WEC 2020 Climate Survey Report – Finalized in October 2021 by WEC IDEA Committee

In mid-fall 2020, the WEC IDEA committee circulated a Qualtrics Survey (see end of document for copy of survey) to WEC Faculty, Staff, Graduate Students, Undergraduate Students, and Post-Doctoral Associates. The survey was active for about four weeks and was disseminated primarily via list-servs and through announcements in class and faculty meetings.

Key Takeaways:

- More effort and innovation are needed to increase visibility, access, and response rate to future WEC Climate Surveys, especially among students – results from this survey should be evaluated in light of the relatively low response rate.
- WEC has generally created a welcome and inclusive environment, with nearly 90% of respondents having positive overall experiences.
- Students felt that WEC classes created a welcoming and positive learning environment.
- There are definite areas for improvement, especially improving environment for faculty, recruiting more diversity within the department to provide more mentors and role models for underrepresented groups.
- Results from this survey should be used to help define and implement IDEA strategies within the Department and modify the survey for future implementation.

Results:

Overall
A total of 56 individuals completed the survey, including 18 (52.9%) faculty, 6 (60%) staff, 11 graduate students (11.6%) and 21 (10.1%) undergraduate students; 48 respondents were from Gainesville campus location.[*] Considering the number of individuals, the response rate was considered low, especially among students, and is a definite area for improvement in subsequent surveys.

Overall, respondents supported the statement that WEC has a welcome and inclusive environment (48% strongly agree, 41% somewhat agree), ranking their experience in WEC higher than in UF as a whole (34% strongly agree, 46% somewhat agree). One respondent (2%) strongly disagreed with the statements that WEC or UF has a welcoming and inclusive environment.

In terms of classes in WEC, the majority strongly agreed (36%) or somewhat agreed (34%) that a welcome and inclusive environment was achieved; 11% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. No respondent indicated that they somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that WEC classes are welcoming and inclusive; 9% of respondents were not sure of the environment within WEC classes.

The majority of respondents felt their opinions (37.5% strongly agreed, 37.5% somewhat agreed) or their efforts to promote diversity and inclusion (34.5% strongly agreed, 29% somewhat agreed) within WEC were valued; 14-16% neither agreed nor disagreed with these statements. In terms of their opinions being valued, 4% and 5% somewhat or strongly disagreed

*Note: these percentages are based on numbers in Fall 2020 for faculty, staff, and graduate students and WEC majors in undergraduate program.

respectively; in terms of their efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, 6% and 2% somewhat or strongly disagreed respectively, and 13% were either unsure or selected N/A.

A series of questions asked respondents to rank from 1 to 5 aspects of the WEC environment with positive scores (e.g., very friendly, somewhat friendly) with ranks of 1 and 2, and negative scores (e.g., somewhat hostile, very hostile) having ranks of 4 and 5. Respondents were asked to score the following using the positive/negative ranks: friendly/hostile, inclusive/exclusive, improving/regressing, or positive or negative based on identify as LGBTQ+; persons with disabilities; spiritual/religious backgrounds; people of color, men, women; non-US citizens, diverse political affiliations; low socioeconomic status; and English as a second language speakers. In all cases, respondents scored WEC in the top 2 positive ranks, with no respondents reporting neutral or negative ranks, although a small percentage selected "not sure" depending on the focus or pertinence of the question (which is not unexpected).

We asked respondents if they had ever observed any conduct directed towards another person or group within WEC that they believed created an exclusionary, intimidating, offensive and/or hostile environment. Of 49 responses, 11 answered "yes" and 38 "no." The vast majority of "yes" responses came from faculty (9 of 11). When asked if "you had personally experienced" any conduct which interfered with your ability to work or learn in WEC, 7 responded "yes" and 40 responded "no;" all "yes" responses were from faculty. For those that observed or experienced conduct that created an unwelcoming environment, when asked about the likely basis for such conduct, respondents cited possible explanations such as gender/gender identity, sexual identity, age, learning disability/condition, medical disability/condition, marital status, parental status (e.g., having children), racial identity, educational credentials (M.S., PhD, etc.); philosophical views, participation in an organization/team, political views, position (staff, faculty, post-doc, student). (Note: some "yes" respondents cited multiple explanations).

By Stakeholder
The relatively small number of respondents within each category (faculty, staff, etc.) limit our ability to disaggregate the data and receive meaningful results. In general, when combining across strongly and somewhat agree, or disagree categories, similarities across stakeholder categories were strong. However, students in general felt more strongly that WEC Department and WEC classes had a welcoming and inclusive environment when compared to faculty. Similarly, students tended to have more positive scores than faculty when asked about the WEC environment across various categories (e.g., citizenship, gender, disabilities, etc.). Faculty and graduate students had more strong negative views toward the statement "My opinions are valued within WEC," with 11% of faculty (2 of 18 respondents) and 9% of graduate students (1of 11 respondents) strongly disagreeing.

A few respondents elaborated on their experiences within WEC, with several being highly complementary and feeling very included, while others concerned about particular biases, including biases against women, people with particular viewpoints or philosophies, or a culture of "cronyism, favoritism, intimidation and retribution." Some commented on the pandemic and the inability to connect to others within WEC, wishing we could do a better job of virtually supporting each other.

Recommendations for Moving Forward:
Among options suggested to improve WEC environment, about 28-33% selected the following options: more diversity and equity training; recognitions and awards for diversity achievements; better resources for reporting concerns; diversity-related experience as criteria in new hires. In addition, individual respondents commented on the need to recognize IDEA efforts in annual evaluations (Note: this has been implemented by WEC Chair); increasing number of faculty of color or faculty in the LGBTQ+ community; starting from a "place where people who disagree with specific agendas and ideologies are not bad people;" developing programs with local community to advance IDEA goals (e.g., high schools, prepping students to apply to UF or other universities); IDEA-focused scholarships and fellowships; providing more information about resources available and what to do if faced with some form of discrimination or unwelcome conduct.

Final Comments:
This WEC Climate Survey is just one tool to help guide our efforts to create a more diverse and inclusive environment in WEC that aims to raise everyone. The IDEA Committee welcomes input and plans to revise and implement a similar survey on an annual basis to provide an indicator of progress towards achieving IDEA goals within WEC. This survey is part of a broader strategy and should not be considered the only measure of success or failure. Indeed, moving forward, we recognize the need to develop a suite of indicators and mechanisms, as well as developing specific targets that better reflect our progress in achieving IDEA goals.

	Total	Faculty	Staff	Post-doctoral Associate	Graduate Student	Undergraduate Student	Prefer to not disclose
Percentage of respondents	Overall, UF has a welcoming and inclusive environment						
Strongly agree	33.9%	16.7%	50.0%	0.0%	36.4%	42.9%	0.0%
Somewhat agree	46.4%	55.6%	33.3%	0.0%	45.5%	42.9%	0.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	7.1%	11.1%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%	0.0%
Somewhat disagree	10.7%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	18.2%	4.8%	0.0%
Strongly disagree	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%	0.0%
Not sure	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
N/A	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Overall, WEC has a welcoming and inclusive environment						
Strongly agree	48.2%	22.2%	50.0%	0.0%	45.5%	71.4%	0.0%
Somewhat agree	41.1%	66.7%	50.0%	0.0%	27.3%	23.8%	0.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%	0.0%
Somewhat disagree	5.4%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Strongly disagree	1.8%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Not sure	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
N/A	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
	Overall, classes in WEC are welcoming and inclusive						
Strongly agree	36.4%	5.9%	16.7%	0.0%	54.5%	57.1%	0.0%
Somewhat agree	34.5%	41.2%	16.7%	0.0%	36.4%	33.3%	0.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	10.9%	11.8%	16.7%	0.0%	9.1%	9.5%	0.0%
Somewhat disagree	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Not sure	9.1%	23.5%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
N/A	9.1%	17.6%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

	My opinions are valued within WEC						
Strongly agree	37.5%	27.8%	50.0%	0.0%	36.4%	42.9%	0.0%
Somewhat agree	37.5%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	27.3%	28.6%	0.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	14.3%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%	18.2%	23.8%	0.0%
Somewhat disagree	3.6%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%	0.0%
Strongly disagree	5.4%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Not sure	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
N/A	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%
	My efforts to promote diversity and inclusion are valued within WEC						
Strongly agree	34.5%	47.1%	16.7%	0.0%	27.3%	33.3%	0.0%
Somewhat agree	29.1%	35.3%	16.7%	0.0%	27.3%	28.6%	0.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	16.4%	5.9%	16.7%	0.0%	18.2%	23.8%	0.0%
Somewhat disagree	5.5%	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	9.1%	4.8%	0.0%
Strongly disagree	1.8%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Not sure	5.5%	5.9%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%	0.0%
N/A	7.3%	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	18.2%	4.8%	0.0%

	Q. 14 Using a scale of 1 to 5, please rate the overall climate at WEC on the following dimensions: (Note: As an example, for the first item, "friendly-hostile", 1=very friendly, 2=somewhat friendly, 3=neither friendly nor hostile, 4=somewhat hostile, 5=very hostile). LEAVE BLANK if "not sure" - Friendly:Hostile						
	Total	Faculty	Staff	Post-doctoral Associate	Graduate Student	Undergraduate Student	Prefer to not disclose

	Friendly/Hostile						
Very friendly	24	5	4	0	5	10	0
Somewhat Friendly	12	5	0	0	4	3	0
Neither friendly/nor hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somewhat hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Not sure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Inclusive/Exclusive							
Very friendly	15	1	2	0	4	8	0
Somewhat Friendly	20	9	2	0	5	4	0
Neither friendly/nor hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somewhat hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not sure	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Improving/Regressing							
Very friendly	14	2	2	0	2	8	0
Somewhat Friendly	17	6	2	0	5	4	0
Neither friendly/nor hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somewhat hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not sure	3	1	0	0	1	1	0
Positive for persons of disabilities/ Negative for persons of disabilities							
Very friendly	9	1	2	0	2	4	0
Somewhat Friendly	9	3	2	0	1	3	0
Neither friendly/nor hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somewhat hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not sure	12	3	0	0	3	6	0
Positive for people who identify as LGBTQ+							
Very friendly	13	1	1	0	4	7	0
Somewhat Friendly	6	4	1	0	0	1	0
Neither friendly/nor hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somewhat hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not sure	9	3	0	0	1	5	0
Positive for people of diverse spiritual/religious backgrounds							

Very friendly	12	1	1	0	4	6	0
Somewhat Friendly	8	5	1	0	1	1	0
Neither friendly/nor hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somewhat hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not sure	9	2	0	0	1	6	0
	Positive for people of color						
Very friendly	12	1	1	0	3	7	0
Somewhat Friendly	8	4	2	0	1	1	0
Neither friendly/nor hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somewhat hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not sure	10	4	0	0	1	5	0
	Positive for men/Negative for men						
Very friendly	22	6	2	0	5	9	0
Somewhat Friendly	8	2	2	0	2	2	0
Neither friendly/nor hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somewhat hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not sure	2	0	0	0	0	2	0
	Positive for women/Negative for women						
Very friendly	17	1	2	0	5	9	0
Somewhat Friendly	13	8	2	0	1	2	0
Neither friendly/nor hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somewhat hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not sure	3	1	0	0	1	1	0
	Positive for people who are not US citizens						
Very friendly	17	3	2	0	6	6	0
Somewhat Friendly	11	5	1	0	1	4	0

Neither friendly/nor hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somewhat hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not sure	5	2	0	0	1	2	0
Positive for people of diverse political affiliations							
Very friendly	12	1	3	0	3	5	0
Somewhat Friendly	8	2	1	0	2	3	0
Neither friendly/nor hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somewhat hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not sure	8	4	0	0	1	3	0
Positive for people of low socioeconomic status							
Very friendly	11	1	2	0	2	6	0
Somewhat Friendly	7	2	1	0	2	2	0
Neither friendly/nor hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somewhat hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not sure	11	4	0	0	2	5	0
Positive for English as second language speakers							
Very friendly	19	4	3	0	6	6	0
Somewhat Friendly	7	4	1	0	0	2	0
Neither friendly/nor hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Somewhat hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Very hostile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not sure	4	1	0	0	0	3	0

	Q 15.Given what you know about the culture within the WEC department, do you have any suggestions on how we can improve to be more inclusive, more diverse, more equitable, and provide greater access to resources for individuals within our community?						
More diversity and equity training	19	5	3	0	3	8	0
Recognition and awards for diversity achievements	16	5	4	0	2	5	0
Better resources for reporting concerns	18	6	3	0	3	6	0
Diversity-related experience as a criteria in new hires	16	7	2	0	2	5	0
Other ideas*	4	1	0	0	3	0	0

*recognition in faculty evaluations for IDEA; diversity related experience; required raining to LGBTQ vocabulary, awareness, and inclusion; avoid tokenization with awards; more role models (e.g., LGBTQ); more engagement in local high schools and communities; scholarships/grants to low socioeconomic individuals in WEC