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**College of Agriculture
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June 23, 2017

Dear Colleagues,

As you know we implemented our inaugural annual CALS Employee Climate Survey on February 16th. Thank you to the 454 of you (33% of our CALS employees) who responded. You have demonstrated your commitment to achieving our foundational goal to *be the most sought-after place to be part of*.

I have been engaged in detailed data analysis to identify areas of greatest potential for improvement and have begun to develop an improvement plan. This is a complex analysis and results will begin to be available soon. The conclusions will also be used to inform focus groups and further hone our actions.

Inspired by feedback from the survey, we have already implemented The CALS Grapevine, Dial-the-Dean open forums, Associate Deans communicating goal attainment, and workshops to support effective performance feedback.

As this was the first CALS Climate Survey, there are a number of lessons I learned to improve next year's survey:

- I unintentionally excluded/misclassified Extension employees under the "service" group. I apologize and have fixed the error in next year's draft survey.
- The initial survey was modeled off of one conducted by CALS Cooperative Extension, which was in turn modeled off of a survey by Sirota. Additional questions were selected from UA Human Resources and peer-reviewed articles (1-3). The domains selected were based both on peer-reviewed job satisfaction and organizational commitment research (3-8), psychological safety (8-10), and additional domains that we wanted to understand within the college (e.g. innovation, teamwork).
- The length of the survey likely contributed to the number of respondents that dropped off by the end of the survey (63, 14% of the 454 respondents) and the CY18 survey will be more concise.
- I settled on a five-point Likert scale to allow respondents the option of a neutral score. This is standard in research (1, 2, 5, 6, 8-11) and the survey industry (e.g. Gallup's Q12) but there are arguments for even-numbered scales—I am still researching this area, including communicating with national academic experts, and I may change it for next year.
- Standard practice in industry (e.g. Gallup, Kenexa, Sirota, etc.) and within research (8, 11) for employee engagement surveys is to send surveys to all employees. Despite our theoretically very credible and creditable one-third response rate (4.96CI at the 99% confidence level), we always must be aware of survey bias. Another option to avoid self-selection bias may be to survey a randomly identified group proportionately representing

the different kinds of CALS' employees. I continue to strive for the highest response rate as possible while concurrently achieving the most accurate representativeness—I am still researching this complex area, including communicating with national academic experts, and I may change it for next year.

- Five people communicated to me concerns that the survey was not genuinely anonymous because of the demographic questions. I must assume that there were more people who either didn't want to mention it to me and/or chose not to complete the survey because of this concern. Protocols were in place prior to the survey to restrict access to the full information and prevent the sharing of detailed results with units where the response rate was small (protocols include single user control of the survey on Qualtrics, password protection for the raw data containing demographic information, survey data being placed in a restricted access folder, and results being scrubbed of demographic information at all levels except for the highest CALS-wide level). Nonetheless, I am thankful these fears were raised so that I can overtly and proactively address them next year by explaining these measures up front. It is not too late to contact me if you have these concerns; doing so will help me make the survey better.
- As with any research, generating large and complex data sets, analysis and statistical hypothesis testing takes considerable time. I now have a much better understanding of our statistical processes and I will build on this next year.

To reiterate, I am engaged with PhD level experts in the field of employee engagement and surveys; however, if you have any recommendations to improve the survey or its distribution, please contact me by email or phone (520) 621-9168. Also, please remember, our Climate Survey is only one tool I am using to help us measure progress within our foundational goal.

Thank you,

Heather Roberts-Wrenn
Specialist, Organizational Development & Effectiveness

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