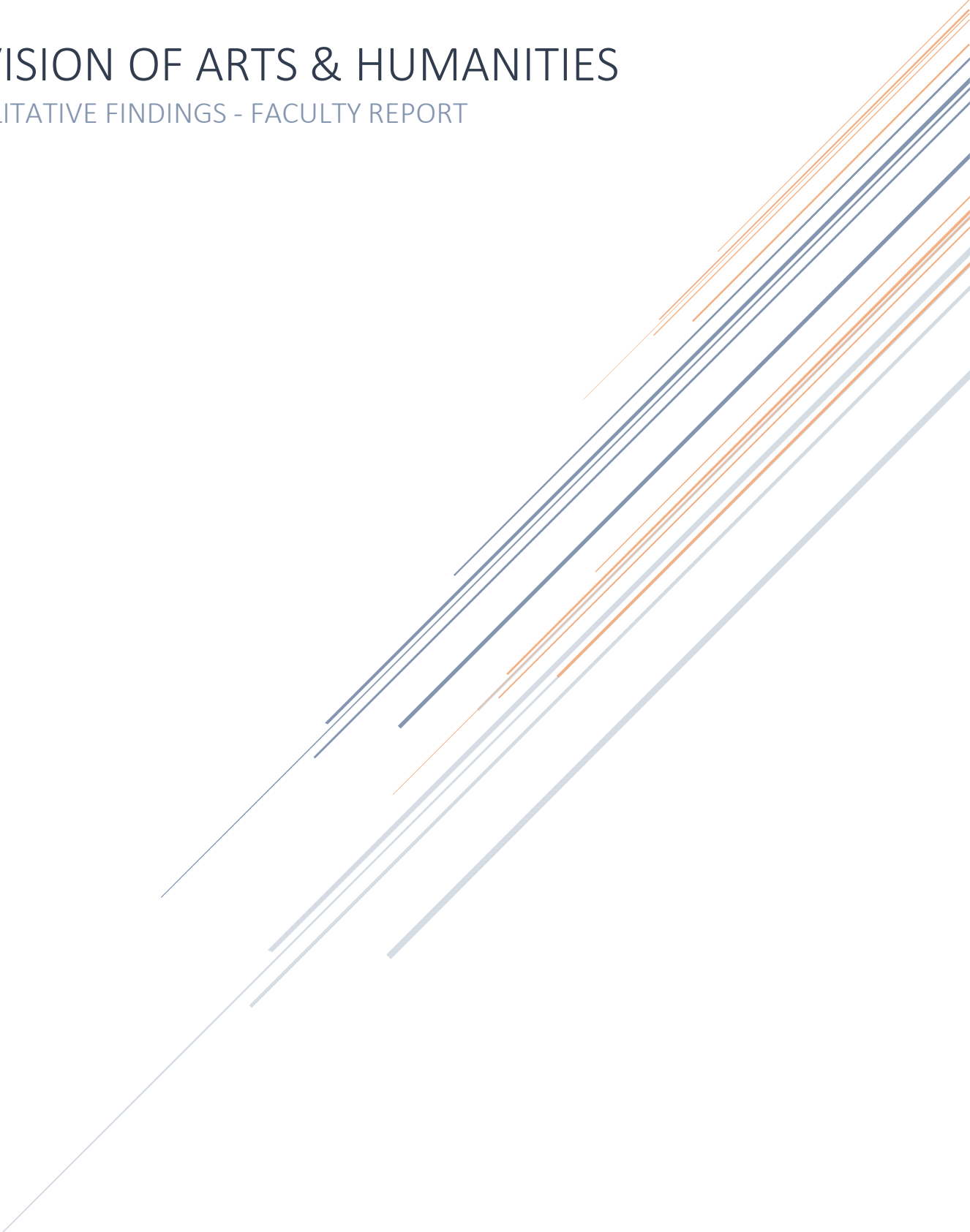


DIVISION OF ARTS & HUMANITIES

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS - FACULTY REPORT



ADMINISTERED BY HARVARD COLLEGE INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

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Introduction

This report presents qualitative findings from faculty responses to a climate survey administered to the Arts & Humanities Division in spring 2021. The purpose of the survey was to evaluate climate among faculty, staff, graduate students, and undergraduate students. Climate is a multidimensional construct and there are, therefore, a number of climate dimensions identified as targets of assessment in the literature. The focus of the faculty section of the survey was on satisfaction (with one's job and with the climate in one's home department), perceptions of inclusion and belonging, interpersonal justice, commitment to diversity and inclusion efforts, communication and civil discourse, workplace incivility, and accountability for wrongdoing.

Methods

Data Collection

HCIR developed the survey instrument, drawing on validated scales from the organizational behavior literature. Survey framing and processes were developed in consultation with Benita Wolff (Equity and Inclusion Administrative Fellow in the FAS Division of Science). The survey consisted of up to approximately 20 forced-choice/Likert-type items. Four open-ended items allowed participants to elaborate on their survey responses and/or to further describe their experiences as well as to provide suggestions about ways the climate could be improved.

Survey participants were asked to respond to four open-ended items:

- Q1: We see that you reported that you are treated differently by others in the community because of your identity. Please comment on these experiences.
- Q2: This survey has asked you to reflect upon a large number of issues related to the climate and your experiences in this climate, using a multiple-choice format. If you would like to elaborate upon any of your survey responses and/or further describe your experiences, we encourage you to do so in the space provided below.
- Q3: Please provide suggestions about ways the climate could be improved in your department.
- Q4: If your department is making efforts to improve the climate, please note any aspects of those efforts that seem promising.

Parallel items were administered across groups to faculty, staff, graduate students, and undergraduate students with the point of reference (i.e., department/program).

The survey was administered during the COVID-19 pandemic (March 30 - April 14). The pandemic was acknowledged in the survey and participants were instructed to think broadly about their experiences with climate in the department/program and about how the department has normally functioned pre-pandemic.

A total of 2,137 surveys were sent to staff, faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students in 21 departments in the Arts & Humanities Division. The overall response rate was 44.9%. 482 faculty members were sent the survey and 326 responded, resulting in a 67.8% response rate for this subgroup. Response rates by question vary and are historically lower for open-ended items. 37 faculty members responded to Q1; 88 faculty members responded to Q2; and 98 faculty members responded to Q3.

Data Analysis

Analyses were conducted on faculty survey comments combined across departments. Responses to all four questions were downloaded from Qualtrics into a Word document, which in turn was downloaded to NVivo 12, a coding and qualitative data management program. Drs. Jenny Bergeron and Jeff Solomon then conducted a combined content and thematic analysis of the data by coding text items (ranging from a couple of words, in some instances, to multiple lines, in others) to classify the ways in which participants addressed the survey questions. A key limitation is that responses were obtained from only a small portion of faculty survey participants and therefore open-ended comments may not be generalizable. The comments should be interpreted as representative only of the views of those who provided them. However, attempts were made to interpret results in light of the Likert-type items which had larger response rates. We use the comments to provide context for interpretation of Likert-type responses.

Summary

- The majority of faculty respondents (89%) were satisfied with their jobs and with the climate in their departments (86%). In fact, 87% of participants reported that if they had to do it over again, they would choose to work in the same department. In the open-ended comments, some faculty shared their positive experiences in their departments as well as work that has been done to improve the climate.
- However, not all subgroups experienced their departments in the same way. Almost a quarter of faculty respondents (23%) reported that they were treated differently due to their identities. There was a near 20+ percentage point gap in satisfaction metrics between Asian faculty respondents, on the one hand, and faculty identifying as URM or White, as well as those who did not disclose race, on the other. However, because there were so few open-ended comments related to those identifying as Asian, we were not able to describe the experiences of these individuals in this report. The open-ended comments we do present from this category reflect being treated differently due to one's race (as a URM), gender (as a female), and sexual orientation.
- Non-ladder faculty were less likely to feel valued by members of their department community as compared to ladder faculty. In their open-ended comments non-ladder faculty respondents described feeling marginalized, disposable, overworked, and taken for granted. Participants lamented being excluded from faculty meetings, where decisions are made and information is shared. A perceived lack of agency in decision-making has led to feelings of alienation and of not belonging. Many explained how the time-limited nature of their jobs (three-year contracts, with the possibility, in some cases, for renewal) was a constant source of stress and has led to relatively frequent turnover and lower institutional commitment.
- From the Likert-type items we learned that the majority of faculty respondents (84%) agreed that there was a demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion in their departments. In their comments, faculty recommended that sustained attention be devoted to increasing the diversity (across race and gender) in faculty hires, leadership positions, and the student body. Some recommended the need for more diversity trainings.
- Senior ladder faculty more often reported comfort in dissenting or sharing ideas openly as compared to junior ladder faculty, non-ladder faculty, and rank undisclosed members (from Likert-type items). The effects of academic rank on comfort with expressing views that might differ from those in more senior positions was further underscored in the open-ended

comments by contract employees (non-ladder faculty, as described above) and those who face tenure review (junior faculty). These two latter groups of faculty feared negative reviews of their work and the possibility of losing their jobs.

- Half of faculty respondents reported experiencing incivility in their departments (from Likert-type items). From the comments we learned that this was most often attributed to only a small number of members in the communities. The following aspects of department culture contributed to incivility: academic hierarchy, the fragmentation/balkanization of specialties within departments (which are hostile or uncooperative with one another), the tenure process (which sometimes results in animosity between colleagues arising from disputes about the merits of candidates' research), the lack of transparency in decision-making processes, and the lack of an accountability system that applies equally to all.
- The majority of faculty respondents agreed that there was a strong sense of community within their departments. Those feeling less connected explained how the balkanization of subfields within departments has made it difficult to find common ground around which to connect as a community.

Results

Identity

Almost a quarter of faculty respondents (23%) reported that they were treated differently due to their identities. Comments in this category reflected being treated differently due to one's race, gender and sexual orientation.

Race

Among faculty, the fraction reporting that they have been treated differently based on identity was highest among Asian faculty (36%) and URM faculty (31%), compared with 16% for White faculty and 28% for race-undisclosed faculty ($p < .05$ for Likert-type items). It should be noted that faculty identifying as Asian (N=36) were less satisfied with the climate in their departments in general, compared with faculty identifying as URM (N=26), White (N=168), or race not disclosed (N=96)¹. This is presented in a separate report of quantitative findings. However, because there were so few open-ended comments by faculty identifying as Asians, we were not able to describe the experiences of these individuals.

In the open-ended comments, a handful of faculty members from across the Division expressed the perception of being treated more positively (as compared to marginalized groups) due to their identity as white, male, and cisgender. Some examples included the following:

- *I am a white male in a position of authority. I work in a field in which identity is a central consideration. The events of the past year have made me acutely aware of the position of privilege I hold. As we have consciously worked to understand and undo the white supremacy inherent to our institution and our country, I continue to think about how others treat me, as a*

¹ There is a nearly 20+ percentage point satisfaction gap between Asian faculty respondents and faculty identifying as URM, White, or undisclosed race (71% Asian faculty job satisfaction vs. 90%+ satisfaction for other faculty ($p < .01$); 63% Asian faculty satisfaction with the department as welcoming place vs. 87%+ for other faculty ($p < .001$); 61% of Asian faculty would do it over again vs. 80%+ for other faculty ($p < .001$).

part of this institution. By some I am met with deference and respect, an unquestioning acceptance of my position--by others, perhaps suspicion as to how I got here, and a keen attention to how the decisions I am making are either upholding or dismantling the system from which I benefit. In this year of national reckoning and personal reflection, I can only assume that the way I am treated has something to do with my identity.

- *As a straight, white, man, I don't have to deal with the same bullshit that my colleagues of color do (microaggressions, requests for unpaid service, Harvard's stifling institutionalized whiteness, etc.)*
- *As a white man, I understand that my experience is not identical to everybody else's in the community. My authority is less often questioned by students and senior faculty members, for instance.*
- *Just to explain the slightly bewildering range of my replies, I would say that as a cisgender white man it would be almost impossible for me *not* to feel heard, attended to, respected, etc. That said, it would be equally impossible for me to openly express any skepticism regarding the efficacy of certain DEI initiatives. Having said THAT, I'm not sure my opinions on such topics matter, so perhaps it's just as well!*
- *This question seems to be assuming a norm from which people diverge, but everyone at this university is treated differently from others because of their identity. I am white and this leads me to be treated differently from my colleagues who are not. I fairly frequently see racist microaggressions in department meetings which affect my colleagues of color far more than they do me, even if they are not directed at them, because of their long traumatic experiences of negotiating racism. I suspect my experience in the department has been better than theirs because I have had careful and protective mentorship, which I must connect to my whiteness. Had I been a person of color, the same mentorship would not have been available to me because there are so few senior scholars of color in my department who would be able to help me figure out how to handle those microaggressions.*

Those from underrepresented racial identities described being subjected to discriminatory comments, drawn into heated discussions about race, confused with others from their racial group, put in the spotlight about their racial backgrounds, and tasked with handling the lion's share of diversity and inclusion efforts in their departments.

- *However, this mild unpleasantness or misfit goes along with some trouble junior faculty of color have had when they've raised questions about unconscious bias. They were summarily shut down. The attitude is that [REDACT] is happy to include them, but not to be changed by them in any way. On one occasion I even heard it said that they should be grateful and know their place (in these exact phrases). I know these are well-meaning people--consciously, they meant as a junior faculty member not a racial minority. But it has become clear that some of my [REDACT] colleagues simply haven't encountered ideas like implicit bias or microaggression, or structural racism... or at least they have not wondered if it applies to them. Therefore they hear any mention of race as accusation of racism, and they are truly hurt by it. (White fragility: also an unexplored concept.)*
- *It is subtle, but I do feel that as a PoC, it is assumed that I represent, speak for, and do the work of diversity in ways that others "can't," don't, or will not... In conversations with colleagues, it was signaled to me that, as a person (and perhaps PoC, though that was never said) invested in departmental change along lines of diversity and inclusion, it was more my responsibility to bring these issues to the table (than, say, tenured faculty*

members). [REDACT] I felt deeply uncomfortable about this pressure, and about being singled out in this way.

- Also, there have been instances where I have been confused with the only other [Redact – identity] faculty member in the department -- whether my name, what I teach, or more disturbingly, my values. Small, awful, telling.
- Previous department leaders have been biased against and engaged in offensive behavior against faculty, graduate students and applicants along lines of race and gender.
- Deeply ingrained racial stereotypes in the minds of senior faculty make the task of improving the climate very difficult.

Gender

From the survey data we learned that there was a substantial gap in responses regarding the perception of being treated differently due to faculty gender identity (30% of female faculty vs. 15% of male faculty and 26% faculty with undisclosed gender [$p < .05$]). Furthermore, female faculty report experiencing incivility at a higher rate as compared to their male colleagues (59% of female faculty reported experiencing incivility compared with 40% of male faculty). In the open-ended comments, women described being ignored, talked over, assigned a greater share of administrative work, and criticized more often than men when serving in leadership roles. There was also the perception that women are not being equally compensated as compared to men.

- There is only one tenured female faculty person in this department. All the other women are non-ladder or untenured or staff or students. And that creates a dynamic where female voices are systematically undervalued, but sometimes this is explained away as a reflection of "standing" within the community rather than sex/gender.
- On a number of occasions in faculty meetings I have felt that proposals put forward by women--especially women in leadership positions--faced stronger criticism and opposition than the same proposals would face if put forward by male colleagues. I am male, so I have not experienced this directly. But this has seemed to me to be a more or less predictable pattern.
- The department's defensive response--particularly initially--to the recent Visiting Committee report (i.e., the Visiting Committee's observations on gender disparities within the department and the department's failure ever to have a female chair as well as the male domination of several of the REDACT Center leadership positions) reveals there is still work to be done in attaining gender equity.
- I have had a small number of interactions with male students and faculty members who have not treated me with respect. One of those faculty members has left the university. The episodes have been minor--for example, male faculty members talking over or interrupting me. A male student has responded angrily when I have tried to offer constructive criticisms of his work. I interpret his behavior as gender-based because of the derogatory things he has said (in my presence) about other women faculty members.
- I have repeatedly experienced treatment from a specific male faculty member based on my gender (I'm female). I have to navigate the fact that he undermines my independence as a faculty member. I don't want to get too specific with details but he communicates decisions (including things like which courses I'm going to teach--without me knowing) on my behalf to committees or the leadership in my department without my knowledge and they bear little relation to what I'm actually thinking or planning.
- These experiences are primarily gender-related...Though small in number, those individuals [perpetrators] have occupied, and/or currently occupy, leadership positions.

- *I feel I have occasionally been judged differently than other members of the community (re: e.g., work output, ability to juggle work and family) simply by virtue of the fact that I am a woman.*
- *Sexism--female professors seem to be asked to serve on more committees, from the information that is available, they are paid less than their male peers, one male colleague is sometimes surprisingly dismissive of women.*
- *I can't say the same for being female: I don't feel confident, for example, that men and women are equally compensated at Harvard, and when special deals are negotiable within Harvard there are blatant inequities. One week, you can be told something is impossible and would go against a certain policy, and the next week you learn a colleague has just successfully negotiated for that very thing. This is a simple thing to avoid.*
- *Largely disproportionate and the values of women are often neglected by the men in charge or by other faculty leading the facilitation. Mostly, uncomfortable silences.*

Sexual Orientation

There were a couple of comments related to sexual orientation. One participant commended their department as being very welcoming and inclusive, but most of the other comments were negatively valenced.

- *[Being treated differently] [c]onsidering gender issues and queer identities.*
- *My queer sexual identity sets me apart.*
- *I am a gay faculty member (female) and I appreciate that the climate in my experience at Harvard has been supportive, from colleagues, students, and administration. It feels "easy" and a "non-issue" to be gay at Harvard speaking from my own experience as a faculty member. I don't take this for granted since I taught at another institution where it wasn't like this. I know from some students that they still find it difficult to come out but this remains a societal issue. From a policy and practice point of view, I am acknowledging here my gratitude for my positive personal experience at Harvard in this respect.*

Academic Rank: Challenges Experienced by Non-Ladder Faculty

From the Likert-type survey items we learned that non-ladder faculty and faculty not disclosing their rank were less likely to feel valued by members of their department community (77% of non-ladder and 74% of nondisclosed rank, compared with 92% of ladder, $p < .05$). The sentiment of feeling like one is not valued was highlighted in the open-ended comments, in which some non-ladder faculty respondents described feeling marginalized, disposable, overworked, taken for granted and treated like second-class citizens by their departments and by the University writ large.

- *These questions about inclusion and belonging in terms of "identity" also have everything to do with our "status" as a faculty member--being tenure-track or contingent faculty in particular. Despite the administration's and department's desire to make Harvard a welcoming place for everyone, it's still the case that tenure-track and contingent faculty are seen as temporary, replaceable, even disposable. There is an enormous culture gap between older tenured faculty and the tenure-track generation. For the most part, I have found my tenure-track colleagues to be highly respectful, supportive, and inclusive. They are my community. The rest of the department (with a few mentoring exceptions) are decidedly not. This is not to say that people are outright hostile. Instead, it's much more subtle and damning than that.*
- *The divide between ladder and non-ladder faculty feels like a significant impediment to a good climate and respectful environment. This goes beyond the department to the University broadly.*

- *My negative experience at Harvard has had less to do with the department than the university culture, which can be hierarchical, exclusive, and unwelcoming, especially if you are not a ladder faculty.*
- *I have often felt marginalized in discussions of the department's collective welfare: the reason is that there is among many faculty members a strong sense that there is a core of faculty who count and who are the REAL department (faculty who are tenured, who have been many years, and/or who are Harvard trained) and then there are the rest of us.*
- *I am given extra work teaching loads without any rhyme or reason. My teaching awards and excellent student reviews go unrecognized. There are no attempts to discuss long term advancement. I feel used and taken for granted.*
- *Aside from this, the biggest division in my department is between senior and junior scholars, in which I fall into the latter category, and I have had several instances where senior colleagues (mostly just one person) have been condescending or dismissive, and in general the climate of meetings has not been particularly welcoming to junior colleagues.*

Participants lamented being excluded from faculty meetings where decisions are made, and information is shared. A perceived lack of agency in decision-making has led to feelings of alienation and like one does not belong.

- *I am one of the preceptors in the department and although we are part of the department, we are not allowed to attend faculty meetings and stay largely unaware of what decisions are being made. Issues that are related to [REDACT] teaching is being communicated to us through the [REDACT] Program Director.*
- *With regard to the community there is inevitably systemic hierarchy--it's a bureaucratic institution. For those of us who are non-ladder faculty, basic inequalities exist that create unsolvable issues in relation to the [REDACT] department--for example, in voting for new [REDACT] hires. We are consulted on a 'polite notice' basis, but have no actual agency.*
- *Also, as a non-ladder faculty member in [REDACT], the degree to which I should participate in the department is unclear. At times, a few of my immediate colleagues have suggested that I should not attend department meetings, for example, while others in the Dept have expressed frustration that more [REDACT] faculty don't regularly attend dept meetings. The director tends to just suggest we do what works for us, which is generous but also unclear.*
- *In addition, because I am required to stay at my office at [REDACT] from 9am to 4pm I cannot be included in typical academic meetings or conferences as I am required to stay at the office at 9am to 4pm which feels like an "island" that keeps me away from the rest of the school. I really hope that [REDACT] instructors and preceptors/senior preceptors/director can be treated equally just like other instructors at Harvard.*
- *Include preceptors in the department community by inviting them to faculty meetings.*

Many explained how the time-limited nature of their jobs (three-year contracts, with the possibility, in some cases, for renewal) is a constant source of stress which has led to relatively frequent turnover and lower institutional commitment. It has also made non-ladder faculty feel unappreciated and disposable, necessitated training of new hires on a relatively frequent basis, and contributed to a lack of consistency and stability for students.

- *My moderate feelings about enthusiasm to work in my current position are a reflection of Harvard's lack of support for me: time-capped contracts, below standard pay, and no internal*

professional development opportunities.

- *The greatest harm to the otherwise wonderful climate in [REDACT] is the reliance on three-year contingent positions, which inserts a palpable level of strain and anxiety below the surface as fabulous tutors "time out" and disappear, and the department constantly has to train in new tutors to replace them. This also creates significant instability for the students as tutors come and go during their time in the concentration.*
- *The one true cause of inequality and dissatisfaction I can sense is the inequitable treatment of non-ladder faculty (as opposed to ladder faculty) with regard to their status, benefits, and rights (in particular in terms of job security in this time of pandemic, and beyond). This is by no means imputable to our department, which tries hard to treat everyone fairly and equitably. Yet, this is a structural problem that needs to be addressed. Departments such as ours rely heavily on preceptors and lecturers for their core curriculum. The insecurity of status they are faced with is highly detrimental not only to the "climate" in the department, but also to our wellbeing and performance as a group.*
- *The problems I have stem from the central administration, not our department. The tenure-track system creates stress for people on it and erects barriers between TT and non-TT faculty.*
- *Part of the issue is, I think, the gap in support between ladder and non-ladder faculty (as lecturers we don't have access to paid leaves, for example) these gaps can make people uncertain about how to proceed. Still, more clarity about our role in the dept at large would be useful, I think, in integrating the various dimensions of the dept into a more cohesive whole.*
- *[There is a need for] [l]ong-term contracts for Lecturers, which would create a sense of real institutional commitment (within and beyond the department) to the subjects we study.*
- *The climate of our community could be improved if NTT faculty members had more job security and more say in their working conditions.*

Moreover, participants noted that the precarious nature of these temporary positions discouraged them from sharing their opinions, for fear that, if those opinions were seen as objectionable by those who make hiring decisions, one's contract wouldn't be renewed. Examples of these various challenges are highlighted below.

- *As a contingent faculty member--whose contract needs to be renewed every year--I obviously don't feel as if I have total freedom to raise concerns about my program or the Harvard administration more broadly.*
- *I work as a visiting J-1 visa and it is truthfully an unsaid rule that my opinion and contribution does not matter. I am always in fear of my job and my work status, I have no natural protections and no way of telling my side. There also have been many instances of academic malpractice and overwork including extreme requirements such as coming into the office every day from 9-4 which is not a requirement in any other department at Harvard ONLY the [REDACT] requires this....Why?*
- *The current climate does not want us to speak how we feel, and the visa thing makes the leader have too much power. It is impossible to speak up about anything. And too much workload, especially for summer programs if we have to do off-line intensive programs.*
- *The problem is not that people are explicitly rude or disrespectful. The problem is that the hierarchical structure of the department makes it difficult for anyone who is not a tenured member to express their opinions freely, and "diversity" to the extent that it exists is largely found among untenured faculty (TT or lecturers). Furthermore, powerful faculty members sometimes exert their influence in unethical ways.*

- *Term limits and an unreliable visa status that is solely dependent on people in charge of me makes me unable to challenge anything they want or desire.*
- *Pathways to promotion and long-term, renewable contracts, both of which would help faculty feel safer to share opinions and as though they can effect positive changes to the curriculum and administration of the concentration.*

Finally, some participants mentioned a recent review of preceptors conducted in the FAS. These comments were negatively valanced and focused on the report's methodology, interpretation of results, the validity of conclusions, and fairness of outcomes.

- *The process for review is opaque and the concluding assessment is unfair, as the sampling procedure and solicited feedback are not representative for the entire period of work evaluated.*
- *The FAS Preceptor System Review Committee report should be revisited and revised in accordance with departmental feedback, particularly about its implications on department climate.*
- *Additionally the report that the FAS Preceptor System Review Committee discussed stated that the data was compared to other leading institutions but the data wasn't even available, only concepts were listed.*

Other participants described how the review has had a negative effect on their department's morale and has generated an even greater division between non-ladder and ladder faculty.

- *The recent FAS Preceptor System Review Committee report has had a damaging effect on the climate within our department.*
- *Actually this report is a disaster in terms of inclusion and belonging, and if applied, will only deepen the gap between ladder and non-ladder faculty, and sabotage any attempt made in the past year to work and collaborate across this divide. The presence among [REDACT, department faculty who helped author the report] is also creating a climate of fear of retaliation among the non-tenured faculty members. They don't dare to express publicly their opinion and feelings about this report by fear of having their contract not renewed.*
- *Following a challenging year of remote instruction due to Covid19, the [REDACT, department name] faculty were at the forefront of this charge, tirelessly redesigning large numbers of [REDACT] courses for remote instruction using innovative and creative approaches (with excellent results). The release of this report, particularly after this challenging remote mission, has established policies that create a negative environment where the wonderfully productive "drifting" of [REDACT] faculty (collaborations, projects, and community building across sections, programs and hierarchical divides) is not valued by the university. The morale among [REDACT] faculty is low.*
- *The Report on Preceptors was demeaning toward the work done by [REDACT] preceptors. It was very unfortunate. But that is not the department's fault.*
- *Additionally communication is horrendous at Harvard, during the recent tenure track preceptor report, there was a zoom meeting to discuss the results in which questions were scheduled to be taken at the end but the meeting was cut without explanation and immediately closed even though many preceptors attending had questions.*

Diversity and Inclusion

From the Likert-type items we learned that 84% of faculty respondents agreed that there is a demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion in their departments. However, faculty colleagues of various identities had very different perceptions about this commitment. Just 58% of Asian faculty reported that their departments have demonstrated a commitment to diversity, compared with 88% of URM faculty, 92% White faculty, and 79% “race undisclosed” faculty ($p < .001$).

In their comments, faculty recommended that sustained attention should be devoted to increasing the diversity (across race and gender) in faculty hires, leadership positions, and the student body.

- *Developing strategies to recruit and retain URM students. Create positions that can attract URM faculty. We have female senior faculty members but some fields such as [REDACT] is heavily skewed to males.*
- *This is not a suggestion about the department but the University. Myself, I feel the University is simply not making the sort of effort it should be making to increase the number of under-represented students at both the UG and G levels.*
- *This year, after so much discussion about diversity, of the six short-listed candidates they sent to the Department Admission Committee, only ONE was a female. Clearly diversity is NOT treated as a problem. When this was brought up a few years during a discussion after the Visiting Committee report, one of the [REDACT] faculty retorted, "So do you want us to lower our standard [to admit more women]?" This happened at a public meeting and the faculty is currently in a leadership position. Something needs to be done about this particular subfield in our department.*
- *More diverse staff.*
- *Hire more Black, Indigenous, and Latinx faculty.*
- *Diversify the leadership.*

Some other faculty recommended additional trainings on diversity and inclusion.

- *It would be very helpful for members of the department to learn precise examples of what types of speech or behavior have been perceived as microaggressions so as to correct similar future speech or behavior. Such reporting should not be punitive or denunciatory, so the identities of both the offender and offended should be protected. Yet learning about specific examples of perceived microaggression would truly help to educate those oblivious to the potential harm of what they may have considered endearing jests or earnest advice.*
- *Mandatory training on implicit and unconscious bias, on racial sensitivity, on bystander training. We likely need training on gender and sexuality as well. We need more forums for discourse and conversation.*
- *I would also like access to anti-racist and gender-sensitivity training which is not aimed at the absolute lowest level and is mandatory... I would appreciate access to better training, by specialists, in e.g. mentorship of students of color, than what I can do for myself in the very little time I have. Another advantage of this would be that official training could go on my CV and my record and be institutionally marked. There seems a real resistance to bringing in external specialists for faculty training or making anything mandatory here in a way I find frustrating and confusing.*

- *Perhaps hold more frequent town hall meetings to solicit feedback and open discussions as to how to better engage in this effort collectively.*
- *Training in racial inclusion. Setting clear guidelines for what happens if tenured faculty are racially disrespectful -- and enforcing them.*
- *Provide support for faculty and staff to learn how to create and maintain anti-racist structures and atmosphere within the department.*

Diversity in Points of View

From the Likert-type items we learned that almost a quarter of faculty respondents disagreed that they felt comfortable sharing their ideas/viewpoints openly (23%) and dissenting from majority opinion (24%). Furthermore, senior ladder faculty more often reported comfort dissenting or sharing ideas openly (comfortable dissenting: senior ladder faculty 83%, junior ladder faculty 68%, non-ladder faculty 73%, and rank undisclosed 33%; comfortable sharing ideas: senior ladder faculty 83%, junior ladder faculty 68%, non-ladder faculty 73%, and rank undisclosed 33% [$p < .01$ for both]). The effects of academic rank on viewpoint diversity were further underscored in the open-ended comments as contract employees (non-ladder faculty, as described above) and those who faced tenure review (junior faculty) described fear of losing their jobs if they were to express opinions that differed from those in higher ranks.

- *As a tenure-track faculty member it can be challenging to speak up among senior colleagues. This is not a reflection of anything any particular colleague has said or done, simply an acknowledgment of the undemocratic nature of the tenure track and how one's colleagues also take part in deciding one's professional future.*
- *We tend to gloss over differences of opinion rather than having productive discussions that could resolve them. Things are left hanging in the air. Senior faculty are seldom corrected if/when they make insensitive comments. A clearer process of resolving disputes or misunderstandings would be helpful.*
- *I think many untenured ladder faculty members are afraid to voice their points of view in meetings because they fear angering a senior colleague who might oppose their promotion in a confidential letter during the promotion review. I hope that the current examination of the promotion process will consider the broader effects of the practice of soliciting such confidential letters.*
- *There is fear of retaliation and intimidation. All faculty members should be encouraged to speak up, and there should be real and open consequences for the offending members.*
- *As a junior faculty, much of what appears to be climate issues aren't features of my department, but of the tenure system in general. I feel very comfortable, heard, and valued in my dept, but at the end of the day, I of course think once or twice about the positions I take or the opinions I express, but I don't feel hampered or silenced.*
- *As tenure-track faculty I am aware that I can be somewhat limited in my interactions with my colleagues. This has nothing to do with any particular incident or any faculty that have pressured me in any way. This is merely a reflection of the undemocratic nature of being a junior faculty, where my tenure case and my entire professional career may depend on how my senior colleagues evaluate me as a scholar and, undoubtedly, as a person. This necessarily limits my speech in some ways, though I don't feel that it has had too many negative consequences.*
- *Conversations between tenured faculty during department meetings have often felt like a gathering at an old boys' club and from what I've heard, others in the department do not feel*

- comfortable sharing their opinions in these meetings either. Because of the power imbalance between contingent and tenured faculty any opinions expressed by contingent faculty do not have to be addressed or taken on board since we do not have a say in how the department is run or in appointments, nor do we have the job security to feel safe with disagreeing with senior colleagues on whose good our jobs will depend.*
- *I think these are very difficult problems to solve because of the inherent power dynamics between groups. I do not have any problems at all with the majority of my colleagues. It is hard to imagine a situation in which, say, a junior faculty member could feel comfortable coming forward with a complaint, simply because of the fact that the senior faculty will all vote on whether or not they get to stay at Harvard.*
 - *The problem is not that people are explicitly rude or disrespectful. The problem is that the hierarchical structure of the department makes it difficult for anyone who is not a tenured member to express their opinions freely.*

Relatedly, survey participants noted the communication style of some senior faculty who dominate discussions, do all the talking, and squelch participation during meetings.

- *Meanwhile most department decision-making is made by debate between three or four senior scholars who have been here for thirty years. Their institutional experience is immense but their opinions were shaped long ago and they have long-standing conversational dynamics which are hard to break into or figure out as a new member of the department.*
- *Faculty meetings are not spaces of discussion. They are, instead, places for oration, and can be fairly hostile. It is near-impossible to feel that I can contribute in a meaningful way in this environment, though I try, and I hope I do upon occasion.*
- *Meetings are generally occasions for giving speeches, not discussion. Where there is disagreement, rude things are sometimes said. (None of this is related to identity issues.)*
- *Unable to evaluate honestly and disagree civilly, our department is becoming fractured at the tenured level and is unable to provide untenured colleagues with the honest mentorship they need. Creating a healthier culture of evaluation is necessary.*
- *Better protocols for ensuring that voices are more equally weighted in conversations supporting dissenting opinions.*

Incivility & Accountability for Wrongdoing

Half of faculty respondents (50%) reported experiencing incivility in their departments. Most often this was attributed to a few senior members in the communities. Academic hierarchy was cited as a reason for incivility. Offenders were most often those with higher job status and often senior faculty, resulting in a downward flow of incivility to individuals with less status bearing the costs, as described in the quotes below.

- *Harvard is a hierarchical place to work. An 'upstairs-downstairs' mentality permeates the place, and I regularly see Faculty (to which I belong) treat Staff with less respect than they deserve. There is a culture of entitlement that maps onto academic hierarchy and gets progressively stronger from grad students to lecturer/preceptors, to assistant/associate, and finally tenured Faculty. An unhealthy pecking order that stymies creativity and isn't in the organization's best interest.*
- *I suspect there is just a lot of misunderstanding of the sort that's extremely difficult to resolve given the relevant power dynamics. I will say that I had much worse problems at another*

department I was in before coming to Harvard, and that I don't think things are better at other institutions, and so I consider myself pretty lucky overall.

- *It is NOT the climate at the department but rather the hierarchy and inequality embedded in the Harvard employment system that is behind most of my negative experiences.*

In their comments, faculty highlighted incidents in which colleagues have reacted with anger and hostility, engaged in power plays, hurled insults, and treated others condescendingly.

- *On the whole, the [REDACT] Department is well led and manifests a high degree of mutual respect. That said, there is a large cadre of very senior colleagues, some of whom (by no means all) do not hesitate to wield and display the power they wield, with kiss up/kick down practices. This has a baleful and dispiriting effect on the communitarian texture of the department. That texture remains only loosely woven. The preponderance of senior colleagues also creates labor disbalances, whereby a few capable and responsible colleagues do all the arduous administrative work.*
- *Personally, I received this year a hostile and bullying email from a colleague about a matter unrelated to work. I did not feel it was something I could or wanted to bring to the attention of the department. This unpleasantness pertains to one unstable individual, not to the community at large. In a different situation, I might at least have alerted the department to this individual's conduct; but in this case, it was better simply to let things lie.*
- *The condescending and dismissive behavior toward me was committed by a single colleague with whom I have had an uneasy relationship. This behavior over a sustained period of time, but has since settled into a relationship of cordiality that makes our working relationship efficient and productive. I still struggle to understand the source of the tension.*
- *My experience is largely positive because I am tenured and senior. If the question was "have you witnessed discourteous behavior," I'd have to say yes, in at least three contexts: 1) faculty /staff interactions (generally from the faculty side, not quite always); 2) faculty/graduate student interactions; 3) department meetings, including both full meetings (where those of different rank are present) and tenured meetings.*
- *The most egregious involved a colleague no longer at Harvard who was notoriously abrasive, condescending, and bullish--one who insulted me directly inside and outside of Faculty meetings (but also did that to colleagues and students), made assumptions about my motivations based on my religious faith.*
- *I am by-and-large extremely satisfied/happy with my department; and it is also true that I have been severely psychologically impacted and harmed by one person that at times it has been difficult to get out of bed.*
- *Right now the climate in my department is outstanding due to generous leadership of [REDACT, faculty name]. However, in the past fifteen years we have sometimes had leadership that is authoritarian and bullying. I have for the most part answered in the present tense, since our climate is generous and lovely this year (and will be next year with [REDACT, faculty name]). Where I indicate discourtesy in the answers, it is a result of problems in the past that have gravely hurt our department atmosphere.*
- *My responses about climate have largely been qualified. While there used to be major climate issues in our department, involving a number of faculty, there are still a couple of faculty who can be problematic.*
- *I don't know what to do about the fact that some FAS members of the committee are routinely disrespectful to [REDACT] faculty and to the school itself.*

- *Colleagues in leadership positions are extremely defensive and even became resentful and angry whenever disagreement arose. The problems described here contribute to an unhealthy power imbalance in the department and compound the situation of gender/age/seniority bias and insensitivity.*
- *The atmosphere of the department and collegiality of the department are not the strong aspects of this job.*

Some participants described incivility resulting from the fragmentation/balkanization of specialties/subfields within departments, which are hostile to or uncooperative with one another.

- *I am in a dept that routinely demonstrates what happens when two wolves and a lamb vote on what to have for lunch. ...It's not that my colleagues are bad people; indeed, many, although not all, are wonderful and we get along very well and work together easily in other contexts. And the current and previous chairs have bent over backwards in being both aware of and sensitive to the disciplinary marginalization that takes place [REDACT] where the macro-fauna step all over the smaller species and don't even realize it. By contrast, one of the truly brilliant things about [REDACT] and other committees is that there is no sense of any one field somehow being superior or of greater significance than any other we work together in concert, embracing the fact that there is no canon and that we are united by common interests and informed by different kinds of training.*
- *There are other conflicts in our fractious department that stem from divisional tensions between sections, and, in my case, the conflicted attitudes of some colleagues to those of us who represent historic disciplines as premodernists. ...But overall, my experience in my other departments, as will be clear in my reply to the survey for those programs, has been not been marred by comparable experiences of unprofessional behavior.*
- *To put this in context, any disparagement or sidelining I may have experienced is due to my professional specialism rather than any issue of gender, age, or race.*

Others mentioned the tenure process and the resultant animosity between colleagues arising from disputes about the merits of candidates' research and the lack of transparency in the decision-making process.

- *Macro: fix the Star Chamber-like FAS tenure process, which permits blackballing, whispering campaigns, and nearly-undetectable bad faith action, and which makes tenure-track jobs at Harvard hard to recommend (except that there are so few others). I've been treated very well throughout my time here, and still am, but I'm angry on behalf of those who were not. --Note that none of these are department-level fixes! If there's a dept-level fix it might have to do with better and more consistent collab w depts and programs elsewhere.*
- *Our department is collegial in all things, save evaluation of colleagues for tenure and promotion. There, we default to a culture of hyperbolic praise and the few who dare voice a dissenting view publicly are either ignored or dismissed. The result is often a striking disparity between the case statement and the individual letters--and, more generally, a delegation of evaluation to CAP and the ad hoc process. Unable to evaluate honestly and disagree civilly, our department is becoming fractured at the tenured level and is unable to provide untenured colleagues with the honest mentorship they need. Creating a healthier culture of evaluation is necessary.*
- *My negative experiences have more to do with the nature of the tenure-track process than with any incidents of incivility. The tenure track is by definition exclusive, and a sense of inclusion is*

only really possible after tenure.

- *Another small but perhaps important point: Harvard has not yet assimilated the reality and requirements of its tenure-track hiring practices. I'm not convinced--neither by data nor by anecdote nor by conversations--that our department knows how to tenure its TT faculty. Actually, the desire to hire full professors away from other departments at times seems to outweigh the desire to look after their own. I've heard very little logic expressed about the importance of the TT faculty here--what we contribute to the department. Perhaps I'm not in the right rooms for that; I'd like to be.*
- *The department's issues are inseparable from larger institutional issues. Tenure needs to be much more transparent at every stage. Some faculty members wield way too much power.*
- *The lack of transparency in the tenure process is a problem.*

Relatedly, faculty lamented the lack of an accountability system: one that articulates standards for behavior, holds all members of departments accountable for their behavior, has clear and safe channels for reporting and a formal process for resolving disputes. Less than half (46%) of faculty respondents completing the survey agreed that there is a clear process for resolving these issues.

- *All members of the community are unfortunately not held to the same standards of behavior. There have been instances of senior faculty being dismissive or disrespectful to junior faculty.*
- *I am unaware of any "clear channels for reporting discourteous or offensive behavior" or "a clear process for resolving conflicts surrounding discourteous or offensive behavior" in my department. I'm not sure what something like that might look like at the department level.*
- *Not all members of the department are held to equal standards of respect. Hierarchies play a role into who is treated with more respect.*
- *There has been a lack of accountability and transparency from the leadership of the department.*
- *Again, concrete action steps would be helpful, a clear articulation of standards we are all expected to meet.*
- *Encourage certain faculty members to respect everyone's strengths and the value of their work, even if their efforts are less glamorous/prestigious and earn less recognition overall.*
- *Formal procedures for reporting incidents need to be instituted; the will is there to do so, but the task has not yet been accomplished.*
- *I think either more anonymous ways of communicating our needs/wants or even better natural protections so that we may voice our concerns without fear would be good.*
- *People in leadership positions could do more (and should in the past have done more) to address issues of misconduct. The Department could make a stronger commitment to working together as a group rather than repeatedly reinscribing hierarchies.*
- *The faculty who take on the responsibility of chairing a department need more training in how to put accountability and transparency into action.*
- *There should be more channels open for complaints.*

Sense of Community

68% of faculty respondents agreed that there is a strong sense of community within their departments. Those feeling less connected explained how the balkanization of subfields within departments has made it difficult to find common ground around which to connect as a community.

- *As a committee rather than a department, and given the enormous range of subfields we cover, I don't expect the [REDACT, department name] to be a single site of community and find most attempts to create a single community unsuccessful. I do think we have to find ways to render smaller subgroups available to students, faculty, and staff.*

- *The [REDACT] department is an interesting place. It does foster a sense of belonging with the shared area of interest of [REDACT, broad content area], and it seems the willingness is there to be part of that loose identity. There is also general support of one another. But with the large size of the department and the study of [REDACT, content area] having a long history and covering a vast number of research interests, questions, and methodologies, it seems easy for social engagement to remain based on specific locality. I have yet to formulate a specific suggestion for improving upon this localization of engagement.*
- *In general, more open conversations. Due to the nature of the department - containing a range of disciplines and specializations - there are different "silos" that have very different perspectives on a variety of issues. They need to be in more contact to create a broader consensus on basic values/practices in the department.*
- *[REDACT] is a department that brings together fields that don't necessarily have very much to say to one another. This makes community-building very difficult, at all levels of the department. I know that this is something that has come up in several external reviews and much has been done recently to work on this.*
- *One would need to find ways of overcoming the atomized nature of the department and to get colleagues to seriously work together with a shared sense of purpose.*
- *I always will be and I will always do what I can for the field within the context of its administrative base in [REDACT]. But for what might be termed personal, spiritual, or community purposes, I mentally abandoned [REDACT] long ago. Even when I began at Harvard [REDACT, year], with an entirely different faculty, was a cold and generally unhappy place. The contrast with [REDACT] could not have been greater, and both intellectually and as a place where I was to spend the best waking hours of my day, I quickly gravitated in that direction. I should add that I have enormous respect for and enthusiasm about our current chair who has taken on a task that anyone would be forgiven for refusing... They are determined to make things better and I wish them well.*

Faculty offered a few recommendations on how sense of connection might be improved, including hosting more social events (opportunities for faculty to learn about each other's work and for faculty to interact with graduate students), establishing checks-ins for new hires to connect with other faculty members, and finding spaces that allow for informal interaction.

- *Although there are a number of departmental colleagues that I feel socially connected to and with whom I enjoy having intellectually stimulating conversations, I would like to see more social engagement among the faculty colleagues.*
- *Create more opportunities to learn about the work of other community members. There are lots of events through the university and hard to know which ones would strengthen my relationships within [REDACT] and which ones would just be interesting.*
- *Provide a better physical space for faculty, students, and staff to interact.*
- *I would feel more included to the Harvard community if our office building is mixed with (or at least closer to) other members of the university.*
- *A greater interaction between graduate students and faculty members across different subfields will be helpful.*
- *Maybe we should have a project outside the department that we truly believe in and to which we would all contribute willingly together (e.g., something to do with rescuing the environment in Harvard Yard?). A pipe dream, I know. But we need to be taken out of ourselves, to combat this feeling that everyone is crushed by grievance.*
- *More chances for casual interaction so everyone has a higher baseline of knowledge and*

understanding about each other.

- *More faculty engagement with one another's work.*
- *More group departmental events/talks in which a significant number attend.*
- *More recognition for both administrative and intellectual achievement; more faculty social/intellectual events.*
- *More support and checking in on new hires.*

Positive Comments

To end on a positive note, there were some faculty members who praised their departments for being inclusive, welcoming, positive, close-knit, and friendly. A couple of participants even commended the work that has been undertaken to improve the climate in their departments.

- *In certain regards I think my department has done excellent things to foster an inclusive, warm and respectful climate. In other regards, there is much to be improved. And some past incidents are painful to recall.*
- *I have found the [REDACT] Department wonderful in all respects. Any low ratings reflect feeling undervalued and even disrespected by another part of FAS.*
- *I think the climate in the program is good. The exclusion referenced is, I think, an academic content matter and not a climate matter of the kind being considered here (though I think my ability to assert this indicates a certain privilege within the climate).*
- *My overall experience in [REDACT] has been very positive.*
- *[REDACT] is extremely close-knit and friendly.*
- *The leadership in the department is excellent; the meetings are friendly and respectful. There is an amiable if moderate sense of community.*
- *There have been great improvements made across the University in the years since I joined the Harvard faculty. Leadership, additional resources, and guidance from the University are paramount if any further progress is to be made.*
- *[REDACT] is an intense, mid-sized program with plenty of interaction between and among students and faculty. In the pre-pandemic world, we often gathered for meals, outings, and other face-to-face events. In those things the program can itself control, as far as I can see (and we have been blessed with a very diverse student population on most demographic fronts) students appreciate the open and candid nature of [REDACT], its lively yet cordial debates in tutorials and at other functions, and the more-or-less 24/7 accessibility of the faculty.*
- *I believe the leadership of our chair and the contribution of all faculty is helping to move forward in the right direction.*
- *I think the program does a very good job maintaining an inclusive environment.*
- *The climate is already very good.*