

Appendix III. Departmental Correspondence Regarding Climate Activities

1. Departmental Announcement About Climate Committee Formation

Dear Psychology community,

I am writing as the chair of the newly formed Departmental Climate Committee to announce our goals and efforts for this spring. The formation of this committee reflects our commitment to ensuring that our department is a safe, respectful, and productive environment for everybody. This first message contains several announcements about our plans and efforts thus far:

- 1. Our primary goal this semester is to learn about our department's climate.** We will approach this goal using both quantitative and qualitative strategies:
 - We will administer a departmental climate survey this spring.
 - We will hold open-forum "listening sessions", where anyone is welcome to attend and discuss their experiences/views on our department's climate. These sessions will be held on Tuesday, April 23 at 4:30PM and on Friday, April 26 at 3:00PM (further details to follow).
- 2. We are accepting suggestions of questions/topics to include in the climate survey.** Please follow [this link](#) if you would like to provide anonymous feedback about our climate survey plans. Feedback will be accepted until **Monday, March 25.**
- 3. In February, Seth Avakian from Harvard's Title IX office visited our department to discuss Title IX policy.** He will be returning to the department on **Friday, April 5 from 3:00-4:00PM in Room 105 WJH** to hold an open discussion/Q&A session geared toward graduate students and postdocs. Graduate students and postdocs: I will send a separate message about this meeting.

I will provide periodic reports to the departmental community about our progress. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the many individuals who have already spoken with me about our department's climate, and to our current Climate Committee for their hard work.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Best,

Leah Somerville on behalf of the Climate Committee
Joshua Cetron
Fiery Cushman
Daniel Janini
Katie McLaughlin
Matthew Nock
Franchesca Ramirez
Ashley Thomas
Shirley Wang

2. Climate Survey Invitation

Sent to all Administrative Staff, Research Staff, Faculty, Graduate Students, and Postdoctoral Fellows

Dear xxxxNAMExxxx,

I am writing to invite you to participate in the Psychology Departmental Climate Survey. This confidential survey touches on issues of climate, inclusion, resources, social dynamics, harassment and discrimination, and professional well-being.

Our hope is that all full-time members of the Psychology Department community (graduate students, full-time staff, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty) will complete the survey. Your participation is crucial to our understanding of what is working and what can be improved in our community.

Procedure:

The individualized link below will take you directly to the survey and will allow you to complete it only once. It will not ask for your name or contact information. The survey will remain open until April 30, 2019 at 5:00PM.

[LINK](#)

The survey should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. You do not need to complete this survey in one sitting. If you need to stop the survey, your responses to previous pages will be retained automatically. You may return to your saved survey by clicking on the same link above. As you advance through the survey, you will not be able to return to a page you have submitted. We recommend you use a computer or iPad to take the survey. It is not designed to be taken on a smartphone.

Confidentiality:

This survey is being administered by the Harvard College Institutional Research Office. Your individual responses will be kept in the strictest confidence and will not be shared with anybody in the Psychology Department (including me and members of the Climate Committee). The raw data will not be available to anybody outside of the Harvard College Institutional Research Office and no results will be shared that could reveal the responses of any individual.

Once the survey has been collected, all results will be aggregated before they are transmitted to the Psychology Department. This includes both quantitative questions and open-ended qualitative questions. For quantitative questions, all data will be aggregated so that there are at least ten respondents in any subgroup that is reported. This approach will protect against identification of individuals within small groups. Open-ended questions will be submitted for qualitative data analysis by the Harvard College Institutional Research Office, and a written summary will be provided to the Psychology Department. The single exception is the final text box in the entire survey which collects comments intended to be transmitted verbatim to the Psychology Department.

If you have technical difficulties with the survey, please contact Scott Spurlock, Assistant Director of Harvard College Institutional Research at HCIR@fas.harvard.edu.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by email. Thank you in advance for your help with this important initiative.

Best,

Leah Somerville
Associate Professor of Psychology
Chair, Departmental Climate Committee

On behalf of the Psychology Climate Committee
Joshua Cetron
Fiery Cushman
Daniel Janini
Katie McLaughlin
Matthew Nock
Franchesca Ramirez
Leah Somerville
Ashley Thomas
Shirley Wang

and the Harvard College Institutional Research Office
Karen Pearce
Scott Spurlock
Lynda Zhang

3. Follow-up Email Reminder on Climate Survey To Graduate Students

Dear Graduate Students,

I wanted to write all of you another email about our climate survey. It's come to my attention that some graduate students have questions about the methodology and eventual use of data we'd collect in the survey. In this email, I'd like to clarify in simple terms how we are collecting, analyzing, and eventually using the data in an effort to be as transparent as possible about the process.

Who is administering the survey?

The survey is being administered by a third-party office at Harvard, the Harvard College Institutional Research Office (HCIRO). The HCIRO has a great deal of experience with administering climate surveys, having worked with several departments at Harvard in recent years (e.g., Government, Philosophy, SEAS). We are following the HCIRO-established procedures for our Climate Survey. HCIRO is administering the survey itself in Qualtrics, saving all the data, and will analyze the data for us before sending a summary back to us. The HCIRO takes confidentiality extremely seriously. Working with HCIRO means that nobody in Psychology will have any access to the raw data collected in the survey.

How can I be sure my identity is being protected?

The survey does not collect any information about your identity. If you click on the survey link, it will take you directly to the survey with no log-in required. The Qualtrics instrument does not ask your name or ID, and it does not capture your Harvard Key or IP address, or anything else

potentially identifying. Each person was invited to take the survey received an individualized link. You might be wondering why we did that, and whether it impacts confidentiality. We used individualized links to prevent people from taking the survey more than once or forwarding the link to people outside of our department, which would compromise the survey results. It is important to be clear that the link information is not saved with your survey. Therefore, the use of individualized links does not impact the confidentiality of the survey in any way.

How are the data being analyzed?

I mentioned in my original message that HCIRO will be analyzing the data for us, both qualitative (open-ended responses) and quantitative (numerical/Likert ratings). I'm happy to provide more information about how this works.

- For quantitative data: HCIRO will summarize the data into tables that aggregate individuals' responses before sending it back to us in Psychology. Some of these summaries will aggregate data for the department as a whole, and some will subdivide the data into subgroups (such as based on respondent gender, role in the department, etc). However, HCIRO will not provide us summary data for any subgroup with less than 10 individual respondents in it. This is to protect the confidentiality of individual respondents who might be concerned they would be accidentally identified because they belong to a small group. Many similar surveys require only 5 respondents but we have raised that number to 10 to be especially sensitive to this issue.

- For qualitative data: HCIRO has an expert qualitative data analyst who will read all of the text-box responses and return high-level summaries of the major emergent themes within the responses. The qualitative analysis will not quote any individual response in their summaries. You can see an example of this kind of qualitative report from HCIRO in Section 6 of the Harvard Government Department Climate survey, which used an identical procedure as we plan to: <https://gov.harvard.edu/files/gov/files/govclimatesurveyfinalreport.pdf>.

- The only exception to the analysis scheme described above is the final question of the survey which provides respondents a chance to send a message to the department in your own words. All responses collected in this box will be transmitted verbatim to the department, as explicitly noted in the prompt for that item.

What if I disclose sensitive information in my survey responses? Would HCIRO break confidentiality to inform the Title IX office or the department?

The HCIRO will not break the analysis protocol described above. No individual responses to the open-ended questions will be shared with the department, even if they contain concerning or sensitive information. No information from this survey will be shared with the Title IX office, either. This fact is crucial for protecting confidentiality, which is of the utmost importance for the climate survey. On the other hand, this means that the department might not find out sufficient information to intervene on an unhealthy situation you might be experiencing if you include it in your response to the climate survey but do not disclose it otherwise. If you are experiencing an unhealthy situation in our department, there are other outlets to voice your concerns and get help. This includes speaking with me in my capacity as incoming DGS, Prof. Alvarez as acting DGS, a faculty member of the Climate Committee (Profs. Cushman, McLaughlin, Nock, and myself), your advisor, the Department Chair, the Title IX office, and the Office of Sexual Assault Prevention & Response, among others.

What if I am not comfortable answering the questions on the survey?

With the exception of a few questions at the beginning to determine what version of the survey to administer to you, you can choose not to answer any question on the survey you do not wish to answer by simply leaving it blank.

Why should I complete the climate survey?

Our department's first-ever Climate Committee was formed this winter. Our first objective is to learn about how our climate is experienced by individuals in the department. The Climate Survey is one of our primary means of undertaking this learning. We will use the results of this survey to set an agenda for future initiatives in our department to help make our department a better place for those of us in it. Your response to the climate survey will help us understand what we are doing well, and what we can improve on. If we do not hear from you, we cannot represent you in these efforts. Thus, we urge you to please complete the climate survey to whatever extent you are comfortable before it closes in one week (April 30).

What if I have additional questions?

Please feel free email me questions you have. If you are not comfortable reaching out to me, you may reach out to any of the faculty on the Climate Committee (Profs. Cushman, McLaughlin, and Nock), or Prof. Banaji in her capacity as Department Chair. I would be happy to correspond over email, by phone, or in a one-on-one meeting about the survey itself or anything else on your mind regarding our efforts to learn about our department's climate.

Thank you all for taking the time to help us learn about our department's climate. We are deeply appreciative of your time and consideration.

Best,
Leah

4. Open Forum Meeting Invitation

The Psychology Departmental Climate Committee is hosting two Town Hall meetings to further our goal of learning more about our department's climate as experienced by different people. They will take place:

Tuesday, April 23, 4:30-5:30PM, in Room 401 WJH
Friday, April 26, 3:30-4:30PM, in Room 343 Northwest

We invite all members of the department to drop in to one of these meetings and share their views on our department's climate. The discussions, which will each be moderated by one PhD student and one faculty member, will solicit your input on two big questions pertaining to our department's climate:

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of our department's climate?
- What efforts could be taken to improve our department's climate?

This information will be used, in conjunction with the results of our forthcoming climate survey, to consider future efforts to make our department an inclusive and healthy place for all.

Best,
Leah Somerville

on behalf of the Departmental Climate Committee

Joshua Cetron
Fiery Cushman
Daniel Janini
Katie McLaughlin
Matthew Nock
Franchesca Ramirez
Leah Somerville
Ashley Thomas
Shirley Wang

5. Invitation To Departmental Talk And Town Hall Meeting On Climate Results

All members of the Psychology Department community are invited to attend:

Results of the Psychology Department Climate Survey
Leah Somerville
Professor of Psychology, Chair of Climate Committee

Thursday December 5, 2019
4:00PM
B-1 William James Hall

This talk will present the primary results of the climate survey administered to the Department of Psychology in April-May, 2019. The presentation will review the goals of the survey, its methodology, and highlight key findings focused on our department's strengths and areas for growth. Results will be cross-referenced to data from other departments when possible. The slides from this presentation will be disseminated to the department following the presentation, along with a comprehensive report on the data.

Follow-up Town Hall meetings will provide an opportunity for the community to share their input on the climate survey findings and future efforts that could be taken to strengthen our departmental community:

Town Hall meetings:

Monday December 9, 2019
4:00PM
Rm B-4 William James Hall

This town hall meeting is for graduate students and postdocs only. Attendees should convene in Rm B-4 WJH and separate into graduate-students-only and postdocs-only subgroups for discussion.

Tuesday December 10, 2019
4:00PM
Rm 1305 William James Hall

This town hall meeting is open to all members of the department.