disability** (18%, $n = 74$) observed unjust employment practices in the past year at Kent State.

- Higher percentages of **Faculty Respondents Employed at Kent State 6-15 Years** (23%, $n = 61$) and **Faculty Respondents Employed at Kent State More Than 15 Years** (28%, $n = 69$) than **Faculty Respondents Employed at Kent State Less Than 6 Years** (12%, $n = 18$) observed unjust employment practices in the past year at Kent State.

Respondents who observed unjust employment practices were also invited to indicate the basis of the practices. The following table offers the top bases for Faculty and Staff.

Position	Observed Unjust Employment Practices	Top Bases of Practice(s)
Staff	26%, $n = 334$	• Position (27%, $n = 84$) • Cronyism (26%, $n = 81$) • Nepotism (19%, $n = 61$) • Racial Identity (17%, $n = 55$) • A Reason Not Listed on the Survey (17%, $n = 53$)
Faculty	23%, $n = 155$	• Cronyism (32%, $n = 48$) • Position (24%, $n = 36$) • Nepotism (18%, $n = 27$) • Racial Identity (17%, $n = 26$)

Qualitative Findings

Extending the quantitative data, the qualitative findings revealed several distinct themes across different groups of Employee respondents. Hiring practices emerged as a consistent theme across all Employee responses. Specifically, Faculty and Staff respondents raised concerns about fairness, transparency, and the need for improved hiring processes. Some noted issues with unqualified hires, stating, “They hire people who are not qualified,” and “Was passed over positions even though I was more qualified than the other candidates.” Others highlighted systemic flaws, with one suggesting, “There needs to be more university-wide training on how to run a hiring committee, interview biases, and the importance of structured interviews and objectivity/scoring of said interviews.” Frustrations about fairness were also voiced, with a respondent commenting, “The practice of advertising positions and going through an ‘interview’ process is unfair and plain

wrong...99% of the time the position is filled with an existing employee (qualified or not), leaving their position vacant for others to pick up duties.”

Diversity emerged as a key theme among responses from Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty and Unclassified Staff/Administrators, revealing varied perspectives on Kent State’s approach to equity and inclusion. Some raised concerns about underrepresentation and biases, noting, “Two Black females in the tenure track position have left. We have a large school and faculty but no TT Black faculty...which is also true at the college,” and “Lack of diverse search committees, harder scoring on BIPOC applicants than non-BIPOC applicants. Derogatory statements made during search committee. Passing over applicant with more related work experience that was a woman.” Others questioned the focus on diversity in hiring, with one stating, “People that were promoted because they are a minority not because of qualifications,” and another adding, “I believe that there is too much focus on hiring diversity instead of hiring the best people for jobs.”

The theme of promotion emerged as a significant concern among Staff respondents, with individuals citing bias, inconsistency, and inequity in advancement opportunities. One respondent observed, “Feel like some people in the office have to apply/interview to be promoted but others it just happens.” Another highlighted potential gender bias, noting, “While there are few opportunities for promotion for educated women within the staff, many men are promoted/or have positions created for them. It all depends on what clique you belong to.” Concerns about tailored roles were also raised, with one respondent sharing, “Positions being created so a person already at the university can be promoted to that position and given a large increase in salary.”

Favoritism and cronyism emerged as a theme specific to Unclassified Staff/Administrator responses, highlighting concerns about inequitable practices and perceived bias in decision-making. One respondent observed, “The opinions of two or three people seemed to be given more weight or validity than the opinions of others.” Another shared, “Two staff members were promoted based on their personal friendships with their supervisor, rather than any change or increase in duties.” Preferential hiring practices were a prominent concern, with one respondent explaining, “It seems like some positions are created so that someone can hire a friend. Then, a token interview exercise with a few other candidates is staged with – the friend – always coming out ahead of the other people who were interviewed for the position purely ‘for show.’”

Mental Health and Resilience at Kent State

Mental Health

Mental health influences individuals' experiences on campus and may impact their engagement and well-being. In this project, *mental health* is defined as a "set of painful mental and physical symptoms that are associated with normal fluctuations of mood in most people (e.g., depression and anxiety)."⁴² It was measured using the six questions⁴³ comprising the *Kessler 6 Psychological Distress Scale* (e.g., anxiety, stress, depression).⁴⁴

Analysis by overall position status found that **Undergraduate Student** and **Graduate/Professional Student** respondents had *lower Mental Health* scores than **Faculty** and **Staff** respondents. Additional tests revealed the following differences in *Mental Health* for each group.

Undergraduate Students

- **Gender Expansive Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Mental Health* scores than **Women Undergraduate Student** respondents and **Men Undergraduate Student** respondents.⁴⁵
- **Women Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Mental Health* scores than **Men Undergraduate Student** respondents.⁴⁶
- **Multiracial Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Mental Health* scores than **API Undergraduate Student** respondents, **Black Undergraduate Student** respondents, and **White Undergraduate Student** respondents.
- **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** had *lower Mental Health* scores than **Neurodivergent Undergraduate Student** respondents, **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Another Disability**, and **Undergraduate Student Respondents with No Disability**.⁴⁷

⁴² <https://dictionary.apa.org/psychological-distress>

⁴³ See Appendix B for survey items used to assess *Mental Health* and *Resilience*.

⁴⁴ Mykyta (2023)

⁴⁵ Analyses of Undergraduate Student respondents' *Mental Health* scores by gender identity revealed an eta squared of 0.060, indicating a medium effect size.

⁴⁶ Analyses of Undergraduate Student respondents' *Mental Health* scores by gender identity revealed an eta squared of 0.060, indicating a medium effect size.

⁴⁷ Analyses of Undergraduate Student respondents' *Mental Health* scores by disability status revealed an eta squared of 0.168, indicating a large effect size.

- **Neurodivergent Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Mental Health* scores than **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Another Disability** and **Undergraduate Student Respondents with No Disability**.⁴⁸
- **Bisexual Undergraduate Student** respondents and **Queer-spectrum Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Mental Health* scores than **Asexual Undergraduate Student** respondents and **Heterosexual Undergraduate Student** respondents.⁴⁹

Graduate/Professional Students

- **Multiracial Graduate/Professional Student** respondents had *lower Mental Health* scores than **Black Graduate/Professional Student** respondents.
- **Neurodivergent Graduate/Professional Student** respondents and **Graduate/Professional Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** had *lower Mental Health* scores than **Graduate/Professional Student Respondents with No Disability**.⁵⁰
- **Bisexual Graduate/Professional Student** respondents and **Queer-spectrum Graduate/Professional Student** respondents had *lower Mental Health* scores than **Heterosexual Undergraduate Student** respondents.⁵¹

Staff

- **Classified Staff** respondents had *lower Mental Health* scores than **Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank** respondents.
- **Multiracial Staff** respondents had *lower Mental Health* scores than **White Staff** respondents.
- **Neurodivergent Staff** respondents and **Staff Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** had *lower Mental Health* scores than **Staff Respondents with Another Disability** and **Staff Respondents with No Disability**.⁵²

⁴⁸ Analyses of Undergraduate Student respondents' *Mental Health* scores by disability status revealed an eta squared of 0.168, indicating a large effect size.

⁴⁹ Analyses of Undergraduate Student respondents' *Mental Health* scores by sexual identity revealed an eta squared of 0.086, indicating a medium effect size.

⁵⁰ Analyses of Graduate/Professional Student respondents' *Mental Health* scores by disability status revealed an eta squared of 0.127, indicating a large effect size.

⁵¹ Analyses of Graduate/Professional Student respondents' *Mental Health* scores by sexual identity revealed an eta squared of 0.069, indicating a medium effect size.

⁵² Analyses of Staff respondents' *Mental Health* scores by disability status revealed an eta squared of 0.157, indicating a large effect size.

Faculty

- **Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty** respondents had *lower Mental Health* scores than **Non-Tenure-Track Faculty** respondents and **Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty** respondents.
- **Gender Expansive Faculty** respondents had *lower Mental Health* scores than **Men Faculty** respondents.
- **Neurodivergent Faculty respondents** and **Faculty Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** had *lower Mental Health* scores than **Faculty Respondents with Another Disability** and **Faculty Respondents with No Disability**.⁵³

Resilience

Resilience also shapes individuals' campus experiences and likewise, their engagement and well-being. Psychological *resilience* is defined as "a dynamic process within an individual that enables them to adapt positively to adverse life conditions, where they can recover or 'bounce back' in a way that allows for positive growth."⁵⁴ It was measured using the *Brief Resilience Scale*⁵⁵, which assesses a unitary construct of resilience.⁵⁶

Analysis by overall position status⁵⁷ found that **Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Resilience* scores than **Graduate/Professional Student, Faculty**, and **Staff** respondents. Additionally, **Graduate/Professional Student** respondents had *lower Resilience* scores than **Faculty** and **Staff** respondents. Additional tests revealed the following statistically significant differences in *Resilience* for each group.

Undergraduate Students

- **Gender Expansive Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Resilience* scores than **Women Undergraduate Student** respondents and **Men Undergraduate Student** respondents.
- **Women Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Resilience* scores than **Men Undergraduate Student** respondents.

⁵³ Analyses of Faculty respondents' *Mental Health* scores by disability status revealed an eta squared of 0.111, indicating a large effect size.

⁵⁴ Sisto et al. (2019)

⁵⁵ See Appendix B for survey items used to assess *Mental Health* and *Resilience*.

⁵⁶ Smith et al (2008)

⁵⁷ Analyses of respondents' *Resilience* scores by position status revealed an eta squared of 0.087, indicating a medium effect size.

- **Multiracial Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Resilience* scores than **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Minoritized Racial/Ethnic Identities**.
- **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** had *lower Resilience* scores than **Neurodivergent Undergraduate Student** respondents, **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Another Disability**, and **Undergraduate Student Respondents with No Disability**.⁵⁸
- **Neurodivergent Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Resilience* scores than **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Another Disability** and **Undergraduate Student Respondents with No Disability**.⁵⁹
- **Undergraduate Student Respondents with Another Disability** had *lower Resilience* scores than **Undergraduate Student Respondents with No Disability**.⁶⁰
- **Bisexual Undergraduate Student** and **Queer-spectrum Undergraduate Student** respondents had *lower Resilience* scores than **Heterosexual Undergraduate Student** respondents.

Graduate/Professional Students

- **Hispanic/Latino/a/e/x, Multiracial, and White Graduate/Professional Student** respondents had *lower Resilience* scores than **Black Graduate/Professional Student** respondents.
- **Neurodivergent Graduate/Professional Student** respondents and **Graduate/Professional Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** had *lower Resilience* scores than **Graduate/Professional Student Respondents with No Disability**.⁶¹
- **Queer-spectrum Graduate/Professional Student** respondents (including Asexual and Bisexual) had *lower Resilience* scores than **Heterosexual Graduate/Professional Student** respondents.

⁵⁸ Analyses of Undergraduate Student respondents' *Resilience* scores by disability status revealed an eta squared of 0.102, indicating a medium effect size.

⁵⁹ Analyses of Undergraduate Student respondents' *Resilience* scores by disability status revealed an eta squared of 0.102, indicating a medium effect size.

⁶⁰ Analyses of Undergraduate Student respondents' *Resilience* scores by disability status revealed an eta squared of 0.102, indicating a medium effect size.

⁶¹ Analyses of Graduate/Professional Student respondents' *Resilience* scores by disability status revealed an eta squared of 0.086, indicating a medium effect size.

Staff

- **Classified Staff** respondents had *lower Resilience* scores than **Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank** respondents.
- **Women Staff** respondents had *lower Resilience* scores than **Men Staff** respondents.
- **Neurodivergent Staff** respondents and **Staff Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** had *lower Resilience* scores than **Staff Respondents with Another Disability** and **Staff Respondents with No Disability**.⁶²

Faculty

- **Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty** respondents had *lower Resilience* scores than **Non-Tenure-Track Faculty** and **Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty** respondents.
- **Neurodivergent Faculty** respondents and **Faculty Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** had *lower Resilience* scores than **Faculty Respondents with Another Disability** and **Faculty Respondents with No Disability**.⁶³

⁶² Analyses of Staff respondents' *Resilience* scores by disability status revealed an eta squared of 0.061, indicating a medium effect size.

⁶³ Analyses of Faculty respondents' *Resilience* scores by disability status revealed an eta squared of 0.063, indicating a medium effect size.

Sexual Misconduct at Kent State

Sexual misconduct experienced by students, faculty, and staff at U.S. institutions of higher education has been the subject of intense attention in recent years. In January 2014, responding to calls for state and federal action, former U.S. President Barack Obama established the White House Task Force to Protect Students From Sexual Assault. This Task Force released its first report, *Not Alone*, in April 2014, which emphasized the need for nationwide action to raise awareness about, effectively respond to, and ultimately prevent campus sexual assault.

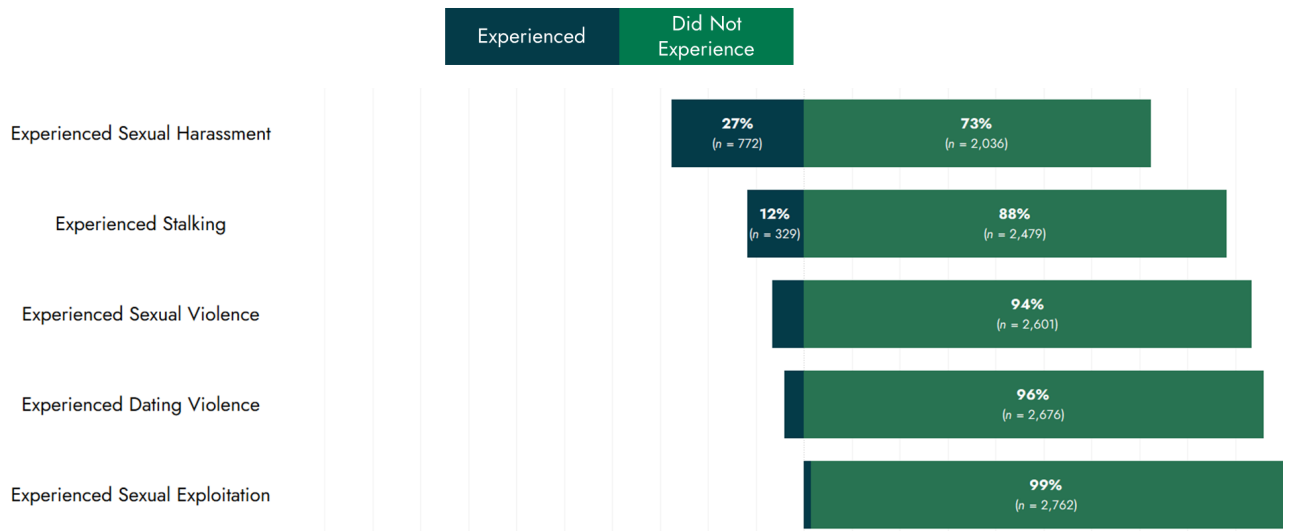
In their report, the Task Force recommended actions that should be taken by college and university communities, specifically campus administrations, regarding campus sexual assault. These recommendations included campus climate surveys to identify prevalence and perceptions related to campus sexual assault.⁶⁴ The United States Department of Justice's Office of Violence Against Women continues to support the use of campus climate surveys in its effort to reduce sexual assault, stalking, dating and intimate partner violence, and sexual harassment on college campuses.⁶⁵

Given this context, one section of the Kent State survey requested information regarding Student respondents' experiences with unwanted sexual misconduct. The survey assessed five forms of sexual misconduct: sexual- and gender-based harassment, stalking, dating and intimate partner violence, online/virtual sexual exploitation, and sexual violence.

- **27%** ($n = 772$) of Student respondents experienced **sexual- and gender-based harassment** during their time at Kent State.
- **12%** ($n = 329$) of Student respondents experienced **stalking** during their time at Kent State.
- **6%** ($n = 180$) of Student respondents experienced **sexual violence** during their time at Kent State.
- **4%** ($n = 111$) of Student respondents experienced **dating/intimate partner violence** during their time at Kent State.
- **1%** ($n = 41$) of Student respondents experienced **online/virtual sexual exploitation** during their time at Kent State.

⁶⁴ White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault (2014)

⁶⁵ The United States Department of Justice: Office of Violence Against Women (2018)



Notes: Data labels for bars with small percentages may not display. Response categories with $n < 5$ are not shown above.

Figure 44. Percentage of Students Experiencing Sexual Misconduct at Kent State

Sexual- and Gender-Based Harassment⁶⁶

Twenty-seven percent ($n = 772$) of Student respondents experienced sexual and gender-based harassment during their time at Kent State. Differences emerged by student position status, campus, gender identity, racial/ethnic identity, disability status, sexual identity, and first-generation status.

- A higher percentage of **Undergraduate Student** respondents (29%, $n = 694$) than **Graduate/Professional Student** respondents (19%, $n = 78$) experienced sexual- and gender-based harassment at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Kent Campus Student** respondents (32%, $n = 705$) than **Regional Campus Student** respondents (12%, $n = 67$) experienced sexual- and gender-based harassment at Kent State.
- Higher percentages of **Women** (27%, $n = 499$) and **Gender Expansive** (53%, $n = 135$) **Student** respondents than **Men Student** respondents (19%, $n = 132$) experienced sexual- and gender-based harassment at Kent State.

⁶⁶ Sexual- and Gender-Based Harassment is defined as “Unwanted or unwelcome conduct based on sex, gender identity, or gender expression that creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment. This includes verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior such as catcalling, inappropriate jokes, sexual comments, or discriminatory treatment based on gender.” See <https://www.eeoc.gov/sexual-harassment> for more information.

- A higher percentage of **Gender Expansive Student** respondents (53%, $n = 135$) than **Women Student** respondents (27%, $n = 499$) experienced sexual- and gender-based harassment at Kent State.
- Higher percentages of **Multiracial** (37%, $n = 70$) and **White Student** respondents than **API Student** respondents (19%, $n = 30$) experienced sexual- and gender-based harassment at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Multiracial Student** respondents (37%, $n = 70$) than **Black Student** respondents (23%, $n = 52$) experienced sexual- and gender-based harassment at Kent State.
- Higher percentages of **Neurodivergent Student** respondents (35%, $n = 181$) and **Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (43%, $n = 209$) than **Student Respondents with No Disability** (20%, $n = 289$) experienced sexual- and gender-based harassment at Kent State.
- Higher percentages of **Neurodivergent Student** respondents (35%, $n = 181$) and **Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (43%, $n = 209$) than **Student Respondents with Another Disability** (23%, $n = 37$) experienced sexual- and gender-based harassment at Kent State.
- Higher percentages of **Asexual** (32%, $n = 38$), **Bisexual** (43%, $n = 177$), and **Queer-spectrum Student** (44%, $n = 200$) respondents than **Heterosexual Student** respondents (20%, $n = 338$) experienced sexual- and gender-based harassment at Kent State.⁶⁷
- A higher percentage of **Continuing-Generation Student** respondents (32%, $n = 396$) than **First-Generation Student** respondents (24%, $n = 368$) experienced sexual- and gender-based harassment at Kent State.

Of those Student respondents who experienced sexual- and gender-based harassment at Kent State, 80% ($n = 585$) experienced the conduct within the past year. Eighty-three percent ($n = 612$) of the respondents noted that the experience happened on Kent State's campus.

Most commonly, Kent State students (82%, $n = 613$) perpetrated the harassment; however, 14% ($n = 107$) of the Student respondents who experienced sexual- and gender-based harassment identified the perpetrator as a Kent State faculty member or teaching staff. Seven percent ($n = 50$) said the perpetrator was a Kent State staff member. Five percent ($n = 34$)

⁶⁷ Analyses of Student respondents who experienced sexual- and gender-based harassment by sexual orientation revealed an eta squared of 0.061, indicating a medium effect size.

of Student respondents who experienced sexual- and gender-based harassment indicated they reported the experience(s) to Kent State's Title IX Office.

Stalking⁶⁸

Twelve percent ($n = 329$) of Student respondents experienced stalking during their time at Kent State. Differences emerged by student position status, campus, gender identity, racial/ethnic identity, disability status, and sexual identity.

- A higher percentage of **Undergraduate Student** respondents (13%, $n = 305$) than **Graduate/Professional Student** respondents (6%, $n = 24$) experienced stalking at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Kent Campus Student** respondents (13%, $n = 295$) than **Regional Campus Student** respondents (6%, $n = 34$) experienced stalking at Kent State.
- Higher percentages of **Gender Expansive** (16%, $n = 41$) and **Women** (13%, $n = 234$) **Student** respondents than **Men Student** respondents (7%, $n = 50$) experienced stalking at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Multiracial Student** respondents (19%, $n = 36$) than **API** (8%, $n = 12$) and **Black** (8%, $n = 18$) **Student** respondents experienced stalking at Kent State.
- Higher percentages of **Neurodivergent Student** respondents (16%, $n = 83$) and **Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (19%, $n = 90$) than **Student Respondents with No Disability** (8%, $n = 124$) experienced stalking at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (19%, $n = 90$) than **Student Respondents with Another Disability** (10%, $n = 16$) experienced stalking at Kent State.
- Higher percentages of **Bisexual** (17%, $n = 70$) and **Queer-spectrum** (15%, $n = 68$) **Student** respondents than **Heterosexual Student** respondents (10%, $n = 164$) experienced stalking at Kent State.

⁶⁸ Stalking is defined as "A pattern of unwanted and repeated attention, harassment, or contact that causes fear or distress in the victim. This can include following someone, sending repeated messages, showing up uninvited, or monitoring a person's activities. Stalking can occur in person or online (cyberstalking)." See <https://www.cdc.gov/intimate-partner-violence/about/about-stalking.html> for more information.

Of those Student respondents who experienced stalking at Kent State, 78% ($n = 242$) experienced the conduct within the past year. Seventy-two percent ($n = 228$) of the respondents noted that the experience happened on Kent State's campus.

The majority of Student respondents who experienced stalking indicated that Kent State students (84%, $n = 269$) perpetrated the stalking. Three percent each identified the perpetrator as a Kent State faculty/instructional staff ($n = 8$) or Kent State staff member ($n = 10$). Six percent ($n = 19$) of Student respondents who experienced stalking indicated they reported the experience(s) to Kent State's Title IX Office.

Dating/Intimate Partner Violence⁶⁹

Four percent ($n = 111$) of Student respondents experienced dating/intimate partner violence during their time at Kent State. Differences emerged by student position status, racial/ethnic identity, disability status, and sexual identity.

- A *higher percentage* of **Undergraduate Student** respondents (4%, $n = 102$) than **Graduate/Professional Student** respondents (2%, $n = 9$) experienced dating/intimate partner violence at Kent State.
- A *higher percentage* of **Multiracial Student** respondents (8%, $n = 15$) than **Student Respondents with Minoritized Racial/Ethnic Identities** (3%, $n = 13$) experienced dating/intimate partner violence at Kent State.
- A *higher percentage* of **Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (7%, $n = 33$) than **Student Respondents with Another Disability** ($n < 5$) and **Student Respondents with No Disability** (3%, $n = 43$) experienced dating/intimate partner violence at Kent State.
- A *higher percentage* of **Bisexual Student** respondents (7%, $n = 27$) than **Heterosexual Student** respondents (3%, $n = 45$) experienced dating/intimate partner violence at Kent State.

Among Student respondents who reported experiencing dating/intimate partner violence at Kent State, 70% ($n = 67$) indicated that the conduct occurred within the past year. Just over half (55%, $n = 56$) said the incidents took place on Kent State's campus.

⁶⁹ Dating/Intimate Partner Violence is defined as "Physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual abuse within a romantic or intimate relationship. This includes controlling behavior, threats, manipulation, physical harm, or coercion by a current or former partner. It can affect people of all genders and sexual orientations." See <https://www.cdc.gov/intimate-partner-violence/about/index.html> for more information.

Seventy percent ($n = 71$) of Student respondents who experienced dating/intimate partner violence at Kent State identified the perpetrators as fellow Kent State students. Eleven percent ($n = 11$) identified campus visitors as the perpetrator. When asked if they reported the incidents to Kent State's Title IX Office, only 7% ($n = 7$) of Student respondents who experienced dating/intimate partner violence indicated that they had.

Online/Virtual Sexual Exploitation⁷⁰

One percent ($n = 41$) of Student respondents experienced online/virtual sexual exploitation during their time at Kent State. Differences emerged by campus and disability status.

- A *higher percentage* of **Kent Campus Student** respondents (2%, $n = 37$) than **Regional Campus Student** respondents ($n < 5$) experienced online/virtual sexual exploitation at Kent State.
- A *higher percentage* of **Student Respondents with at Least One Disability** (3%, $n = 29$) than **Student Respondents with No Disability** (1%, $n = 12$) experienced online/virtual sexual exploitation at Kent State.

Among Student respondents who experienced online/virtual sexual exploitation at Kent State, 68% ($n = 25$) indicated that the conduct occurred within the past year. Forty-five percent ($n = 17$) said the incidents took place on Kent State's campus.

Fifty-seven percent ($n = 21$) of Student respondents who reported experiencing online/virtual sexual exploitation at Kent State identified the perpetrators as fellow Kent State students. Nineteen percent ($n = 7$) identified campus visitors as the perpetrator. Fewer than five of the Student respondents who experienced online/virtual sexual exploitation indicated that they reported the incidents to Kent State's Title IX Office.

⁷⁰ Online/Virtual Sexual Exploitation is defined as "The use of digital platforms to manipulate, coerce, or abuse someone sexually. This includes sharing intimate images without consent (revenge porn), grooming, sextortion, or forcing someone to engage in sexual acts online." See <https://www.nsvrc.org/saam/2022/learn/whatisonlinesexualabuse> for more information.

Sexual Violence⁷¹

Six percent ($n = 180$) of Student respondents experienced sexual violence during their time at Kent State. Differences emerged by student status, campus, gender identity, racial/ethnic identity, disability status, and sexual identity.

- A higher percentage of **Undergraduate Student** respondents (7%, $n = 163$) than **Graduate/Professional Student** respondents (4%, $n = 17$) experienced sexual violence at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Kent Campus Student** respondents (8%, $n = 170$) than **Regional Campus Student** respondents (2%, $n = 10$) experienced sexual violence at Kent State.
- Higher percentages of **Gender Expansive** (8%, $n = 20$) and **Women** (8%, $n = 140$) **Student** respondents than **Men Student** respondents (3%, $n = 18$) experienced sexual violence at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Multiracial Student** respondents (14%, $n = 27$) than **API** ($n < 5$) and **Black** (5%, $n = 11$) **Student** respondents experienced sexual violence at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **White Student** respondents (7%, $n = 104$) than **API Student** respondents ($n < 5$) experienced sexual violence at Kent State.
- Higher percentages of **Neurodivergent Student** respondents (10%, $n = 52$) and **Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities** (13%, $n = 60$) than **Student Respondents with Another Disability** (5%, $n = 7$) and **Student Respondents with No Disability** (4%, $n = 53$) experienced sexual violence at Kent State.
- A higher percentage of **Bisexual Student** respondents (13%, $n = 52$) than **Heterosexual Student** respondents (5%, $n = 81$) experienced sexual violence at Kent State.

Among Student respondents who experienced sexual violence at Kent State, 64% ($n = 110$) indicated that the conduct occurred within the past year. Fifty-one percent ($n = 90$) said the incidents took place on Kent State's campus.

⁷¹ Sexual Violence is defined as "Any sexual act committed against someone without their consent. This includes rape, sexual assault, forced sexual acts, and any form of non-consensual sexual contact. Sexual violence can be perpetrated by strangers, acquaintances, or intimate partners." See <https://www.cdc.gov/sexual-violence/about/index.html> for more information.

Seventy-eight percent ($n = 138$) of Student respondents who reported experiencing sexual violence at Kent State identified the perpetrators as fellow Kent State students. Four percent ($n = 7$) identified a Kent State staff member as the perpetrator, and 16% ($n = 28$) indicated that the perpetrator was a visitor to campus. Three percent ($n = 6$) of Student respondents who experienced sexual violence indicated that they reported the incidents to Kent State's Title IX Office.

Institutional Support

At the close of the survey, respondents were asked to identify three initiatives, programs, or policies at Kent State that have contributed to their success and three barriers that have hindered their success. Below are themes that emerged from the qualitative findings.⁷²

Position	Contributions to Success	Barriers to Success
Students	<i>All Students</i> • Positive Academic Experiences • Academic Supports • Advising • Faculty • Financial Support • Identity-Based Support • Programs and Departments • Student Activity Groups • Student Resources <i>Undergraduate Students</i> • Tutoring • Student Accommodation Services (Student Accessibility Services)	<i>Undergraduate Students</i> • Challenges Related to Courses • Professors <i>Graduate/Professional Students</i> • Parking/Transportation
Staff	<i>All Staff</i> • Flexible Work Arrangements • Great Benefits • Professional Development Opportunities • The People • Training Opportunities • Wellness Initiatives	<i>All Staff</i> • Limited Opportunities for Advancement/Promotion • Pay

⁷² For more information on these qualitative findings, see Appendix A.

***Unclassified
Staff/Administrators with
Faculty Rank***

- Tuition Waiver
-

Faculty

All Faculty

- Center for Teaching and Learning
- Mentoring
- The People

Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty

- Support for Research

Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

- Professional Development Opportunities
 - Tuition Waiver
-

Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty

- Administration/Leadership
- Teaching Load

Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

- Pay
- Workload

Key Takeaways

The findings of Kent State's *Engagement and Well-Being Survey* reveal critical insights into the experiences and perceptions of students, faculty, and staff. The survey, conducted by Rankin Climate, LLC in collaboration with Kent State's Climate Study Working Group (CSWG), underscores both the strengths and areas needing attention within the University's climate. Below is a summary of key strengths and areas of potential focus.

Key Strengths

- **General Comfort with Kent State's Climate:** Many respondents perceived Kent State's climate positively, with 75% of respondents indicating they felt "comfortable" or "very comfortable" with the overall Kent State climate. Student respondents, in particular, had a high level of comfort with the overall Kent State climate, with 83% of Undergraduate Student respondents and 81% of Graduate/Professional Student respondents indicating they felt "comfortable" or "very comfortable." Classroom settings were particularly praised, with 83% of Undergraduate Student respondents, 85% of Graduate/Professional Student respondents, and 85% of Faculty respondents expressing high levels of comfort with the climate in their classes. This suggests that academic spaces at Kent State are generally inclusive and conducive to engagement, fostering a welcoming atmosphere for learning and collaboration.
- **Positive Experiences for Graduate/Professional Students:** Kent State demonstrates a notable strength in fostering positive advising and departmental communication experiences for Graduate/Professional Students. The majority of Graduate/Professional Student respondents expressed satisfaction with their advisors, highlighting qualities such as accessibility (79%), responsiveness (81%), and clear communication of expectations (72%), while 82% felt comfortable sharing professional goals with their advisors. Additionally, departmental communication emerged as a key strength, with 84% of respondents reporting prompt responses from non-advisor faculty and 83% noting similar responsiveness from department staff. These findings reflect the University's strong commitment to building supportive relationships and maintaining effective communication that enhances the graduate/professional student experience.
- **Workplace Flexibility and Support:** Data from Staff respondents highlighted supervisors' support for work-life balance as a strength, with 81% of Staff respondents feeling this was adequately managed. Flexibility in scheduling was also a highlight, noted by 78% of Staff respondents. Competitive benefits, such as

vacation time (81%), health insurance (74%), and retirement plans (70%), further contributed to the positive workplace climate, alongside opportunities for engagement in wellness programs and clear definitions of workplace responsibilities.

- **Clarity in Policies and Academic Freedom:** Faculty respondents praised the clarity of institutional policies, particularly Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents, 80% of whom noted the existence of clear tenure criteria. Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents similarly perceived clear expectations for contract renewal (76%) and responsibilities (74%). Across all Faculty respondents, 73% felt Kent State perceived Kent State as valuing academic freedom, reflecting the institution's commitment to fostering intellectual exploration and upholding academic integrity.

Key Areas of Potential Focus

- **Disparities in Sense of Belonging:** While many respondents reported positive experiences, disparities in *Sense of Belonging* were evident, particularly among gender-expansive individuals, neurodivergent participants, and those with multiple disabilities. Compared to their Graduate/Professional Student peers, Undergraduate Student respondents had lower levels of belonging. Additionally, Multiracial Undergraduate Student and Faculty respondents had lower levels of belonging than certain of their peers, as did White Graduate/Professional Student respondents. These findings indicate the need for tailored efforts to improve inclusion and support for diverse populations.
- **Differences in Mental Health and Resilience:** Undergraduate and Graduate/Professional Student respondents had significantly lower mental health scores compared to Faculty and Staff respondents. These differences were particularly pronounced among queer-spectrum and gender expansive students, neurodivergent individuals, and respondents with disabilities. Resilience scores followed a similar pattern, with gender-expansive students and those with minoritized racial/ethnic identities expressing a lower capacity to recover from challenges, highlighting the importance of enhanced mental health and support initiatives.
- **Workplace Inequities and Career Advancement Challenges:** Faculty and Staff respondents expressed concerns about workload inequities, lack of recognition, and limited career advancement opportunities. Salary competitiveness was a key issue, with only 27% of Tenure-Track Faculty respondents, 15% of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents, and 14% of Staff respondents agreeing that salaries were competitive. Less than half of Staff respondents felt included in career-advancing opportunities, and only 22% agreed that clear procedures for advancement were in place.

- **Exclusionary Conduct and Harassment:** Nineteen percent of respondents indicated that they experienced exclusionary conduct in the past year, with Faculty (28%) and Staff (25%) respondents being the most affected groups. Across all groups, supplemental analyses revealed that respondents with disabilities were particularly susceptible to such conduct.
- **Retention Threats:** Over one-third of respondents, including 55% of Faculty respondents and 60% of Staff respondents, seriously considered leaving Kent State. Low compensation, limited advancement opportunities, and increased workloads were frequently cited as driving factors. Staff respondents, in particular, noted feeling undervalued and overburdened, with many reporting unfilled positions leading to heightened responsibilities without additional compensation.

Collectively, these findings provide a roadmap for Kent State to strategically address challenges while building on its strengths to create a more inclusive and supportive campus environment.

Next Steps

Embarking on this assessment is further evidence of Kent State's commitment to ensure that students, faculty, and staff work in an environment that nurtures a culture of wellbeing, respect, and inclusivity. The primary purpose of this assessment was to investigate the engagement and well-being among members of the Kent State community and to shed light on respondents' experiences of living, working, and learning at the institution. At a minimum, the results add empirical data to the current knowledge base and provide more information on Kent State members' experiences as a whole and of the various identity groups within the student, faculty, and staff community.

Assessments and reports, however, are not enough to bring about change. Developing strategic actions and an implementation plan is critical to improving the climate, even as institutions of higher education grapple with other challenges. Kent State is committed to using the assessment data to build on the successes and address the challenges uncovered in the report as it follows through with the commitment established at the outset of the project.

Rankin Climate will work with Kent State to review the results from this assessment and the prioritized suggestions from the survey to support the development of practices, programs and/or policies that facilitate the development of meaningful change.

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Appendix A – Qualitative Analysis Report

Introduction

The qualitative report provides the findings from 12 open-ended response questions included in the survey titled *Engagement & Well-Being Survey*, conducted at Kent State. In spring 2024, Kent State contracted with Rankin Climate, LLC (Rankin Climate) to conduct a university-wide assessment. The survey was constructed based on Rankin Climate's prior work and in collaboration with students, faculty, and staff of Kent State's Climate Study Working Group (CSWG).

The qualitative report offers a summary of themes identified across the open-response questions. In some ways, the findings are similar to the results of other climate studies and mirror the experiences offered in the literature about historically underrepresented and/or underserved groups, though there are also noted differences.

Methodology

The Rankin Climate team reviewed respondent comments using qualitative content thematic analysis.⁷³ Content thematic analysis is used to systematically identify, analyze, and interpret recurring patterns within textual data, aligned with the study objectives. Content analysis goes beyond merely counting words to intensely examine language for the purpose of classifying large amounts of text into an efficient number of categories that represent similar meanings (e.g., themes).⁷⁴ It is one of numerous research methods used to analyze text data and focuses on the characteristics of language as communication with attention to the content or contextual meaning of the text.⁷⁵ The themes can represent either explicit communication or inferred communication.

The data analysis process commenced with Rankin Climate researchers familiarizing themselves with the dataset through repeated readings, ensuring a comprehensive grasp of the content. Initial codes were generated to capture meaningful segments directly related to the study. These codes were then grouped into themes that highlighted overarching patterns and connections within the data. The themes underwent a rigorous review and refinement process to enhance their accuracy and reflect the content faithfully. Each theme was then distinctly defined and given descriptive names to encapsulate its essence.

⁷³ Krippendorff, K. (2018)

⁷⁴ Luttrell (2010)

⁷⁵ Gläser-Zikuda et al. (2020)

Findings from the thematic analysis are reported using a narrative approach, complemented by a relevant quotation to illustrate the identified themes. Ethical considerations such as maintaining participant anonymity and confidentiality, were strictly adhered to throughout the data collection and analysis process. Additionally, the research team acknowledged the potential influence of personal biases and preconceptions and actively worked to minimize their impact on the analysis.

It is important to note that the content thematic analysis method has inherent limitations, including the subjectivity associated with qualitative research and constraints related to sample size. However, despite these limitations, thematic analysis is a valuable tool for gaining profound insights into the study objectives, providing a solid foundation for further discussion and potential strategic actions. Also, important to note, this methodology does not reflect a comprehensive qualitative study. Comments were not used to develop grounded hypotheses independent of the quantitative data. Respondents were “primed” by the quantitative questions that preceded the open-ended text boxes.

Qualitative Themes

Q15 - Seriously Considered Leaving (Student Respondents)

Three hundred sixty-six Undergraduate and Graduate Student respondents elaborated on why they had seriously considered leaving Kent State. Five themes emerged from the responses: lack of support, financial concerns, lack of quality, challenging academics, and academic offerings. The table below presents the themes, as well as a representative quote.

Student Respondents		
THEME	DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE SUPPORTING QUOTE
Lack of Support	Student respondents perceived a lack of support while working toward their degree.	<i>"I have contacted multiple people with questions concerning my major, and they just tell me to contact somebody else, and then nobody responds."</i>
Financial Concerns	Student respondents worried about how to afford attending Kent State.	<i>"Kent State has a very good fashion program, but due to financial reasons, I find it very hard to be able to stay."</i>

Lack of Quality	Student respondents were unhappy with the quality of education available at Kent State.	<i>"The curriculum is not up to standards at other major top universities, the professors are subpar at best."</i>
Challenging Academics	Student respondents struggled to be successful in their academic pursuits.	<i>"I considered leaving because of how hard the coursework was and didn't feel confident in my abilities."</i>
Academic Offerings	Student respondents were frustrated by the academic offerings available to them.	<i>"I considered leaving Kent State because I was undergoing a change of major, and there were majors I was considering at other campuses."</i>

Q15 - Seriously Considered Leaving (Employee Respondents)

Six hundred forty-two Employee respondents elaborated on why they had seriously considered leaving Kent State. Six themes emerged across all respondents: low salary, not feeling valued, heavy workload, restructuring concerns, poor leadership, and negative work environment. In addition, two themes emerged specifically for Staff respondents: terrible supervisor, and lack of advancement opportunities. The table below presents the themes, as well as a representative quote.

Employee Respondents		
THEME	DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE SUPPORTING QUOTE
Low Salary	Employee respondents were frustrated by low salaries.	<i>"I am seriously considering leaving because the salary is not enough to live on and advance in life."</i>
Not Feeling Valued	Employee respondents did not feel valued by the University.	<i>"I have seriously considered leaving when it's been evident that my own and others' value to the university is not being appreciated and often taken for granted."</i>
Heavy Workload	Heavy workloads were overwhelming and uncompensated.	<i>"As positions are removed or left unfilled due to saving money, but those who continue to work have their workload increased without even an</i>

		<i>attempt at improving compensation for the added workload."</i>
Restructuring Concerns	Employee respondents had concerns about restructuring initiatives.	<i>"Given the changes in higher ed and restructuring of university in profound ways, I'm not sure I want to continue in this line of work. It's been my life for almost thirty years (I'm 51) but it feels like higher ed is a sinking ship that has lost its way."</i>
Poor Leadership	Employee respondents were not happy with the quality of University leadership.	<i>"Lack of confidence in my campus leadership."</i>
Negative Work Environment	Employee respondents were unhappy with their work environment.	<i>"I am frustrated by a lack of professionalism and toxic environment in college."</i>
Staff Respondents		
Terrible Supervisor	Experiences with a terrible supervisor led Staff respondents to consider leaving.	<i>"Immediate supervisor was a bully who negatively impacted my mental health. I stayed when allowed to move to another department."</i>
Lack of Advancement Opportunities	Staff respondents were frustrated by a lack of advancement opportunities.	<i>"I have been a staff member at Kent State for many years (in various roles) and find the lack of advancement opportunities very disheartening and devaluing."</i>

Q26 - Experienced Exclusionary Behavior

Question 26 queried respondents on their experience of exclusionary behavior. Three hundred and fifty-four respondents shared experiences. Two themes emerged from Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank respondents, Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents, and Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents: lack of accountability and no faith. The table below presents the themes, as well as a representative quote. More detailed summaries follow with additional supporting quotations.

Exclusionary Conduct Experiences		
THEME	DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE SUPPORTING QUOTE
Lack of Accountability	Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank respondents, Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents, and Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents did not believe the University adequately addressed problematic behavior.	<i>"KSU is highly skilled in glossing over discriminations."</i>
No Faith	Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank respondents, Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents, and Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents had no faith in reporting systems or personnel.	<i>"My experiences have taught me that there is no real way to report or confront incidents safely or fairly."</i>

Q63 - Faculty Workplace Climate

Two hundred twenty-three Faculty respondents shared their perspectives on topics such as salaries, workload, shared governance, professional development, and job security. Three themes were present in all responses: heavy workload, inequitable workloads, and budget/restructure concerns. One theme emerged from Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents only: lack of support for research. In addition, there was one theme specific to Non-Tenure-Track and Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty respondents: low salaries. The table below presents the themes, as well as a representative quote.

Faculty Respondents		
THEME	DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE SUPPORTING QUOTE
Heavy Workload	Faculty respondents shared concerns about their heavy workloads.	<i>"I wear multiple hats that sometimes becomes overwhelming and it appears they now want us to do more with less - and not be compensated."</i>

Inequitable Workloads	Faculty respondents commented on inequitable workloads between positions.	<i>"There do seem to be some differences in workload between NTTs and tenured/tenure-track faculty."</i>
Budget/ Restructure Concerns	Faculty respondents shared their concerns about the budget crisis and restructuring plans.	<i>"The restructuring proposal for Transformation 28 has and will continue to greatly impact faculty and student morale across campus and has significantly changed my viewpoint of the university as a workplace in a negative manner."</i>
Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Respondents		
Lack of Support for Research	Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents wanted better support for research from Kent State.	<i>"First, we want to be an R1 research center. However, we also have to balance workload to reflect that. A 3-3 or 3-2 load for tenured tract faculty is not consistent."</i>
Non-Tenure-Track and Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty Respondents		
Low Salaries	Non-Tenure-Track and Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty respondents were frustrated by their low salaries.	<i>"As an adjunct faculty member, I teach as many classes as some full-time faculty, but with much lower pay and without the benefits or job security."</i>

Q67 - Staff Workplace Climate

Three hundred sixty-eight Staff respondents shared their perspectives on topics such as salary, performance evaluations, career opportunities, and taking extended leave. Six themes emerged from the responses: salary concerns, good place to work, merit pay is desired, lack of advancement opportunities, staff are undervalued, and concerns about the future. The table below presents the themes, as well as a representative quote.

Staff Workplace Climate		
THEME	DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE SUPPORTING QUOTE
Salary Concerns	Staff respondents shared their concerns about low salaries.	<i>"The staff salaries make it quite challenging to attract and retain employees, especially when those receiving a low/entry level salary do not make a living wage."</i>
Good Place to Work	Staff respondents commented that Kent State was a good place to work.	<i>"Kent State has been a wonderful place to work. My supervisor and colleagues have always been supportive of me."</i>
Merit Pay Desired	Staff respondents explained why they wanted merit pay.	<i>"Raises are given across the board (to my knowledge) with no opportunities for merit-based raises. The person who does the bare minimum but still shows up gets the same raise as someone who takes on additional responsibilities and goes above and beyond their job duties."</i>
Lack of Advancement Opportunities	Staff respondents lamented a lack of advancement opportunities.	<i>"There is no path available for staff to grow in their position."</i>
Staff are Undervalued	Staff respondents commented that they felt staff are undervalued.	<i>"Top administrators are always appreciated and treated with respect, but the same does not go for staff. We are shushed a lot and never have a voice. At times, our voices are silenced."</i>
Concerns about the Future	Staff respondents shared their concerns about the future of Kent State.	<i>"It's difficult as we approach T-28 to feel confident in a future at Kent State. We receive a lot of doom and gloom"</i>

		<i>messages and it doesn't seem as though units that are growing in enrollment, doing well financially, etc. are any safer than any other unit - which really doesn't make a lot of sense."</i>
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Q69 - Graduate/Professional Student Experiences

One hundred Graduate Student respondents shared their perspectives on topics such as advising, faculty members, funding, and department staff. Five themes were present in all responses: good experiences, poor advising, lack of support, lack of funding, and online experience. The table below presents the themes, as well as a representative quote.

Graduate/Professional Student Experiences		
THEME	DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE SUPPORTING QUOTE
Good Experiences	Graduate/Professional Student respondents described how positive their graduate school experience was.	<i>"The environment here in Kent is really good, I really enjoyed the vibes, advisor is supportive and got enough opportunities to explore in the field of research."</i>
Poor Advising	Graduate/Professional Student respondents shared frustrations with poor advising.	<i>"I have found that working with my advisor isn't the easiest task. Perhaps they are busy with moderating classes and other students but it has been difficult at times to get them to respond to my email or provide me with clear guidance on what I should do (classes, internships, etc.)"</i>
Lack of Support	Graduate/Professional Student respondents described a lack of support from faculty and staff.	<i>"Staff in the graduate program does not care. They don't care to get to know students and don't care if you don't graduate on time."</i>

Lack of Funding	Graduate/Professional Student respondents lamented a lack of funding, especially for conference travel.	<i>"The funding provided for the travel related expenses for research conferences are not adequate as it covers only part of the expenses, because of this reason I have never wanted to go to any conference as it would add to my existing financial stress."</i>
Online Experience	Graduate/Professional Student respondents described their experiences with online classes and programs.	<i>"I am a graduate student taking 100% online courses so very little interaction with others besides classmates and professors virtually within class portal."</i>

Q72 - Experiences of Transgender/Non-Binary Respondents

Question 72 queried Transgender/Non-Binary respondents on their experience of barriers in relation to their gender identity. One hundred and forty-eight individuals provided responses to this item. The theme of no barrier emerged across the following respondents: Undergraduate Students, Graduate/Professional Students, and Staff. One theme of misuse of pronouns and name emerged from Undergraduate Student respondents, Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank respondents, and Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents. The table below presents the themes, as well as a representative quote.

Gender-Identity-Related Barriers		
THEME	DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE SUPPORTING QUOTE
No Barrier	Student and Staff respondents had not experienced barriers related to their gender identity.	<i>"No, the campus has been very welcoming and I have met extremely nice and accepting people."</i>
Misuse of Pronouns and Name	Undergraduate Student, Unclassified Staff/Administrator, and Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents experienced misgendering via pronouns, name usage, and online systems.	<i>"I still frequently see my dead name (legal name) instead of my preferred name."</i>

Q103 - Unjust Employment-Related Practices

Question 103 provided Faculty and Staff respondents an opportunity to elaborate on the unjust employment-related practices that they observed. Two hundred and sixteen respondents elaborated on their experiences. One theme was present in all responses: unjust hiring practices. One theme emerged from Staff respondents: unjust promotions. One theme emerged from Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty and Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank respondents: diverging views on diversity. One theme emerged from Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank respondents: favoritism and cronyism. The table below presents the themes, as well as a representative quote.

Employee Respondents		
THEME	DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE SUPPORTING QUOTE
Unjust Hiring Practices	Faculty and Staff shared various challenges they witnessed through hiring.	<i>"No open search process—internal candidates are hand-picked."</i>
Staff Respondents		
Unjust Promotions	Staff observed the promotion of others through unjust practices.	<i>"Promotion to position without regard for qualifications."</i>
Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty and Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank Respondents		
Diverging Views on Diversity	Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty and Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank respondents described differing views on diversity initiatives at the University.	<i>"It seems that racial minority without qualifications was hired over others because the hiring entity was of same race, etc."</i>
Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank Respondents		
Favoritism and Cronyism	Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank respondents witnessed the hiring of individuals through favoritism and cronyism.	<i>"observed more than one hiring decision based on the Director's 'friendship' with the individual(s)."</i>

Q106 - Feeling Safe and Supported on Campus

Question 106 asked students to identify spaces in which they feel safe and supported. Eight hundred and thirty-nine students provided responses. One theme was present in Student responses: everywhere. Three themes emerged from only Undergraduate Student respondents: classes, professors, and library. The table below presents the themes, as well as a representative quote.

Student Respondents		
THEME	DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE SUPPORTING QUOTE
Everywhere	Students expressed feeling safe and supported in all areas of campus.	<i>"There isn't anywhere on campus where I do not feel safe."</i>
Undergraduate Student Respondents		
Classes	Undergraduate Student respondents identified classes as a supportive space.	<i>"The classroom feels like a safe place. All of my professors in the Communications major have been kind."</i>
Professors	Undergraduate Student respondents identified professors as being a source of support.	<i>"My professors had helped me learn and understand my weaknesses."</i>
Library	Undergraduate Student respondents identified the library as a safe and supportive space on campus.	<i>"the library its very inviting."</i>

Q111 - Regional Campus Experiences

Question 111 queried individuals from Regional Campuses on their experiences. One hundred and seventeen respondents shared their experiences. The theme of negative perception emerged from Classified Staff, Faculty, and Undergraduate Student respondents. One theme was found for Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank, Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty, and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents: not valued. The theme of seen as second-class emerged from Unclassified Staff/Administrator and Faculty respondents. One theme emerged from only Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank respondents: inequality in pay. A theme of limited opportunities emerged from

Undergraduate Student respondents. The table below presents the themes, as well as a representative quote.

Classified Staff, Faculty, and Undergraduate Student Respondents		
THEME	DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE SUPPORTING QUOTE
Negative Perception	Classified Staff, Faculty, and Undergraduate Student respondents described instances in which they were looked down on from those on the Kent Campus.	<i>"I have consistently seen faculty and administrators at the Kent campus openly regard faculty at regional campus as less capable/qualified."</i>
Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank, Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty, and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Respondents		
Not Valued	Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank, Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty, and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents felt that their work was undermined based on their location.	<i>"Regionals are told by Kent departments they are unnecessary and not part of departments."</i>
Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank, Non-Tenure-Track Faculty, and Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Respondents		
Seen as Second Class	Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank, Non-Tenure-Track Faculty, and Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents noted being treated differently than those on the Kent Campus.	<i>"Regional campus faculty and staff are often seen as second class members of Kent State."</i>
Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank Respondents		
Inequality in Pay	Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank respondents believed there were inequalities in pay between the Kent Campus and Regional Campuses.	<i>"I think most regional campus members feel lesser in comparison with Kent faculty via pay, recognition, etc."</i>

Undergraduate Student Respondents		
Limited Opportunities	Undergraduate Student respondents noted having limited opportunities at Regional Campuses.	<i>"There are not the same opportunities offered to the regional campuses as there are to the Kent campus."</i>

Q112 - Contributions to Success (Student Respondents)

One thousand one hundred ninety-four Undergraduate and Graduate/Professional Student respondents listed the top three initiatives, programs, or policies at Kent State that have contributed to their success. Nine themes emerged from the responses: student resources, academics, academic supports, faculty, student activity groups, positive academic programs/departments, advising, financial support, and identity-based support. In addition, there were two themes specific to Undergraduate Student respondents: tutoring and student accommodation services. The table below presents the themes, as well as four responses that fit in the theme.

Student Respondents		
THEME	DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE SUPPORTING QUOTES
Student Resources	Student respondents named many different resources available at Kent State.	<i>"CommUNITY Lab"</i> <i>"CUE"</i> <i>"CAPS"</i> <i>"Student Success Programs"</i>
Positive Academic Experiences	Student respondents noted various academic experiences.	<i>"Interesting Classes"</i> <i>"Guest Lectures"</i> <i>"Honors College"</i> <i>"SURE program"</i>
Academic Supports	Student respondents listed a variety of academic supports that had helped them.	<i>"Supplemental Instruction"</i> <i>"Writing Commons"</i> <i>"Academic Coaching"</i> <i>"Study groups"</i>
Faculty	Student respondents stated that faculty had helped them succeed.	<i>"Interaction with professors"</i> <i>"Excellent faculty"</i> <i>"Caring teachers"</i> <i>"Understanding professors"</i>

Student Activity Groups	Student respondents listed many different clubs and organizations they were a part of.	<i>"Chem club"</i> <i>"Student organizations"</i> <i>"GSS"</i> <i>"Marching Band"</i>
Programs and Departments	Student respondents identified academic programs, departments, or schools that were important to them.	<i>"School of Fashion"</i> <i>"Aeronautics"</i> <i>"Sculpture Program"</i> <i>"HDFS"</i>
Advising	Student respondents commented that advising had contributed to their success.	<i>"Advising office"</i> <i>"Academic advising"</i> <i>"Good advising"</i> <i>"Supportive advisor"</i>
Financial Support	Student respondents named various forms of financial support and scholarships.	<i>"Financial aid"</i> <i>"Graduate assistantship"</i> <i>"CARES"</i> <i>"Founders Scholarships"</i>
Identity-Based Support	Student respondents identified identity-based groups and resources that had helped them succeed.	<i>"LGBTQ center"</i> <i>"Black United Students"</i> <i>"K/T"</i> <i>"Newman Center"</i>
Undergraduate Student Respondents		
Tutoring	Undergraduate Student respondents stated that tutoring had been helpful.	<i>"Tutoring program"</i> <i>"Peer tutoring"</i> <i>"Drop in tutoring"</i> <i>"Math tutors"</i>
Student Accommodation Services	Undergraduate Student respondents indicated that student accommodation services, or SAS, had contributed to their success.	<i>"Student accommodation services"</i> <i>"SAS"</i> <i>"Student accessibility services"</i>

Q112 - Contributions to Success (Employee Respondents)

Nine hundred twenty-one Employee respondents listed the top three initiatives, programs, or policies at Kent State that have contributed to their success. One theme emerged across all respondents: the people. There were four themes specific to Staff respondents: training opportunities, wellness initiatives, flexible work arrangements, and great benefits. Two themes that emerged from Faculty respondents: Center for Teaching and Learning, and mentoring. In addition, there was one theme specific to Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty: research support. There was one theme for only Staff and Non-Tenure-Track respondents: tuition waivers. Another theme emerged specifically from Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank respondents and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents: professional development support. Finally, there was one theme specific to Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty respondents only: no supportive initiatives. The table below presents the themes, as well as three responses that fit in the theme.

Employee Respondents		
THEME	DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE SUPPORTING QUOTES
The People	Employee respondents identified the people that had contributed to their success.	<i>"Supportive supervisor and dean"</i> <i>"Great colleagues"</i> <i>"A great team to work with"</i>
Staff Respondents		
Training Opportunities	Staff respondents stated that training opportunities had helped them be successful.	<i>"Departmental training"</i> <i>"Accessibility trainings"</i> <i>"Beyond Compliance training"</i>
Wellness Initiatives	Staff respondents appreciated wellness initiatives as contributing to their success.	<i>"Wellness programs"</i> <i>"Be Well Solutions"</i> <i>"Wellness and Mental Health Resources"</i>
Flexible Work Arrangements	Flexible work arrangements were cited as a contributing factor.	<i>"Flexible work schedule"</i> <i>"Remote work"</i> <i>"Flex schedules and telecommuting"</i>
Great Benefits	Staff respondents identified benefits as contributing to their success.	<i>"Good medical benefits"</i> <i>"Employee benefits"</i> <i>"Great healthcare and benefits"</i>

Faculty Respondents		
Center for Teaching and Learning	Faculty respondents felt the Center for Teaching and Learning had helped them succeed.	<i>"Center for Teaching & Learning"</i> <i>"Support from CTL"</i> <i>"CTL programs"</i>
Mentoring	Faculty respondents stated that mentoring had contributed to their success.	<i>"Mentoring Program"</i> <i>"Faculty Mid-Career Mentorship Program"</i> <i>"Mentoring on our campus"</i>
Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Respondents		
Support for Research	Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents appreciated support for research as a contributing factor to their success.	<i>"Research funding support"</i> <i>"Research leave"</i> <i>"Pre-tenure course release for research"</i>
Staff and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Respondents		
Professional Development Opportunities	Professional development opportunities contributed to the success of Staff and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents.	<i>"Professional development"</i> <i>"Institute for Excellence"</i> <i>"Encouraged professional development"</i>
Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Respondents		
Tuition Waiver	Unclassified Staff/Administrator with Faculty Rank and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents cited the tuition waiver as important to their success.	<i>"Tuition waiver program"</i> <i>"Free tuition"</i> <i>"Tuition benefit to earn a certificate and PhD"</i>
Adjunct/Part-Time-Faculty Respondents		
Nothing Contributed	Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty respondents stated that there were no initiatives, programs, or policies that had contributed to their success.	<i>"None"</i> <i>"Nothing"</i> <i>"I don't think there are any"</i>

Q113 - Barriers to Success

Question 113 asked individuals to identify the top three barriers at Kent State that have hindered their success. Two thousand and fifty-seven members of the Kent State community responded to the item. In total, eight themes were found within responses. One theme was present in Staff responses: limited opportunities for advancement/promotion, and a theme of pay emerged from Staff and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents. One theme was present in data specific to Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents: workload. Two themes emerged from Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents: administration/leadership and teaching load. From Undergraduate Student respondents, two themes emerged: professors and challenges related to courses, whereas parking/transportation came forth as a theme from Graduate/Professional Student respondents. The table below presents the themes, as well as a representative quote.

Staff Respondents		
THEME	DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE SUPPORTING QUOTE
Limited Opportunities for Advancement /Promotion	Staff respondents identified limited opportunities to advance at the University.	<i>"Unclear way to move up"</i>
Staff and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Respondents		
Pay	Staff and Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents believed they were underpaid for their work.	<i>"Little pay (benefits, while appreciated, don't pay bills), need extra jobs"</i>
Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Respondents		
Workload	Non-Tenure-Track Faculty respondents identified their heavy workload as a barrier.	<i>"Inflation of job requirements"</i>
Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Respondents		
Administration /Leadership	Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents experienced challenges with administration/leadership.	<i>"Top heavy administration"</i>

Teaching Load	Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty respondents identified their heavy teaching load as a barrier.	<i>"High teaching loads"</i>
Undergraduate Student Respondents		
Professors	Undergraduate Student respondents experienced challenges with their professors.	<i>"Unfair professors"</i>
Challenges Related to Courses	Undergraduate Student respondents identified various issues with their courses.	<i>"Changes in student caps in online and physical courses"</i>
Graduate/Professional Student Respondents		
Parking/Transportation	Graduate/Professional Student respondents identified parking/transportation as a barrier.	<i>"Parking services, parking availability"</i>

Appendix B – Factor Analysis

Introduction

The survey contained questions that measured multiple outcomes related to campus climate: *Student Perceived Academic Success*, *Faculty-Student Interaction*, *Resilience*, *Mental Health*, and *Student, Faculty, and Staff Sense of Belonging*. Rankin Climate developed survey questions to quantitatively measure the sense of belonging for staff. Pascarella and Terenzini's research on student persistence⁷⁶ provided support for the development of the *Perceived Academic Success* item, while their research on informal faculty-student interactions⁷⁷ provided support for the *Faculty-Student Interaction* item. *Resilience* was measured using the Brief Resilience Scale⁷⁸ and *Mental Health* using the Kessler 6 Psychological Distress Scale.⁷⁹ The *Sense of Belonging* scales were informed by Strayhorn's qualitative examination of students' sense of belonging.⁸⁰

Methodology

The questions on the scales were answered on a Likert metric from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” (scored 1 for “strongly agree” and 5 for “strongly disagree”) for *Perceived Academic Success*, *Faculty-Student Interaction*, *Resilience*, and *Sense of Belonging*, and from “all of the time” to “none of the time” (scored 1 for “all of the time” and 5 for “none of the time”) for *Mental Health*. For the purposes of analysis, only respondents who answered all scale sub-questions were included in the analyses.

The factor score for each of the scales was created by taking the average of the scores for the sub-questions in each factor. Each response for individuals who answered all the questions included in each factor was assigned a score on a five-point scale. The factor was then reverse coded so that higher scores on factors suggested an individual or constituent group had higher *Perceived Academic Success*, positive *Faculty-Student Interactions*, higher psychological *Resilience*, better *Mental Health*, and a higher *Sense of Belonging* at Kent State.

⁷⁶ Pascarella and Terenzini (1980)

⁷⁷ Pascarella and Terenzini (1980)

⁷⁸ Smith et al. (2008)

⁷⁹ Mykyta (2023)

⁸⁰ Strayhorn (2012)

<i>Student Perceived Academic Success</i>
ITEMS
I am performing up to my full academic potential.
I am satisfied with my academic experience at Kent State.
I am satisfied with the extent of my intellectual development since enrolling at Kent State.
I have performed academically as well as I anticipated I would.
My academic experience has had a positive influence on my intellectual growth and interest in ideas.
My interest in ideas and intellectual matters has increased since coming to Kent State.

<i>Student Faculty-Student Interaction</i>
ITEMS
I am satisfied with the opportunities to meet and interact informally with faculty members.
My non-classroom interactions with faculty have had a positive influence on my career goals and aspirations.
My non-classroom interactions with faculty have had a positive influence on my intellectual growth and interest in ideas.
My non-classroom interactions with faculty have had a positive influence on my personal growth, values, and attitudes.
Since coming to Kent State, I have developed mentoring relationships with at least one faculty member.

<i>Resilience</i>
ITEMS
I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times.
I have a hard time making it through stressful events.
It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event.
It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens.
I usually come through difficult times with little trouble.
I tend to take a long time to get over set-backs in my life.

<i>Mental Health</i>
ITEMS
During the past 30 days, how often did you feel...
...so sad that nothing could cheer you up?
...nervous?
...restless or fidgety?
...hopeless?
...that everything was an effort?
...worthless?

Student Sense of Belonging
ITEMS
I feel valued by Kent State faculty.
I feel valued by Kent State staff.
I feel valued by Kent State senior administrators (e.g., dean, vice president, provost).
I feel valued by faculty in the classroom.
I feel valued by other students in the classroom.
I feel valued by other students outside of the classroom.
I feel that the Kent State climate encourages open discussion of difficult topics.
I feel that I have faculty whom I perceive as role models.
I feel that I have staff whom I perceive as role models.

Faculty Sense of Belonging
ITEMS
I feel valued by faculty in my department/program.
I feel valued by my department/program chair or director.
I feel valued by other faculty.
I feel valued by senior administrators (e.g., dean, vice president, provost, RC administrators).
I feel that the Kent State climate encourages open discussion of difficult topics.
I feel that Kent State values my research/scholarship.
I feel that Kent State values my teaching.
I feel that Kent State values my service contributions.

Staff Sense of Belonging	
ITEMS	
	I feel valued by coworkers in my work unit.
	I feel valued by coworkers outside my work unit.
	I feel valued by my supervisor/manager.
	I feel valued by Kent State students.
	I feel valued by Kent State faculty.
	I feel valued by Kent State senior administrators (e.g., dean, vice president, provost, RC administrators).
	I feel that the Kent State climate encourages open discussion of difficult topics.
	I feel that Kent State values my skills.
	I feel that Kent State values my work.

Appendix C – Comparison of 2016 and 2024 Results

In the 2024 survey, Administrators with Faculty Rank received the Staff-related questions and a subset of the Faculty-related questions. In contrast, the 2016 survey included these individuals only in the Faculty-related questions. These distinctions are indicated in the "Who Received Question" column below. Please remain mindful of these differences when interpreting the percentages and any related changes over time.

Icons and asterisks: A red arrow indicates a less favorable outcome in 2024 and a green arrow indicates a more favorable outcome in 2024. An asterisk indicates statistically significant difference between the two percentages, meaning that the observed difference is unlikely to be due to random variation. In contrast, percentages that are not statistically different indicate that any observed difference may be attributable to chance and therefore should be interpreted with a measure of caution.

Survey Item	Who Received Question	2016 Data	2024 Data	Change
Overall, how comfortable are you with the climate at Kent State? ("Comfortable" and "Very Comfortable" only)	Everyone	79% (n = 6,641)	74% (n = 3,637)	▼ *
Have you ever seriously considered leaving Kent State?	Everyone	36% (n = 3,038)	37% (n = 1,800)	▲
In the past year, have you personally experienced any exclusionary (e.g., shunning, ignoring), intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile (e.g., bullying, harassing) conduct that	Everyone	17% (n = 1,408)	19% (n = 907)	▲

has interfered with your ability to learn, live, or work at Kent State?				
Overall, how comfortable are you with the climate in your department or work unit at Kent State? ("Comfortable" and "Very Comfortable" only)	Employees	69% (n = 1,871)	66% (n = 1,336)	▼
Overall, how comfortable are you with the climate in your classes? ("Comfortable" and "Very Comfortable" only)	Faculty and Students	84% (n = 5,663)	83% (n = 2,959)	▼
As a Kent State faculty member, I feel the Kent State climate encourages open discussion of difficult topics.	Faculty and Administrators with Faculty Rank in 2016; Faculty in 2024	50% (n = 519)	54% (n = 367)	▲
I am reluctant to bring up issues that concern me for fear that doing so will affect my performance evaluation/review or tenure/merit/promotion decision. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Faculty	37% (n = 348)	38% (n = 277)	▲
The process for determining salaries/merit raises is clear. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Faculty	47% (n = 439)	33% (n = 241)	▼ *
I am comfortable taking leave that I am entitled to without fear that doing so may affect my job/career. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Faculty	69% (n = 620)	45% (n = 308)	▼ *

only)				
As a Kent State faculty member, I feel valued by faculty in my department/program. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Faculty and Administrators with Faculty Rank in 2016; Faculty in 2024	71% (n = 756)	70% (n = 481)	▼
As a Kent State faculty member, I feel valued by my department/program chair or director. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Faculty and Administrators with Faculty Rank in 2016; Faculty in 2024	71% (n = 740)	68% (n = 464)	▼
As a Kent State employee with a non-tenure-track appointment, I feel FTNTTs are equitably represented at the university level. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Non-Tenure Track Faculty	45% (n = 122)	41% (n = 103)	▼
As a Kent State faculty member, I feel faculty voices are valued in shared governance. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Faculty and Administrators with Faculty Rank	38% (n = 392)	47% (n = 340)	▲ *
As a Kent State faculty member, I feel Kent State values academic freedom. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Faculty and Administrators with Faculty Rank	64% (n = 671)	73% (n = 535)	▲ *
As a Kent State faculty member, I feel I have peers/mentors who provide me career advice or guidance when I need it. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Faculty and Administrators with Faculty Rank in 2016; Faculty	72% (n = 721)	59% (n = 406)	▼ *

	in 2024			
As a Kent State staff member, I feel the Kent State climate encourages open discussion of difficult topics. <i>Note: In 2016, the question read: "I believe that my work unit encourages free and open discussion of difficult topics."</i>	Staff in 2016; Staff and Administrators with Faculty Rank in 2024	52% (n = 833)	49% (n = 637)	▼
I am reluctant to bring up issues that concern me for fear that doing so will affect my performance evaluation/review or tenure/merit/promotion decision. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Staff and Administrators with Faculty Rank	35% (n = 618)	25% (n = 328)	▼ *
The process for determining salaries/merit raises is clear. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Staff and Administrators with Faculty Rank	44% (n = 757)	14% (n = 184)	▼ *
I am comfortable taking leave that I am entitled to without fear that doing so may affect my job/career. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Staff and Administrators with Faculty Rank	77% (n = 1,357)	69% (n = 913)	▼ *
As a Kent State staff member, I feel valued by coworkers in my work unit. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Staff only in 2016; Staff and Administrators with Faculty Rank in 2024	80% (n = 1,299)	84% (n = 1,095)	▲ *

As a Kent State staff member, I feel valued by my supervisor/manager. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Staff only in 2016; Staff and Administrators with Faculty Rank in 2024	73% (n = 1,168)	79% (n = 1,033)	▲ *
As a Kent State staff member, I feel Kent State provides adequate resources to help me manage work-life balance. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Staff only in 2016; Staff and Administrators with Faculty Rank in 2024	75% (n = 1,152)	65% (n = 856)	▼ *
As a Kent State staff member, I feel my supervisor is supportive of flexible work schedules. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Staff only in 2016; Staff and Administrators with Faculty Rank in 2024	72% (n = 1,127)	78% (n = 1,025)	▲ *
As a Kent State staff member, I have supervisors who give me job/career advice or guidance when I need it. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Staff only in 2016; Staff and Administrators with Faculty Rank in 2024	66% (n = 1,016)	62% (n = 814)	▼
As a Kent State staff member, Kent State provides me with resources to pursue training/professional development opportunities. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Staff only in 2016; Staff and Administrators with Faculty Rank in 2024	81% (n = 1,297)	59% (n = 785)	▼ *

As a Kent State student, I feel the Kent State climate encourages open discussion of difficult topics.	Students	69% (n = 3,945)	71% (n = 1,994)	▲
As a Kent State student, I feel valued by faculty in the classroom. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Students	77% (n = 4,377)	82% (n = 2,294)	▲ *
As a Kent State student, I feel valued by other students in the classroom. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Students	64% (n = 3,619)	68% (n = 1,904)	▲ *
As a Kent State student, I feel that I have faculty whom I perceive as role models. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Students	72% (n = 4,121)	69% (n = 1,941)	▼ *
As a Kent State student, I feel that I have staff whom I perceive as role models. ("Agreed" and "Strongly Agree" only)	Students	57% (n = 3,209)	60% (n = 1,685)	▲ *
Experienced sexual misconduct while at Kent State**	Students	4% (n = 304)	7% (n = 180)	▲

* The difference between the two percentages is statistically significant, meaning that the observed difference is unlikely to be due to random variation. In contrast, percentages that are not statistically different indicate that any observed difference may be attributable to chance and therefore should be interpreted with a measure of caution.

** In 2016, respondents were asked a single question about unwanted sexual conduct: *"While a member of the Kent State community, have you experienced unwanted sexual contact (including interpersonal violence, stalking, sexual assault, sexual assault with an object, forcible fondling, forcible rape, use of drugs to incapacitate, forcible sodomy, or gang rape)?"* In contrast, the 2024 survey asked students a series of questions specific to sexual- and gender-based harassment, stalking, dating/intimate partner violence, online/virtual sexual exploitation, and sexual violence. ***In this appendix, the 2024 percentage only reflects the proportion of respondents who reported experiencing sexual violence while at Kent State.***