Appendix

The Pennsylvania State University Values & Culture Survey

Summary of the Survey Process

Introduction

In 2013, The Pennsylvania State University (Penn State) contracted with the Ethics & Compliance Initiative (ECI)[24] to conduct the Values & Culture Survey, a census survey of its members – Faculty, Staff, and Graduate and Undergraduate Students. The project was part of a larger ongoing effort by the University to better understand its culture and the values that are commonly held among its members. The results of the survey informed the development of several major initiatives, including a greater emphasis on workplace ethics and various enhancements to the annual ethics training program.

In 2017, Penn State re-contracted with the ECI to implement a follow-up survey to the 2013 Values & Culture Survey. Penn State conducted the 2017 survey to build upon the findings from the first iteration. The areas of investigation remained largely similar in order to compare changes that may have occurred during the intervening years.

Definition of Culture

The survey asked current members of the Penn State community about their perceptions of the University culture as they experience it on a daily basis. Metrics for the 2017 survey were based on the same generally accepted definition of culture that served as the foundation for the 2013 survey. The following describes the definition of culture, and the metrics that were central to the survey effort.

Like any organization, there are many aspects to the "Penn State culture," and what is thought of as "Penn State" is actually the sum of countless subcultures. The University is a large, multifaceted organization comprised of many campuses, colleges, offices, and student groups. Although no two people can be expected to experience the Penn State culture in exactly the same way, research has shown that in even the most dynamic and differentiated cultures (like Penn State), there is a set of formal and informal systems that are widely shared. Additionally, in complex cultures there are beliefs that are commonly held, and stakeholders have an experience of "the culture" as an overarching entity that embodies all its subcultures (Schein, 2004).

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[24] The Ethics & Compliance Initiative (ECI) is comprised by three nonprofit organizations, one of which is the Ethics Research Center (ERC). In both 2013 and 2017 the Penn State Values & Culture Survey were conducted by the ERC. For clarity, in this report the organization is referred to as ECI; the public brand of the organization.

Clifford Geertz, a pioneer in the field of anthropology, defined culture as "an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions … by which [people] communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge … and attitudes" (1973, p. 89). Put another way, culture is "non-biological inheritance" (Hoebel, 1966, p. 52). Through the culture, members of a community learn about the behaviors that are considered to be acceptable, the activities that should be prioritized, and the moments in the history of the group that still shape the way things are done. This is true whether the culture is a nation, a school, or a company (Schein, 2004).

At the heart of a culture is its values: the ideals about how people should act that ultimately guide their decisions and behavior. Members of the culture both explicitly and implicitly nurture certain values and discourage others by giving recognition, attention, or punishment. This dimension of an organization's culture is referred to as its "ethics culture."[25] An organization's *ethics culture* is the extent to which the organization makes doing what is right a priority and promotes and embodies its values. Ethics culture is the (often unwritten) code of conduct by which stakeholders learn what they should think and do, and then do it. Through the ethics culture of an organization, individuals learn which rules must be followed, and how rigidly; how people ought to treat one another; whether it is acceptable to question authority figures; if it is safe to report observed misconduct; and more (Ethics Research Center [ERC], 2013). Ethics culture determines "how [stakeholders] understand what is expected of them, and how things really get done" (Trevino, Weaver, Gibson, & Toffler, 1999).

Research has shown that the ethics culture of an organization is a powerful influence on the behavior of its stakeholders, particularly when problems arise. The extent to which an individual will take a stand to uphold the values of the organization in the face of misconduct is largely dependent upon their views about the ethics of senior leaders, the support they are provided by trusted advisors, and the extent to which they believe that action will be taken if they come forward to report wrongdoing. For example, ECI's research has shown that when this "ethical commitment" is higher, rates of reported misconduct rise. In the 2017 *Global Business Ethics Survey®*, ECI found that 52% of employees reported misconduct when they perceived the ethical commitment of their organization to be weak, compared to 88% of employees who perceived a strong ethical commitment in their organization (ECI, 2017, p.10).

Key Metrics in the Survey

The Penn State Values & Culture Survey was designed to help the University better understand the views of its community with regard to its overall culture as well as its ethics culture. To be able to measure change, the survey explored many of the same areas as the 2013 survey. However, several sections were modified in order to investigate certain areas in more detail. Specifically, the questions pertaining to ERAs, Observed Misconduct and Reporting of

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[25] In academic literature and in ERC research prior to 2012, the term "ethical culture" is used to refer to the ethical dimension of organizational culture. In 2012, ERC began to use the more neutral term "ethics culture," reserving "ethical culture" for instances in which an organizational is promoting positive, ethical values.

Misconduct were both updated substantially. The goal of the survey was to focus on several key areas:

- *Expression of Core Values.* In 2013, participants were asked to assess how important specific values were to the Penn State community, and which five values they felt should have been most important. The results of the 2013 survey informed the development and adoption of six core values. The 2017 survey investigated the enculturation of the six values at the University. Community members' were asked about their awareness of the values and the extent to which their primary location "embodied" each value, among other areas of investigation.

- *Awareness of Standards and Resources.* Participants were asked to indicate their level of awareness of University resources that a) establish or educate the community about standards of conduct (i.e. regulating ethical conduct in research), or b) provide support to individuals who have questions or who have observed violations of University standards (i.e. a means to confidentially report wrongdoing).

- *Ethical Leadership and Commitment.* The 2017 survey built upon the 2013 survey by asking participants to address the ERAs of a range of groups at the University. Participants were asked to assess the following groups:

    - The President, VP's, Provost and other University leaders (All groups);
    - Dean/Chancellor/Unit Head (All groups);
    - Department Head/Director/Program Director (All groups);
    - The Person I Report to (All groups);
    - Staff Members (All groups);
    - Faculty/My Faculty (All groups);
    - Undergraduate Students (Graduate and Undergraduate Students);
    - Graduate Students (Graduate Students and Undergraduate Students); and
    - My Advisor (Graduate Students).

    The purpose of these questions was to measure whether these groups prioritize, model, and support ethical conduct. Several of the groups were modified depending on the classification of the participant as a staff member, faculty member, undergraduate student or graduate student.

- *Personal Experiences Related to Ethics and Conduct.* The survey inquired about perceived pressure to violate University policies or the law; observations of misconduct in the past twelve months; decisions to report any misconduct they observed; and, when applicable, the results of their report, including whether they experienced retaliation as a result.

- The 2017 survey expanded upon the 2013 survey by asking participants where misconduct was committed and who committed the misconduct. Additionally, participants were asked about reporting locations such as the following:

  - The person they report to (All Groups);
  - Faculty member of instructor (Undergraduate Students); and,
  - My Advisor(s) (Graduate Students).

Overview of the Process

The survey development process involved several phases: 1) Questionnaire development, 2) Pilot testing & revision, 3) Implementation of the survey to the entire Penn State community. Representatives from the Penn State community were involved in each portion of the process.

- Questionnaire Development – ECI utilized the 2013 survey as the foundation for the 2017 survey. Based on the input from the University and ECI's longstanding research, ECI drafted an updated survey question set and then further refined the questionnaire in collaboration with members of the Office of Ethics & Compliance and the University Ethics Committee.

- Pilot Testing & Revision – While a portion of the questions in the survey were based on ECI's standard ethics survey questionnaire (and were therefore previously tested and validated), a number of questions were new and required testing. Furthermore, it was important to test the online delivery of the survey with the University's servers, and also to be sure that survey questions were posed in a way that could be easily understood. Therefore, a pilot of the survey was conducted from September 28 to October 2, 2017. This phase included the following activities.

  - *Pilot survey implementation*: Invitations to participate in the survey were sent to 12 individuals (either 9 staff members and 3 faculty members or 12 staff members) at a range of campus and administrative locations. Where applicable, three faculty members completed the faculty survey, while three staff members each completed the staff survey, the graduate survey and the undergraduate survey. Additionally, all members of the University Ethics Committee completed the pilot survey.

  - *Development of Communications Materials*: ECI provided support to the University Ethics Committee as they developed a communications strategy and related materials to promote participation in the full survey. The University undertook a comprehensive effort to raise awareness about the survey, on all campuses.

- Implementation to the Entire Penn State Community – The Penn State Values & Culture Survey launched on October 4, 2017 and remained in field until October 31, 2017.

Participants received an invitation email from the ECI, containing a link that directed them to the survey site. The total population invited to participate in the survey was 114,538; including all faculty, staff, administrators, technical service employees, undergraduate students and graduate students at all Penn State campuses, including the World Campus. The final data set contains the input from 14,012 participants. Across the University as a whole, the response rate for the survey was 12%. For breakdowns of response, please see the "Response Rates and Margins of Error" section that follows.

Throughout the entire survey process, ECI staff regularly reported on progress during meetings with the Office of Ethics & Compliance.

Survey Instrument

Given the unique nature of the University and the populations that comprise it, questions for the survey had to be tailored so that participants could answer as accurately as possible. For that reason, four versions of the questionnaire were developed and implemented. Participants were divided into the following groups:

- Faculty;
- Staff/administrators/technical service employees;
- Undergraduate students; and
- Graduate students.

Surveys varied in the number of questions asked of participants; a core set of questions were common to all. Each survey also contained branching patterns based on how a participant answered; therefore, no participants were asked the full set of questions. Each version of the survey also contained questions at the end to collect demographic information.

Response Rates and Margins of Error

The following tables indicate the response by the Penn State community to the survey effort. For each group and campus, the margin of error is also indicated. The margin of error is calculated for the 95% confidence interval and estimates the range in which we can be 95% certain the true population figure exists.[26]

Penn State Values & Culture Survey Final Response Rates & Margins of Error - Designation			
Designation	**Total Population**	**Responses[27]**		**Margin of Error**
Faculty	7229	1947	**27%**	+/- 1.9%
Staff/Administrators/Technical Service Employees	14308	5358	**37%**	+/- 1.1%
Undergraduate Students[28]	78801	5179	**7%**	+/- 1.3%
Graduate Students	14200	1528	**11%**	+/- 2.4%
Total Penn State	**114538**	**14012**	**12%**	**+/- 0.8%**

Limitations of the Survey Data

ECI implemented a system comparable to the process used in 2013 to assess the representativeness of the survey data. Similar to 2013, there were particularly low responses from both student groups in 2017. As a result, ECI conducted chi-square tests on demographic variables that were able to be matched to data from the University Budget Office. Results indicated that the survey distribution differed from the expected distribution. Random subsets were drawn from the data for each demographic matched to the population distribution in order to determine if any significant differences arose between the random subset and the survey population. The demographic data included the following: gender and age for all four

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[26] Margin of error means that within +/- X percent, a response given by a sample of survey participants is representative of the target population. The "confidence level" is the degree to which we can be sure that that is the case within a given "confidence interval," here 95%. For example, if 80% of responding participants on "Campus A" say they believe sustainability is very important to Penn State now, and the margin of error for that question in that sample of participants is +/- 5%, that means that a reader can be 95% certain that the true percentage of all members of this group who believe that sustainability is very important to Penn State now is between 75% and 85%.

[27] The "Responses" counts in Tables 2 & 3 reflect the counts of the final data set, or the "usable cases" for analysis. This includes some partially-completed surveys.

[28] A significant percentage of undergraduate students did not complete the survey past the first section. The response rate for the majority of the survey for undergraduate students is closer to 5.2% (4,119 responses). The margin of error using the 5.2% response rate is +/-.1.5% for undergraduate students and the margin of error for the entire population remains the same at +/-0.8%.

groups, standing for undergraduate students, part time or full time status for graduate students, and tenure and rank for faculty. One-way analysis of variance tests determined that no significant differences existed between the random subsets and the survey population, providing evidence that the survey data can be considered representative of the Penn State population.

One other important concern was the extent to which there is a bias in the data because particular groups opted not to complete the survey. ECI examined the Penn State Values & Culture Survey data for evidence suggesting the presence of significant nonresponse bias. Time trend extrapolation was conducted on the data, which compared survey participants who completed the survey during the first fourteen days the survey was in field ("early responders") to participants who completed the survey during the last fourteen days the survey was in field ("late responders"). Theory suggests that individuals who answer a survey later, after more prodding through direct reminders and other communications, are more similar to those who do not answer a survey at all than those who answer a survey early (Armstrong & Overton, 1977).

After some statistically significant differences were found between early responders and late responders, the composition of each test group was adjusted to represent faculty, staff, undergraduate students, and graduate students by their representation in the overall Penn State population, thereby controlling for differences in answers attributable to the different populations. Statistically significant differences did continue to appear; however, the mean differences for these questions were not large enough to impact the practical interpretation of these findings.[29] Therefore, the presence of nonresponse bias cannot be definitively ruled out. It exists as one consideration that must be acknowledged when examining results as with any other survey research project. The amount estimated to be present in this survey does not appear to be enough to be a sufficient cause for practical concern. Combined with the results of testing conducted to examine the representativeness of the data, ECI believes that Penn State can be confident in the data and findings.

About ECI

The Ethics & Compliance Initiative (ECI) is America's oldest private, non-profit organization devoted to empowering organizations to build and sustain high quality ethics & compliance programs. Since 1922, the ECI has been a resource for institutions committed to a strong ethics culture.

For more than two decades, ECI has regularly fielded surveys of employees and other stakeholders in organizations of all types and sizes. Data from these efforts have helped

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[29] For example, among graduate students, the mean difference for the question, "Undergraduate students communicate the importance of ethics and doing the right thing" is -.162 (early responders' mean = 3.314; late responders' mean = 3.476); this difference is statistically significant. This is the largest difference found among tested questions.

organizational leaders to gauge their ethics cultures, to identify emerging issues, and also to develop programs and resources to help stakeholders consistently live out their values.

ECI's survey metrics are based on its longstanding research in the areas of culture and ethics/compliance program effectiveness. ECI is widely known for its *National Business Ethics Survey* research, including the *Global Business Ethics Survey®.* ECI's culture metrics have been developed collaboratively with leading academics specializing in organizational culture.

For more information about the ECI or to download our research reports, please visit www.ethics.org

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