

# ClimateQUAL Executive Summary

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## What is ClimateQUAL?

The ClimateQUAL survey is administered by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and addresses library workplace climate issues such as diversity, teamwork, learning, and fairness, as well as current managerial practices and employees' attitudes and beliefs. ClimateQUAL survey results can be used to measure the health of an organization. A healthy organization is one in which employees feel empowered and believe that the organization values diversity. It is an organization in which policies, practices, and procedures are administered fairly and employees believe that they are treated fairly.

## When was ClimateQUAL conducted at UW Libraries?

The University of Wyoming Libraries ran the ClimateQUAL survey from November 15 – December 5, 2021. All full-time staff and faculty were invited to participate, and we had a 100% completion rate. This was the third time UW Libraries participated in ClimateQUAL, with past surveys in 2014 and 2009. Data was stored at ARL and anonymized so that no individual or specific work unit could be identified.

## What does ClimateQUAL Measure?

The ClimateQUAL Organization Climate and Diversity Assessment consists of the following 26 measures, which will be discussed frequently in this report. Additional information on the core scales can be found at <http://www.climatequal.org/about/concepts/core-scales>

**Climate for Continual Learning:** An organization with a Climate for Continual Learning has policies, practices, and procedures that emphasize continued employee education.

**Climate for Deep Diversity, Standardization of Procedures across Groups** refers to the consistency of application of procedures across subgroups.

**Climate for Distributive Justice** reflects the employees' perceptions regarding the extent to which the rewards that they receive (e.g. pay, opportunities to advance, etc.) are adequate given their level of effort and work.

**Climate for Gender Diversity** reflects the extent to which an individual team supports diversity of genders.

**Climate for Informational Justice** refers to whether or not an employee has access to the information they need.

**Climate for Innovation** refers to the extent to which co-workers encourage each other to share and come up with innovative solutions.

**Climate for Interpersonal Justice** refers to the extent to which other people in the workplace, such as supervisors, treat an employee fairly.

**Climate for Procedural Justice** refers to the fairness of procedures used to come to outcomes such as salary or advancement (i.e., performance evaluations, amongst others).

**Climate for Psychological Safety** refers to the degree to which an organization or teams therein encourage employees to freely share opinions with each other and with management.

**Climate for Racial Diversity** refers to the extent to which the library supports racial diversity.

**Climate for Sexual Orientation Diversity** assesses the extent to which the library has a climate supportive of sexual-orientation related diversity

**Climate for Standardized Procedures** refers to the consistency of application of procedures across subgroups.

**Climate for Valuing Diversity** reflects the extent to which the organization values diversity and diversity-related initiatives.

**Employee Belief in Benefits of Teams** concerns employees' opinions of the usefulness and importance of teamwork.

**Interpersonal Conflict** refers to the amount of personal or emotional conflict amongst a work unit.

**Job Satisfaction** measures how satisfied an individual is with their work.

**Leader Member Relationship Quality** refers to the quality of an individual's relationship with their immediate supervisor.

**Leadership Climate, Authentic Transformational Leadership:** The transformational leader is consistent in their actions, and that the leader truly believes what they claim to believe.

**Organizational Attitudes** reflect the organization's morale. The measure employee attitude on topics such as their commitment to the organization, their satisfaction with their work, and the extent to which they feel empowered.

**Organization Withdrawal** refers to the actions that an employee may engage in that distance themselves from the organization and reflect intentions to leave the organization.

**Psychological Empowerment in the Workplace** reflects the extent to which an individual feels they can contribute to their team.

**Structural Facilitation of Teamwork** refers to the degree to which the organization's structure and policies facilitate and encourage teamwork.

**Task Conflict** refers to the disagreements co-workers have over how to complete their tasks.

**Task Engagement** refers to the extent to which an employee is interested in and engaged in their work.

## ClimateQUAL 2021 Findings

ClimateQUAL results are organized into measures above, called “Core Scales.” Each question in the survey correlates to a particular scale. Questions associated with a scale were combined to generate an overall mean score for the scale. The scales represent broad, thematic concepts such as the Organizational Climate for Justice. A sample question that would contribute to the scale for Distributive Justice would be “Do the rewards in your team/ division reflect the effort that team/division members put into their work?”

Overall data was reported in two ways: 1) as a mean score on a scale of one to seven, with seven as the highest level of agreement with the question; and 2) as a percentage of the participants responding five or higher (indicating at least some level of agreement) to the questions.

### Institutional Strengths

ClimateQUAL results reflected numerous strengths in the climate at UW Libraries. Comments from participants included “The Libraries are generally a great place to work with good leadership, and the workplace climate has improved” as well as “this library is full of incredibly intelligent, talented, and kind people.”

The following scales had a mean score of 6 or above (or below 4 on reverse-scored scales) indicating very high agreement that the climate is positive:

Measure	UW Libraries mean on a 7-point scale
Interpersonal Justice	6.51
Leader-Member Relationship Quality	6.09
Climate for Diversity in Race	6.39
Climate for Diversity in Gender	6.22
Climate for Diversity in Sexual Orientation	6.40
Task Engagement	6.03
Work Unit Interpersonal Conflict*	2.55
Work Unit Task Conflict*	3.23

\*These scales are reverse scored, lower scores are better.

When analyzing the scales with a percentage of participants in agreement about a positive climate with over 85% scoring over five, even more strengths come to light:

Measure	UW Libraries % agreement
Interpersonal Justice	100%
Leader-Member Relationship Quality	88%
Authentic Transformational Leadership	85%
Valuing Diversity	87%
Climate for Diversity in Race	85%
Climate for Diversity in Sexual Orientation	87%
Climate for Innovation: Co-Worker Support	89%
Benefits of Teams	91%
Task Engagement	94%
Work Unit Interpersonal Conflict*	11%
Work Unit Task Conflict*	15%

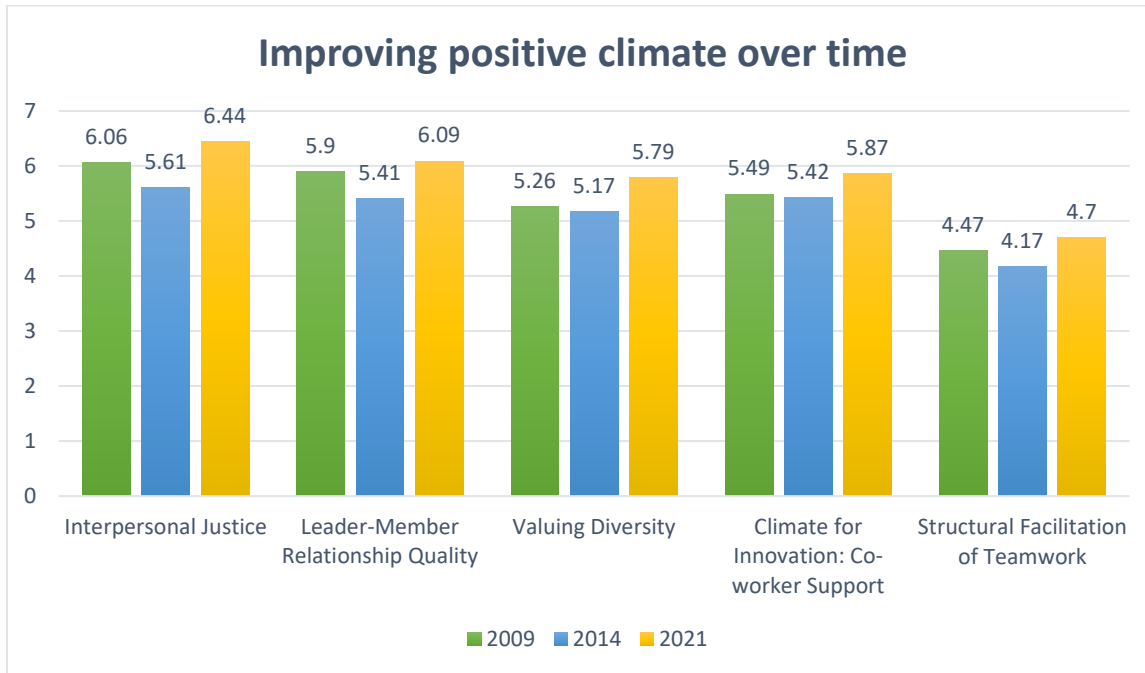
\*These scales are reverse scored, lower scores are better.

Another way of looking at the results is to compare our scores with normative data. We compared the UW Libraries 2021 data with combined averages from all libraries that have previously participated in ClimateQUAL. These all-library averages are referred to as the normative data (or NORM) for each scale.

UW Libraries scored above all-library norms in several areas, notably in the following:

Measure	NORM across libraries on a 7-point scale	UW Libraries mean on 7-point scale
Procedural Justice	4.34	4.85
Interpersonal Justice	5.81	6.51
Climate for Customer Service	5.12	5.59
Climate for Psychological Safety	4.82	5.20

Finally, UW Libraries showed significant improvement in positive responses to measures from the 2009 and 2014 ClimateQUAL surveys:



## Institutional Weaknesses

A few scales consistently demonstrated negative climates. These scores were reflected in free-text comments like “The university has outdated staff classifications and abysmal pay scales with very few opportunities for raises” and “lack of regularly scheduled pay raises is a barrier to employee retention”.

A mean score below five indicates limited or no agreement or disagreement. The following scales scored below four\*, indicating room for improvement:

Measure	UW Libraries mean on a 7-point scale
Distributive Justice	3.39
Psychological Empowerment in the Workplace	3.53

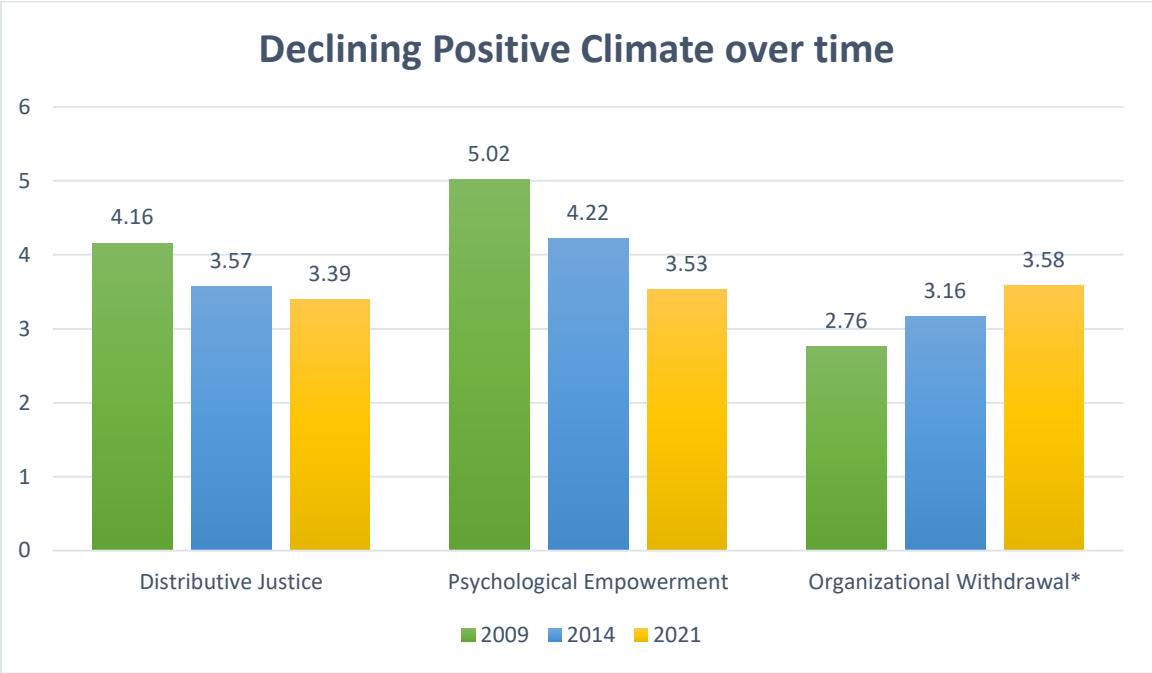
\*This does not include reverse scored scales, in which lower scales are better.

The UW Libraries scores in these areas were also less positive about climate than the national norm:

Measure	NORM across libraries on a 7-point scale	UW Libraries mean on a 7-point scale
Distributive Justice	4.34	3.39
Psychological Empowerment in the Workplace	5.81	3.53
Organizational Withdrawal*	2.94	3.58

\*These scales are reverse scored, lower scores are better.

And they showed a consistent drop off in positive perceptions from prior UW Libraries ClimateQUAL surveys:



\*These scales are reverse scored, lower scores are better

## Differences by group identification

**Race:** When answering the question “what is your race?” 38 employees chose white, 2 chose Hispanic/Latino, 1 chose Black/ African American, and 2 chose other. Scores without 6 or more responses are not shared, as they risk violating anonymity. We do not have statistically valid results to share based on race.

**Gender:** 7 employees identified as either agender, gender nonconforming, gender fluid, nonbinary, two spirit, or other. To preserve anonymity, their scores were grouped into an “all else” category for reporting. 10 employees identified as cisgender, 10 as man/male, and 22 as woman/female.

The "all else" group ranked several scores significantly lower than their peers who identify as cisgender, man/ male, or woman/ female, including:

- Leader-membership relational quality
- Climate for diversity: sexual orientation
- Climate for innovation: co-worker support
- Climate for continual learning

**Manager/ department head:** Employees who self-identified as managers or department heads ranked the Libraries higher in Valuing Diversity than non-managers did.

**Salary:** Libraries employees who make more than \$65,000 a year ranked both Valuing Diversity and Psychological Empowerment in the Workplace significantly higher than did employees making less than \$65,000 a year.

**Time employed:** Employees who reported working at UW Libraries between 15 and 20 years showed higher rates of organizational citizenship behaviors than those who worked here fewer than 15 years.

Other demographic indicators such as rank, religion, role, and sexual orientation were collected. While these responses revealed a wide range of identities and roles in the libraries, they did not produce statistically different answers to any of the scale questions.

## Climate for diversity

The results of the 2021 survey provide a complex look at diversity in the UW Libraries. In general, demographic responses were diverse in areas of gender, sexual orientation, and religion, but lacked diversity in race.

Answers to questions related to the Valuing Diversity scale were mixed. While the Libraries showed improvement over time on diversity scales from the ClimateQUAL surveys in 2014 and 2009, a troubling pattern emerged in analyzing the 2021 scores. The demographic groupings who ranked the libraries lowest in Valuing Diversity were employees younger than 40; those with 1-5 years of experience in the Libraries; non-managers; and employees making less than \$65,000 a year. Some of these differences were more significant than others, but when taken together they indicate that employees with less power, seniority, and/or resources think we could do a better job valuing diversity.

Free-text comments about the climate for diversity were similarly mixed. Of the five responses that addressed diversity directly, none was fully negative nor positive. There were two suggestions that

diversity initiatives at the Libraries were “lip service” or for “visibility.” Others spoke positively about the climate for diversity but noted individual bad actors.

## Free-text comments

20 respondents included individual comments with their surveys. These comments aligned around the following themes:

Topic	# of comments
Poor salaries	8
Insufficient job classifications	6
Communications	6
University restrictions on salary/ advancement	5
Low staffing/ retention difficulties	5
Climate for diversity	5
Positive work environment	4
Library organizational structure	4
Training	3
Covid-19 related stress	3
Libraries administration efforts	2

The content of the comments reflected the strengths and weaknesses identified in the survey results overall. Comments were often a mix of positive and negative feedback, such as: “I have found the libraries to be a welcoming and healthy work environment. I believe that library personnel are generally under-compensated for our work, but that this problem exists on the university level, not solely with the libraries.”

Weaknesses in institutional communications featured in many of the comments. Commenters noted that remote and hybrid work required new communication patterns, and some comments noted that inter-divisional communication could also be improved.



## Next Steps

ClimateQUAL 2021 results were shared in full with the UW Libraries leadership team in early 2022. The executive summary will be shared with the entire UW Libraries along with the library-wide results. Narrower results by department or unit will not be shared to protect confidentiality of respondents.

Next steps identified by the Libraries leadership team include sharing the executive summary and library-wide results with university leadership and with the external review team in 2022. The results of the survey will inform future strategic vision and planning processes for UW Libraries. Libraries leadership has identified equity and growth opportunities in salary and classifications as top priorities from the ClimateQUAL results. Continued conversations on diversity, equity and inclusion along with dedicated funds and release time for related professional development will also be prioritized.

The broad participation and improvement on markers related to interpersonal relations and supervisory relations provide a sense of institutional engagement at the Libraries. The leadership team is committed to maintaining and improving on gains over time in ClimateQUAL results and building a culture and a workplace that is welcoming and rewards all employees.