



***Ruffalo Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction
Survey Results: All Employees***

**Gallaudet University
Spring 2019 Report**

Student Success and Academic Quality (SSAQ)
Office of Institutional Research
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Gallaudet Employee Satisfaction Survey Report: Spring 2019

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Executive Summary

The Ruffalo Noel Levitz Employee Satisfaction (ESS) supports the university in better understanding perspectives of faculty, staff, and administrators at Gallaudet University (GU) on issues that affect campus climate. Spring 2019 semester was the fourth administration of the Employee Satisfaction Survey (ESS) at Gallaudet University.

A total of 346 regular-status employees (administrators, faculty, and staff) completed or partially completed the survey. The response rate was 31% to 46%, depending on the survey item. This report summarizes the responses of all regular-status employees for all sections of the survey. The Supplemental ESS Report separates responses by employee role.

Key Takeaways

Consistency and Credibility

Gallaudet has administrated the Employee Satisfaction Survey in 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2019. One key takeaway is the consistency of results across all four years. This consistency lends strong credibility to the results and encourages Gallaudet to carefully consider what can be done to respond to the results.

The Employee Satisfaction Survey provides a variety of information about employee perspectives on issues that impact the climate at Gallaudet. Among all this information, Ruffalo Noel Levitz focuses our attention on Strengths and Challenges as we consider how to strengthen Gallaudet's climate.

Four Challenges, all related to resources, have consistently been reported from 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2019:

- This institution makes sufficient budgetary resources available to achieve important objectives
- My department has the staff needed to do its job well
- My department has the budget needed to do its job well
- I am paid fairly for the work I do

The results of the ESS for four years have also shown us that employee morale continues to be a top priority for the majority of employees. At Gallaudet, as elsewhere, employees are being asked to work harder and smarter as they strengthen approaches to student success and new generations of students.

Eight Strengths have been repeatedly identified for four years. Gallaudet employees take pride in working at Gallaudet, and in the work that they do. They also feel valued and attended to. It would appear that employees are eager to have Gallaudet identify ways in which they can continue to do this work that is so valuable in spite of the fiscal crisis.

- This institution promotes excellent employee-student relationships
- Staff take pride in their work
- Faculty take pride in their work
- I am proud to work at this institution
- The work I do is valuable to the institution

- My supervisor pays attention to what I have to say
- The type of work I do on most days is personally rewarding
- The employee benefits available to me are valuable

Peer Comparisons

Although Gallaudet’s employees’ overall satisfaction steadily improved from 2015 to 2017, their overall satisfaction declined in 2019 and they indicate that they continue to be significantly more dissatisfied with all except one Campus Culture and Priorities and Work Environment item on the climate survey compared to peer institutions. Gallaudet’s employees’ overall satisfaction for the one item, “the employee benefits available to me are valuable,” was higher compared to peer institutions. However, the difference was not statistically significant. It will be important to strategically consider what can bring the greatest improvement in quality for students, as well as employee morale.

Gallaudet Priority Targets

Targets for the 2019 Gallaudet Priority for Campus Climate were not achieved and did not improve compared to 2017.

“There is a spirit of teamwork and cooperation at the institution.”

Mean Scores

2015 Actual	2016 Actual	2017 TARGET	2017 Actual	2019 TARGET	2019 Actual
2.37	2.57	2.63	2.84	2.95	2.46

“Transparent and Informed communication is practiced consistently throughout the university community.”

Mean Scores

2015 Actual	2016 Actual	2017 TARGET	2017 Actual	2019 TARGET	2019 Actual
2.46	2.65	2.70	2.79	2.90	2.26

I. Introduction

The Ruffalo Noel Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey (ESS) supports the university in better understanding the perspectives of faculty, staff, and administrators at Gallaudet University (GU) on issues that affect campus climate. Employees have been surveyed using the ESS for four years in the spring of 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2019. Results from this year's ESS were analyzed longitudinally across the four years, and compared to a cohort of 48 comparable private 4-year institutions (peers). This report summarizes the responses of all regular-status employees for all sections of the survey. The Supplemental ESS Report separates responses by employee role.

A. Background

Gallaudet has administered an employee climate survey since 2007. The GU Campus Climate Survey (GUCCS) was developed in response to internal issues that were very important in 2007, along with concerns from Gallaudet's regional accreditor, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). The GUCCS addressed six themes: 1) respect, trust, and fairness; 2) institutional communication and information sharing; 3) management style; 4) academic culture; and 5) freedom of expression. A sixth theme of bilingualism was added in 2011. Over time, the results of the GUCCS showed repeated patterns, and there was an interest in asking more detailed questions to provide specifics within those patterns. There was also a desire to address a wider range of issues facing higher education, as well as to see how Gallaudet University compared to peer institutions in areas impacting climate. For these reasons, Gallaudet University adopted the Ruffalo Noel Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey (ESS). Gallaudet first administered the ESS in spring, 2015, and then again in 2016, 2017, and 2019 to assess campus climate longitudinally.

In previous years, ESS consisted of 82 items with 4 open-ended questions. Of these items, 13 were Gallaudet-specific and were designed to address areas of particular interest to Gallaudet including bilingualism, diversity, ethics, and communication. For the most recent survey administration in spring 2019, two additional Gallaudet-specific items were added to the ESS, which led to 84 items with 4 open-ended questions.

The survey also included a question regarding the responder's role at Gallaudet to better provide an understanding of who completed the survey. The question was strengthened in 2017 and re-used in 2019 by adding clearer descriptions regarding the responder's role at Gallaudet.

The ESS includes five sections:

- Section 1: Campus Culture and Policies
- Section 2: Institutional Goals
- Section 3: Involvement in Planning and Decision-Making
- Section 4: Work Environment
- Section 5: Overall Satisfaction with Gallaudet

Sections 1 and 4 of the ESS, which address Campus Culture and Policies and Work Environment, ask employees to respond to questions about campus climate using a Likert scale to rate items in two ways: "importance to me" and "my level of satisfaction." Scales range from

1 – 5, with 5 as the highest (very important or very satisfied) and 1 as the lowest (not important at all or not satisfied at all). Mean scores are presented using this 1 – 5 scale format. Mean scores for Importance are typically in the range of 4 to 5, and mean scores for Satisfaction are typically in the range of 2 to 3. Performance gaps are then calculated as the difference between perceived Importance and Satisfaction mean scores. The larger the performance gap, the greater the discrepancy between how important an employee believes that item to be, and how satisfied the employee is regarding that item. Areas with high Importance and high Satisfaction represent areas of Strength. Areas with high Importance and low Satisfaction or a large mean for the gap between Importance and Satisfaction, identify Challenges for Gallaudet. (See Appendix A for a copy of the survey instrument and Appendix B for a copy of the Gallaudet-specific questions.)

For section 2, Institutional Goals, employees were asked to rate how important each of the 10 institutional goals is on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not important at all and 5 = very important.) From the list of institutional goals, employees were also asked to rank and list the top three institutional priority goals.

For section 3, Involvement in Planning and Decision-making, employees were asked to rate how involved each of the eight constituents are in planning and decision-making at Gallaudet University. Again, the rating was on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not enough involvement and 5 = too much involvement.)

In addition to the items surveyed for the four themes, employees were to rate their overall satisfaction with their employment at Gallaudet University on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not satisfied at all and 5 = very satisfied.)

B. Methods

The Office of Institutional Research surveyed approximately 749 faculty, staff, and administrators using the Ruffalo Noel Levitz ESS during spring 2019 through an online link sent via e-mail. Instructions in ASL and English for completing the survey were publicized through e-mail. A total of 346 regular-status employees completed or partially completed the survey. Responses for each item ranged from 230 to 342 responses, which generated a 31% to 46% response rate, depending on the survey item. This response rate is about the same as the 30% to 41% response rate for the [2016 ESS survey](#)¹.

The ESS was intended for regular status² employees at Gallaudet University. Although a few surveys (0.9%) were completed by employees in other categories, the majority of responders to the ESS were staff (53.4%), with 41.6% exempt staff and 11.7% non-exempt staff. 31.4% of the respondents were faculty, and 13.5% were administrators.

¹ For additional data about survey responders see the GU Ruffalo Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Report data online at [ESS Full Report with Demographic Information](#).

² Regular status employees are defined as full-time employees, both staff and faculty.

Table 2. Percentage of ESS Responses by Employee Group

Employee Role		% of Total ESS Responses- 2017	
Faculty		31.4%	
All Staff		53.4%	
Exempt Staff	Non-Exempt Staff	41.6%	11.7%
Administrator		13.5%	

The demographic representation of respondents in 2019 was similar to previous surveys in which the largest percentage of respondents were staff. However, the percentage of faculty respondents increased by 15 percentage point compared to 2016 and 2017 in which 16% of the respondents were faculty. The percentage of administrator respondents also increased by 3 percentage point compared to 2016 and 2017 in which 10% of the respondents were administrators. Respondents represented a range of years of experience, with 4% having worked at Gallaudet for less than 1 year, 23% with 1 to 5 years, 21% with 6 to 10 years, 28% with 11 to 20 years, and 24% with more than 20 years of experience. These percentages were similar to the last survey administration in 2017. 69% of respondents were White, while 31% of respondents were international or members of racial or ethnic minorities group. 51% of the respondents were Deaf, 10% Hard of Hearing, and 39% Hearing.

II. Employee Satisfaction Survey Results

This report presents detailed ESS results as follows:

- A. Campus Culture and Policies
- B. Work Environment
- C. Institutional Goals
- D. Involvement in Planning and Decision-Making
- E. Overall Satisfaction with Gallaudet

Ruffalo Noel Levitz suggests using the matrix in Figure 1 to analyze the ESS results and prioritize actions, particularly for the Campus Culture and Policies and Work Environment sections.

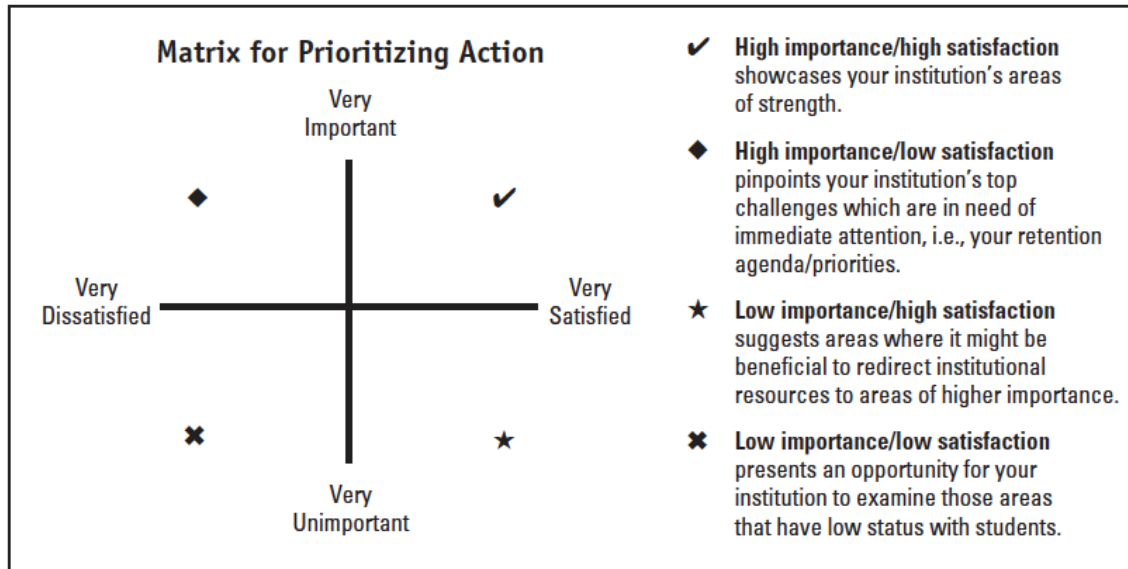


Figure 1. Matrix for prioritizing action

In identifying areas of Strength, two conditions had to be met: 1) the item's average Importance score was in the top 50% of all items' Importance score and 2) the items' average Satisfaction score was in the top 25% of all items' Satisfaction scores. In identifying areas of Challenge, two conditions had to be met: 1) the items' average Importance score was in the top 50% of all items' Importance score and 2) the item's average Satisfaction score was in the bottom 25% of all items' Satisfaction scores or the gap (difference between Importance and Satisfaction) was in the top 25% of all items' gap scores. In other words, items with high Importance and high Satisfaction are the institution's areas of Strength, and items with high Importance and low Satisfaction are the institution's top Challenges, which are in need of immediate attention. This report will also present detailed ESS results for other sections including institutional goals and involvement in planning and decision-making.

A. Campus Culture and Policies

Table 3 lists the Strengths and Challenges for Campus Culture and Policies in order of importance. Items in **bold** are items that were also identified as a strength or a challenge in the last survey administration in 2017. Items that employees found to be highly important, and are also satisfied with include: the way in which the institution treats students; and staff and faculty pride in their work. Items that employees found to be important, but are not satisfied with were: communication between departments and employees, specifically between faculty and administrators as well as staff and administrators; institutional planning; and the adequacy of budgetary and staff resources.³

³ For complete analysis by items see the Ruffalo Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Report data posted online at [ESS Data Regular GU Employees Only](#).

Table 3. Campus Culture and Policies Strengths and Challenges

Strengths	Challenges
This institution treats students as its top priority.	This institution makes sufficient budgetary resources available to achieve important objectives.
This institution promotes excellent employee-student relationships.	The leadership of this institution has a clear sense of purpose.
Staff take pride in their work.	This institution plans carefully.
Faculty take pride in their work.	Administrators share information regularly with faculty and staff.
	This institution makes sufficient staff resources available to achieve important objectives.
	There is good communication between the faculty and the administration at this institution.
	There are effective lines of communication between departments.
	There is good communication between staff and the administration at this institution.

B. Work Environment

For Section 4: Work Environment, employees were asked to rate 31 items. As with Section I, for each item in Section 4, employees were to rate how satisfied they are with the item on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not satisfied at all and 5 = very satisfied), and how important the item is to them on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not important at all and 5 = very important).

Table 4 lists the Strengths and Challenges for Work Environment in order of importance. Items in **bold** are items that were also identified as a strength or a challenge in the last survey administration in 2017. Work Environment Strengths identified by Gallaudet employees focused on the value of the work they are doing with regards to benefits, attention and appreciation from supervisor, and the value of their worth at Gallaudet. Items that employees found to be important, but were not satisfied with were related to resources for their work and communication⁴.

⁴ For complete analysis by items see the Ruffalo Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Report data posted online at [ESS Data Regular GU Employees Only](#).

Table 4. Work Environment: Strengths and Challenges



<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Challenges</i>
The type of work I do on most days is personally rewarding.	My department has the staff needed to do its job well.
The employee benefits available to me are valuable.	My department has the budget needed to do its job well.
The work I do is valuable to the institution.	Transparent and informed communication is practiced consistently throughout the university community.
My supervisor pays attention to what I have to say.	I am paid fairly for the work I do.
I am proud to work at this institution.	University administrators are accessible and receptive to input.
My job and responsibilities are communicated clearly to me.	Information flows upward and is recognized at higher levels of the administration.
The work I do is appreciated by my supervisor.	

C. Institutional Goals


For section 2: Institutional Goals, employees were asked to rate 11 institutional goals using the Likert scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not important at all and 5 = very important). In addition, from the list of institutional goals, they were to rank and list the top three institutional priority goals. The table below lists items in order of importance from most important to least important. (See Appendix F for statistical details of the Institutional Goals responses).

Employees found improving employee morale to be the most important institutional goal followed by retention of current students to graduation, improving the quality of existing academic programs, and improving the academic ability of entering student classes.

Table 5. Importance of Institutional Goals: Mean Scores

RATE: IMPORTANCE (1 = "Not important at all / 5 = "Very important")	Mean
1. Improve employee morale	 4.79
2. Retain more of its current students to graduation	4.72
3. Improve the quality of existing academic programs	 4.58
4. Improve the academic ability of entering student classes	4.52
5. Increase the enrollment of new students	4.40

RATE: IMPORTANCE (1 = "Not important at all / 5 = "Very important")	Mean
6. Develop digital infrastructure to support internal operations, communications, and digital learning	4.37
7. Increase the diversity of racial and ethnic groups represented among the student body	4.35
8. Improve the appearance of campus buildings and grounds	4.01
9. Recruit students from new geographic markets	4.01
10. Develop new academic programs	3.92
11. Some other goal	3.59


 Indicates an increase from 2017

D. Involvement and Decision-Making

For section 3: Involvement in Planning and Decision-Making, employees were asked to rate on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 (1 = not enough involvement and 5 = too much involvement) how involved they felt each of the eight campus constituents were in planning and decision-making at Gallaudet University. The table below lists items in order of involvement in planning and decision making from the most involved to the least involved⁵.

Employees found senior administrators at the vice president and provost level or above to be the most involved in planning and decision-making followed by the deans or directors of administrative units, deans or chairs of academic units, and trustees. Employees also found staff to be the least involved.

Table 6. Involvement in Planning and Decision-Making: Mean Scores

RATE: INVOLVEMENT (1 = "Not enough involvement" / 3 = "Just the right involvement" / 5 = "Too much involvement")	Mean
How involved are: Senior administrators (VP, Provost level or above)	 4.11
How involved are: Deans or directors of administrative units	3.55
How involved are: Deans or chairs of academic units	3.34
How involved are: Trustees	3.01
How involved are: Faculty	2.74

⁵ For complete analysis by items see the Ruffalo Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Report data posted online at [ESS Data Regular GU Employees Only](#).

RATE: INVOLVEMENT (1 = "Not enough involvement" / 3 = "Just the right involvement" / 5 = "Too much involvement")	Mean
How involved are: Students	2.49
How involved are: Alumni	2.40
How involved are: Staff	2.02

↑ Indicates an increase from 2017

III. Comparing Gallaudet’s ESS Results Across Years

Gallaudet has administered the Employee Satisfaction Survey for four years in 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2019. The following sections provide longitudinal comparisons for all areas of campus climate addressed in the ESS.

A. Campus Culture and Policies: Longitudinal Comparison – 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019

Three areas of strength for Campus Cultures and Policies were identified for Gallaudet in all four years. The four areas were: 1) employee-student relationship, 2) staff pride, and 3) faculty pride. One areas of strength was identified in all four years, except 2015 and this area was Gallaudet’s treatment of students as its top priority. Compared to 2017, all areas of strengths were re-identified except for Gallaudet being well-respected in the community. There were also no new strengths identified in 2019.

One areas of challenge for Campus Culture and Policies was identified in all four years. This area was budgetary resources. Two areas of challenges were identified in all years except for one year. Effective lines of communication between departments was identified as a challenge in all years except 2015. Institutional planning was identified as a challenge in all years except 2016. Leadership’s clear sense of purpose was identified as a challenge in 2019, as it had been in 2015, but not in 2016 or 2017. Administrators sharing information regularly with faculty and staff, communication between administrators and faculty or staff, and staff resources were identified as areas of Challenge for the first time this year.

Table 7. Campus Culture and Policies: Strengths and Challenges – 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019

Item	2015	2016	2017	2019
This institution treats students as its top priority.		Strength	Strength	Strength
This institution promotes excellent employee-student relationships.	Strength	Strength	Strength	Strength
Staff take pride in their work.	Strength	Strength	Strength	Strength
Faculty take pride in their work.	Strength	Strength	Strength	Strength

Item	2015	2016	2017	2019
Administrators take pride in their work.	Strength			
This institution is well-respected in the community.			Strength	
The goals and objectives of this institution are consistent with its mission and values.	Strength	Strength		
There is a spirit of teamwork and cooperation at this institution.	Challenge	Challenge		
This institution makes sufficient budgetary resources available to achieve important objectives.	Challenge	Challenge	Challenge	Challenge
There are effective lines of communication between departments.		Challenge	Challenge	Challenge
This institution plans carefully.	Challenge		Challenge	Challenge
This institution does a good job of meeting the needs of staff.			Challenge	
The leadership of this institution has a clear sense of purpose.	Challenge			Challenge
The reputation of this institution continues to improve.	Challenge			
Administrators share information regularly with faculty and staff				Challenge
This institution makes sufficient staff resources available to achieve important objectives.				Challenge
There is good communication between the faculty and the administration at this institution.				Challenge
There is good communication between staff and the administration at this institution.				Challenge

B. Work Environment: Longitudinal Comparison – 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019

Five areas of strength for Work Environment were identified for Gallaudet in all four years. The five areas were: 1) employees’ pride to work at Gallaudet, 2) the attention that their supervisor provides, 3) employees’ perception that their work is valuable, 4) employees’ perception that their work is rewarding, and 5) the employees benefits made available. One area of strength was identified in all four years except 2015, and this area was employees’ perception that their work is appreciated by their supervisors. The item regarding clear communication of job responsibilities was also identified as a strength in 2019 as it was in 2016. There were also no new strengths identified in 2019.

Three areas of challenge for Work Environment were identified for Gallaudet in all four years. The three areas were: availability of resources (staff and budget) to do the job well and being paid fairly for the work done. One area of challenge was identified in all four years except 2017, and this area was transparent and informed communication. Information flows upward and is recognized at higher levels of administration was also identified as a challenge in 2019 as it had been in 2015. A new area of challenge in 2019 was “university administrators are accessible and receptive to input” because the level of Satisfaction decreased this year.

Table 8. Work Environment: Strengths and Challenges – 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019

Item	2015	2016	2017	2019
I am proud to work at this institution.	Strength	Strength	Strength	Strength
My supervisor pays attention to what I have to say.	Strength	Strength	Strength	Strength
The work I do is valuable to the institution.	Strength	Strength	Strength	Strength
The type of work I do on most days is personally rewarding.	Strength	Strength	Strength	Strength
The employee benefits available to me are valuable.	Strength	Strength	Strength	Strength
The work I do is appreciated by my supervisor.		Strength	Strength	Strength
My job responsibilities are communicated clearly to me.		Strength		Strength
I am treated with respect for cultural/personal differences in my unit/department at Gallaudet University.	Strength			
I am paid fairly for the work I do.	Challenge	Challenge	Challenge	Challenge
My department has the staff needed to do its job well.	Challenge	Challenge	Challenge	Challenge
My department has the budget needed to do its job well.	Challenge	Challenge	Challenge	Challenge
Transparent and informed communication is practiced consistently throughout the university community.	Challenge	Challenge		Challenge
I have adequate opportunities for advancement.			Challenge	
There are regular demonstrations of expected ethical behavior and attitudes by influential University leaders.	Challenge			
Information flows upward and is recognized at higher levels of the administration.	Challenge			Challenge
University administrators are accessible and receptive to input.				Challenge

C. Institutional Goals: Longitudinal Comparison – 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019

Employees who responded to the 2019 ESS identified the same top five institutional goals that were identified by employees who responded to the 2015 and 2016 ESS: (1) improve employee morale; (2) retain more current students to graduation; (3) improve the academic ability of entering student classes; (4) improve the quality of existing academic programs; and (5) increase the enrollment of new students. Employees who responded to the 2017 ESS identified four of these five institutional goals. Instead of identifying (4) improve the quality of existing academic

programs as one of the top five institutional goals, they identified increasing the diversity of racial and ethnic groups represented among the student body.

Table 9. Institutional Goals Means – Longitudinal Comparison – 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019

Institutional Goal	2015 Importance Mean Score	2016 Importance Mean Score	2017 Importance Mean Score	2019 Importance Mean Score
Improve employee morale	4.71	4.72	4.71	4.79
Retain more of its current students to graduation	4.71	4.73	4.73	4.72
Improve the quality of existing academic programs	4.67	4.65	4.16	4.58
Improve the academic ability of entering student classes	4.58	4.59	4.63	4.52
Increase the enrollment of new students	4.60	4.58	4.57	4.40
Develop digital infrastructure to support internal operations, communications, and digital learning	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	4.37
Increase the diversity of racial and ethnic groups represented among the student body	4.27	4.38	4.40	4.35
Improve comparable standards for use of ASL and English in an academic setting	4.29	4.48	4.37	N/A*
Increase a sense of security and freedom to express diverse perspectives	4.42	4.48	4.34	N/A*
Increase research activities to establish Gallaudet as the epicenter of research, development, and outreach	4.32	4.33	4.29	N/A*
Recruit students form new geographical markets	4.08	4.18	4.17	4.01
Improve the appearance of campus buildings and grounds	3.77	4.07	4.12	4.01
Develop new academic programs	4.00	4.06	4.10	3.92
Some other goal	3.53	3.58	3.61	3.59

* Gallaudet specific items not included in the survey administration

IV. Comparing Gallaudet with the National Comparison Groups

Ruffalo Noel Levitz provides data to allow Gallaudet University (GU) to compare the responses of our employees to those at other peer institutions. For the purpose of this analysis, peers are considered national four-year private institutions whose employees completed the same survey version in the last three academic years. Comparison of Satisfaction on Campus Culture and Work Environment areas allows Gallaudet to better understand the extent to which areas of concern are unique to Gallaudet⁶.

Below is a summary of comparisons for employees at Gallaudet University and in the national comparison group for each survey section. Before reviewing the comparisons with peer institutions, it should be noted that Gallaudet employees had somewhat higher levels of experience at the institution than did peer employees (Gallaudet: 52% with 11-20 or more years of experience compared to 33% with 11-20 or more years of experience at peers⁷)⁷.

A. Campus Culture and Policies and Work Environment: GU compared to Peers

Compared to peers, Gallaudet University employees are significantly *less satisfied* on all 30 Campus Culture and Policies items. GU employees also rated 3 out of 30 Campus Culture and Policies item as significantly *more important*, and 8 items as significantly *less important* than did employees at peer institutions. The three items that GU employees felt were more important had to do with making sufficient budgetary resources available, involving its employees in planning for the future, and consistently following clear processes for selecting new employees⁹.

Regarding Work Environment, Gallaudet employees were *less satisfied* than employees at peer institutions on 20 of 21 Work Environment items. They were *equally satisfied* on one work environment item, “the employee benefits available to me are valuable.” Four out of 20 Work Environment items were rated as significantly *more important* for Gallaudet employees than for employees at peer institutions. These four items that GU felt were more important had to do with their department having the budget need to do its job well, adequate opportunities for professional development or advancement, and their department having written, up-to-date objectives.

B. Institutional Goals: GU compared to Peers

Employees at peer institutions rated the same institutional goals as the top institutional priorities as did Gallaudet employees:

-
- Improve employee morale
 - Retain more of its current students to graduation
 - Improve the quality of existing academic programs
-

⁶ For a complete list of peer institutions used by Ruffalo Noel-Levitz for the national comparison group go to the GU ESS tables posted online at [ESS Peer Institutions](#).

⁷ For a detailed list of item comparisons between Gallaudet University and other institutions see the ESS data posted online at [ESS Peer Comparison Report](#).

⁸ “Significantly” means the difference was statistically significant.

⁹ For complete analysis by items see the Ruffalo Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Report data posted online at [ESS Peer Comparisons Report](#).

- Improve the academic ability of entering student classes
- Increase the enrollment of new students

C. Involvement in Planning and Decision-Making: GU compared to Peers

RATE: INVOLVEMENT (1 = "Not enough involvement" / 3 = "Just the right involvement" / 5 = "Too much involvement")	Gallaudet University Mean	Comparison group Mean
How involved are: Senior administrators (VP, Provost level or above)	4.11	3.67
How involved are: Deans or directors of administrative units	3.55	3.28
How involved are: Deans or chairs of academic units	3.34	3.24
How involved are: Trustees	3.01	3.45
How involved are: Faculty	2.74	2.77
How involved are: Students	2.49	2.48
How involved are: Alumni	2.40	2.63
How involved are: Staff	2.02	2.33

The means for level of involvement of key stakeholders at Gallaudet were significantly different than those at other institutions for all stakeholders except Faculty and Students. For Trustees, Alumni, and Staff, Gallaudet’s mean level of involvement was significantly lower than peers’. For all others, the mean level of involvement was higher at Gallaudet. However, when the means were ranked from highest level of involvement to lowest, rankings were virtually identical with the exception of three stakeholders: Trustees, Students, and Alumni. For peer institutions, Trustees were ranked as 2nd highest level of involvement, while at Gallaudet, Trustees were ranked as the 5th in level of involvement. At Gallaudet, Student’s level of involvement was ranked higher than Alumni’s level of involvement, while at peer institutions this ranking was reversed. At both Gallaudet and peer institutions, Staff level of involvement was ranked lowest.

D. Overall Satisfaction: GU Compared to Peers

Employees’ rating of overall satisfaction with their institution was statistically significantly higher at peer institutions than at Gallaudet. For 2019, the GU rating of overall satisfaction was 3.27 as compared with overall Satisfaction of 3.85 at peer institutions. Compared to 2017, GU’s rating of overall Satisfaction decreased from 3.60 whereas the overall Satisfaction rating at peer institutions has remained the same at 3.85.

V. Key Takeaways

Gallaudet Priority Targets

In 2016, Gallaudet established campus priorities that include a focus on campus climate.¹⁰ In 2016, when this priority was first established, the metrics for the priority included mean

¹⁰ Priority 2: “Create a campus climate where all members feel welcomed, supported, included, and valued for their unique qualities and individual contributions.

satisfaction scores on two items from the ESS: 1) Teamwork and Cooperation; and 2) Transparent and Informed Communication. These items were identified as key performance indicators or targets because both had been concerns in previous GU Campus Climate Survey. Both items had also been identified as Challenges on the ESS in 2015 and 2016.

In 2017, the target mean satisfaction scores for both of these indicators were exceeded, and neither were identified as Challenges for Gallaudet. However, in 2019, the target mean scores for both of these indicators were not exceeded and Transparent and Informed Communication was identified as a Challenge for Gallaudet. The Satisfaction mean score for the first item, “a spirit of teamwork and cooperation,” for 2019 was the second lowest mean score since 2015 while the Satisfaction mean score for the second item, “transparent and informed communication is practiced consistently throughout the university community,” was the lowest since 2015. This suggests that if these ESS mean scores are kept as metrics, the targets should remain the same.

“There is a spirit of teamwork and cooperation at the institution.”

Mean Scores

2015	2016	2017 TARGET	2017 Actual	2019 TARGET	2019 Actual
2.37	2.57	2.63	2.84	2.95	2.46

“Transparent and Informed communication is practiced consistently throughout the university community.”

Mean Scores

2015	2016	2017 TARGET	2017 Actual	2019 TARGET	2019 Actual
2.46	2.65	2.70	2.79	2.90	2.26

Consistency and Credibility

Gallaudet has administered the Employee Satisfaction Survey for four years: 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2019. In 2017, one key takeaway was the consistency of results across all three years. This remains true in 2019. This consistency lends strong credibility to the results and encourages Gallaudet to carefully consider what can be done to respond to the results.

The Employee Satisfaction Survey provides a variety of information about employee perspectives on issues that impact the climate at Gallaudet. Among all this information, Ruffalo Noel Levitz focuses our attention on Strengths and Challenges as we consider how to strengthen Gallaudet’s climate.

Gallaudet’s Challenges:

Four Challenges, all related to resources, have consistently been reported from 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2019:

- This institution makes sufficient budgetary resources available to achieve important objectives.
- My department has the staff needed to do its job well.
- My department has the budget needed to do its job well.

- I am paid fairly for the work I do.

The results of the ESS for four years have also shown us that employee morale continues to be a top priority for the majority of employees. At Gallaudet, as elsewhere, employees are being asked to work harder and smarter as they strengthen approaches to student success and new generation of students.

Gallaudet Strengths:

Employees' perspectives on Gallaudet's strengths are important to consider as the institution plans to address Challenges. Eight strengths have been repeatedly identified for four years. Gallaudet employees take pride in working at Gallaudet, and in the work they do. They also feel valued and attended to. It would appear that employees are eager to have Gallaudet identify ways in which they can continue to do this work that is so valuable in spite of the continued fiscal crisis.

- This institution promotes excellent employee-student relationships.
- Staff take pride in their work.
- Faculty take pride in their work.
- I am proud to work at this institution.
- The work I do is valuable to the institution.
- My supervisor pays attention to what I have to say.
- The type of work I do on most days is personally rewarding.
- The employee benefits available to me are valuable.

Gallaudet University employee concerns with budget cuts and employee morale, particularly in times with increased expectations for enrolling, retaining, and responding to students, are not unique. A [2014 report by American Association of University Professors](#) of an employee survey at a state university noted with surprise that “budget cuts were seen as the primary explanation for negative climates.” The report goes on to say that “faculty members¹¹ felt that the greatest negative impact on their day-today [sic] experiences resulted from things entirely beyond their department's control.”

What can be done? The AAUP report recommends moving beyond short-term approaches to more strategic, long-term efforts. This recommendation is reinforced in GU Challenges identified for 2015, 2017, and 2019: “This institution plans carefully.” A perception that not all employees are involved in the planning and decision-making also came through in the open-ended feedback. Future planning and decision-making efforts will need to consider how to meaningfully involve all campus stakeholders. Currently, staff, in particular, believe they are the last and the least involved in planning. When institutional decisions are made, especially those that are counter to the input received from employees, it will be important to articulate and communicate the rationale behind those decisions.

Careful planning is unlikely to be enough. In a 2009 *Inside Higher Education* article on [“Cuts and Morale”](#) a community college dean reflects on why morale on his campus has held together.

¹¹ Although “faculty members” is the term used in this report the survey reported was of staff members as well as faculty.

One action he points to is “unprecedented openness with faculty and staff about priorities, processes, and the vagaries of the...budget.” Open and transparent communication is likely to be particularly significant at Gallaudet University where communication, teamwork, and transparency have long been concerns that have risen to the top in climate surveys.

Communication can also support faculty morale by communicating what is already being done in terms of strategic planning on campus, including rationales behind decisions that are made for the university as described earlier. Identifying ways in which employees at other universities are dealing with the higher education fiscal crises can also be helpful. In addition, recognition will be important at many levels: recognition of what Gallaudet has accomplished, and what employees in all roles achieve every day. Employees, like students, ask that the institution find ways to support Gallaudet as a community by finding ways to unify and celebrate the many positive attributes of Gallaudet University.

Peer Comparisons

Comparisons to peer institutions also help to increase our understanding of Gallaudet climate. Although Gallaudet’s employees’ overall satisfaction steadily improved from 2015 to 2017, their overall satisfaction declined in 2019 and they indicate that they continue to be significantly more dissatisfied with all except one Campus Culture and Priorities and Work Environment item on the climate survey compared to peer institutions. Gallaudet’s employees’ overall satisfaction for the one item, “the employee benefits available to me are valuable,” was higher compared to peer institutions. However, the difference was not statistically significant. It will be important to strategically consider what Gallaudet does well, and what can bring the greatest improvement in quality for students, as well as employee morale.

On the other hand, when asked what institutional goals should be prioritized for the institution, Gallaudet employees are not so different than those at peer institutions in listing the top three institutional goals. In addition, employees at both GU and peer institutions are similar in their perception of the level of involvement of the stakeholders in their roles: staff, administrators, and faculty.

Next Steps for Surveying Employee Climate

Since results from the ESS have been consistent for four years, Gallaudet may want to consider suspending administration of an employee climate survey for one to two years. This would enable the institution to take actions needed to address the Challenges identified in the ESS and conserve considerable resources used to administer and respond to the ESS for those years. At the end of that period of time and after investment in addressing the Challenges, Gallaudet should be able to see progress in campus climate when the ESS is again administered.

VI. Limitations

This report provides an analysis of the responses of all Gallaudet regular status, full-time employees. Within that analysis of all employees, the responses may confound the results of each work role. A supplementary report which analyzes this data by work role provides a more detailed analysis. This supplementary report provides a better picture of the perspectives of respondents in each role.

One limitation when making comparisons from Gallaudet's survey of employees is that Gallaudet defines the employee group surveyed as regular status, full-time employees. While we assume that peer institutions are also surveying full-time employees, we cannot, with certainty, know how they define the employees they survey.

For detailed information on the survey data, please contact Lindsay Buchko, Director of Institutional Research at lindsay.buchko@gallaudet.edu.

Q2

very important	important	somewhat important	not very important	not important at all	
					SECTION 2: Institutional goals
					How important is it to you that this institution pursue the following goals?
					[A] Increase the enrollment of new students
					[B] Retain more of its current students to graduation
					[C] Improve the academic ability of entering student classes
					[D] Recruit students from new geographic markets
					[E] Increase the diversity of racial and ethnic groups represented among the student body
					[F] Develop new academic programs
					[G] Improve the quality of existing academic programs
					[H] Improve the appearance of campus buildings and grounds
					[I] Improve employee morale
					[J] Some other goal

NOTE: WE CAN ACCOMMODATE UP TO 3 ADDITIONAL CAMPUS-SPECIFIC INSTITUTIONAL GOALS IN SECTION 2.

From the list above (in Section 2), choose three goals that you believe should be this institution's top priorities, and enter the letter for that goal below, in order of importance:

First priority goal:

Second priority goal:

Third priority goal:

What other institutional goals do you think are important? Please describe them in the space below:

Q3

	too much involvement	more than enough involvement	just the right involvement	not quite enough involvement	not enough involvement
SECTION 3: Involvement in planning and decision-making					
In your opinion, how much involvement do each of the following have in planning and decision-making at your institution					
Faculty					
Staff					
Deans or directors of administrative units					
Deans or chairs of academic units					
Senior administrators (VP, Provost level or above)					
Students					
Trustees					
Alumni					

NOTE: WE CAN ACCOMMODATE UP TO 3 ADDITIONAL CAMPUS-SPECIFIC POPULATIONS IN SECTION 3.

Q9 SECTION 5: Demographics

How long have you worked at this institution?

- Less than 1 year
- 1 to 5 years
- 6 to 10 years
- 11 to 20 years
- More than 20 years

Q10 Is your Position:

- Full-time
- Part-time

Q11 Is your position:

- Faculty
- Staff
- Administrator

NOTE: WE CAN ACCOMMODATE UP TO 2 ADDITIONAL CAMPUS-SPECIFIC DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS.

Appendix B: Gallaudet-Specific Questions for the Employee Satisfaction Survey

Section 1: Campus Culture and Policies

1. This institution has comparable standards for use of ASL in an academic setting.
2. This institution has comparable standards for use of English in an academic setting.
3. This institution has a sense of inclusion that provides opportunities to express diverse perspectives.
4. This institution has research activities to establish Gallaudet as the epicenter of research, development, and outreach.

Section 2: Institutional Goals

1. Develop digital infrastructure to support internal operations, communications, and digital learning.

Section 4: Work Environment

1. There are adequate programs or resources in place to strengthen my use of ASL.
2. There are adequate programs or resources in place to strengthen my use of English.
3. There are clear and available statements and policies defining ethical behavior for all members of the campus community.
4. There is regular demonstration of expected ethical behavior and attitudes by influential University leaders.
5. There are regular programs to inform and support ethical behaviors at all levels of the university.
6. Information flows upward and is recognized at higher levels of the administration.
7. University administrators are accessible and receptive to input.
8. Transparent and informed communication is practiced consistently throughout the university community.
9. I am treated with respect for cultural/personal differences in my unit/department at Gallaudet University.
10. There is visible leadership to foster diversity/inclusion on campus.

Demographics Section

1. Is your position:
 - a. Gallaudet administrator (director or above, i.e. directors, deans, associate/assistant deans, vice president, associate provost, chief of staff, provost, or president)
 - b. Gallaudet regular status faculty (i.e. professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, or lecturer)
 - c. Gallaudet regular exempt staff (paid salary)
 - d. Gallaudet regular non-exempt staff (paid hourly)
 - e. Gallaudet temporary faculty or staff (i.e. adjuncts, 30-days temporary contract, 90-days temporary contract)
 - f. Clerc Center administrator (director or above, i.e. directors, principals, assistant principals, deans, or vice president)
 - g. Clerc Center regular status teachers
 - h. Clerc Center regular exempt staff (paid salary)
 - i. Clerc Center regular non-exempt staff (paid hourly)

- j. Clerc Center temporary teacher or staff (i.e. substitutes, 30-days temporary contract, 90-days temporary contract)
 - k. Other
2. Hearing/deaf status and disabilities:
- a. Deaf with no disability
 - b. Hard of hearing with no disability
 - c. Hearing with no disability
 - d. Deaf with one or more disabilities
 - e. Hard of hearing with one or more disabilities
 - f. Hearing with one or more disabilities
3. Is your ethnicity:
- a. International/Non-resident Alien
 - b. American Indian/Alaska Native
 - c. Asian
 - d. Black/African American
 - e. Hispanic of any race
 - f. Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
 - g. Two or more
 - h. White