



# Healthy Campus Research Summary

UCR

UCR is taking an integrated and comprehensive approach to elevate health and well-being at UCR. UCR Healthy Campus (HC), part of the larger systemwide Healthy Campus Network (HCN) supported by President Napolitano, invests in improving the health and quality of life for all of our UCR campus community. UCR Healthy Campus began in Fall of 2016.



## RESEARCH METHODS

Healthy Campus is conducting a three-year longitudinal study using a mixed-method design to assess efforts to create a campus culture of health. Data collection includes an annual survey and focus groups with faculty, staff, and students. In 2018, a total of 900 participants completed the Healthy Campus survey and 73 participants, including 26 students, 29 staff, and 12 faculty, partook in one of eight focus groups.

The **research aims** to:

1. Describe health and well-being at UCR.
2. Identify characteristics of a healthy campus culture and the role of leadership, faculty, staff, and students in creating a culture of health.
3. Assess the impact of healthy campus activity on health as a shared value.

The report compares Healthy Campus 2018 survey results with 2017 results (n=1300 participants) to compare change over time, as well as uses focus group data to explicate the survey data.

Findings from Healthy Campus research indicates that faculty, staff, and students are concerned about chronic diseases (heart disease), healthy food access, mental health, and physical activity. Survey data indicate health concerns vary by UCR affiliation:

- Faculty are most concerned about heart disease, food access, and colds and the flu.
- Staff are most concerned about stress and weight management and exercise.
- Students are most concerned about anxiety, exercise, and sleep.

Collectively our campus community expressed during focus groups that they want to see change involving five broad categories of health:

- Mental health stigma
- Healthy food access
- Healthcare services access
- Wellness and prevention resources/services
- Safe and comfortable environments

## OVERVIEW OF HEALTHY CAMPUS FINDINGS

Salient themes across these categories of health included access, ergonomics, disability, building temperature (they are often too cold), and personal safety. Themes of self-advocacy and healthcare for all also arose. UCR Healthy Campus can take collective action to create a campus culture that values health and attends to our campus needs. Leadership plays a critical role in modeling and promoting health, as do faculty and supervisors who have the potential to negatively or positively impact staff and student well-being. Below we highlight findings from survey data aimed to understand faculty, staff, and student perceptions of campus health and use narrative text from focus group to explicate these findings.

### **A Campus That Cares - percent of campus community that strongly agrees that UCR cares about my health and personal and well-being.**

- **5.5 % of faculty (a reduction from previous year at 6.2%, 2017)**
- **11.5% of staff (an increase from previous year at 9.9%, 2017)**
- **12.3% of students (an increase from previous year at 9.9%, 2017)**

### **Perception of a Healthy Campus Culture – percent of campus community that strongly agrees that UCR has a culture and environment that promotes and supports health and well-being for its faculty, staff, and students**

- **4.1% of faculty (a reduction from previous year at 6.3%, 2017)**
- **20% of staff (an increase from previous year at 15.1%, 2017)**
- **13.7% of students (an increase from previous year at 11.5%, 2017)**

Twenty percent or less of UCR staff and students and 5% or less of UCR faculty agree that UCR cares about their personal health and well-being and the campus promotes a culture of health. While there is a general increase among staff and students in terms of agreement from 2017 to 2018 data, there is a decrease among faculty. When we asked faculty, staff, and students to share what they envisioned as an ideal healthy campus culture this is what they said: **a campus culture** that is friendly, serene, tobacco free, and disability accessible where leadership engages in healthy practices, mental and physical health are promoted, and healthy food options are accessible.

## Students

Students envisioned a healthy campus culture as friendly, tobacco free, green (e.g., solar tables), and with good air quality. Their descriptions of the environment emphasized nature such as flowers, Zen gardens, and meditation pools. They described the classroom climate as flexible such as with standing break options. They also envisioned a healthy campus culture as one that provides healthcare coverage to all students, as well as facilitates access to counseling and psychological services and healthy food.

## Staff

Staff envisioned a healthy campus culture as serene and tobacco free. Their descriptions of the environment also included Zen gardens and meditation pools, as well as flowers and art as part of a calming scenery. They imagined their working environments as friendly and described supervisors as engaging in healthy activity, encouraging work-life integrating, and supporting flexible work schedules. They also envisioned a campus culture that was bike friendly and attended to staffs' physical and mental health and provided access to healthcare prevention (flu shots) and financial wellness counseling.

## Faculty

Faculty envisioned a healthy campus culture as clean, safe, and stable. They described healthy workspaces void of toxicity and microaggressions and healthy work habits. They provided examples of unhealthy behaviors such as sending emails to colleagues and co-workers outside of business hours and on weekends. Faculty envisioned a campus culture that promotes mental and physical wellbeing, recognizes all (dis)abilities, and facilitates access to healthcare services and healthy food. They also envisioned a campus culture characterized by a congruency in what is said or valued and action.

**Leadership Support and Engagement - percent of campus community that strongly agrees that *leaders at UCR are actively engaged in promoting and role-modeling health and well-being***

- **1.4 % of faculty (a reduction from previous year at 5.4%, 2017)**
- **10% of staff (an increase from previous year at 9%, 2017)**
- **8% of students (an increase from previous year at 6.7%, 2017)**

Over the past year, staff and students perceived a positive shift in leadership support for health and well-being whereas faculty perceived a decline. Leadership plays a critical role in building a culture of campus health. First, they can model work-life integration and actively encourage and support others to better integrate their personal and professional lives. Educational training in which campus leaders and supervisors can learn how to create healthy environments and engage in healthy behaviors can enable campus leaders to serve as positive role models for the campus community. For instance, the use of technology has blurred the boundaries of work and home life for faculty and staff and our campus community struggles to create boundaries. Leadership and supervisors can learn how to best create healthy work-home life boundaries and teach others to model such behavior. Participants also discussed the importance of leadership in creating more supportive and safe environments for all campus members by fostering a sense of belonging and campus community.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEALTHY CAMPUS

## Students

Students indicated that Healthy Campus focus on students' access to healthcare services, especially mental healthcare services, and healthy food. For instance, students would like for all students to have healthcare insurance and access to on-campus healthcare services. They would also like there to be more attention on counseling and psychological services. Students discussed long wait times and limited sessions as barriers to utilizing campus mental healthcare services. They also suggested more attention to wellness and prevention, including information on allergies, air quality, and building temperatures which are often too cold.

## Staff

Staff recommended that Healthy Campus focus on food (in)security, access to healthy foods, work-life integration, and physical and mental health, including addictions. They also recommended finding ways to help both faculty and staff navigate their medical benefits and treatments, which could involve a health liaison situated in each department. Furthermore, they recommended increased attention to maternal and child health indicating the need for more lactation rooms, changes to the maternity leave policy, and resources for the child care center.

## Faculty

Faculty recommended Healthy Campus promote physical and mental health and focus on creating a safe and supportive campus community. They stressed the need for safe and supportive working and learning environments and skill development to promote advocacy for self and others especially in toxic work environments.

## **BASED ON THIS RESEARCH,**

**Healthy Campus will focus on the following areas to continue to build a healthy campus culture:**

- **Increase Access to Healthy Food**
  - Promote healthy food and beverage options:
    - Vending Machines
    - Catering
    - C-Stores
    - Residential
    - Retail
  - Provide education and experiential learning on healthy meal preparation through campus partnerships such as the R'Pantry, R'Garden, Student Recreation Center CookWell.
  - Increase access to clean water through the installation of hydration and water refill stations.
  
- **Address the physical and mental health needs of the campus community**
  - Recognize that physical and mental health are integrated and need to be addressed together.
  - Create opportunities for physical activity through marked walking paths, which will both promote physical and mental health and create a sense of belonging and community.
  - Provide information and resources for faculty to support student mental health by disseminating the Red folder (mental health resources) to faculty and staff.
  - Increase faculty and staff awareness of the Faculty Staff Assistance Program (FSAP).
  - Conduct mental health trainings for faculty, staff, and graduate students who are often first responders.

- **Increase Access to Preventative Healthcare**
  - Provide education on how to access and navigate healthcare benefits and services.
  - Identify opportunities for the faculty, staff, and students to easily access flu vaccines and health screenings on campus.
  
- **Create Healthy Environments**
  - Consider ways to promote work-life integration for faculty and staff.
  - Continue to work on and advocate for alternative work arrangement guidelines.
  - Identify ways to increase access to financial wellness resources and counseling.
  - Incorporate healthy classroom pedagogy strategies into teaching and learning environments.
  - Identify training on healthy work practices for campus leadership and supervisors.

**Findings from the Healthy Campus research are used to inform Healthy Campus strategies and activity to facilitate and sustain cultures of campus health. If you would like to be part of the Healthy Campus team or have any questions or comments, please contact Healthy Campus co-Chairs Dr. Ann Cheney, [ann.cheney@medsch.ucr.edu](mailto:ann.cheney@medsch.ucr.edu), and Julie Chobdee, [Julie.Chobdee@ucr.edu](mailto:Julie.Chobdee@ucr.edu).**