

UCSF School of Dentistry Faculty Council Report The Faculty Morale Improvement Project

Project Overview

In December 2022, the School of Dentistry Faculty Council (SOD FC) members selected “improving faculty morale” as its main project for the year. Climate surveys conducted between 2017 and 2022 had demonstrated that SOD faculty morale is low in comparison to the UCSF schools of medicine, pharmacy, and nursing, and to other U.S. dental schools. Past efforts to improve faculty morale have not resulted in sustained improvement. In January 2023, with sponsorship and financial support from the Dean's Office, FC began engaging with a consultant from the UCSF Program Management Office (PMO), to support this work. PMO consultant Jason Rivera began working with the SOD FC leadership team in January 2023 to identify facilitators and barriers to improvement using the LEAN Improvement Process. The Faculty Morale Project was conducted as part of regular SOD FC business and extended through AY 23/24.

Description of Activities for 2023-2024

SOD FC leadership met with the PMO consultant Jason Rivera and Academic Senate Office Associate Director Alison Cleaver, who is assigned to the SOD FC, weekly throughout the year to advance the project and plan activities with the larger FC membership.

January – April 2023

Developed a project charter

Reviewed and summarized key takeaways from campus, SOD, and American Dental Education Association (ADEA) climate surveys

Held meetings with George Taylor, SOD Associate Dean for Diversity and Inclusion and Elizabeth Ozer, Associate Vice Provost, Faculty Equity, Office of Diversity and Outreach to review climate surveys and past and ongoing work to improve faculty morale

Created a list of project ideas

Sent a communication to SOD faculty announcing the Faculty Morale Project

Held meetings with the SOD Dean's Office

Held meetings with faculty in the SOD

Held meetings with other FC members in the schools of medicine, nursing, and pharmacy

Identified two separate but related issues: 1) drivers of faculty morale and 2) challenges to improving faculty morale

March 9 FC Meeting: PMO consultant Rivera led a faculty morale project presentation and activity at the SOD FC meeting. Reviewed project milestones, reviewed the LEAN process, and gathered input from SOD FC members on three key questions:

1. What do you think is the main problem affecting faculty morale?
2. What are additional metrics/information to better understand the problem?
3. What are possible Faculty Council agenda items in addition to the project?

May – September 2023

May 22 Full Faculty Meeting: Introduced the Faculty Morale Project, described the LEAN process, described activities completed by the FC leadership to date, gathered feedback from SOD faculty, discussed next steps

Began drafting problem statement and identifying root causes

October 2023 – April 2024

Identified climate survey questions that could be compared across surveys and evaluated for trends. Comparable data was identified in the 2018 SOD and 2021 UCSF Campus surveys. Detailed 2021 Campus survey results for SOD were requested from and provided by Elizabeth Ozer. Drafted and sent Faculty Council Newsletter to SOD faculty, including an update on the Faculty Morale Project

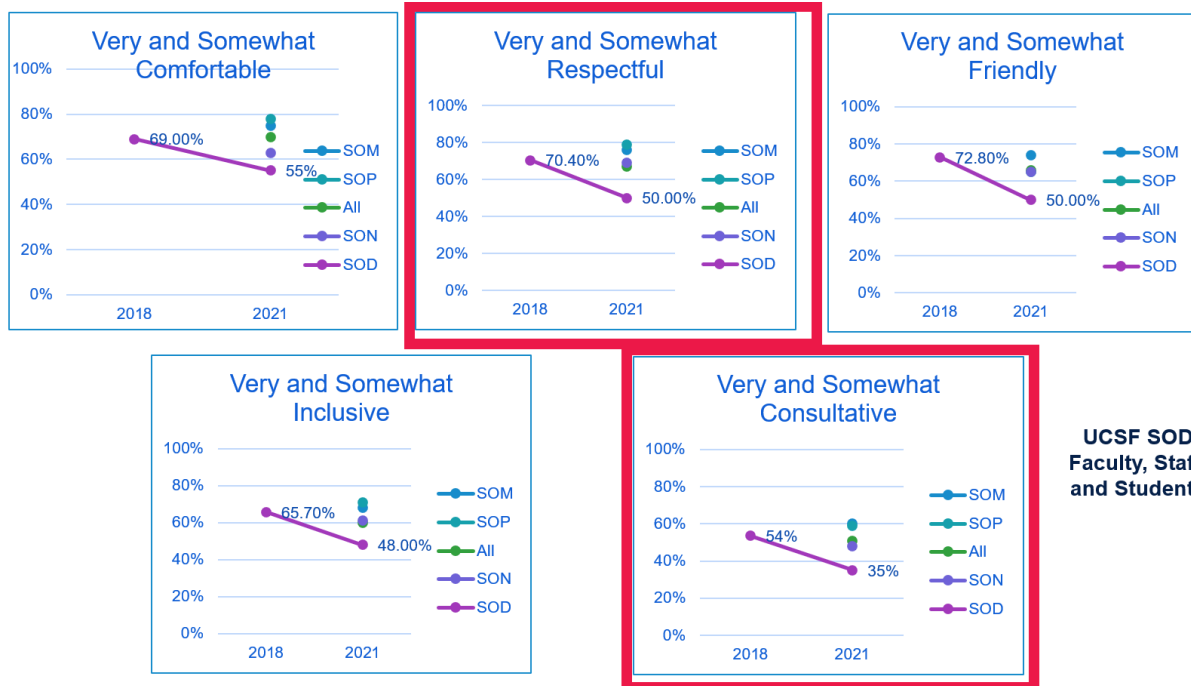
February 15 FC Meeting: Elizabeth Ozer, Associate Vice Provost, Faculty Equity and Tracy Pascua Dea, Academic Climate Program Director, UC Berkeley presented SOD specific data from the latest Climate Survey and introduced the DEI Blueprint Project.

March 14 FC Meeting: PMO consultant Rivera led a faculty morale project presentation and activity at the SOD FC meeting. Presented comparable 2018 and 2021 data for 2 key questions:

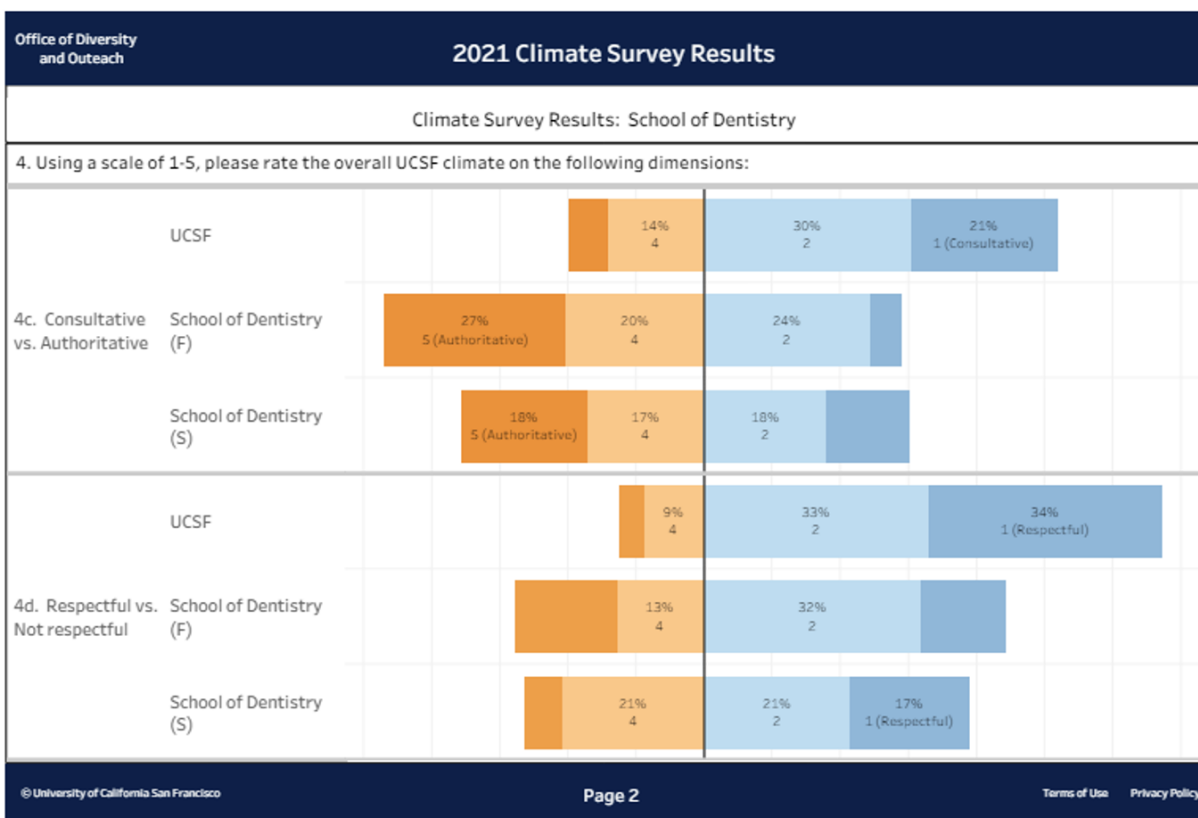
- 1) Overall, how comfortable are you with the climate at UCSF...very comfortable, comfortable, neither uncomfortable, uncomfortable, or very comfortable?
- 2) Using a scale of 1-5, please rate the overall UCSF climate on the following dimensions...a. Friendly (1) vs Hostile (5), b. Inclusive (1) vs. Exclusive (5), c. Consultative (1) vs. Authoritative (5), d. Respectful (1) vs. Not respectful (5)

SOD FC members voted to prioritize 2 measurable objectives for improvement:

- 1) Very and Somewhat Respectful
- 2) Very and Somewhat Consultative



**UCSF SOD
Faculty, Staff,
and Students**



August – November 2024

Literature review of best practice for faculty morale improvement

Scoping of morale improvement practices in place in SOD and SOM

Drafting and approval of final report

Summary of Key Issues

While best practices for improving morale have been implemented for staff in the SOD, they have not been implemented for improving faculty morale. Best practices would include an annual engagement survey, nominating engagement ambassadors to encourage survey participation, requiring Department Chairs and Division Chiefs to co-create action plans with faculty, formal evaluation of Chair and Chiefs' progress towards improving morale, and providing infrastructure and support for these activities.

Recommendations for SOD Leadership

- 1) Acknowledge that experiences of faculty morale vary across Department and Divisions
- 2) Commit to improving morale for all faculty
- 3) Conduct a survey of SOD faculty morale annually. Ensure consistent and comparable questions are included from year to year.
- 4) Co-develop a process that encourage as many SOD faculty as possible to complete the climate surveys so that there is enough data to break down by Department and Divisions. Address faculty's fear of retaliation for providing honest feedback.

- 5) Encourage collaboration between Dean's Office and SOD FC and larger faculty to review survey results and identify measurable objectives related to faculty morale improvement for inclusion in True North.
- 6) Delegate the identification and implementation of strategies for improvement to Department Chairs and Division Chiefs, working in conjunction with faculty (which may be different based on context), with Dean's office support.
- 7) Conduct bi-annual spot surveys to gauge progress.
- 8) Co-develop a process, with SOD FC, Deans Office, Department Chairs, and Division Chiefs, to ensure accountability for improving the faculty morale objectives on an annual basis.
- 9) Provide regular updates to SOD FC on progress.
- 10) Support and accelerate a culture of improvement in the SOD in which anyone and every is encouraged to identify areas of improvement and work collaboratively to develop solutions.
- 11) Collaborate with SOD FC and the larger faculty to identify information needed to foster a culture of improvement.