

Carleton College Staff Survey, Spring 2019

Summary

The Staff Survey was conducted as a collaboration between Human Resources and Institutional Research and Assessment during Spring 2019. The instrument was developed using Qualtrics and deployed via anonymous survey link distributed by email to 526 staff members. A total of 447 surveys were completed for an 85% response rate.

The survey instrument (see Appendix A) was comprised of 19 statements where respondents were prompted to indicate their level of agreement with each statement on a 5-point Likert scale anchored by “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree.” Each statement had an open-response option. Additionally, respondents were asked to identify their division, and employee group.

There were 225 Exempt staff, 110 Bi-weekly staff, 42 Union staff, and 70 staff who did not disclose their employee group (Undisclosed) who responded. The breakdown by division was 145 Undisclosed (division), 98 Dean of the College, 76 Business and Finance, 51 Student Life, 49 External Relations, 17 Admissions and Financial Aid, and 11 President's Division.

Results are quite positive. In general, staff feel that they are part of something important, understand how their work fits with the mission, enjoy working with each other, believe that their positions make good use of their skills, feel safe at work, satisfied with their benefits, attend campus events, feel informed about salary and benefits changes, satisfied with their current position, believe that the College values a diverse workforce, and trusts the College to address harassment and discrimination issues.

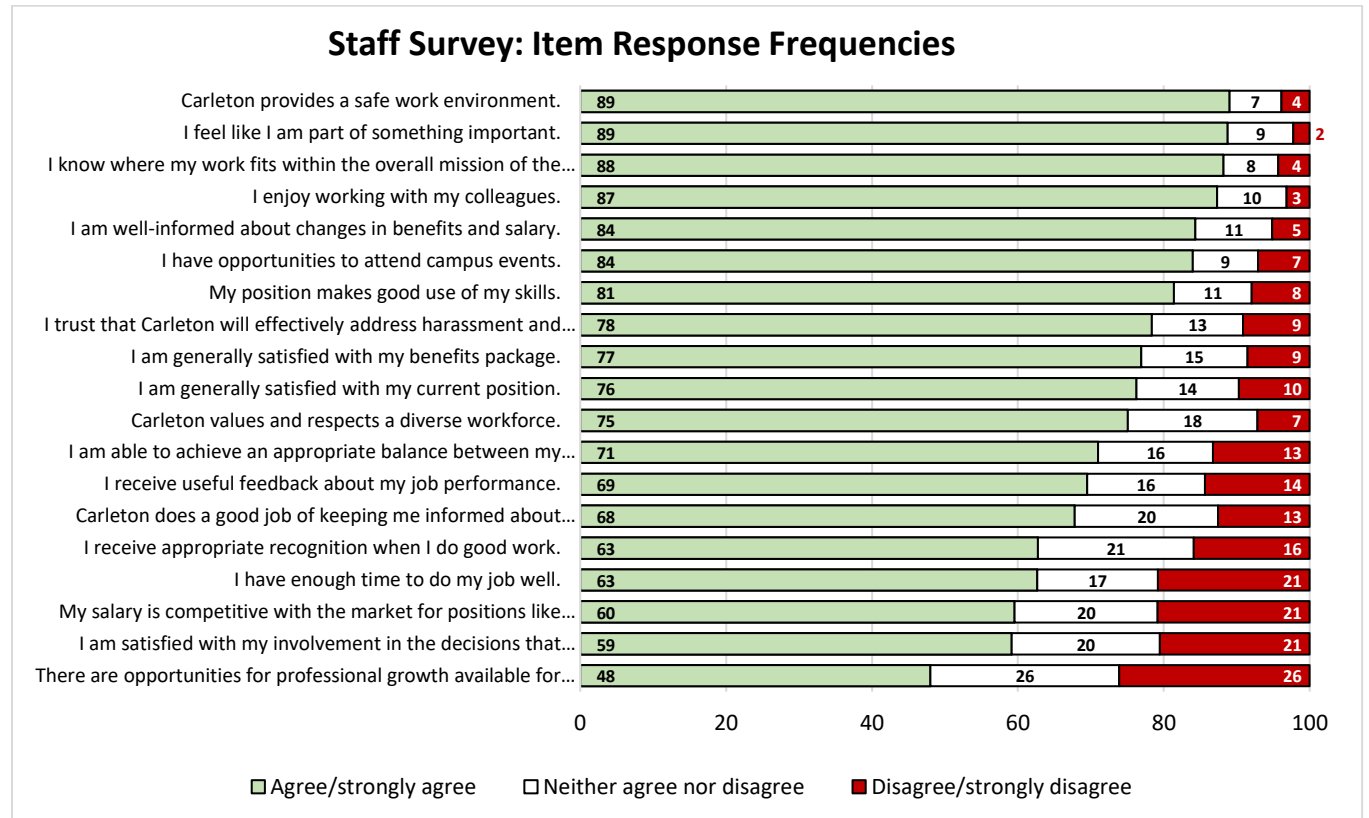
There are also opportunities for improvement. These areas relate to some staff not feeling like they have enough time to do their jobs well, receiving meaningful recognition for good work, having opportunities for professional growth, involvement in work decisions, and addressing staff salaries where needed.

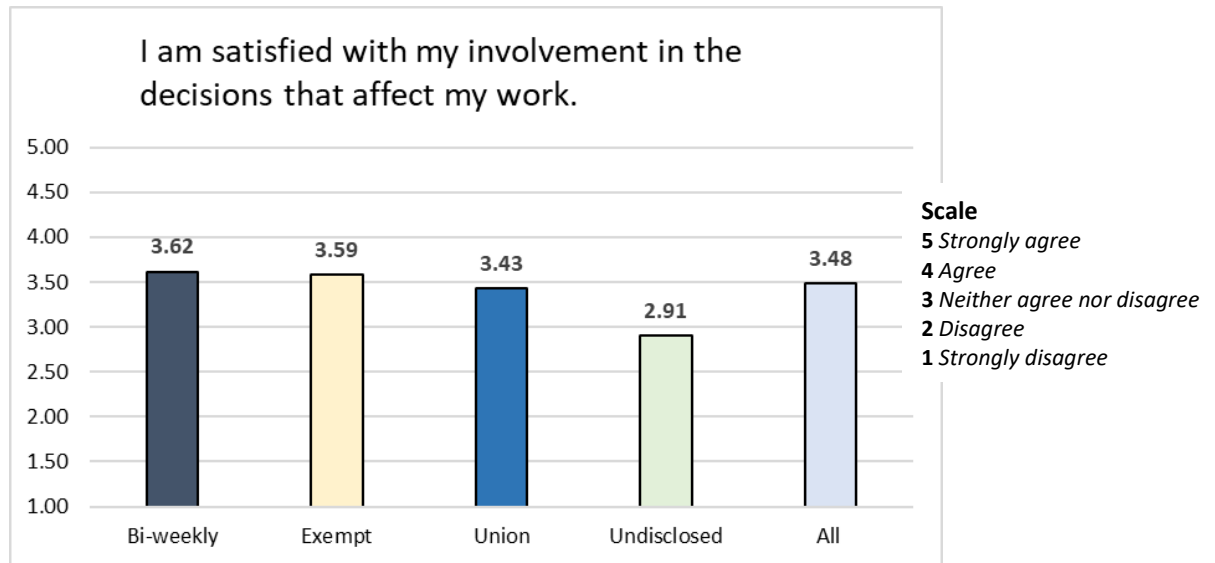
Staff who did not disclose their employee group made up roughly 15% of the total respondents. Their responses were statistically different from responses from other employee groups on only one item. Similarly, Union employee responses were statistically significant and different on only one item. What this means is that employee groups are best presented in aggregate for all but two survey items.

There were no statistically significant differences between staff who did and did not disclose their division. Therefore, divisional results are also aggregated.

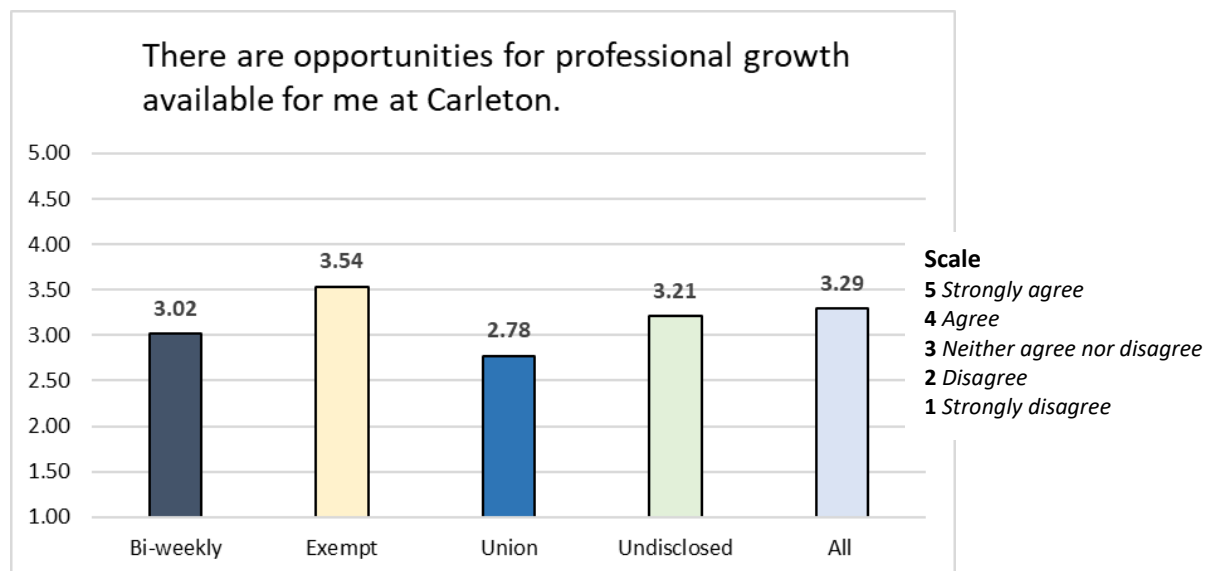
Quantitative Analysis

Item response frequency is presented in descending order by statements with the highest level of agreement to the lowest. “Strongly agree” and “Agree” were combined into “Agree/strongly agree,” while “Strongly disagree” and “Disagree” were combined into “Disagree/strongly disagree.” The response option “Neither agree nor disagree” was not changed.





Not only is this one of the items with a lower level of agreement and response mean. The mean for the Undisclosed employee group is statistically significant and lower than that of the other employee groups.



Union employees' responses are statistically significant and lower than the responses of other employee groups on the item concerning opportunities for professional growth. This item is also one of the items with lower levels of agreement for all groups.

When reviewing comments it is evident that some staff were reading this as "opportunity for advancement" rather than "professional growth."

Qualitative Analysis

In addition to quantitative analysis there were a considerable number of staff comments analyzed. The qualitative analysis is focused on identifying themes that may or may not have been revealed in the quantitative analysis. Finally, the comments will be mined for ways improve the staff experience.

The survey received 1,246 responses to the first 19 questions, 410 responses to “What do you like about working at Carleton” and 324 responses to “What could be done to substantially improve Carleton as a workplace?” for a total of 1,980 written responses.

Each question was reviewed at least three times by independent reviewers. First, all responses were read in their entirety. Next, identifying information was removed and responses were loosely coded. During the third pass, a color-coding scheme was employed to identify positive, neutral/suggestion, and negative or very negative responses. Through this process the following themes were identified.

Some of the emerging positive themes include:

- Carleton is full of bright and talented people (coworkers and students)
- Employees feel connected to Carleton’s mission
- Employees enjoy the Quarterly Meeting
- Employees appreciate professional development opportunities

Some of the emerging negative themes include:

- Staff feel their input is not appreciated
- Staff report they are not trusted and have little autonomy
- Tasks and workloads have expanded and are unrealistic
- Employee divide/silos
- Lack of recognition
- Compensation concerns

Employees provided thoughtful, often emotional responses. A sample of common responses are listed below, however, I have slightly “scrubbed” some responses to remove any identifying information.

Representative positive themed responses:

- My colleagues are one of the top reasons that I enjoy my job so much. They have been amazing - super supportive, fun, collaborative.
- Overall, the staff at Carleton are a dedicated and responsible group of hard-working, intelligent and creative folks who excel at problem-solving and are a joy to work with
- Every day that I come to work I am excited to know that what I am doing supports great students, and faculty colleagues.
- I enjoy the students - they are extraordinary, brilliant people who are eager to learn
- The mission of the college is very important to me and I appreciate that most employees are here to help the college accomplish its mission.
- The people who work here genuinely care about the students and colleagues.

- I really appreciate the updates we get, particularly at quarterly meetings: budgets, construction, health insurance, admissions, etc. It's interesting and informative appreciate the robust professional development opportunities that are offered
- I like that Carleton creates opportunities for intersectionality, metacognitive learning, and professional development for staff.
- Everything!! It is the best place I ever worked! The part that most stands out for me is how respectful and nice everyone is. That means the world!

Representative negative themed responses:

- Input is not appreciated, simple questions are interpreted as challenges, so I've learned to stay quiet
- Staff are much more likely to be called out for doing something wrong than for regularly going above and beyond work expectations
- I am more likely to be criticized when I do exceptional work rather than recognized, appreciated or rewarded.
- Carleton does not capitalize on staff talents, abilities and experience by allowing those of us with direct knowledge of, and expertise in our fields a voice in any decisions. Rather, there is an institutional culture that staff should know their place, and stick to it
- A simple assignment usually has to through five people for approval; feedback is usually filtered through five people rather than being provided directly to person doing the work.
- Please stop the micromanaging. It's slowly killing us. Many staff, including me, have just stopped taking risks. It's not worth it
- I think many are frustrated when leadership does not communicate with my supervisor to find out whether we have the capacity for extra projects
- Staff - across the board - are routinely discounted or ignored.
- There is a big divide between respect and deference given to faculty and the administration vs the rest of the staff. I feel like we are forgotten a lot of the time when people are making decisions or in consideration for changes.
- It's "the Carleton way" to be overworked, work evenings and weekends, and check email on vacation. This is one of the reason I will quit here.
- I have what could easily be 2.0 FTE worth of work to do and I'm not even 1.0. And that's one of the better ratios in my office
- We need to work on the very elitist faculty / staff divide here. People bring various professional backgrounds and lived experiences, which is what makes a vibrant work place. Everyone's contributions should be valued.
- In a culture where perfect is considered the minimum, how can we excel? Anything less than perfect is noticed and punished. Excellence is considered standard and not recognized.
- I have considered leaving Carleton because I do not feel that my salary is competitive for the amount of work that I do.
- Cost of healthcare is a concern. I understand such concerns are not unique to Carleton, but it is still a legitimate concern.

- I do not agree with Carleton's policy of only offering tuition remission benefits to exempt employees
- Please provide more time off and the ability to work remotely periodically.

Conclusions

It can be rewarding to work at a safe place where you feel that you play a part in something important, where you get to work with fellow mission-driven colleagues. A place where your skills are utilized well and you can be fully engaged in the life of the enterprise. This is what Carleton is like for many staff.

Not all staff members have the same Carleton experience. For a small number of staff Carleton can be difficult if they feel that they don't have time to their best work, have little say in how they do their jobs, and their work goes unnoticed. These same staff see limited growth opportunities, and view their salaries as stagnant.

The latter seems to be true for the 70 employees who did not disclose their employee group. While it is impossible to determine why some did not disclose their employee group it is obvious that these employees', about 15% of all survey completers, responses were statistically different from those from other groups. That is, Bi-weekly, Union, and Exempt staff responses were statistically indistinguishable. What this means is that for most survey items, those in the Undisclosed group were less inclined to agree with each statement.

Appendix A.

Employee Experience Survey – Spring 2019

Dear Colleagues,

It is important to take stock of Carleton's performance periodically on many dimensions, including the College's role as an employer. Accordingly, we are conducting this survey regarding your experiences as a Carleton employee. Responses to this survey will be used by Human Resources to assess the work environment at the College and results will be shared in the fall. This brief survey should take less than 20 minutes to complete, depending on how much you elaborate on your responses. We ask that you do not include names, titles, or details about situations that could identify individuals. All potentially personally identifiable information will be removed to maintain confidentiality. The survey will remain open through **May 10th**.

Please contact Todd Jamison in the Institutional Research and Assessment Office (tjamison@carleton.edu or x4292) if you have any questions about completing the survey.

Thank you for sharing your perspective,

Kerstin Cardenas
Director of Human Resources

If you need to stop and return to the survey please do so using the same device and browser, as this feature works by placing a temporary cookie on your browser to hold your place on the survey.

direct Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements. You may also use the text box following each statement to include comments.

imprtnt I am part of something important at Carleton.

- ☐ Strongly agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (4)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Don't know (Null)

imprtnt_txt Comments:

mission I know where my work fits within the overall mission of the College.

- ☐ Strongly agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (4)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Don't know (Null)

mission_txt Comments:

sat_pstn I am generally satisfied with my current position.

- ☐ Strongly agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (4)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Don't know (Null)

sat_pstn_txt Comments:

colleagues I enjoy working with my colleagues.

- Strongly agree (5)
- Agree (4)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)
- Don't know (Null)

colleagues_txt Comments:

time I have enough time to do my job well.

- Strongly agree (5)
- Agree (4)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)
- Don't know (Null)

time_txt Comments:

fdbk I receive useful feedback about my job performance.

- Strongly agree (5)
- Agree (4)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)
- Don't know (Null)

fdbk_txt Comments:

recog I receive appropriate recognition when I do good work.

- ☐ Strongly agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (4)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Don't know (Null)

recog_txt Comments:

sklz_use My position makes good use of my skills.

- ☐ Strongly agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (4)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Don't know (Null)

sklz_use_txt Comments:

adv_op There are opportunities for professional growth available for me at Carleton.

- ☐ Strongly agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (4)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Don't know (Null)

adv_op_txt Comments:

inlv I am satisfied with my involvement in the decisions that affect my work.

- Strongly agree (5)
- Agree (4)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)
- Don't know (Null)

inlv_txt Comments:

informed Carleton does a good job of keeping me informed about matters impacting me.

- Strongly agree (5)
- Agree (4)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)
- Don't know (Null)

informed_txt Comments:

diverse Carleton values and respects a diverse workforce.

- Strongly agree (5)
- Agree (4)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)
- Don't know (Null)

diverse_txt Comments:

discrim I trust that Carleton will effectively address harassment and discrimination issues should they occur.

- Strongly agree (5)
- Agree (4)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)
- Don't know (Null)

discrim_txt Comments:

safe Carleton provides a safe work environment.

- Strongly agree (5)
- Agree (4)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)
- Don't know (Null)

safe_txt Comments:

cmps_evnts I have opportunities to attend campus events.

- Strongly agree (5)
- Agree (4)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)
- Don't know (Null)

cmps_evnts_txt Comments:

bensal_chng I am well-informed about changes in benefits and salary.

- Strongly agree (5)
- Agree (4)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)
- Don't know (Null)

bensal_chng_txt Comments:

benft_sat I am generally satisfied with my benefits package.

- Strongly agree (5)
- Agree (4)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)
- Don't know (Null)

benft_sat_txt Comments:

salry My salary is competitive with the market for positions like mine.

- Strongly agree (5)
- Agree (4)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly disagree (1)
- Don't know (Null)

salry_txt Comments:

wl_balnc I am able to achieve an appropriate balance between my work and personal life.

- ☐ Strongly agree (5)
- ☐ Agree (4)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Disagree (2)
- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Don't know (Null)

wl_balnc_txt Comments:

candid Please be as candid as possible on the next two questions regarding what you like about working here and what could be done to improve the workplace.

like_txt What do you like about working at Carleton?

improve_txt What could be done to substantially improve Carleton as a workplace?

division In which division are you employed?

- ☐ Admissions and Financial Aid (1)
- ☐ Business and Finance (2)
- ☐ Dean of the College (3)
- ☐ External Relations (4)
- ☐ President's Office (5)
- ☐ Student Life (6)
- ☐ Prefer to not answer (9)

class What is your job classification?

- ☐ Exempt (1)
- ☐ Bi-weekly (2)
- ☐ Union (3)
- ☐ Prefer to not answer (9)

Appendix B.

Frequency Table

I am part of something important at Carleton.

	Employee group									
	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	6	8.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	1.8	10	2.2
Neither agree nor disagree	12	17.4	10	9.1	5	11.9	13	5.8	40	9.0
Agree/strongly agree	51	73.9	100	90.9	37	88.1	207	92.4	395	88.8
Total	69	100.0	110	100.0	42	100.0	224	100.0	445	100.0

I know where my work fits within the overall mission of the College.

	Employee group									
	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	6	9.0	4	3.7	0	0.0	9	4.1	19	4.3
Neither agree nor disagree	7	10.4	11	10.1	3	7.1	12	5.4	33	7.5
Agree/strongly agree	54	80.6	94	86.2	39	92.9	201	90.5	388	88.2
Total	67	100.0	109	100.0	42	100.0	222	100.0	440	100.0

I am generally satisfied with my current position.

	Employee group									
	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	11	16.4	5	4.5	0	0.0	27	12.1	43	9.7
Neither agree nor disagree	17	25.4	16	14.5	7	16.7	22	9.9	62	14.0
Agree/strongly agree	39	58.2	89	80.9	35	83.3	174	78.0	337	76.2
Total	67	100.0	110	100.0	42	100.0	223	100.0	442	100.0

I enjoy working with my colleagues.

	Employee group									
	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	7	10.4	1	0.9	2	4.9	4	1.8	14	3.2
Neither agree nor disagree	9	13.4	12	10.9	9	22.0	12	5.4	42	9.5
Agree/strongly agree	51	76.1	97	88.2	30	73.2	207	92.8	385	87.3
Total	67	100.0	110	100.0	41	100.0	223	100.0	441	100.0

I have enough time to do my job well.

	Employee group									
	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	16	23.9	13	11.8	3	7.1	60	26.9	92	20.8
Neither agree nor disagree	16	23.9	9	8.2	13	31.0	35	15.7	73	16.5
Agree/strongly agree	35	52.2	88	80.0	26	61.9	128	57.4	277	62.7
Total	67	100.0	110	100.0	42	100.0	223	100.0	442	100.0

I receive useful feedback about my job performance.

	Employee group									
	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	17	25.8	13	12.0	4	9.5	29	13.0	63	14.4
Neither agree nor disagree	14	21.2	14	13.0	8	19.0	35	15.7	71	16.2
Agree/strongly agree	35	53.0	81	75.0	30	71.4	159	71.3	305	69.5
Total	66	100.0	108	100.0	42	100.0	223	100.0	439	100.0

I receive appropriate recognition when I do good work.

Employee group

	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	17	25.8	10	9.1	4	9.5	39	17.6	70	15.9
Neither agree nor disagree	15	22.7	16	14.5	13	31.0	50	22.5	94	21.4
Agree/strongly agree	34	51.5	84	76.4	25	59.5	133	59.9	276	62.7
Total	66	100.0	110	100.0	42	100.0	222	100.0	440	100.0

My position makes good use of my skills.

Employee group

	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	9	13.6	12	10.9	4	9.5	10	4.5	35	7.9
Neither agree nor disagree	11	16.7	12	10.9	10	23.8	14	6.3	47	10.7
Agree/strongly agree	46	69.7	86	78.2	28	66.7	199	89.2	359	81.4
Total	66	100.0	110	100.0	42	100.0	223	100.0	441	100.0

There are opportunities for professional growth available for me at Carleton.

What is your employee group?

	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	18	29.5	32	29.6	17	42.5	45	20.5	112	26.1
Neither agree nor disagree	15	24.6	38	35.2	13	32.5	45	20.5	111	25.9
Agree/strongly agree	28	45.9	38	35.2	10	25.0	130	59.1	206	48.0
Total	61	100.0	108	100.0	40	100.0	220	100.0	429	100.0

I am satisfied with my involvement in the decisions that affect my work.

Employee group

	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	26	40.6	14	12.7	5	11.9	45	20.3	90	20.5
Neither agree nor disagree	15	23.4	23	20.9	16	38.1	35	15.8	89	20.3
Agree/strongly agree	23	35.9	73	66.4	21	50.0	142	64.0	259	59.1
Total	64	100.0	110	100.0	42	100.0	222	100.0	438	100.0

Carleton does a good job of keeping me informed about matters impacting me.

Employee group

	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	15	23.1	12	11.0	6	14.3	22	9.9	55	12.6
Neither agree nor disagree	13	20.0	20	18.3	12	28.6	41	18.5	86	19.6
Agree/strongly agree	37	56.9	77	70.6	24	57.1	159	71.6	297	67.8
Total	65	100.0	109	100.0	42	100.0	222	100.0	438	100.0

Carleton values and respects a diverse workforce.

Employee group

	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	10	15.6	5	4.7	1	2.4	15	6.8	31	7.2
Neither agree nor disagree	15	23.4	17	15.9	7	16.7	38	17.3	77	17.8
Agree/strongly agree	39	60.9	85	79.4	34	81.0	167	75.9	325	75.1
Total	64	100.0	107	100.0	42	100.0	220	100.0	433	100.0

I trust that Carleton will effectively address harassment and discrimination issues...

	Employee group									
	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	12	19.4	4	3.8	5	11.9	17	8.2	38	9.1
Neither agree nor disagree	14	22.6	10	9.6	3	7.1	25	12.0	52	12.5
Agree/strongly agree	36	58.1	90	86.5	34	81.0	166	79.8	326	78.4
Total	62	100.0	104	100.0	42	100.0	208	100.0	416	100.0

Carleton provides a safe work environment.

	Employee group									
	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	5	7.9	5	4.6	0	0.0	7	3.1	17	3.9
Neither agree nor disagree	11	17.5	4	3.7	3	7.1	13	5.8	31	7.1
Agree/strongly agree	47	74.6	100	91.7	39	92.9	203	91.0	389	89.0
Total	63	100.0	109	100.0	42	100.0	223	100.0	437	100.0

I have opportunities to attend campus events.

	Employee group									
	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	7	11.1	10	9.2	3	7.3	11	4.9	31	7.1
Neither agree nor disagree	9	14.3	7	6.4	9	22.0	14	6.3	39	8.9
Agree/strongly agree	47	74.6	92	84.4	29	70.7	199	88.8	367	84.0
Total	63	100.0	109	100.0	41	100.0	224	100.0	437	100.0

I am well-informed about changes in benefits and salary.

	Employee group									
	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	2	3.2	9	8.5	1	2.4	10	4.6	22	5.1
Neither agree nor disagree	12	19.4	12	11.3	4	9.5	17	7.8	45	10.5
Agree/strongly agree	48	77.4	85	80.2	37	88.1	191	87.6	361	84.3
Total	62	100.0	106	100.0	42	100.0	218	100.0	428	100.0

I am generally satisfied with my benefits package.

	Employee group									
	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	4	6.3	14	13.2	1	2.4	18	8.1	37	8.5
Neither agree nor disagree	23	36.5	11	10.4	7	16.7	22	9.9	63	14.5
Agree/strongly agree	36	57.1	81	76.4	34	81.0	182	82.0	333	76.9
Total	63	100.0	106	100.0	42	100.0	222	100.0	433	100.0

My salary is competitive with the market for positions like mine.

	Employee group									
	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	18	30.5	23	24.2	2	4.9	42	19.7	85	20.8
Neither agree nor disagree	14	23.7	23	24.2	4	9.8	39	18.3	80	19.6
Agree/strongly agree	27	45.8	49	51.6	35	85.4	132	62.0	243	59.6
Total	59	100.0	95	100.0	41	100.0	213	100.0	408	100.0

I am able to achieve an appropriate balance between my work and personal life.

Employee group

	Undisclosed		Bi-weekly		Union		Exempt		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Disagree/strongly disagree	10	16.1	5	4.5	2	4.8	41	18.3	58	13.2
Neither agree nor disagree	14	22.6	16	14.5	4	9.5	35	15.6	69	15.8
Agree/strongly agree	38	61.3	89	80.9	36	85.7	148	66.1	311	71.0
Total	62	100.0	110	100.0	42	100.0	224	100.0	438	100.0

Come up with 5-10 slides that show ...

Basic demographics of respondents

Things going well

Opportunities to improve