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# Fostering Inclusive Workplace Climates

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UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE  
**ADVANCE INSTITUTE**

[\*www.udel.edu/advance\*](http://www.udel.edu/advance)

# Focus of Today

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## 1. Assessing Workplace Climate

- Definitions
- Key findings from UD data/research

## 2. Solutions

- Case studies
- Your own experiences

## 3. Implementation

- Actionable next steps
- Additional resources you may need

### In Your Folders:

- Case Studies
- UD ADVANCE resources to support your work

# What is workplace climate?

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***Climate:*** people's shared perceptions of, and meanings attached to, experiences at work.

This includes:

- policies, practices, and procedures
- behaviors they observe being rewarded, supported, and expected

(Schneider, Ehrhart, Macey 2013)

***Inclusive climate:*** individuals of all backgrounds “are fairly treated, valued for who they are, and included in core decision making.”

Benefits include:

- Reduced conflict in diverse groups
- When relationship conflicts arise, they don't damage unit morale

(Nishii 2013)



# Inclusive climate in academia

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## Fairly Treated

- Evaluation
- Work expectations; salary/funding
- Resources for development

## Included in Decision Making

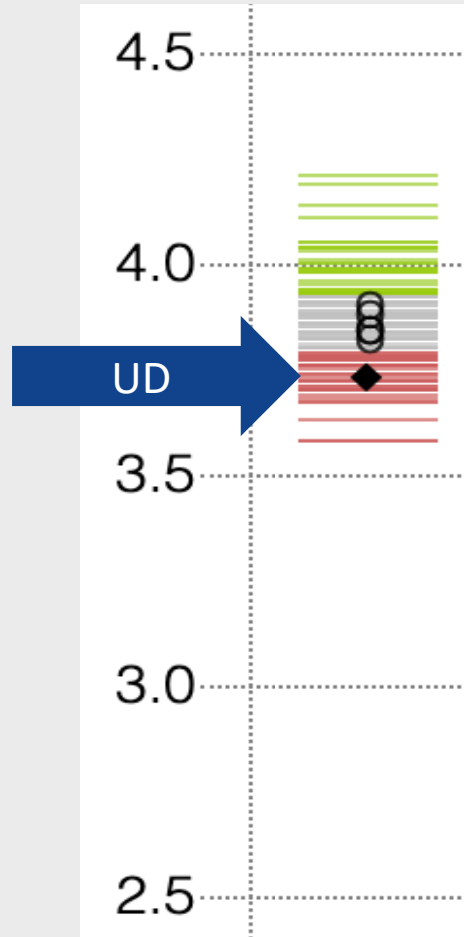
- Represented in decision-making
- Clear communication

## Valued for Who They Are

- Contributions are recognized and valued
- Sense of community and belonging
- Seeing and accepting people's differences

*What else is important for  
inclusive climate?*

# UD COACHE Survey: Department Collegiality



***What is Collegiality:*** multiple survey items measure elements of collegiality

Areas where UD lagged peers/cohort include:

- Department is collegial
- Colleagues committed to diversity/inclusion
- Colleagues pitch in when needed
- Also concerns around work-life & interaction with colleagues

Perceptions common across all faculty groups:

- Tenured & pre-tenure
- Men/women
- FOC/white faculty

COACHE survey results: <https://ire.udel.edu/ir/coache/>

# UD ADVANCE Research (Faculty)

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## Quantitative

- Analysis of faculty data from UD IRE

## Qualitative

- Interviews with current & former faculty (2015-2019 exits)
- Women of color oversampled (Black, Latina, Multi-Ethnic)
  - 20 current & 7 former T/TT WOC faculty (nearly 50% of population)

## Today's Findings Supported by Prior UD ADVANCE Research

- 2014/2016/2018 UD ADVANCE Faculty Climate Surveys
- Path analysis of pathways to career satisfaction (gender differences)

# Retention of T/TT Faculty at UD

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- Over a 7-year window (2011 to 2017) UD lost 11 Black faculty
- Average annual count of Black faculty during this time period = 39
- This amounts to a 28.2% loss of Black faculty
- For comparison, among those leaving:

28.2% of  
Black faculty

10.0% of  
Hispanic  
faculty

10.0% of  
Asian faculty

6.4% of  
White faculty

*Of the 11 Black faculty that left UD, 8 were women*

Source: Raw data, UD IRE

# Research Findings: Department Climate

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Chairs play a direct and indirect role in climate

- Consistent with prior climate surveys, interviews, and path analysis research

Women (including WOC) who exit frequently cite department climate:

*“I would have said that the climate is chilly, passive aggressively hostile, with pockets of places where people are collegial” (R48)*

WOC in *diverse departments* report relationships with chair and colleagues as key source of satisfaction:

*“The university itself never felt like an especially welcoming place, but [my department] was an oasis” (R54)*



# Research Findings: Lack of Community

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WOC report feeling isolated within their departments:

“We are so isolated and minoritized in our specific unit” (R41)

“I’ve gotten accustomed to the isolation. In the past, when there would be racial upheaval and unrest in the country, mostly people would pretend they couldn’t see me in the mailroom. But now [after George Floyd’s murder], people started emailing me [asking if I’m OK]. That’s never happened before...nobody ever cared if I was okay” (R48)

Women (including WOC) who leave UD frequently cite lack of close relationships with colleagues as part of their dissatisfaction with department climate

# Leaders of/for Change

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The chair is central to key aspects of departmental climate (for all faculty)

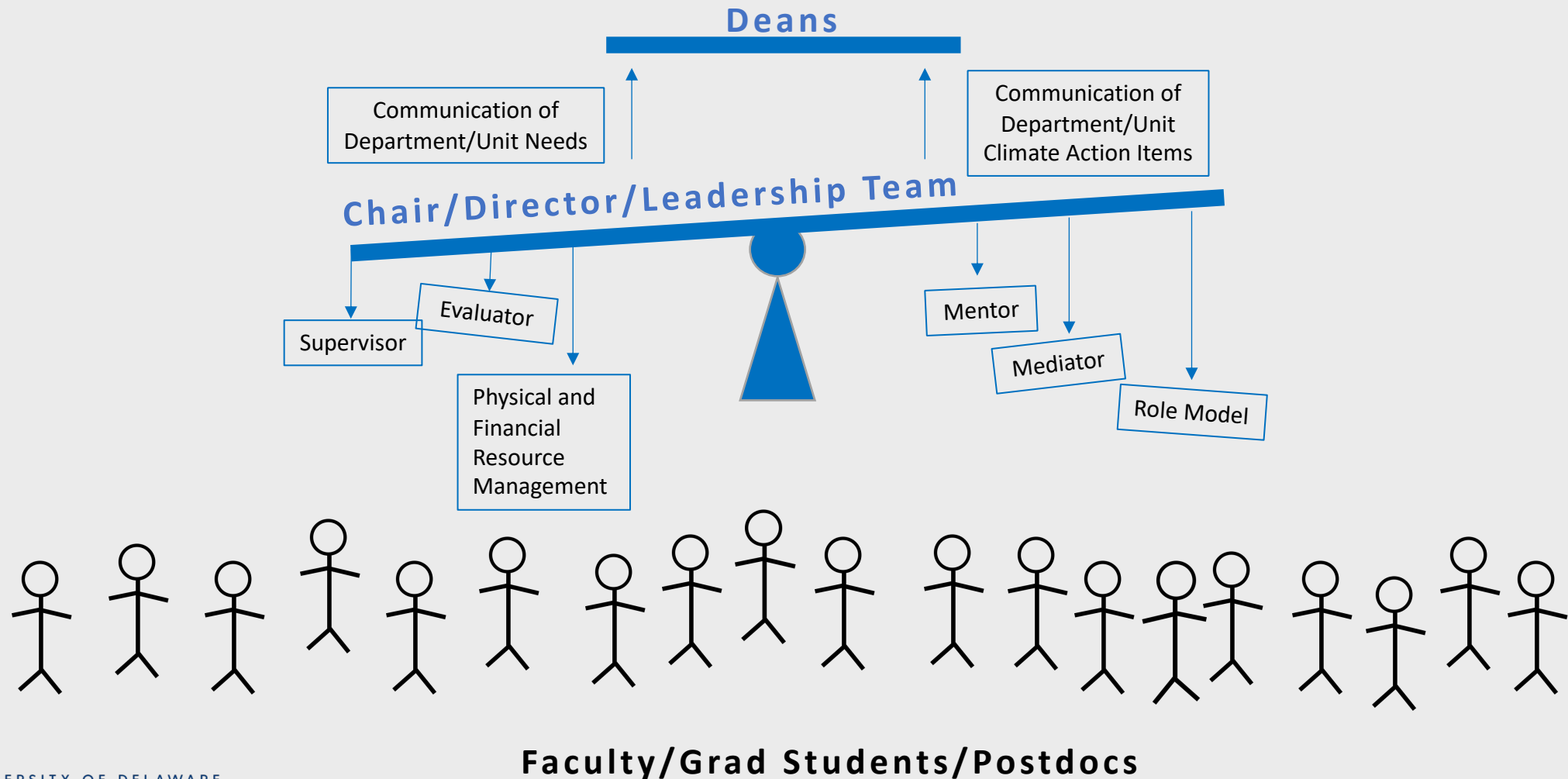
- Setting an example for collegiality
- Ensuring resources are equitably distributed
- Engaging in clear communication & transparent decision making
- Helping people become integrated into the department

Leaders impact the degree to which people feel valued (key for retention)

“The department chair is the most important person in faculty life” (R5)

“My chair had a vision of wanting to make the department a better department. He spent a lot of time caring about... the faculty” (R38)

# Leaders Have Many Roles



# Case Study 3

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1. What are some of the positives of this scenario? Negatives?
2. What could/should Jim have done differently in relation to Ling? What of Dave's input?
3. Do you know any Lings? What are some of the situations that elicit that sort of response in graduate students?
4. In such situations is there someone to whom the student can go for advice?
5. If Ling loses his financial support, is there some temporary support fund which can be used to tide him over as he finds a new advisor/project?
6. Do you know any Jims? Would you be willing to have a discussion with him/her around any of his/her approaches which might need to be re-directed?

# Case Study 4

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1. What went wrong during the meeting? Identify all the areas that need improvement.
2. Have you encountered situations like this before?
3. What might Sam have done better in this scenario?

# Group Discussion

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Now let's discuss your own experiences with workplace climate:

What are your some of the biggest challenges in your workspace, with respect to climate?

What strategy/ies have you tried for dealing with them? *Did anything work?*

What resources do you need to improve the climate in your space?

# Next Steps

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Some small steps we can take, starting tomorrow, within our workspace.

- Be intentional about setting up meetings – what do you want to accomplish?
- Open your next meeting with a clear context, setting the tone and purpose.
- Have regular informal interactions with the people in your area of operation, e.g. informal lunches, updates, etc.
- Your interactions with your graduate students impact their self-confidence and development. Make notes of how to be a positive impact when you next meet with them. Keep refreshing/updating and using the notes.
- Take time to survey the profiles of your graduate students. Are there some who may need more help finding their feet? Step in and actively provide this help.

Which strategy feels most important for your workspace?

What will you commit to doing as of now?

# Wrap Up

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## Follow Up

- **ADVANCE:** Synthesize ideas from today's discussion and workshops in other colleges. Share new resources.
- **You:** Engage others in your workspace in conversations about climate. Take some of those “small steps”.

Link to ADVANCE website: [www.udel.edu/advance](http://www.udel.edu/advance)