



Rankin & Associates, Consulting

Assessment • Planning • Interventions

# UC Hastings College of the Law

## Assessment of Climate for Learning, Living, and Working

### Executive Summary

September 2021



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## **Executive Summary**

### **History of the Project**

This report provides the findings from a survey entitled “*UC Hastings College of the Law Assessment of Climate for Learning, Living, and Working*,” conducted at UC Hastings Law. In 2020, UC Hastings Law contracted with Rankin & Associates Consulting (R&A) to conduct a College-wide study. Nineteen UC Hastings Law faculty, staff, students, and administrators formed the Community Experience Survey Working Group (CESWG). The CESWG worked with R&A to develop the survey instrument and promote the survey’s administration in spring 2021. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, UC Hastings Law engaged in primarily online learning and working environments (although a small portion of students continued in residence at the Tower during this period). All members of UC Hastings Law were encouraged to complete the survey.

Responses to the multiple-choice format survey items were analyzed for statistical differences based on various demographic categories (e.g., UC Hastings Law position status, gender identity, disability status) where appropriate. Where sample sizes were small, certain responses were combined into categories to make comparisons between groups and to ensure respondents’ confidentiality. Throughout the report, for example, the Faculty category included ladder, non-ladder full-time, and non-ladder part-time faculty members.

In addition to multiple-choice survey items, several open-ended questions provided respondents with the opportunity to describe their experiences at UC Hastings Law. Comments were solicited to 1) give “voice” to the quantitative findings and 2) highlight the areas of concern that might have been overlooked owing to the small number of survey responses from historically underrepresented populations. For this reason, some qualitative comments may not seem aligned with the quantitative findings; however, they are important data.

Five-hundred eighty-one (581) surveys were returned for a 47% overall response rate. Table 1 provides a summary of selected demographic characteristics of survey respondents. Response rates by position status were 39% ( $n = 398$ ) for Students, 42% ( $n = 85$ ) for Faculty, and 58% ( $n = 98$ ) for Staff.

**Table 1. UC Hastings Law Sample Demographics**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Subgroup</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b>% of sample</b>
Position status	Student	398	68.5
	Faculty	85	14.6
	Staff	98	16.9
Gender identity	Women	358	61.6
	Men	195	33.6
	Trans-spectrum	18	3.1
	Missing	10	1.7
Racial/ethnic identity	Alaska Native/American		
	Indian/Native American/Indigenous	< 5	---
	Asian/Asian American	84	14.5
	Black/African/African American	23	4.0
	Hispanic/Latinx/Chicanx	55	9.5
	Jewish	13	2.2
	Middle Eastern	21	3.6
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	< 5	---
	South Asian	15	2.6
	White/European American	265	45.6
	Multiracial	73	12.6
	Missing/Not Listed	27	4.6
Sexual identity	Queer-spectrum	83	14.3
	Bisexual	57	9.8
	Heterosexual	413	71.1
	Missing/Not Listed	28	4.8
Citizenship status	U.S. Citizen-Birth	495	85.2
	U.S. Citizen-Naturalized	43	7.4
	Non-U.S. Citizen	29	5.0
	Missing	14	2.4
Disability status	Single Disability	162	27.9
	No Disability	296	50.9
	Multiple Disabilities	89	15.3
	Missing	34	5.9

**Table 1. UC Hastings Law Sample Demographics**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Subgroup</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b>% of sample</b>
Religious affiliation	Christian Religious Affiliation	143	24.6
	Additional Religious Affiliation	91	15.7
	No Religious Affiliation	284	48.9
	Multiple Religious Affiliations	31	5.3
	Missing	32	5.5

Note: The total *n* for each demographic characteristic may differ as a result of missing data.

**Comfort With Campus, Workplace, and Classroom Climate at UC Hastings Law**

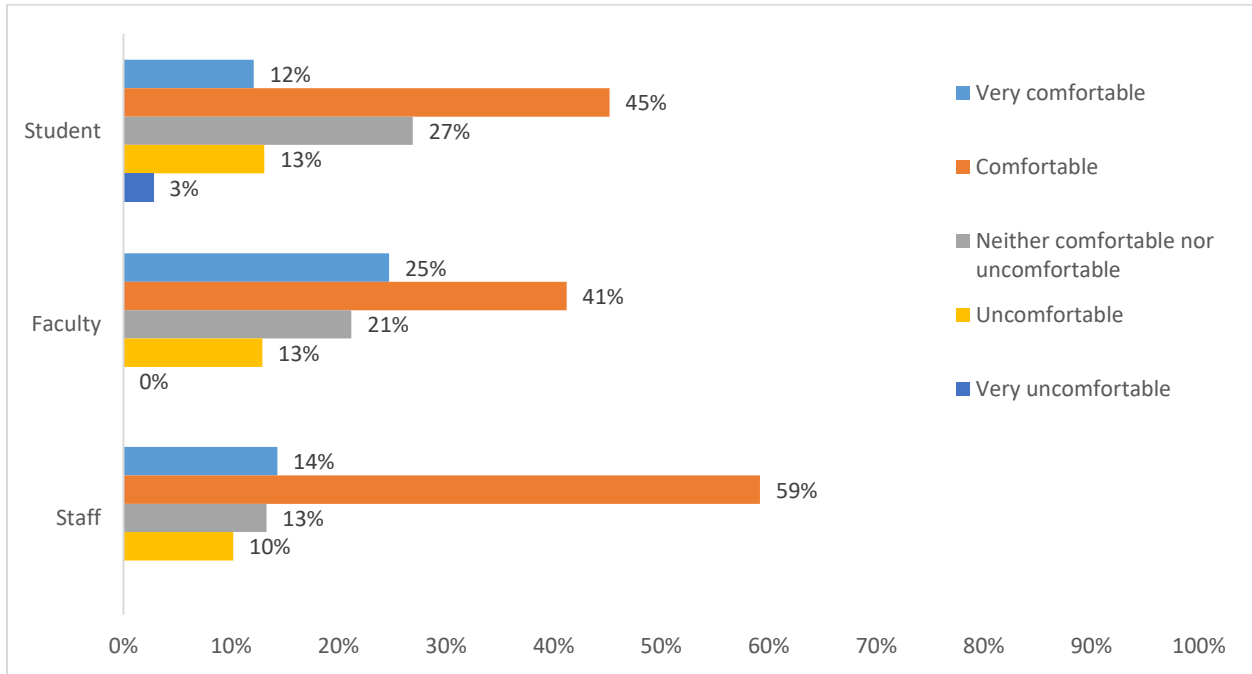
Research on campus climate generally has focused on the experiences of faculty, staff, and students associated with historically underserved social/community/affinity groups (e.g., women, People of Color, people with disabilities, first-generation and/or low-income students, queer-spectrum and/or trans-spectrum individuals, and veterans).<sup>1</sup> Several groups at UC Hastings Law indicated on the survey that they were less comfortable than their majority counterparts with the climates of the campus and workplace.

Most survey respondents were “very comfortable” or “comfortable” with the overall environment at UC Hastings Law (61%, *n* = 356, p. 57), the environment in their departments/program or work units (84%, *n* = 82, p. 57), the environment in their classes (64%, *n* = 307, p. 57), and the environment within the faculty (57%, *n* = 48, p. 57).

Faculty respondents were significantly more comfortable with the overall environment than were Student respondents (Figure 1, p. 57).

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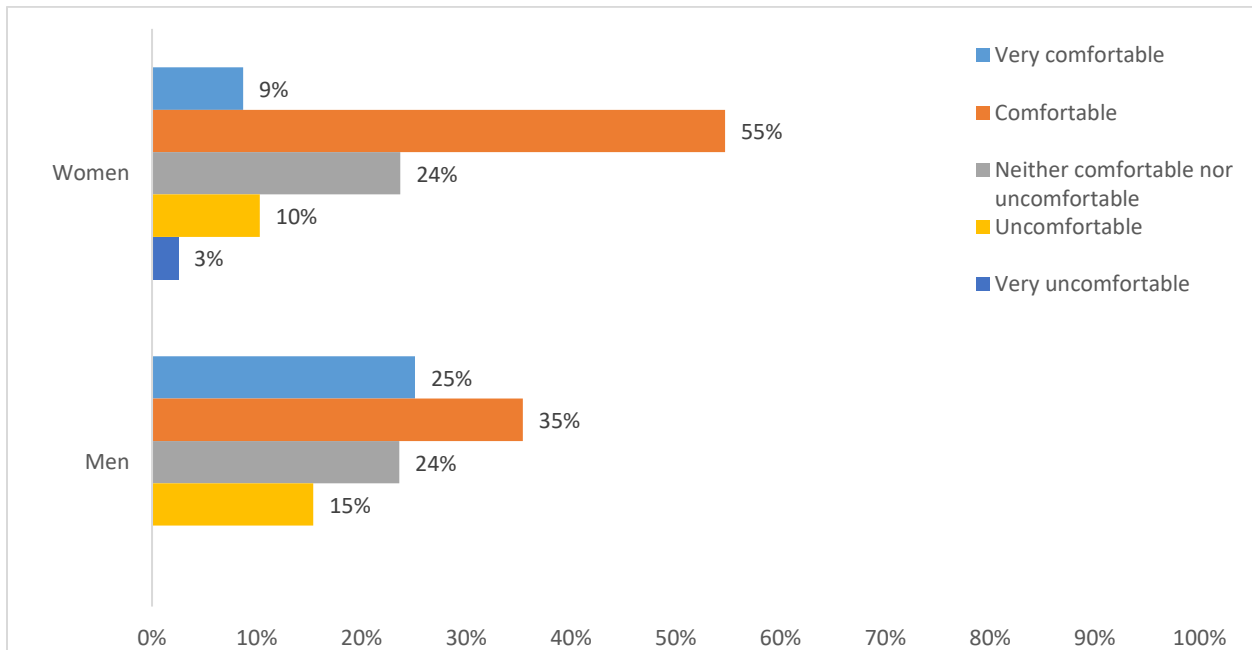
<sup>1</sup> Garvey et al. (2015); Goldberg et al. (2019); Harper & Hurtado (2007); Jayakumar et al. (2009); Johnson (2012); Means & Pyne (2017); Soria & Stebleton (2013); Rankin (2003); Rankin & Reason (2005); Walpole et al. (2014)



Note: Responses with  $n < 5$  are not presented in the figure.

*Figure 1. Respondents' Comfort With Overall Climate by Position Status (%)*

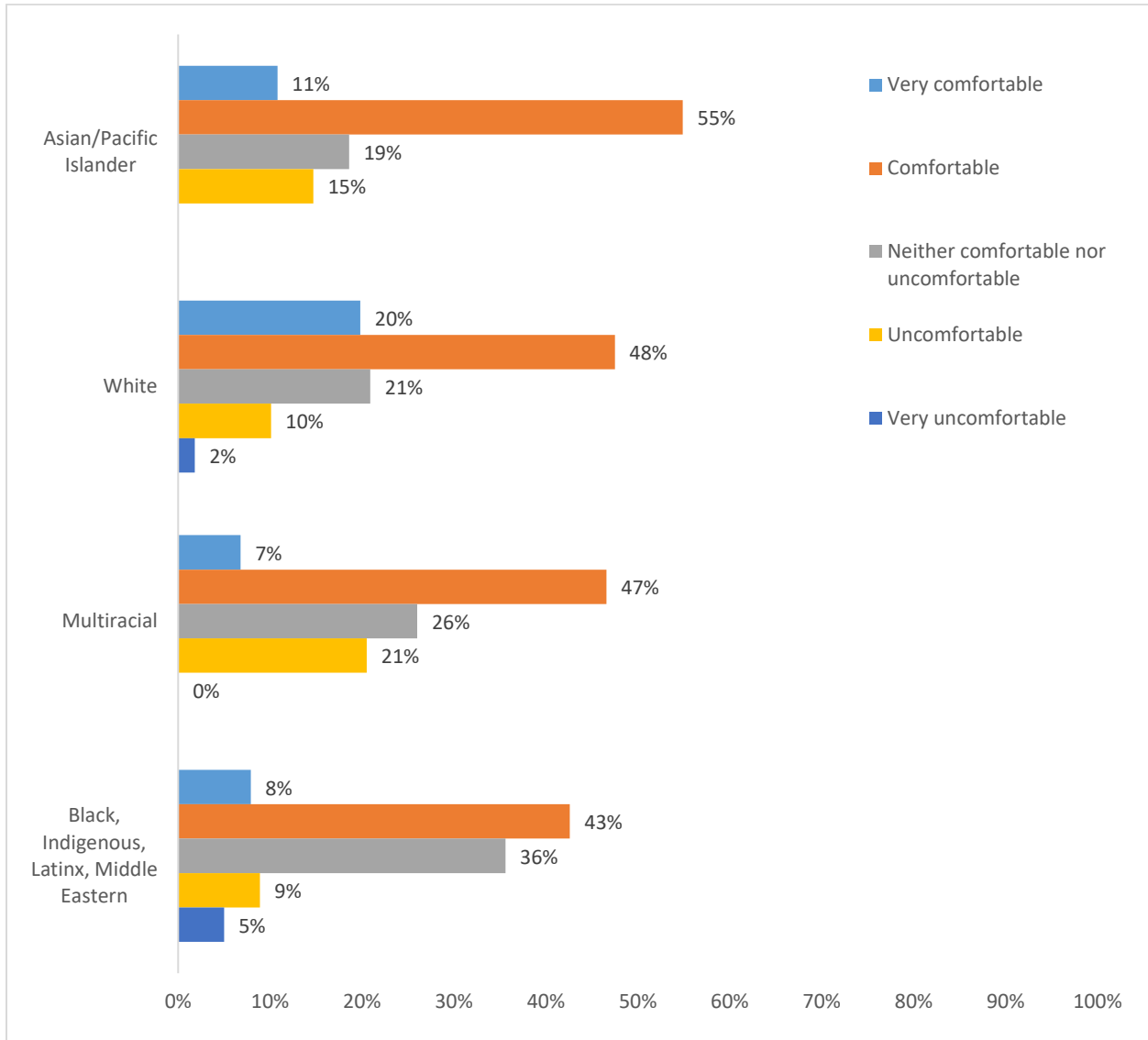
Men respondents were significantly more comfortable with the overall environment than were Women respondents (Figure 2, p. 60).



Note: Responses with  $n < 5$  are not presented in the figure.

*Figure 2. Respondents' Comfort With Overall Climate by Gender Identity (%)*

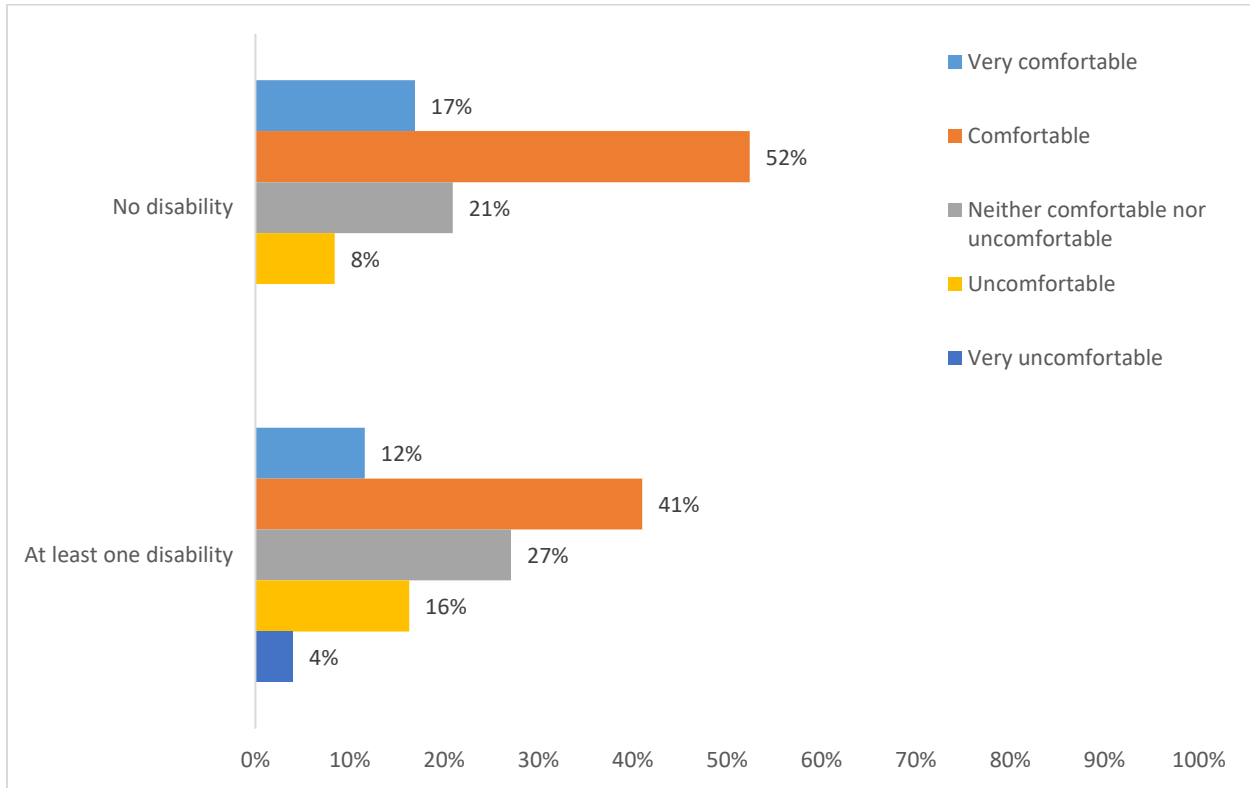
White respondents were significantly more comfortable with the overall environment than were Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Middle Eastern respondents (Figure 3, p. 62).



Note: Responses with  $n < 5$  are not presented in the figure.

*Figure 3. Respondents' Comfort With Overall Climate by Racial Identity (%)*

Respondents with No Disability were significantly more comfortable with the overall environment than were Respondents with At Least One Disability (Figure 4, p. 66).



Note: Responses with  $n < 5$  are not presented in the figure.

Figure 4. Respondents' Comfort With Overall Climate by Disability Status (%)

**Faculty Respondents – Positive Attitudes About Faculty Work**

**Ladder Faculty**

Ladder Faculty respondents held positive attitudes about faculty work at UC Hastings Law and indicated that research (93%,  $n = 28$ , p. 161) was valued at UC Hastings Law. Eighty-seven percent ( $n = 26$ ) of Ladder Faculty respondents agreed that the criteria for tenure were clear. Eighty-three percent ( $n = 24$ ) of Ladder Faculty respondents agreed that senior administrators (e.g., Dean, Associate/Assistant Deans) took faculty opinions seriously. Significant differences between demographic groups could not be determined because of the small sample size.

**Non-Ladder Faculty**

The majority of Non-Ladder Faculty respondents indicated that UC Hastings Law values research (83%,  $n = 44$ , p. 164) and teaching (77%,  $n = 41$ , p. 164). Significant differences between demographic groups could not be determined because of the small sample size.

## **All Faculty**

Approximately three-quarters (79%,  $n = 64$ ) of all Faculty respondents would recommend UC Hastings Law as a good place to work (p. 166). Similarly, Faculty respondents felt positive about their career opportunities (68%,  $n = 54$ , p. 168) and thought that retirement/supplemental benefits were competitive (67%,  $n = 53$ , p. 166).

### ***Staff Respondents – Positive Attitudes About Staff Work***

Staff respondents generally held positive views about working at UC Hastings Law. Staff respondents felt their supervisors (86%,  $n = 83$ , p. 173) and coworkers/colleagues (85%,  $n = 82$ , p. 173) gave them job/career advice or guidance when they needed it. More than three-quarters of Staff respondents felt that their supervisors provided adequate support for them to manage work-life balance (80%,  $n = 78$ , p. 174) and that they were given a reasonable time frame to complete assigned responsibilities (77%,  $n = 75$ , p. 175).

### ***Student Respondents – Positive Attitudes About Academic Experiences***

Student respondents held positive perceptions of their experiences at UC Hastings Law. A strong majority of Student respondents felt that UC Hastings Law prepared them with the knowledge and skills to be an effective attorney (67%,  $n = 259$ , p. 209). Student respondents indicated that they felt safe and supported at multiple spaces on campus. Student respondents indicated they knew where to seek advice (73%,  $n = 289$ , p. 217), felt they had adequate access to academic advising (78%,  $n = 306$ , p. 218), and were satisfied with the quality of advising they had received from faculty members (73%,  $n = 288$ , p. 217). Student respondents thought that faculty members (88%,  $n = 349$ , p. 217) and staff members (78%,  $n = 313$ , p. 217) responded to their emails, calls, or voicemails in a prompt manner. Seventy-one percent ( $n = 278$ , p. 219) of Student respondents felt that they received support from faculty and staff to pursue personal academic and career interests. The majority of Student respondents felt comfortable sharing their professional goals in one-on-one appointments with student-facing departments (75%,  $n = 296$ , p. 220) and with faculty (82%,  $n = 323$ , p. 220).



## **Experiences of Exclusionary, Intimidating, Offensive, and/or Hostile Conduct**

Several empirical studies reinforce the importance of the perception of non-discriminatory environments for positive learning and developmental outcomes.<sup>2</sup> Research also underscores the relationship between hostile workplace climates and subsequent productivity.<sup>3</sup> The survey requested information on experiences of exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct.

- 33% ( $n = 189$ ) of respondents indicated that they personally had experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct (p. 80).
- Of these respondents, 30% ( $n = 57$ ) suggested that the conduct was based on gender/gender identity, 29% ( $n = 54$ ) noted that the conduct was based on political views, and 26% ( $n = 49$ ) felt that it was based on their ethnicity (p. 80).
  - No significant differences in the percentages of respondents who had experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct existed based on their gender identity, political views, and/or ethnicity. However, of those respondents who experienced such conduct, the significant differences were found in the perceived bases of the conduct such as:
    - Higher percentages of Trans-spectrum respondents (78%,  $n = 7$ ) than Women respondents (36%,  $n = 44$ ), and a higher percentage of Women respondents (36%,  $n = 44$ ) than Men respondents (12%,  $n = 6$ ) who had experienced this conduct indicated that they thought that the conduct was based on their gender identity (p. 81).
    - A higher percentage of Conservative/Libertarian respondents (85%,  $n = 11$ ) than Moderate respondents (34%,  $n = 15$ ) and Progressive respondents (29%,  $n = 22$ ) thought that the conduct was based on their political views (Liberal respondents [ $n < 5$ ] did not significantly differ from the Conservative/Libertarian group or Progressive group, p. 82).

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<sup>2</sup> Dugan et al. (2012); Eunyong & Hargrove (2013); Garvey et al. (2018); Hurtado & Ponjuan (2005); Mayhew et al. (2016); Oseguera et al. (2017); Pascarella & Terenzini (2005); Strayhorn (2012)

<sup>3</sup> Bilimoria & Stewart (2009); Costello (2012); Dade et al. (2015); Eagan & Garvey (2015); García (2016); Hirshfield & Joseph (2012); S. J. Jones & Taylor (2012); Levin et al. (2015); Rankin et al. (2010); Silverschanz et al. (2008)

- Higher percentages of Respondents of Color (including Multiracial) (40%,  $n = 25$ ) and Asian/Pacific Islander respondents (38%,  $n = 12$ ) than White respondents (8%,  $n = 6$ ) who had experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct indicated that the conduct was based on their ethnicity (p. 83).

## **Most Appreciated Aspects**

### ***Faculty Respondents***

When asked what was the most appreciated aspects of UC Hastings Law, 75% ( $n = 64$ ) of Faculty respondents indicated that they most appreciated the student body. Other aspects included Hastings' public mission (55%,  $n = 47$ ), San Francisco location (55%,  $n = 47$ ), Hastings' commitment to teaching (54%,  $n = 46$ ), their faculty colleagues (54%,  $n = 46$ ), and the opportunity to contribute to positive change (53%,  $n = 45$ ) (p. 233).

### ***Staff Respondents***

When asked what was the most appreciated aspects of UC Hastings Law, 72% ( $n = 71$ ) of Staff respondents indicated that they most appreciated their relationship with coworkers. Other aspects included relationship with supervisor/manager (69%,  $n = 68$ ), benefits (63%,  $n = 62$ ), fulfilling/satisfying work (63%,  $n = 62$ ), and opportunities to make a positive contribution (58%,  $n = 57$ ) (p. 233).

### ***Student Respondents***

When asked what was the most appreciated aspects of UC Hastings Law, 56% ( $n = 221$ ) of Student respondents indicated that they most appreciated the San Francisco location. Other aspects included faculty (49%,  $n = 194$ ), clinical and experiential programs (47%,  $n = 188$ ), alumni network (43%,  $n = 172$ ), Hastings' connections to the Bay Area and Silicon Valley institutions and businesses (43%,  $n = 169$ ), and engaging and effective teaching (42%,  $n = 168$ ) (p. 234).

## **Respondents Who Seriously Considered Leaving UC Hastings Law**

Campus climate research has demonstrated the effects of campus climate on faculty and student retention.<sup>4</sup> Research specific to student experiences has found that sense of belonging is integral to student persistence and retention.<sup>5</sup>

### ***Faculty and Staff Respondents***

Fifty-one percent ( $n = 43$ ) of Faculty respondents and 60% ( $n = 58$ ) of Staff respondents had seriously considered leaving UC Hastings Law (p. 190). Of those who seriously considered leaving, 49% ( $n = 21$ ) of Faculty respondents seriously considered leaving because they felt under-appreciated or under-valued and 40% ( $n = 17$ ) because of personal reasons (p. 192). Sixty-two percent ( $n = 36$ ) of Staff respondents who seriously considered leaving noted it was because of low salary/pay rate and 48% ( $n = 28$ ) because of limited opportunities for advancement (p. 190).

### ***Student Respondents***

Forty-five percent ( $n = 179$ ) of Student respondents had seriously considered leaving UC Hastings Law (p. 226). Of those respondents, 55% ( $n = 99$ ) seriously considered leaving because they had a desire to attend a different law school. Student respondents also considered leaving because they lacked a sense of belonging at UC Hastings Law (41%,  $n = 74$ ), because of the campus climate (34%,  $n = 61$ ), and/or because of a lack of institutional support (34%,  $n = 60$ , p. 227).

## **Respondents' Sense of Belonging**

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the *Sense of Belonging* scale derived from Questions 105 and 109 on the survey for staff and students. *Sense of Belonging* questions for Faculty respondents could not be combined into a factor for analysis because of differences in wording between R&A's scale and the questions asked on the survey. Higher scores on the *Sense of Belonging* factors suggested an individual or constituent group felt a stronger sense of

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<sup>4</sup> Blumenfeld et al. (2016); Gardner (2013); Garvey & Rankin (2016); D. R. Johnson et al. (2014); Kutscher & Tuckwiller (2019); Lawrence et al. (2014); Pascale (2018); Ruud et al. (2018); Strayhorn (2013); Walpole et al. (2014)

<sup>5</sup> Booker (2016); García & Garza (2016); Hausmann et al. (2007)

belonging at UC Hastings Law. Using this scale, analyses revealed the following significant differences in the overall test means for:

- Staff respondents by years of employment on *Staff Sense of Belonging*. Findings indicated that Staff Respondents with Less than 6 Years of employment had higher *Staff Sense of Belonging* scores than did Staff Respondents with 6 or More Years of employment at UC Hastings Law (p. 189).
- Student respondents by disability status and religious affiliation on *Student Sense of Belonging*. These findings indicated that Student Respondents with No Disability had higher *Student Sense of Belonging* scores than did both Student Respondents with a Single Disability and Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities (p. 206).

## **Challenges and Opportunities Related to Campus Climate**

### ***Faculty Respondents***

Only 16% ( $n = 13$ , p. 166) of Faculty respondents felt that salaries for tenure-track faculty positions were competitive, and 19% ( $n = 15$ , p. 166) of Faculty respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that child care benefits were competitive. One-fourth (25%,  $n = 20$ , p. 168) of Faculty respondents felt that meaningful committee work was fairly distributed across the faculty. A little more than one-third (35%,  $n = 28$ ) of Faculty respondents felt that UC Hastings Law provided adequate resources to help them manage work-life balance (p. 167).

### ***Staff Respondents***

Staff respondents indicated that they felt less positive about several aspects of their work life at UC Hastings Law. Twenty-six percent ( $n = 25$ ) of Staff respondents felt that they performed more work than colleagues with similar performance expectations (e.g., formal and informal mentoring or advising, helping with student groups and activities, providing other support, p. 174). Thirty-seven percent ( $n = 36$ ) of Staff respondents felt that they were pressured by departmental/program work requirements that occurred outside of normally scheduled hours (p. 175). Thirty-nine percent ( $n = 38$ ) of Staff respondents felt that their workload increased without additional compensation as a result of other staff departures (e.g., retirement positions not filled, p. 175).

### ***Student Respondents***

Analyses of the Students' survey responses revealed statistically significant differences based on disability status, first-generation status, income status, racial identity, religious affiliation, sexual identity, gender identity, political views, and practice area of interest where students from backgrounds historically underrepresented at colleges held less positive views of their experiences than did their peers from "majority" backgrounds (pp. 209–213).

### ***Student Respondents' Perceived Academic Success***

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the *Perceived Academic Success* scale derived from Question 7 on the survey. Using this scale, analyses revealed that Not-First-Generation Student respondents had higher *Perceived Academic Success* scores than First-Generation Student respondents (p. 200). Subsequent analyses on *Perceived Academic Success* for Student respondents were significant for two comparisons: No Disability vs. Single Disability and No Disability vs. Multiple Disabilities. These findings suggest that Student Respondents with No Disability had higher *Perceived Academic Success* scores than both Student Respondents with a Single Disability and Student Respondents with Multiple Disabilities (p. 200).

### ***A Meaningful Percentage of Respondents Experienced Unwanted Sexual Conduct***

In 2014, *Not Alone: The First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault* indicated that sexual assault is a substantial issue for colleges and universities nationwide, affecting the physical health, mental health, and academic success of students. The report highlights that one in five women is sexually assaulted while in college. One section of the UC Hastings Law survey requested information regarding respondents' experiences with sexual assault.

- 11% ( $n = 65$ ) of all respondents indicated that they had experienced unwanted sexual contact/conduct while at UC Hastings Law (p. 139).
  - 1% ( $n = 6$ ) experienced relationship violence (e.g., ridiculed, controlling, hitting, p. 139).
  - 2% ( $n = 12$ ) experienced stalking (e.g., following me, on social media, texting, phone calls, p. 141).

- 9% ( $n = 51$ ) experienced sexual interaction (e.g., catcalling, repeated sexual advances, sexual harassment, sexual cyber-harassment, p. 143).
- 3% ( $n = 16$ ) experienced unwanted sexual contact (e.g., fondling, rape, sexual assault, penetration without consent, p. 148).
- Respondents identified UC Hastings Law students, current or former dating/intimate partners, acquaintances/friends, and strangers as sources of unwanted sexual contact/conduct (pp. 140–148).

Respondents who indicated that they did not report unwanted sexual contact/conduct were offered the opportunity to elaborate on why that was the case. The primary reason cited for not reporting these incidents was that the incidents did not feel serious enough to report. Additional rationales included that respondents did not want to go through the reporting process because they feared nothing would happen and the contact occurred off-campus (pp. 142–150).

### ***Conclusion***

UC Hastings Law climate findings<sup>6</sup> were consistent with those found in higher education institutions across the country, based on the work of R&A Consulting.<sup>7</sup> For example, 70% to 80% of respondents in similar reports of universities and colleges found the campus climate to be “very comfortable” or “comfortable.” A somewhat lower percentage (61%) of UC Hastings Law respondents indicated that they were “very comfortable” or “comfortable” with the overall climate at UC Hastings Law (p. 57). Twenty percent to 25% of respondents in similar reports of universities and colleges indicated that they personally had experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct in the past year. At UC Hastings Law, a somewhat higher percentage of respondents (33%) indicated that they personally had experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and/or hostile conduct in the past two years (p. 80). The results also paralleled the findings of other climate studies of specific constituent groups offered in the literature.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Additional findings disaggregated by position status and other selected demographic characteristics are provided in the full report.

<sup>7</sup> Rankin & Associates Consulting (2021)

<sup>8</sup> Guiffreda et al. (2002); Harper & Hurtado (2007); Harper & Quaye (2004); Hurtado & Ponjuan (2005); Rankin & Reason (2005); Sears (2002); Settles et al. (2006); Silverschanz et al. (2008); Yosso et al. (2009)

UC Hastings Law’s climate assessment report provides baseline data on diversity and inclusion, and addresses UC Hastings Law’s mission and goals. While the findings may guide decision-making regarding policies and practices at UC Hastings Law, it is important to note that the cultural fabric of any institution and unique aspects of each campus’s environment must be taken into consideration when deliberating additional action items based on these findings. The climate assessment findings provide the UC Hastings Law community with an opportunity to build upon its strengths and to develop a deeper awareness of the challenges ahead. UC Hastings Law, with support from senior administrators and collaborative leadership, is in a prime position to actualize its commitment to promote an inclusive campus and to institute organizational structures that respond to the needs of its dynamic campus community.

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