

UTC Faculty/Staff Worklife and Diversity Study (FSWDS)
Center for Applied Social Research
Principal Investigator: Barbara C. Medley, Ph. D.
Research Coordinator: Susan F. Ritz, Ph. D.
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Generally, this study shows that UTC is viewed by its employees (faculty, administrators and staff) as a good place to work, and where they have a sense of fulfillment about their work. They want the university to be successful, and feel it offers much to the region as an excellent instructional and community resource. However, it needs to improve in several key areas, including salaries, communication systems, diversity of its faculty and administrative groups, and research support. The general feeling is that important steps in addressing some of these issues have been taken, but more is needed to enable the university to truly achieve its mission of inclusiveness, engagement, and regional relevance.

Selected Key Findings:

1. UTC employees are generally pleased with their employment and the departments in which they work. However, they are concerned with the lower salary and wage levels of the university, and feel greater parity in these areas is needed with other institutions in the system. They are generally satisfied with benefits, and consider benefits and the Chattanooga area to be major assets in their employment.
2. Most employees are satisfied with their work, but have concerns in the areas of sufficient administrative support, and in some cases, equipment and office space needs. There is particularly a concern with the lack of support for research, and the need for a better teaching-research-service balance.
3. The majority of employees feel some type of experiential-based learning option should be available to students. However, how this can be accomplished within the time constraints faculty presently face, and those possibly existing for students, is unclear. Faculty, staff, administrators and students concur that either service-learning or another approach to experiential learning is needed to help UTC achieve its mission as an engaged metropolitan university.
4. In the area of communication and decision-making, most employees felt they had some opportunity to influence decisions within their own departments. However, they felt significantly more limited in their knowledge of matters affecting the campus, and felt they had few opportunities to have any major input into campus-level decisions. The greatest concern was for the lack of sufficient information and access to information.
5. Improving employee recognition and enhancing the reward system of the university were viewed as greatly needed by a majority of the respondents to the survey.
6. Many employees were unaware of a number of employee support programs and benefits. This reflected a lack of communication about these programs, their purpose, and availability. Certain programs were known, but had been less effectively utilized by employees. These included the Affirmative Action Office and sexual harassment workshops.
7. Overall, employees felt UTC had made important strides in the area of diversity, but primarily in terms of women faculty and administrators, and in having a more diverse student body. In the

areas of racial and ethnic faculty and administrator diversity, however, there was less success, and this was identified as an area needing attention.

8. All employees were supportive of multiculturalism as one of the goals of the university, and felt some important success had been achieved in this area. However, additional attention to issues of diversity and a broad approach to multiculturalism were seen as needed.
9. The UTC mission was well known to employees, and the majority felt the mission statement reflected the right direction for the university. They also felt it reflects the direction of higher education in the future. How to best achieve the mission, especially the dimensions related to being an engaged metropolitan university, was less clear to employees.

Selected Recommendations for Improvement from the FSWDS:

1. Increase salary and wage parity for employees as soon as this is possible. Standardize the information given to incoming employees so that they are familiar with all of the benefits, programs, and opportunities applicable to them in the university.
2. Review university and departmental requirements for research and teaching, and develop a more balanced formula that will reflect the prioritization of teaching, but supports the importance of research.
3. Provide more financial support for research.
4. Set up a multidisciplinary task force to explore experiential learning options for students, and how best to incorporate this into the curriculum of selected departments.
5. Develop a campus newsletter or other communication vehicle for informing the campus about departments, activities, accomplishments, and other newsworthy matters.
6. Develop a more transparent decision-making process and improve access to information about the university and its major policy and financial decisions.
7. Identify ways to improve employee morale through an enhanced recognition and reward system.
8. Review the programs and practices of the university that are important to achieving fairness and inclusion at all employee levels. Revamp the Affirmative Action Office to be more effective against problems of discrimination and harassment.
9. Review and develop stronger approaches to improving diversity, especially in the recruitment and retention of minority faculty and administrators. Review the lack of upper level minority administrators and address this problem.