

CLIMATE ASSESSMENT

Change Agent States

“Tool For Change”



Description	A goal oriented assessment of the systemic or departmental environment for any number of dimensions of diversity.
Strategy behind the tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies need for system change • Gives direction for system change strategies • Demonstrates commitment to change • Creates dissatisfaction with the status quo • Provides documented evidence of the need for change • Motivates participation in change activities among all groups • Demonstrates administration’s openness to listening to employees in the system • Allows people to see themselves as participants in the change process • Provides baseline data to use to measure change • Gives insight into the system i.e. culture, practices, effects on individuals...
Goals and outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish baseline data and/or measure change/progress. • Identification of key issues • Direction for strategic planning and implementation • Creation of momentum for system to adopt change • Mandate for follow up to insure trust • Organizational self-reflection/insight • Involvement of the greater extension community in helping to make change
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions for administration and catalyst teams before onset of assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Why are we doing this? – What do we want to get out of it? – What different diversity identity issues do we want information about, i.e., sexism, racism, classism, rankism.... – Are we ready for an assessment? – What mechanisms should be used to prepare and distribute results? • Early in the planning stages have consultant in the field of assessment and data collection meet with key partners in the system, i.e. directors, human resource people, attorney, representatives of the Catalyst team.... • Lead administrator has commitment and language to support and give rationale for benefits of the process, addressing the concerns of colleagues and others in the system. • State diversity coordinator is critical to the process of informing all groups involved. • Preparation of coordinator and a key administrator who can move it forward. • Diversity team aware, question, provide support, input for the system.
Target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depends on assessment and identification of areas to include based on organizational unit that is working for change.

Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys: paper? electronic? • Focus groups
Disseminating information from the survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make presentations in a way that people see themselves as part of the solution. • Create an environment of solution-making and problem-solving where people feel safe and are not judged or blamed for the climate. • Context of acknowledgement of efforts thus far to create an inclusive organization. • Power point presentation. • Data on system's website. • Present at meetings/series of focus groups where people interpret data, supply additional context for system's climate, and create change strategies.
Suggestions for initiating this project/strategy	
Who's "buy-in" is needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity committee/teams • Top leadership • Administrators/supervisors
Who participated in development of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity committee, evaluation specialist, diversity colleagues, leadership.
Time frames and steps for development/ implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Necessary internal foundational structure needed prior to an assessment process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Commitment by leadership – Development and training of a Catalyst Team – Designation of a diversity coordinator to lead and manage the process • Choose outside consultant/researcher to do the work of survey development, consultation and analysis. • Prepare survey questions with the consultant: administrators, catalyst teams and the coordinator involved. • Submit for human subject review and approval. • Preparation of the system for survey distribution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Address fears and safety concerns. – Clarify purpose. – Check for other events/issues that might influence survey participation and attitudes: strife, cut backs, etc. • Distribute the survey with assurances of anonymity, instructions on completing, and cover letter by lead administrator. • Designate key people in different areas, regions, etc., to encourage participation through letters, e-mails and/or personal contacts. • Distribution methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Electronic – At system events, i.e., conferences, meetings, workshops.... – Hard copy mailings to home or office • Send out reminders on e-mail, in memos, announce at meetings. • Participants send surveys to consultant. • Consultant analyzes data and provides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An executive summary • Frequency of response to each individual question • Cross tabulation and significance testing as appropriate • Content analysis and findings • Content analysis of comments

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations • A select committee (2-3 people) from catalyst team and administration meet to review the draft report, check for accuracy and when necessary request additional information from researcher.
Barriers or issues to consider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial commitment to do an assessment from administration and other concerned individuals. • Readiness to provide follow up and communicate back to participants. • Translation into other languages, i.e., Spanish, Braille. • Length and complexity --literacy level considerations, simplicity. • Survey process assures safety and anonymity.
Costs associated with project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time for development, implementation, data entry, analysis, summary and follow up. • Direct costs: cost for assessment (can be considerable if document will be tallied by scanning), envelopes, postage, return postage, copies, follow up postcards or reminders, posters.
Media/ communication/ promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare all levels of leadership on how to encourage participation. • Prepare system with numerous messages, announcements. • Leadership should include information about the assessment in all publications, memos and newsletters. • Pre-publicity could include letters, email messages to listservs, office posters. • Promote at conferences and system events • Questions with answers (Q&A) distributed in preparation for survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What is the purpose of the survey? – Who is being asked to participate in the survey? – How can participants be sure that their answers will be confidential? – When will the survey be disseminated, and when will we receive the results? – What will be done with the survey results? – Will survey results be shared with faculty, council members and others? – Whom should I contact if I have questions about the survey?
Author	Revised by the Communications Committee, 2006