



August 9, 2021

Dear Vice Provost Hamrick,

As requested, I submit this **Dean's Preface** to you as Principal Investigator of the USF Climate Survey, to include:

- My summary of the unit-specific report, i.e., my understanding;
- My plans to respond to the insights; and,
- Anything I/we have already done in the interim period of time to move the school-level climate to a better place.

The USF Climate Survey data collection was completed in Fall 2017. There were significant delays from the time of survey completion to the publishing of this report. (A timeline is included below my signature line. Please see Appendix A.)

Because the School of Nursing and Health Profession's (SONHP) overall response rate was 36%, exceeding the 30% threshold, the School was eligible for eventual release of unit-specific results. In addition, because of the overall 36% response rate, the USF-level results **were generalizable to the School of Nursing and Health Professions**. Given the latter, we immediately moved forward with many initiatives while also using my knowledge of the draft survey results (while awaiting a final report) to guide climate improvements within SONHP.

With these two data sources as well as information from a comprehensive review and analysis of many issues to the School of Nursing and Health Professions, I led an organizational transformation project that brought with it many improvements, including those that would lead to improvements in climate.

Over time, we have followed through on many other initiatives, whether at the School, group, or individual level, to improve climate. (See Appendix B.) And, while we responded to data from this 2017 survey, we continued to assess the needs of students, staff, faculty, and administrators with regard to various aspects of climate, most intensely since March 2020.

Beginning in August 2021, Interim Dean Patricia Pearce will lead the School of Nursing and Health Professions through the transition to a new dean. I am confident that SONHP administrators, faculty, staff, and students will continue to lead focused efforts to support continued improvement for a positive and supportive climate in which all members feel safe, respected, seen, heard, valued, recognized, and appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,



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 Dean and Professor
 School of Nursing and Health Professions

Appendix A. Timeline: USF Climate Survey Results to SONHP Final Report

Year	Date/time frame	Note
2017	April	Campus Climate Workgroup advances effort
2017	August-October	Deans asked to effectively communicate and provide campus climate survey outreach
2017	Fall semester	Campus Climate Survey launched; repeated efforts to increase response rates
2017	October 27	New deadline for survey availability
2018	April	Results are in; executive summary available for review
2018	June	VP Hamrick reaches out to Dean Baker to see if SONHP will serve as one of two pilot units for release of unit-specific results. Baker agrees.
2018	December	VP Hamrick makes a 171-page draft SONHP-specific report available to Dean Baker in draft form 12 hours in advance of Provost's Council meeting. Dean Baker quickly reviews, asks Provost Heller for a delay (citing two significant issues with the draft) and an opportunity to carefully review the draft and submit requested edits or corrections.
2019	June	Dean Baker finishes detailed review of the 171-page draft report; sends VP Hamrick detailed

		request for changes/ edits to improve accuracy and representatives of data and ensure anonymity for respondents.
2020	January	VP Hamrick notifies Dean Baker of need for a 2-3-page Dean's preface Summary as a prefix to the SONHP Climate Survey Report
2020	May	Baker finishes draft Dean's preface, awaits corrected report to finalize preface.
2021	March	Baker is in receipt of corrected/ edited Campus Climate Assessment Report - SONHP.
2021	August	Baker finalizes and submits Dean's preface to VP Hamrick for release of report.

Appendix B. SONHP Activities in Response to USF-level Results: Selected Examples

Below, I provide examples of the many ways that faculty, staff, and administrators at SONHP have **responded to the results** of the USF survey results and **move the School-level climate to a better place**. This report is based on emails, agendas, notes, and other sources.

Developing Strategies, Taking Actions

- Upon my start as Dean in August 2016, I requested the formation of a faculty/staff committee on diversity, equity, and inclusion that could serve in an advisory capacity to me and others. In November 2017, the Faculty Association-School of Nursing and Health Professions (**FASONHP**) **Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** was formed. While the Committee, which includes faculty and staff, has worked diligently toward certain goals, no report has been completed. The last posted minutes in Canvas for the DEI Committee are from October 2019. I look forward to recommendations from this group as to a DEI Statement for SONHP as well as goals and a timeline for furthering the work of the School.
- Individuals and groups within SONHP started reviewing the results and meeting either on an *ad hoc* basis or with VP Mary Wardell and others to discuss individual and group initiatives that could move forward based on the results;
- From an Appreciative Inquiry standpoint, there was awareness of the many strengths of the USF Climate as perceived by faculty, staff, and students and efforts to build on those strengths.
- Many members of SONHP attended **brown bag sessions** held by VP Wardell and follow-up with local efforts;
- In October 2018, I invited VP Wardell to **present** to the SONHP Executive Team and then to the School's **Leadership Council** about Climate Survey results and how we might strategically improve SONHP's climate;
- Voluntary inclusion of gender pronouns in signature lines

- Use of person-first language in all communications coming out of the Dean's Office and encouragement of same throughout the School
- Education, Resources, and Support
 - In September 2018, I launched initiatives as part of our commitment to fostering a climate of safety and respect, including a **Faculty and Staff Lunch (Hilltop Campus): "How Title IX Impacts You."** Facilitated by Dr. Mary Wardell-Ghirarduzzi, Vice Provost and Chief Diversity Officer and Shannon Gary, Dean of Students and **Know Your Rights Title IX Brochure: Coming to Your Mailbox**, an initiative to distribute a hard copy of the brochure to all SONHP faculty and staff.
 - The nomination of four **Faculty Equity Advocates** for training and, since then, inclusion of an FEA on all tenure/probationary faculty search committees;
 - Our program directors, program staff, and executive team members regularly meet with students and student groups to assess their needs, respond to their concerns, and foster a diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment. The dean, dean's team members, and program directors and staff respond to individual or group concerns raised by students.
- Communications and Community-Building
 - We held an **All-Staff retreat** for staff and ET members with agenda items focused on climate survey results followed by a community-building event (bowling) afterward; subsequent formation of an **SONHP Staff Community Building Group** and submission of recommendations for staff shared governance at SONHP by Fall 2020;
 - Breakfasts and lunches hosted by the Dean and ET members as well as potlucks
 - Completion of or substantial progress in **SONHP Operations projects** that were in whole or in part responsive to climate survey results, such as:
 - Development of a **scholarship review process** that is systematic and allows the reviewer to consider not only financial need, but other factors, including but not limited to immigration status, circumstances with direct and indirect financial implications, self-identification as a member of an underrepresented group, and first-generation college status.
 - Institution of **exit interviews** for all staff and analysis of/reflection on individual results as well as staff turnover metrics;
 - Established a systematic approach to build Leadership Council agendas throughout the year during which the Dean can regularly share information important to stakeholders to gather input, meet strategic goals, increase communication, and build community. topics during the monthly Leadership Council meetings to increase transparency, include feedback from our leaders in decision-making, and
 - Established an SONHP Policy and Procedure Handbook with access to all SONHP faculty, staff, and administrators.
- **Communications and Community-Building**
 - With a goal of providing timely communications and increased transparency, I initiated a **Staff Huddle** in July 2018. This huddle has, over time, increased from

10-15 minutes to 30 minutes and varies in frequency (and length) given needs. For those who would like to submit anonymous comments or questions, a locked metal box was put in the main conference room and, before each huddle, it was checked for submissions. (While we are on Zoom now for Huddles, comments or suggestions may be sent to my assistant so that he can email it to me while protecting the identity of the person who submitted.).

- After several well-intended but ultimately failed attempts on my part to regularly communicate to the School, I leveraged Carolina Echeverria's considerable communications experience and strengths to start a **biweekly e-newsletter** to faculty and staff in Fall 2019 with the goal of increasing communication and recognition as well as community building by providing stories about faculty, staff, students, alumni, and partners. By using Emma, we are able to track metrics that suggest interest in particular news items and guide future communications. All members may submit something for consideration for the newsletter.
- The Dean, Associate Deans, Assistant Dean, and Directors for Partnerships, Operations, and Development regularly support student efforts to build community and improve climate within and across cohorts and programs.
- **Formal and Informal Recognition**
 - We have focused our **social media** posts on recognizing accomplishments of and expressing our gratitude for our faculty and staff (and students); we track metrics related to these posts and use them to guide our strategy;
 - Many people within the School nominate members for formal recognition. For example:
 - In 2018, faculty wrote a successful nomination for a **national award** from the American Association of Colleges of Nursing with support from the Dean's Office. In 2019, another successful nomination was submitted for a different AACN competitive **national award**, this time earning the AACN Award for Excellence in Innovation in Teaching.
 - In 2019, the Executive Team worked together to write nominations for each and every available USF-level faculty and staff award found [here](#). By May 2019, 16 individual or team nominations went in from ET (and one from faculty in Pleasanton), and 5 SONHP faculty and/or staff garnered the following awards:
 - Distinguished Research Award - William Bosl
 - Individual Merit Award - Nicole Cuadro
 - Beyond the Hilltop Award - Margaret Levine (submitted by faculty)
 - Educational Effectiveness Award - SONHP Program Evaluation Committee (faculty and staff)
 - Arthur I. Karshmer Award for Distinguished Service to Disability Issues - Stacey Kohut

Each of the 16 nominees, regardless of outcome, got a letter from the Dean with a copy of their nomination letter. This effort was largely missed in 2020 because our efforts were diverted to the pandemic response, with only one award winner, albeit for the Sarlo Prize. In 2021, we were once

again successful in submitting more nominations with variable success. Regardless of whether our nominee is ultimately chosen, we share the nomination with them as a way of recognizing them.

- The Dean used to hold time in each All-School meeting during which the FASONHP Chair held time for faculty to talk about their accomplishments. By far, it was full-time faculty talking about their accomplishments. I was in receipt of feedback that staff rarely felt comfortable sharing, as it did not seem as though their achievements were in line with what was being elicited and, many times, not nearly as important. The Dean changed the two-hour All-School meeting agendas to stop this time for announcing achievements and, instead, included a full hour devoted to **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** topics with presenters being selected faculty, staff, and administrators. In addition, the Dean personally asked a faculty member and a staff member (with efforts to include those from non-SF locations) to do either an **opening reflection or closing reflection** of their choosing. The DEI topics were only 10 minutes long, but gave all attendees a sampling of the many DEI initiatives taking place throughout the school and an opportunity for others to contact them.

“**Achievements**” became a regular feature in our biweekly newsletter, thereby including those of faculty, staff, administrators, and students.

- In 2020, we started doing **ShoutOuts** in the staff huddle. ShoutOuts are solicited pre-meeting is accomplished using a simple survey tool embedded in the calendar invitation that provides for anonymous or attributed statements announced by the Dean. Shoutouts may also be done live. Either way, an email goes to the nominee, their supervisor, and the nominator so that all have it for their files.
 - Survey/planning for SONHP awards as a way to regularly recognize and appreciate community members.
- **Professional Development**
 - We have invited HR to SONHP to meet with staff in advance of them writing self-appraisals for their annual evaluation so that they could articulate what professional development they would like in the coming year, while I directed supervisors to pay particular attention to feed back to us what professional development was requested that we could offer at school, group, and individual levels so we could work it into the budgets and calendars.
 - I work with the Faculty Development Committee to support their work in enhancing faculty development with regard to teaching effectiveness and/or scholarship.
 - **Individual Efforts**
 - Since starting as dean in August 2016, I have responded in timely ways to any and all complaints around exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct toward others. Over time, this included reports of and/or complaints about interactions between students, faculty, and staff in varying combinations. Depending on the nature of the interactions, I or my designees referred some

such reports to the appropriate units on campus, such as Student Life, the Title IX Office, or others. For those involving personnel issues within the School, I used a variety of interventions and consultations to respond to complaints or reports. For those cases in which it was more appropriate to support and counsel those who would lead on an intervention, I did so. Such interventions by me and/or support and counsel of those who would intervene is variably effective given that changing the behavior of an individual or group may take several attempts and/or various interventions and may yield variable results over time.

End of Dean's Preface