

I thank the members of the Administrative Policy Committee for their work conducting and summarizing the survey results of the 2016/2017 Report on the Evaluation of the President. I have distributed the report to all members of the Michigan Tech University Board of Trustees.

The response rate at 38% was good and above average, the results of the survey on each question are comparable or slightly better than those of past surveys. It is encouraging to see the high level of agreement with people having a sense of belonging at Michigan Tech, that people have pride in their work; and that anxiety over job security has lessened. These all lead to a more productive, if not “fun,” climate for work. It was heartening to see that for almost all questions, responses from women were the same or more positive than those of their male colleagues. It will be interesting to see if this pattern holds in the future. Separately, we are following up on the work environment/climate issue for students, faculty and staff this year and next as part of our continued commitment to improving the learning and working environment for our University community.

There are several items in the survey that are of special concern to me that we will look at in the upcoming climate survey. First, was the expressed inability of people to disengage from work. This is a national concern of employers and employees, and while attentiveness to one's job responsibilities is essential, being able to balance that with personal needs is just as if not more critical for well-being. Being on is good; being on-edge is not healthy or productive.

At the same time, it was also concerning that a number of people felt that they weren't being challenged - that their skills and knowledge were not being used adequately. Similar to past years, this response was most prevalent among union represented staff. A few years ago we followed up on this sentiment and designed education and training programs, with the first group of around 25 people graduating last year. The program was highly regarded by those participants and we will continue to sponsor the program going forward. Also, as a result of last year's responses we also initiated more advanced education/training/mentoring for supervisors. This year's results suggest that is a continued need.

Finally, there were a number of concerns expressed that I was either a) saying too much about the recent immigration issues or b) saying too little about recent immigration issues. Some expressed a belief that as a university president, I should remain silent on political issues that may affect the Michigan Tech family. Others expressed a belief that standing in resistance to federal edicts is the only justifiable response to protect the same. Regardless of where your own personal thoughts, words and actions may fall, it is incumbent upon us to work to create a welcoming environment that ensures the rights and safety of all our faculty, staff and students.

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