

**Millennium Project Phase II Five-Year Report**  
**Prepared by the Millennium Project Action Committee**  
**Spring 2007**

**Introduction and Background**

The Millennium Projects Phases I and II were part of an effort to assess and respond to issues and concerns about workplace climate entitled “Enhancing the Climate for Excellence at the University of Arizona”. Phase I was initiated in 2000 as a joint effort led by the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the Association for Women Faculty (AWF) to assess issues related to climate for faculty and to recommend actions where needed. The Millennium Project Phase I Report, released in 2001, established that “large numbers of female faculty, faculty of color and other diverse faculty experience a particularly challenging and sometimes hostile campus climate.” Recommendations focused on efforts to create a more diverse, fair and hospitable community. A Millennium Report Oversight Committee (MROC) with representation from faculty leaders throughout the university was established to monitor the implementation of an action agenda.

As Phase I progressed, CSW members representing classified staff and appointed personnel as well as leaders of Staff Advisory Council (SAC) and Appointed Personnel Organization Council (now Appointed Professionals Action Committee or APAC) reported persistent concerns related to workplace climate, equitable treatment, and morale. Since support staff issues have rarely been the subject of an in depth study, either at the University of Arizona or at other institutions of higher education, CSW proposed a Phase II study to address these concerns. Following the completion of the Millennium Project Phase I, President Peter Likins agreed to support the Millennium Project Phase II, initiated in Summer 2001, to assess the quality of work life for classified staff and year-to-year appointed personnel at the University of Arizona.

Diane Perreira Quinn, then President of CSW and Director of the SALT Center, and Kathleen Miller, Coordinator of Employee Development in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences were appointed as co-chairs of the project. A University Steering Committee which included the Presidents of SAC and APOC, University Advisory Board, and Community Advisory Board provided guidance throughout the project. Dr. Linda Johnsrud of the University of Hawaii, who had published a similar study of support staff at that institution, was chosen as project director. Nine facilitated discussion groups were used to identify a broad range of issues and concerns, many but not all of which were common to both groups. Two separate surveys, one for classified staff (in both English and Spanish) and one for year-to-year appointed personnel, were designed to reflect these concerns and measure employee morale and satisfaction with various aspects of work life. Surveys were mailed to a total of 7526 employees (5892 CS, 1634 AP), .2FTE or greater. Over fifty percent of each group returned surveys (53.1% CS, 50.6% AP).

**Millennium Project Phase II Results**

The Millennium Project Phase II Report, released in Fall 2002, presented results of the survey by mean-weighted satisfaction scores (level of satisfaction x importance). Qualitative comments to the extent they could not be identified with a specific individual were included in the report to broaden the picture of work experiences. The complete report is available online:

<http://www.u.arizona.edu/%7Emillen/phase2/summary-report.htm>

**Overall Morale at UA:**

Most classified staff (CS) and year-to-year appointed personnel (AP) reported that they enjoy their work and felt loyalty and commitment toward the University. (Scores ranged from 68.3%-82.8% for CS and 71.7%-79.4% for AP.) The level of agreement was much lower with statements reflecting that the UA values its employees (CS 47.8%, AP 45.9%), shares a common purpose (CS 44.6%, AP 39%), and is a caring organization (CS 44.1%, AP 41.8%) or a fair institution (CS 52.6%, AP 50.8%).

**Overall Satisfaction at UA:**

The majority of classified staff and year-to-year appointed personnel reported that they have positive relationships with colleagues and trust in their co-workers. Statements related to job characteristics such as enjoyment, variety, input, and independence showed high levels of agreement (70-87%). However, significant numbers of staff and appointed personnel reported much lower satisfaction (CS 34.4%, AP 39%) regarding fair salary.

The top five most and least satisfying aspects of work life for each group are listed below:

**Appointed Personnel (Most Satisfying)**

Safe Work Environment

Relations with Students

Education Benefits

Relations with Public

Reputation of UA

**Appointed Personnel (Least Satisfying)**

Affordability of Parking

Opportunity to Evaluate Supervisors

Opportunity for Promotion

State Government Intervention

Childcare

**Classified Staff (Most Satisfying)**

Education Benefits

Safe Work Environment

Health/Safety Protections

Opportunity to Respond to Evaluations

Relations with Public

**Classified Staff (Least Satisfying)**

Affordability of Parking

Opportunity to Evaluate Supervisors

Opportunity for Promotion

Health Plans

Salary/Wages

While majorities of both classified staff and appointed personnel reported they had not experienced harassment or discrimination by gender or race/ethnicity, the number reporting occasionally, often, frequently or very frequently is too high to be ignored.

**Harassment by Gender**

CS: 80.9% Never 19.3% Experienced

AP: 79.5% Never 20.5% Experienced

**Harassment by Race**

CS: 87.2% Never 12.8% Experienced

AP: 88.3% Never 11.7% Experienced

**Discrimination by Gender**

CS: 84.5% Never 15.5% Experienced

AP: 79.7% Never 20.3% Experienced

**Discrimination by Race**

CS: 87.9% Never 12.1% Experienced

AP: 87.7% Never 12.3% Experienced

While many positive aspects of working at the University of Arizona were identified in the report, some issues that contribute to workplace climate would benefit from additional attention. Specific recommendations were developed to help improve the quality of work lives for classified staff and year-to-year appointed personnel. These recommendations support the

following overarching goal and vision of an ideal workplace community:

***To build a University community that honors the contributions of all its members in meeting the mission of a student-centered research institution.***

***The Ideal University Community:***

- \$ Treats all members of the community with respect and civility.***
- \$ Recognizes and rewards good work in all units, at every level.***
- \$ Ensures that all members of the community receive fair compensation and the resources necessary to accomplish their jobs.***
- \$ Creates a safe and open climate for sharing concerns, criticisms and ideas.***

The report identified specific recommendations under the four major dimensions of work life below to address the most dissatisfying aspects of work as reported by classified staff and appointed personnel:

- \$ Leadership and Supervision***
- \$ Opportunities for Advancement***
- \$ Salary and Benefits***
- \$ Climate of Civility and Respect***

(See attached table of weighted satisfaction ratings for areas addressed in the recommendations: opportunity to evaluate supervisors, training for supervisors, opportunities for promotion, availability of mentoring, salary and/or wages, equity in merit pay increases, affordability of parking, health plan, child care, state government support, fear of retaliation and the perception of the University as a caring institution.)

The report strongly recommended the establishment of a Millennium Project Phase II Oversight Committee to address ways to implement the recommendations contained in the report and a reassessment in five to seven years.

### **Creation of Millennium Project Action Committee (MPAC)**

The Millennium Project Action Committee (MPAC) was formed in Spring 2003 by President Peter Likins to oversee implementation of the recommendations resulting from the Millennium II study. MPAC is a diverse group whose members come from many administrative units, including an off-campus representative and designated representatives from Staff Advisory Council (SAC) and Appointed Professionals Advisory Council (APAC). Originally the co-chairs of the Millennium II Project, Diane Quinn and Kathleen Miller, were appointed as co-chairs of MPAC. When Diane Quinn stepped down in Spring 2005, Jennifer Lawrence, who had worked on the project since its inception agreed to assume the role of co-chair.

## **Accomplishments and Recommendations**

MPAC's work to date has focused on efforts to promote a more respectful community and foster a culture that promotes better management and supervision of employees at all levels. MPAC's role has been primarily advisory. The group has worked to raise awareness of the issues and concerns of classified staff and appointed personnel that the study identified by conducting in-depth discussions with key administrators and has made concrete proposals to promote a better working environment.

Overall the response from senior administrators and major units on campus has been very positive but climate changes happen slowly. In detailing the efforts made over the past five years, we include not only MPAC's accomplishments, but also those actions and achievements of other groups that have supported the recommendations of the Phase II report.

### **Leadership and Supervision**

Responding to concerns expressed about the quality of management and the lack of opportunity for employees to evaluate supervisors, MPAC held informational meetings with representatives from Human Resources and with department managers identified as exhibiting "best practices" in the area of personnel management. This resulted in MPAC producing a formal proposal, *Enhancing Management Performance: Concrete Steps to Improve the Quality of Management and Supervision at the University*. MPAC presented this document to President Likins, Provost Davis, Vice President Taylor, Vice President Valdez, and VPR Tolbert, as well as other senior administrators. The proposal, which calls for training of and accountability for managers and supervisors at all levels, was forwarded to President's Cabinet for discussion of ways to implement various suggestions.

The Department of Human Resources under Allison Vaillancourt has taken the lead in this area by providing increased training opportunities for supervisors and managers and making performance management tools and guidelines readily accessible on their web site. Workshops such as the *Successful Supervisor Series* and the *University Leadership Institute* teach employees the skills necessary to become competent managers and supervisors. The web-based *Manager's Toolkit* (<http://www.hr.arizona.edu/mgrtoolkit.php>) allows for quick access to information.

MPAC continues to advocate for accountability and continuity in the conduct of performance reviews and more access to training in skills needed for better personnel management for managers and supervisors at the unit level and for research personnel.

### **Opportunities for Advancement**

MPAC has supported initiatives by other groups to promote professional development and advancement by employees. CSW's successful *Intersections: Living, Learning, Working* conferences held in 2004 and 2005 were developed to address professional development needs raised by CS in the Phase II report. SAC and APAC are also actively engaged in developing and promoting professional development opportunities. Human Resources is using new survey tools

to determine why employees move from one department to another, and has undertaken classification studies to determine if certain job titles match job content.

The UA has in place a policy providing benefits-eligible employees with at least 16 hours per year of paid release time to pursue professional development activities (see <http://policy.web.arizona.edu/~policy/development.shtml>). Broader use of this policy would allow employees opportunities to enhance their skills and further their career goals.

### **Salary and Benefits**

Salary and/or wages, and in particular equity in the distribution of merit increases, were areas of dissatisfaction among both CS and AP. Among issues relating to campus life, both CS and AP indicated that they were most concerned about the availability and affordability of parking, availability of childcare resources, and the quality and affordability of health care options.

As University-wide salary money has become available, MPAC submitted formal statements to the Compensation Advisory Team identifying CS and AP concerns regarding plans to distribute salary increases as merit increases only. MPAC considers that merit increases are more likely to be perceived as fair when they are given in addition to an across the board increase.

Availability and cost of parking was the number one issue of dissatisfaction with both CS and AP. MPAC met with Patrick Kass, Director of Parking and Transportation Services. As a result, an MPAC liaison serves on the Parking and Transportation Advisory Council, joining representatives from APAC and SAC. We note that Parking and Transportation has increased its low-cost parking options, has expanded the campus shuttle service, and has increased the number of day passes bus permit holders may purchase. Affordable parking remains a challenge for many employees, and MPAC encourages the University to consider innovative solutions, perhaps to include establishing sliding fee scales for parking permits purchased by employees.

MPAC has not directly addressed the issue of childcare for employees, but fully supports the efforts of the many groups and individuals engaged in this important discussion. MPAC applauds the CSW for creating a defined play area for children in the Student Union and for its effort to have diaper-changing stations installed in restrooms across campus. Funding for the employee child-care voucher program administered by *Life & Work Connections* has increased in recent years. (true?) MPAC believes that the University should continue to support existing programs, but should also develop additional family-friendly options to support its parent-employees.

On the issue of healthcare, we note that employee contributions to healthcare costs have remained stable for the past four years. We encourage the University to ensure that there is University of Arizona staff representation on the local and state-level committees that evaluate and contract for healthcare packages.

### **Climate of Civility and Respect**

In presenting results of the Phase II study throughout the University, we found universal agreement that respect and civility must be articulated as a central value of the University. To promote such a conversation, MPAC created a value statement regarding respect which was reviewed and approved by President Likins. MPAC participated in the creation of the values statement on Diversity and Inclusion that is included in the University's Strategic Plan. To encourage discussion about the concepts of respect, dignity, and courtesy, MPAC designed and distributed a graphically striking bookmark. The *RESPECT* bookmark tool has been incorporated into new-student orientations, employee training workshops, residence hall discussions, and other campus events. MPAC continues to receive requests for this tool, and plans to make the design readily available to the University community.

The Diversity Resource Office (DRO) is central in efforts to promote the values of respect and inclusion. The first "UA Discusses..." event focused on the topic of respect, and the DRO continues to take a leadership role in fostering respect and in creating a climate where employees and students can share concerns, criticisms, and ideas. Also instrumental is the Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Office, which offers the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Program, a series of workshops designed to educate employees and supervisors on the University's policies regarding equal employment, anti-harassment, and discrimination. Much work has been done to foster an inclusive environment that supports all employees, and these efforts should continue to be encouraged and supported.

### **Conclusions**

The Millennium Project Action Committee has worked to enhance the workplace climate of the University of Arizona, and to help build a University community that honors the contributions of all its members. It has been five years since results of the comprehensive Phase II survey were released. In that time, many groups and offices throughout the University have taken steps to address concerns raised by this study. Continued attention must be paid to critical issues related to fairness of salary increases, evaluation processes, as well as respect in the workplace. Managers must be provided sufficient training and tools to supervise effectively and be held accountable for this part of their responsibilities.

The climate surveys that the Department of Human Resources plans to conduct periodically, as well as exit surveys and other tools, should provide the University with the data necessary to regularly assess the quality of work life it provides for classified staff and appointed personnel. We believe that a separate formal follow up survey is not needed. Standardized annual collection of data already being developed by Human Resources should fulfill this need. It is important that results from these surveys be shared with groups such as SAC and APAC to enable them to better pursue their advocacy efforts. As MPAC ends its formal role, we believe that SAC and APAC, if properly recognized and supported by the administration, can provide the leadership to support continued progress in the areas highlighted below:

- **Respect and Civility:** Promoting respect and civility is seen by many as one of MPAC's key accomplishments, this critical aspect of work life should receive continued attention in all diversity efforts.
- **Salary Increase Distributions:** Future compensation advisory teams should solicit and pay attention to formal input by both SAC and APAC. Until better tools and training are in place to bring greater consistency across departments and across campus and guide the equitable distribution of merit, dissatisfaction with "fairness" will persist. Merit will be more likely to be perceived as fair if it is given in addition to an across the board increase.
- **Management and Supervision:** Recent exit survey results and the Employment Policies Review Team Report suggest that management and supervision issues require greater attention. Education in good management practices and accountability for management must spread downward through the organization to include department heads, directors and principal investigators, and all those who supervise classified staff and appointed personnel.
- **Performance Management:** All employees should have the opportunity to receive an honest evaluation of their work at least once a year. Far too many employees still report that they have never or rarely been reviewed or that reviews only happen when required for salary distribution and then are only cursory and rushed.