

Summary Report

Climate and Culture Committee

February 9, 2023

This report summarizes the findings obtained by the Culture and Climate Committee from meetings held with faculty and staff during 2022-23 academic year. The committee was formed by the Provost in an effort to gauge the current climate and culture at ULM.

Committee Members: Dr. Paula Griswold (Chair); Eron Bethard (Co-Chair); LeeAnn Box; Dr. Jeffery Evans; Lynne Twilbeck; Marcie Young

Committee Processes

In Fall 2022 semester, the members of the Climate & Culture Committee met with Dr. Arant to define its purpose in assessing the current climate and culture at ULM as it relates to faculty and staff. Additionally, the committee was tasked with gathering information about workload. ~~How~~ collecting this information was through conducting focus group sessions. The committee worked to developed a series of questions to ask during the focus group sessions. ~~How~~ during each focus group session.

The committee held 2 face-to-face focus group sessions and 2 virtual sessions (via Zoom) with ULM faculty and staff. The questions asked in each session were:

- What elements contribute to a good life/positive career at ULM?
- When you are a customer, what are the most important attributes to customer service? Do we have these attributes at ULM?

Findings:

The major themes that were identified from the group sessions include:

1. Communication
2. Values
3. Administration

Details in Themes:

1. Communication

Participants voiced that they wanted to feel connected to decision-making processes on campus. Employees noted that they want to feel connected to and in-the-know about the happenings at ULM. They want more communications/information distributed and for this information to be relevant and useful. Participants stated they would like an employee recognition component to the communications/information process. Employee recognition should not be limited to ULM related accomplishments, but should also include personal achievements and accomplishments.

In regards to interdepartmental communication, participants voiced that they felt there is no consistency among departments as it relates to customer service standards, including, but not limited to: consistency of processes, availability, timeliness in responses/processes, transparency, accountability, methods of communication, and willingness to help and problem solve. Additionally, it was noted that identifying the disparities in workload among departments could help improve the customer service experience.

As it related to customer service, lack of answering the phones on campus in major offices is a concern for faculty. If faculty can't get in touch with needed personnel, students can't either.

Participants thought that connecting alumni to students in their majors would be a meaningful way to connect with ULM more. Participants also voiced that it would be beneficial if they were included in what is being communicated to the general public about ULM. They stated that employees often find out about things on the local news rather than through ULM.

2. Values

This theme relates to employee wellness, workload, and work-life balance. Employees want to be viewed as a "whole person" and that includes mental, physical, emotional,

information to faculty and staff. Additionally, a suggestion is to include current enrollment data each week so everyone is up-to-date. The committee anticipates that this information would be appreciated and very well received.

The committee recommends that each department review their mission, goals, and processes. Processes in major offices on campus should be examined for efficiency and positive customer service delivery. By doing this, the committee feels that work flow, interdepartmental communication, customer service, student retention, and the quality of interactions among faculty/staff/students would greatly improve.

2. Values

The committee recommends that a culture of recognizing employees for their achievements on and off campus be created. Administration should consider creating a quarterly faculty/staff spotlight which would include details and accomplishments of a deserving employee.

Additionally, the committee recommends that supervisors examine ways to allow for flexibility in the workplace so employees feel valued as a “whole person”. This could relate to workload, work-life balance, and the ability to work remotely when appropriate.

3. Administration (*HR, management, policies, procedures*)

ATTACHMENT A

FocusGroupProcesses & RawData

Date of Focus Groups: November 30, 2022

Total Number of Participants: 35 faculty/staff participants

Method of Groups: Two in person and two virtual (Zoom) meetings were offered; each group was hosted at a different time on November 30, 2022. Each focus group session lasted 50-60

1. What elements contribute to a good life/positive career at ULM?

Responses:

- x Coworkers
- x Work/life balance
- x Being treated as valuable, feeling valued in an authentic way
- x Acknowledgment
- x Pay
- x Flexibility as a whole if pay can't change
- x Efficient workflows
- x Clear communication in cross-functional relationships (i.e., departments work together on shared goals, using shared resources)
- x University closure days – not having to take annual leave for every closure & aligning these days with city/parish schools
- x Clear policies across departments (i.e., leave)
- x Ability to

3. How could ULM celebrate its "people" more? What do ULM staff need? What do ULM faculty need?

Responses:

- x Faculty/staff need to be recognized more, in a personal way that speaks to them (i.e., words of affirmation, personal

4. What

Additional FocusGroupNotes:

³/₄ Throughout our focus groups, the committee was questioned on the guarantee of anonymity within the focus groups. Before the questioning portion of the focus groups began, the participants were informed their

ATTACHMENT B

Committee Resources and Documents

Research Links

[UCLA Survey Instrument for Climate & Culture administered to faculty/staff](#) [Accompanying flyer for UCLA Survey](#)

[University of Michigan Campus Climate Survey Report](#) [University of Michigan sample Faculty survey](#) [University of Michigan sample](#)

[Staff survey](#)

[University of Houston](#)

ATTACHMENT C

TIPS for Conducting Focus Group

The moderator's goal is to generate a maximum number of different ideas and opinions from as many different people in the time allotted.

The focus group moderator has a responsibility to adequately cover all prepared questions within the time allotted.

They also have a responsibility to get all participants to talk and fully explain their answers.

Some helpful probes include:

- x "Can you talk about that more?"
- x "Help me understand what you mean"
- x "Can you give an example?"

It is good moderation to summarize and clarify comments. It demonstrates active listening and clarifies the comment for everyone in the group.

Because the moderator holds a position of authority and perceived influence, some appropriate strategies:

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- x Self-appointed experts: "Thank you. What do other people think?"
 - x The dominator: "Let's have some other comments."
 - x The rambler: Stop eye contact; look at your watch; jump in at their inhale.
 - x The shy participant: Make eye contact; call on them; smile at them.
 - x The participant who talks very quietly: Ask them to repeat their response more loudly.

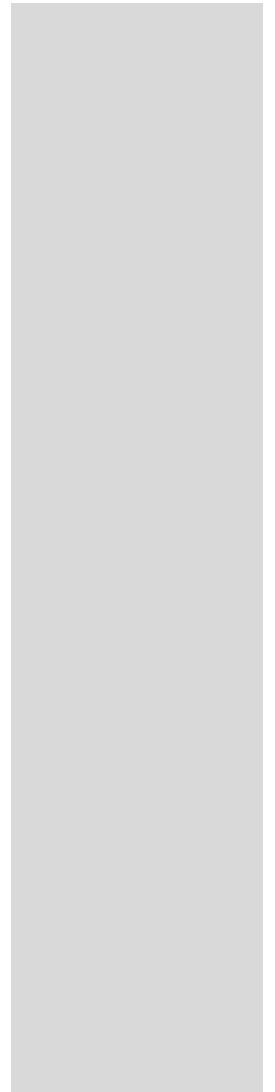
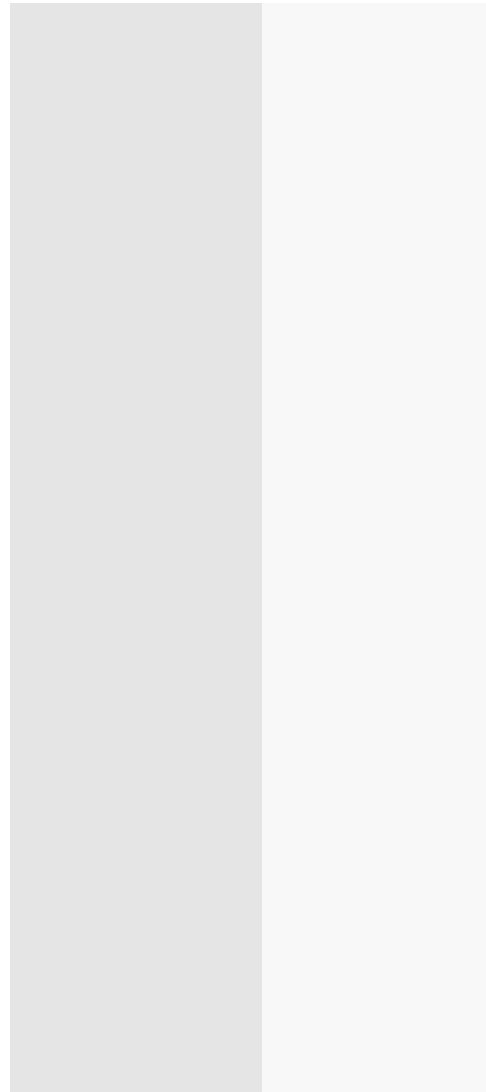
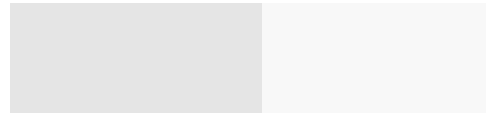
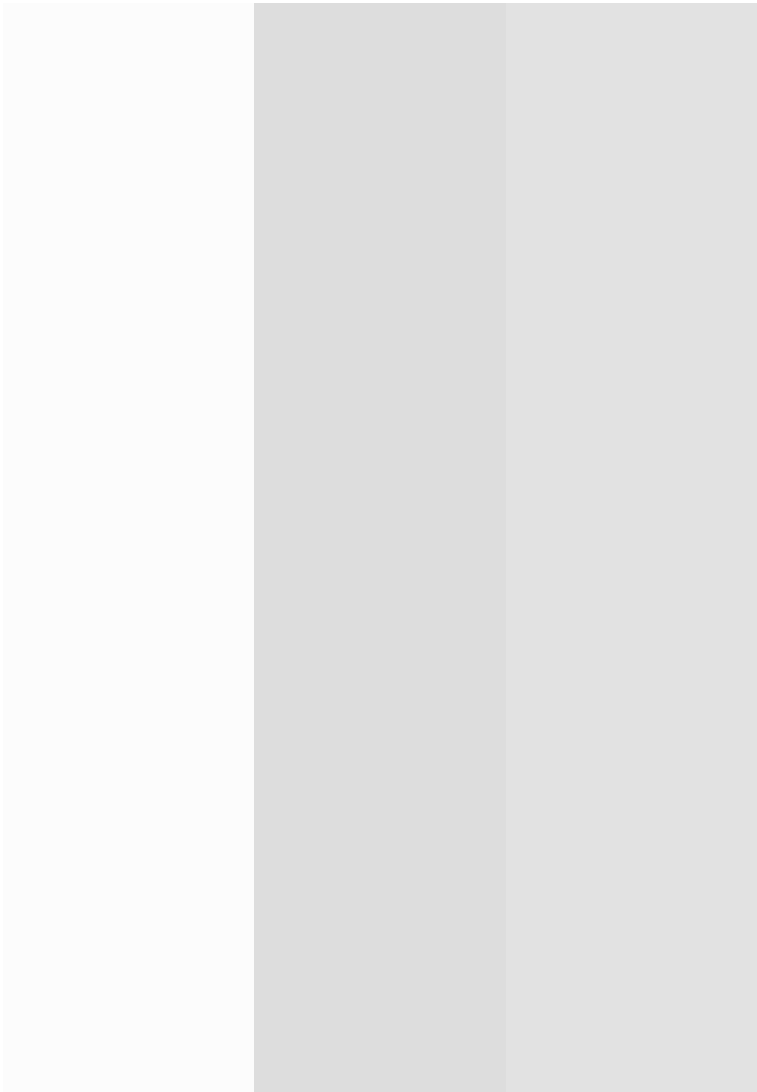
Additional information can be found here: https://universityplanning.wp.olemiss.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/98/2016/05/Trinity_Duke_How_to_Conduct_a_Focus_Group.pdf

Discussion Prompt: If ULM opened its doors for the first time today, what would it look like?

Climate & Culture Focus Group Fundamental Themes

Campus & Resources	Employee Wellness	Values	Administration(HR, policies, procedures, management)	Communication	Traditions	Academics	
<p>More office space for comfortability meeting with students (i.e., tiny offices in Walker 3rd floor)</p>		<p>More openness across campus; faculty & staff being seen more</p>				<p>More interdisciplinary crossover; collaborations across campus</p> <p>Student support center either overall or within each department</p>	

Question #1



		Support network					
		Work/life balance					
		Working with others who prioritiz students' needs					

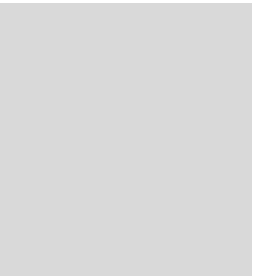
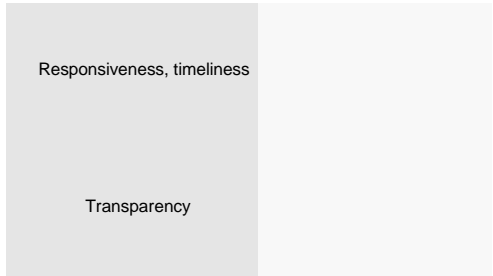
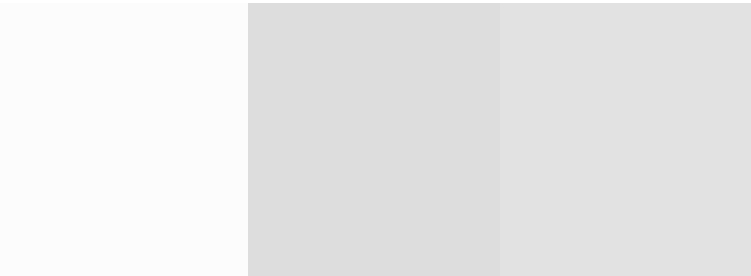
Question #2.1 When you are a customer, what are the most important attributes to customer service?

Climate & Culture Focus Group Fundamental Themes

Campus & Resources	Employee Wellness	Values	Administration(HR, policies, procedures, management)	Communication	Traditions	Academics	Other
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Responses for Themes

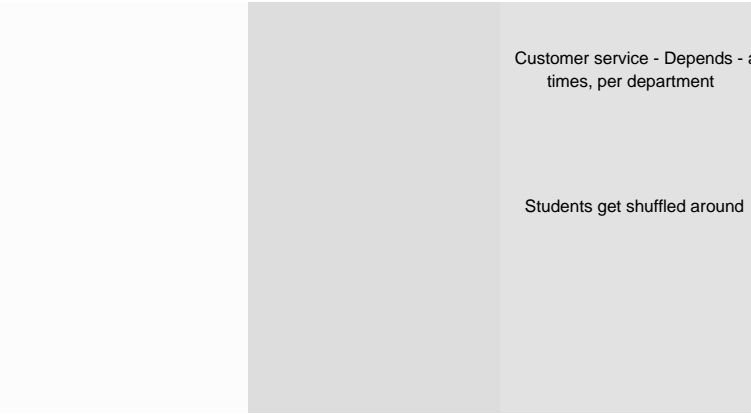
Access to resources		Feeling heard Friendliness		Availability		Onboarding of new students (transcripts, financial aid)	
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Responsiveness, timeliness

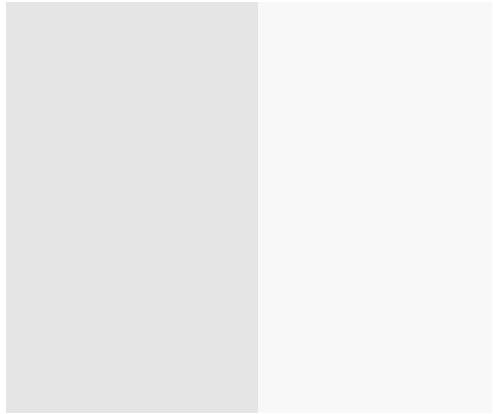
Transparency

Question #2.2 Do we have these attributes at ULM?



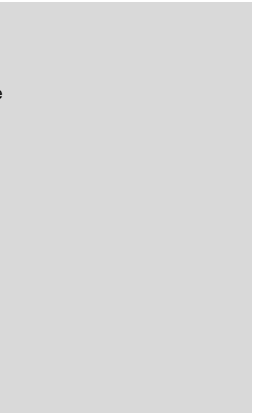
Customer service - Depends - at times, per department

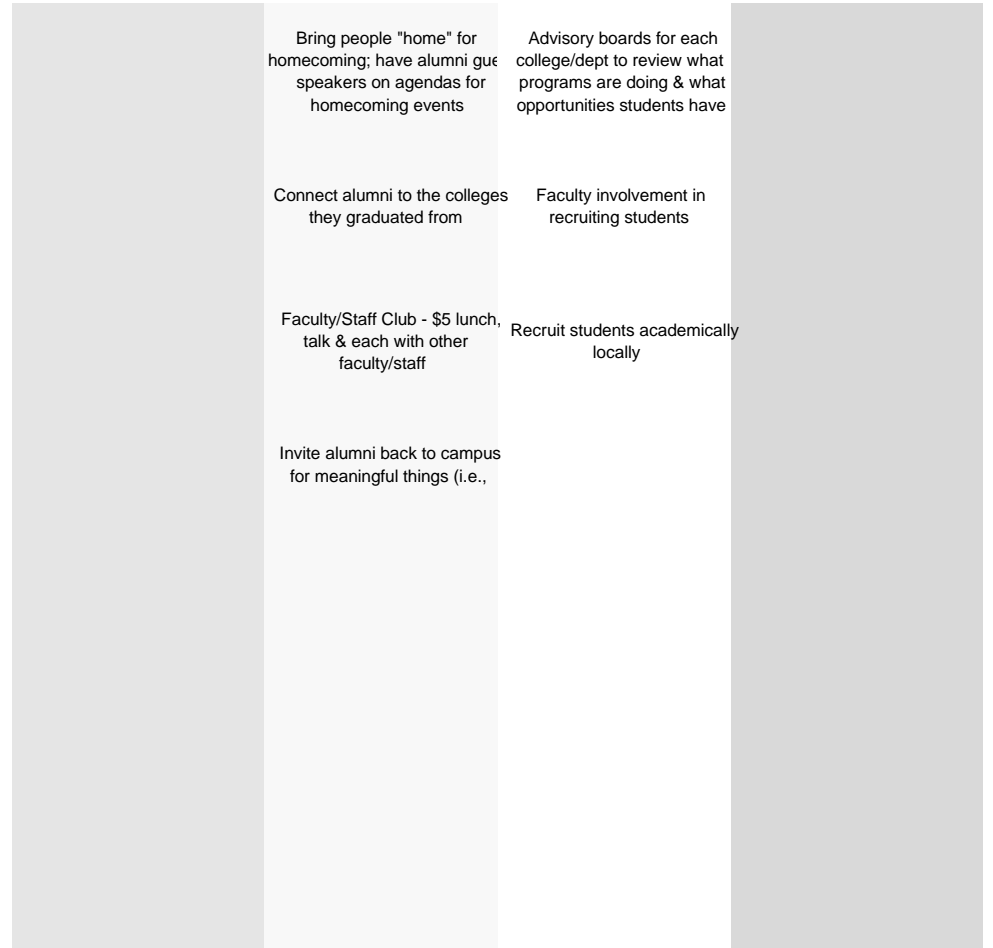
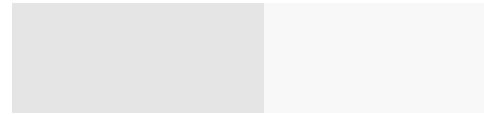
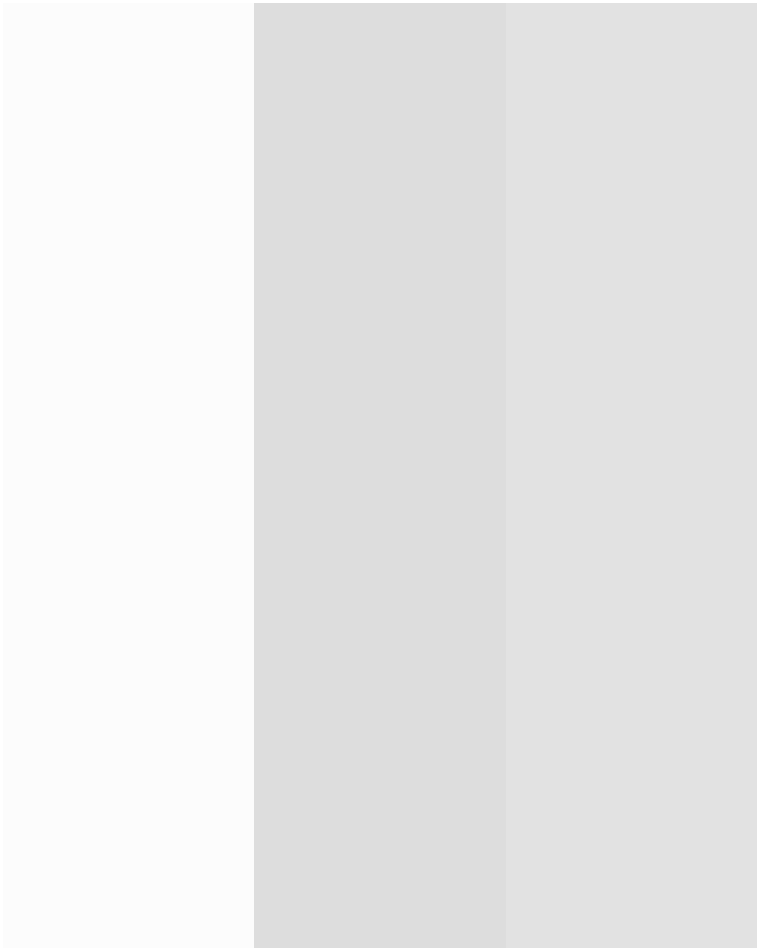
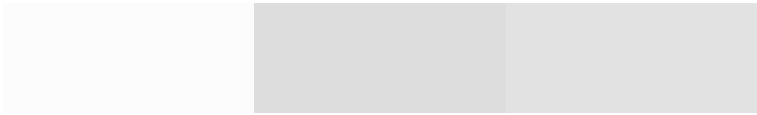
Students get shuffled around



Look at workload among departments to help improve customer service experience

More collaboration within departments needed





Bring people "home" for homecoming; have alumni guest speakers on agendas for homecoming events

Advisory boards for each college/dept to review what programs are doing & what opportunities students have

Connect alumni to the colleges they graduated from

Faculty involvement in recruiting students

Faculty/Staff Club - \$5 lunch, talk & each with other faculty/staff

Recruit students academically locally

Invite alumni back to campus for meaningful things (i.e.,

More diversity

More openness across campus;
faculty & staff being seen more

Panels with alumni for campus events

Recruit students academically locally

Recruiting adjunct instructors from within the university

Student support center either overall or within each department

More personal touches (i.e., handwritten cards to depts. Vs emails)

The mission of ULM isn't inviting

Working with others who prioritiz
students' needs