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The University of New Hampshire Sustainability Knowledge and Perspectives Survey Summary Findings - 2017

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The Survey Center
University of New Hampshire
August, 2017

Background

As a land- sea- and space-grant university, sustainability is rooted in the University of New Hampshire's 150-year history. Sustainability is a core value of UNH and is based upon a holistic framework that integrates the principles of environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and economic vitality to meet our present needs while ensuring the ability of future generations to meet their needs. At its core, sustainability is a collective commitment to human dignity for all people and ecological integrity in all places.

The University of New Hampshire Sustainability Institute, Human Resources, and Community, Equity, and Diversity worked together with the UNH Survey Center to conduct an integrated survey of UNH faculty and staff members to better understand their knowledge and perspectives on a broad set of questions related to sustainability. The survey was conducted to help guide the University's sustainability efforts moving forward.

Methodology

Response Rate

President Huddleston sent out an email invitation to complete the online survey to 3,186 UNH faculty and staff members in April 2017. Overall, 1,263 UNH faculty and staff members responded to the survey, yielding a **response rate of 40%**. This is considered a high response rate for a survey of this type.

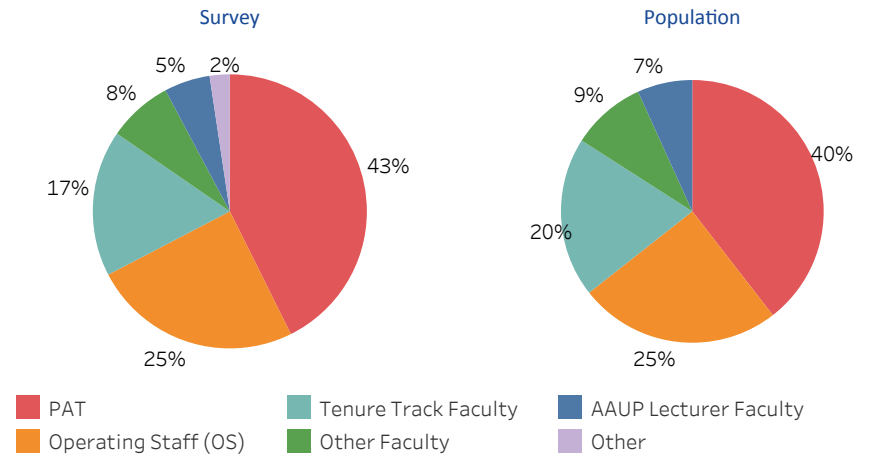
Survey Sections

Included in the survey were questions related to awareness of sustainability on campus, sustainability culture and behaviors, employee satisfaction, and campus climate. By campus climate we mean the current attitudes, behaviors, and standards of employees and students concerning the access for, inclusion of, and level of respect for individual and group needs, abilities, and potential.

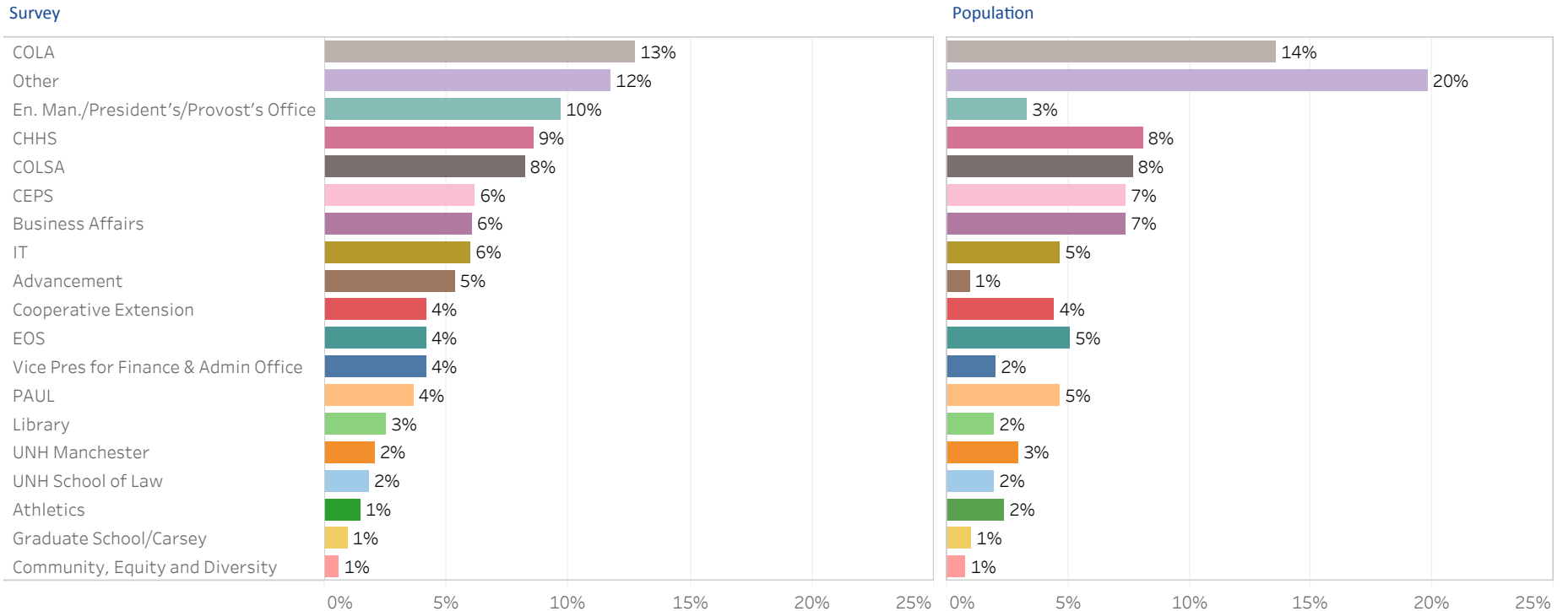
Demographic Profile of Respondents

There are no significant demographic differences between the survey population and the UNH population as a whole. Population demographic data is current as of April 25, 2017.

Primary Position at UNH

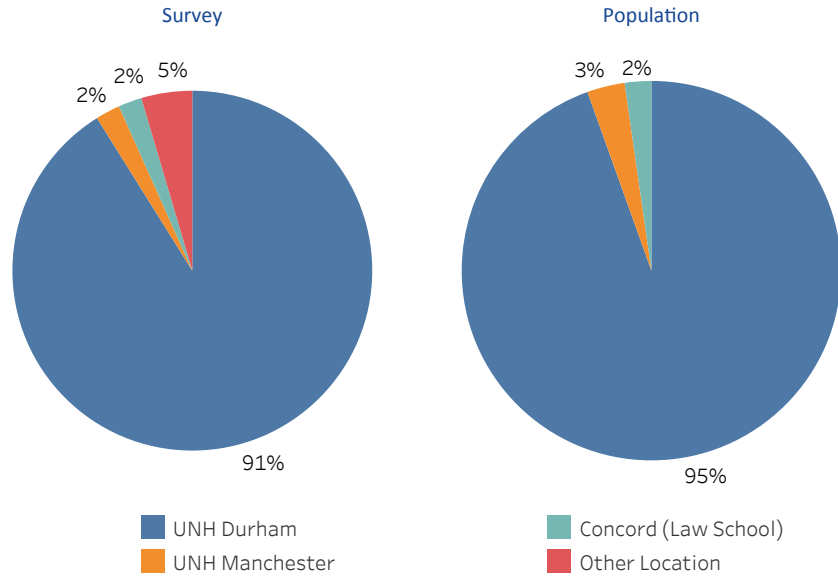


College, school or department work or teach in

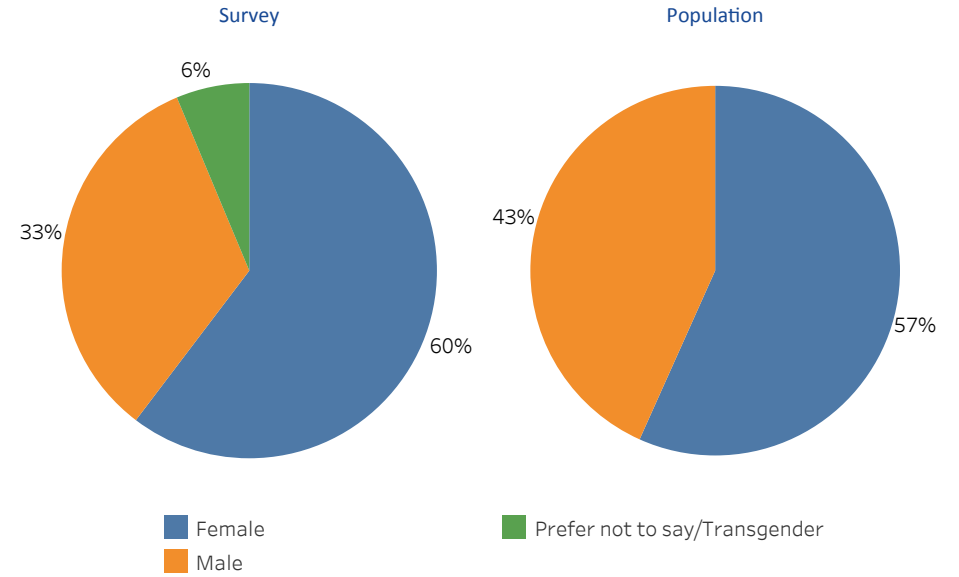


Demographic Profile Continued

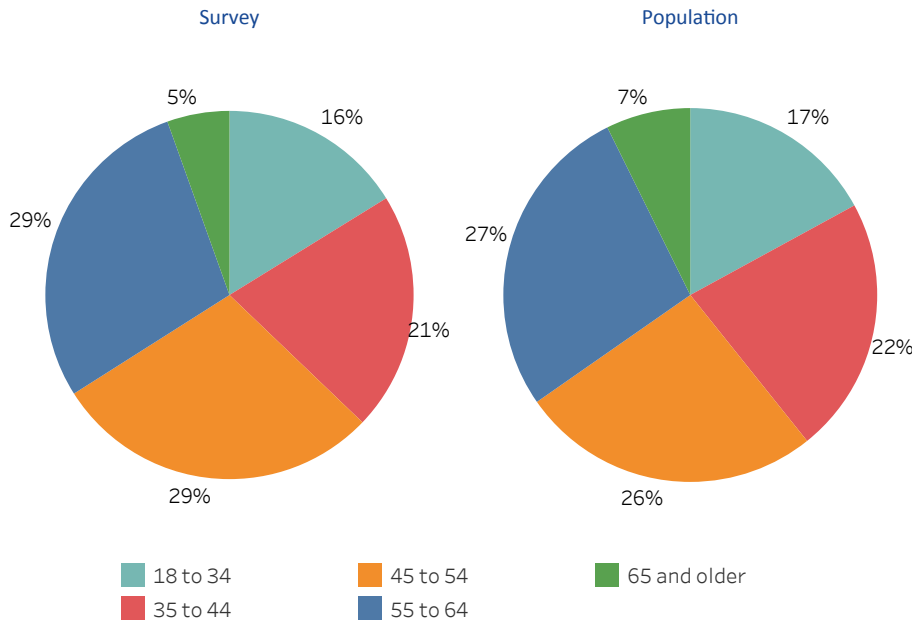
Primary Campus



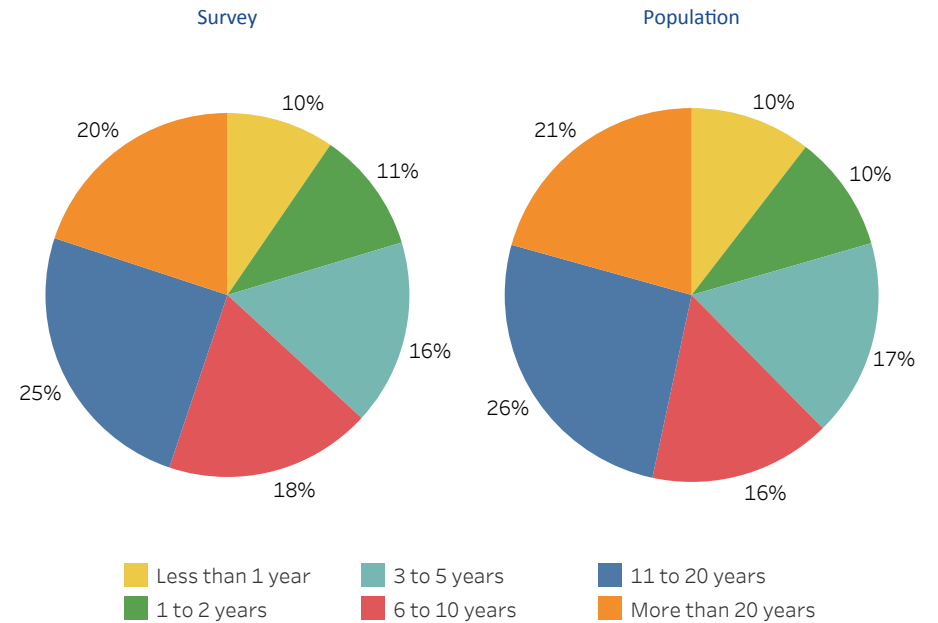
Gender



Age



Years Employed at UNH

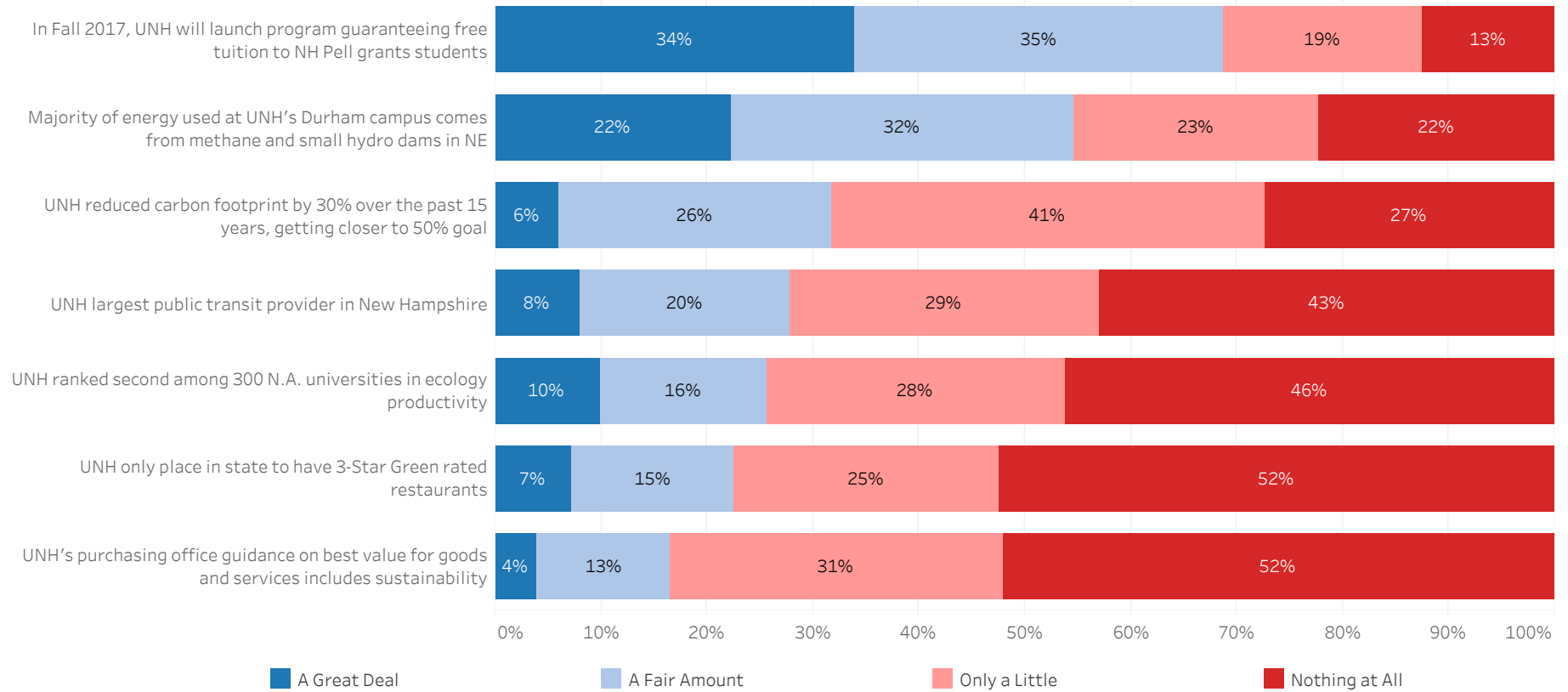


Highlights of Key Findings

- A large majority of UNH faculty and staff agree that sustainability includes cultural, social, environmental, and economic factors. Those who do not agree clearly stated their opposition in their open-ended responses.
- Nearly all UNH faculty and staff members say sustainability is important to them personally and professionally, but less than half say their lifestyle has become more sustainable since working at UNH and only one in eight say they considered sustainability when they chose to work at UNH.
- UNH faculty and staff members express very high interest in individual sustainability issues. They express the greatest interest in access to healthcare, renewable energy, and human rights.
- Majorities of UNH faculty and staff members always or most of the time practice personal sustainability habits such as recycling, turning off lights, and using a reuseable liquid container. Few engage in more interpersonal activities such as contacting their representatives about issues they feel strongly about, university-wide gatherings to facilitate positive change, or events on sustainability issues.
- Most UNH faculty and staff members say they are proud to work at UNH (86%), that UNH encourages sustainability (86%), and that they would recommend working at UNH to their friends (82%).
- More than two-thirds of UNH faculty and staff members say they are comfortable or very comfortable with the climate in their department/work unit (71%) and with the campus climate at UNH (68%). Fifteen percent are uncomfortable or very uncomfortable with the campus climate in their department/work unit while 10% feel the same about UNH as a whole.
- Eighty-one percent of UNH faculty and staff are satisfied or very satisfied with their job at UNH and only 7% say they dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Sixty percent are satisfied or very satisfied with their ability to express concerns about important topics or bring their ideas to their work place at UNH while only 18% are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

Knowledge of Sustainability at UNH

Figure 1: How much have you heard about each of the following UNH sustainability initiatives?

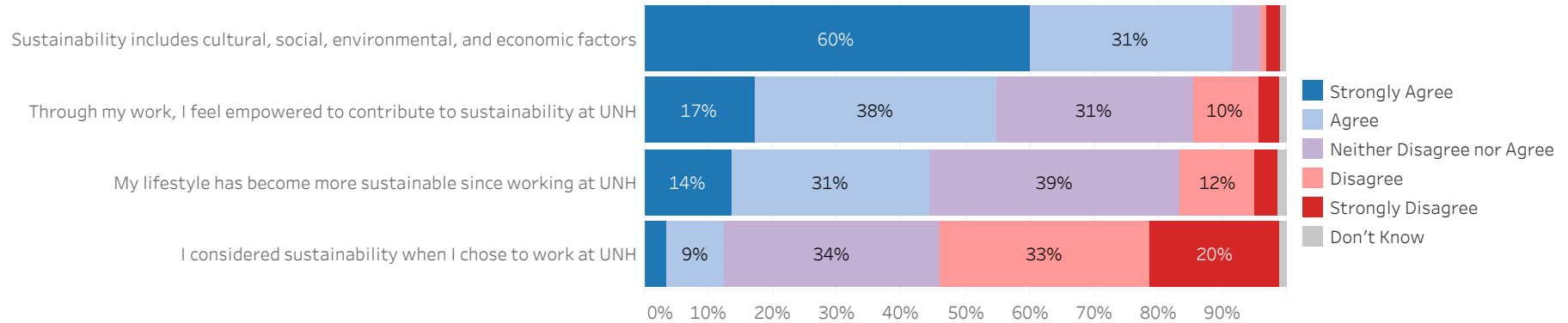


Key Takeaways

Knowledge of UNH Sustainability efforts is mixed. The Granite Guarantee and UNH's renewable energy work are best known whereas our sustainable dining commitments and procurement support are less well known.

Habits and Perspectives Regarding Sustainability

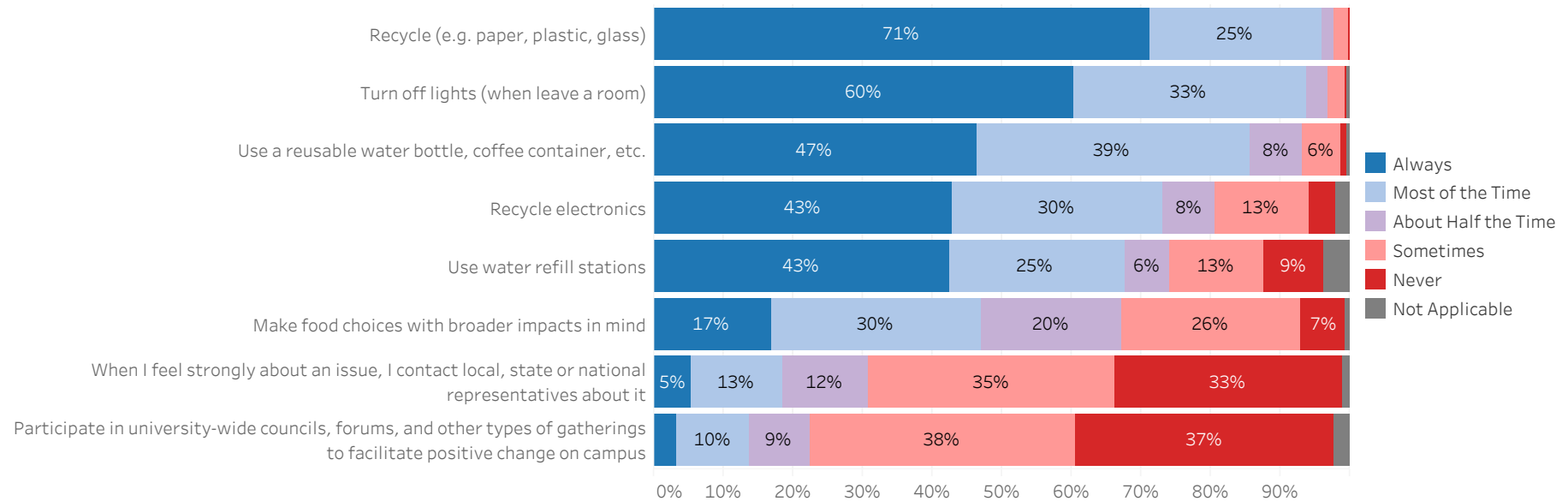
Figure 2: Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements...



Key Takeaways

The majority (91%) of UNH faculty and staff agree that sustainability includes cultural, social, environmental, and economic factors and about half of UNH faculty and staff members agree that they feel empowered to contribute to sustainability at UNH and that their lifestyle has become more sustainable since working at UNH.

Figure 3: How often do you engage in the following activities?



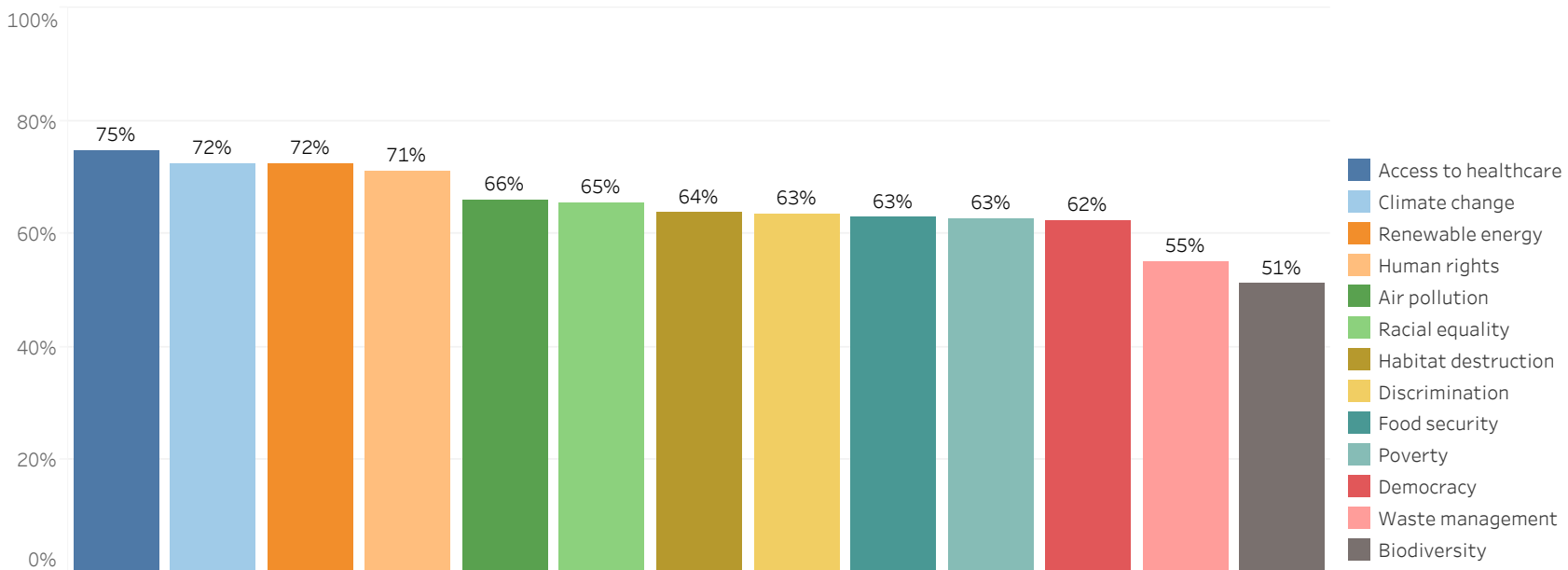
Key Takeaways

Nearly all UNH faculty and staff practice recycling, turn off lights when they leave a room, and use a reusable water bottle. Fewer faculty and staff members contact local, state, or national representatives when they feel strongly about an issue or participate in gatherings to facilitate positive change on campus.

Interest in Sustainability Issues

Figure 4: Rate your level of interest in the following sustainability issues...

Responded "Very Interested"



Key Takeaways

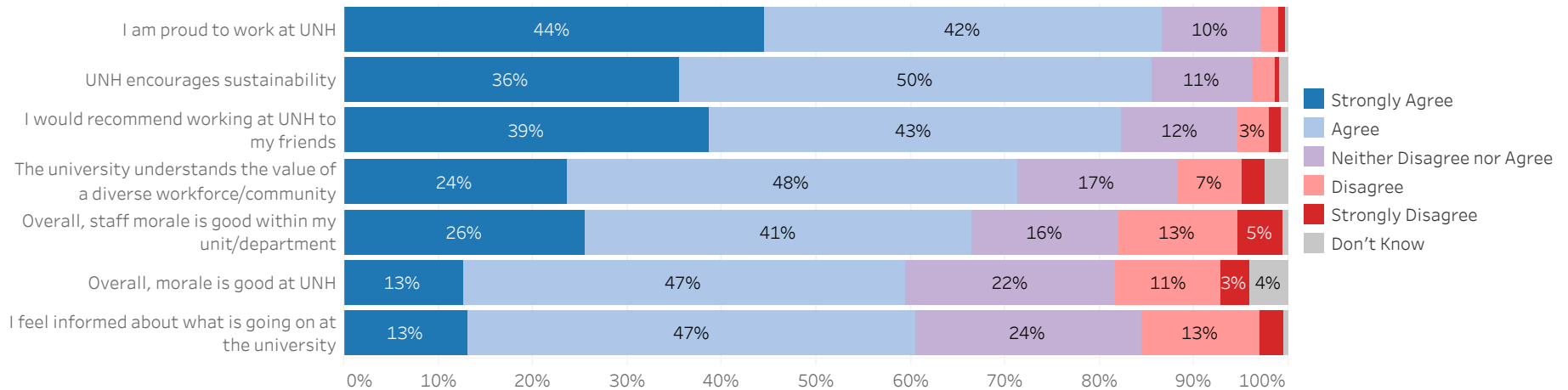
UNH faculty and staff members express very high interest in a wide range of sustainability issues, especially access to healthcare, climate change, renewable energy, and human rights.

Figure 5: World Cloud - Is there another sustainability issue that is of interest to you?



Working at UNH

Figure 6: Please tell us whether you agree with the following statements about the work climate at UNH



Key Takeaways

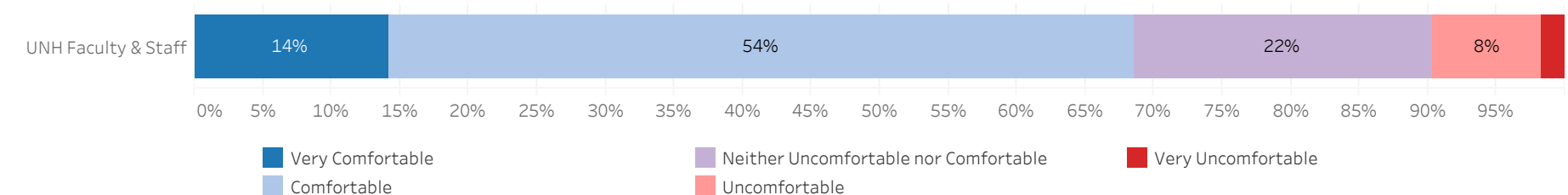
Most UNH faculty and staff members agree that they are proud to work at UNH, that UNH encourages sustainability, and that they would recommend working at UNH to their friends.

Faculty and staff are slightly less likely to agree that the university understands the value of a diverse workforce/community, that overall staff morale is good within their unit/department, that overall morale is good at UNH, or that they feel informed about what is going on at the university.

Figure 7: Overall, how comfortable are you with the climate in your department/work unit?



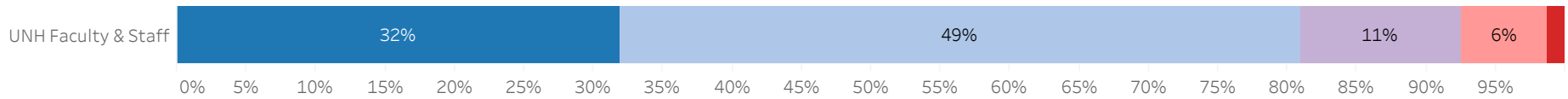
Figure 8: Overall, how comfortable are you with the climate at UNH?



Key Takeaways

More than seven in ten UNH faculty and staff members say they are very comfortable or comfortable with the climate in their department/work unit and more than two in three are very comfortable or comfortable with the climate at UNH. Few say they are uncomfortable or very uncomfortable in their department/work unit or at UNH overall.

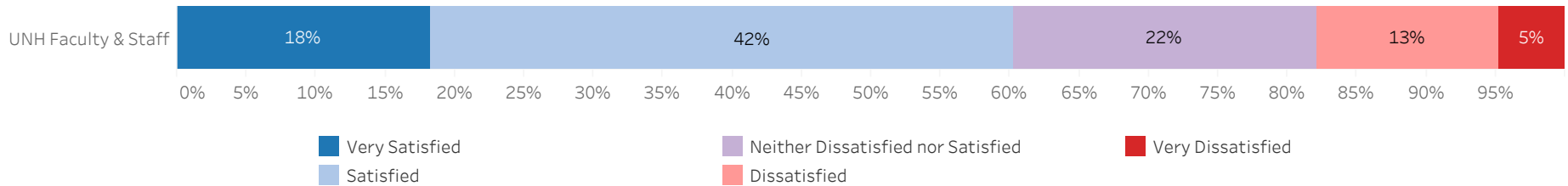
Figure 9: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you, in general, with your job at UNH?



Key Takeaways

Eighty-one percent of UNH faculty and staff members are satisfied or very satisfied in general with their job at UNH.

Figure 10: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you, in general, with the ability to express concerns about important topics or bring your ideas to your work place at UNH?

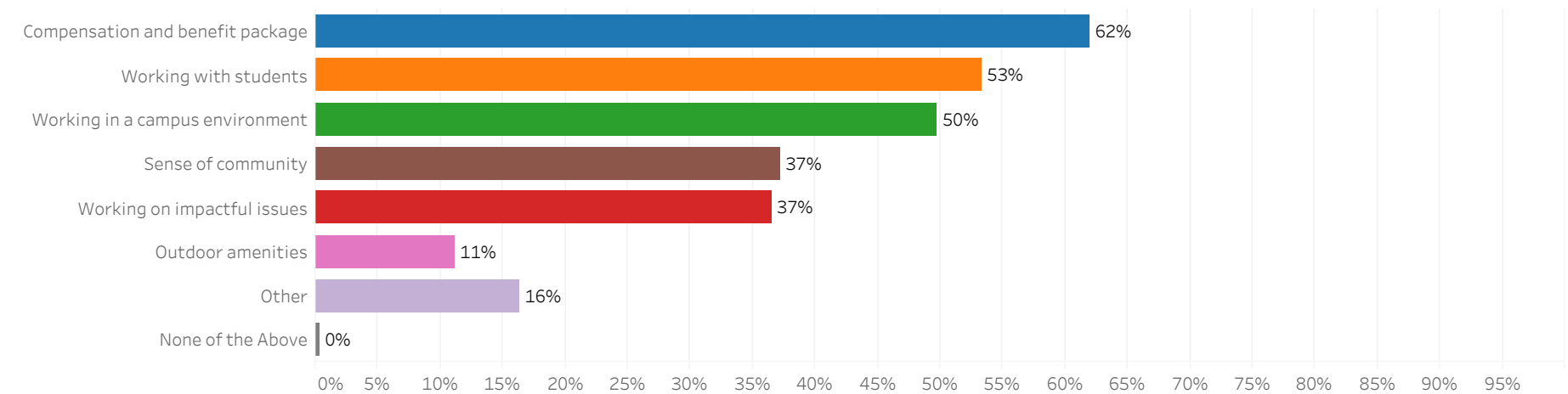


Key Takeaways

Sixty percent of UNH faculty and staff members are satisfied or very satisfied with their ability to express concerns about important topics or bring their ideas to their work place at UNH.

Figure 11: Please select up to three attributes you value from the following list

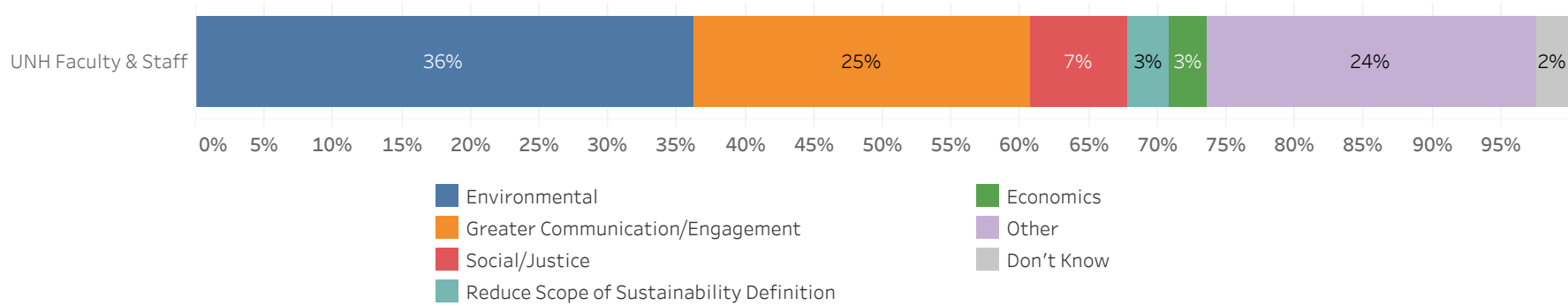
Select up to three



Key Takeaways

When asked to select up to three attributes they value working at UNH, faculty and staff selected compensation, working with students, and working in a campus environment as their top three. Smaller numbers selected a sense of community, working on impactful issues, outdoor amenities, a good work/life balance, their impact on students or their field, or their colleagues.

Figure 12: Please share your thoughts on how UNH can improve our sustainability efforts regarding education, research, and practice across our three campuses (coded)



Key Takeaways

Among those UNH faculty and staff members who shared their thoughts, the most common responses primarily mention environmental factors, greater communication or engagement from the university, social or justice factors, or economic factors.

A Few Select Quotes

Regarding Communications:

"More communications about Sustainability efforts on campus."

"The focus on sustainability or maybe the communication about it has dwindled and I think we need to see more communications..."

"We could make efforts to better the education about what sustainability really means"

"The constant PR machine churning out the 'branding' message of UNH makes the whole effort at 'sustainability' seem phony...One clear element of this is the turning of 'sustainability' into what amounts to a progressive political platform that, somehow, now includes things like 'democracy' and 'discrimination' and 'racial inequality.' Nobody is against democracy or for discrimination or racial inequality. But, the insistence that these topics are part of 'sustainability' makes the whole project politically suspect."

"I feel the broad inclusion of so much under the term 'sustainability' makes it somewhat meaningless. It's everything and that threatens to make it nothing. I believe it should be focused more on environmental issues."

Waste recycling:

"Need consistent info about recycling. The signage and bins on campus have no consistency."

"There are 'rumors' that the cleaning company (are they affiliated with UNH? I have no idea...) dump recycling and trash into the same bins...I have always wondered if that is true."

Human Resources:

"Encourage more cross-integration with campus professionals - a blending of academics with operations, for instance, as well as a general increase in opportunity for encouraging the blending of staff interactions at all levels of leadership for networking, regardless of department or job. Despite perceived differences, the things we have in common as human beings give spark to ideas for collaboration and strong foundations for ideas."

"More internal communication and expectation that supervisors will embrace and pass down to the staff for cross-campus communication."

Academics:

"Create incentives/remove barriers for working across colleges."

Next Steps

Immediate action steps in response to this survey and other engagement activities:

- New UNH Sustainability landing page has been launched (July, 2017)
(<http://www.unh.edu/main/sustainability>)
- Fall UNH Magazine will feature sustainability (8/31)
- Develop long-range communications plan to accurately and authentically tell UNH's sustainability story (November, 2017)
- New Sustainability Professional Development module is now available for staff and faculty (August, 2017)
(<https://sustainableunh.unh.edu/professional-development>)
- New Green Office program is being rolled out across UNH (Fall, 2017)
(<https://sustainableunh.unh.edu/green-office-program>)
- All three UNH campuses will be engaged in a collective sustainability visioning initiative (2017-2018)
- Significant resources are being committed to zero-waste efforts (Fall, 2017)
- Data from this survey will inform the Presidential Task Force on Climate (September, 2017)
- A task force was formed in March to develop a comprehensive climate survey (Fall, 2018)

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of the staff and faculty who participated in the survey. The collective input allows us to gain insight into important issues on campus and helps us focus energy to continue to make UNH a better university and employer.