

A photograph of a male professor with glasses, wearing a dark blazer over a light blue shirt, standing in a classroom. He is gesturing with his hands while addressing a group of students. The students are seen from behind, sitting at desks with laptops. In the background, there is a green chalkboard with some faint writing, a projector screen, and a window with blinds. The overall scene is a typical university lecture hall.

University of Nebraska System Climate Study

The Student, Faculty and
Staff Experience

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Foreword From the University

In the following pages you will find the results of a system-wide climate survey that the University of Nebraska initiated in 2021 in partnership with Gallup. This is the first in what will become a regular climate assessment so that over time we gain a meaningful understanding of our strengths, challenges, areas of progress and opportunities to do more to become a better place for all members of the University of Nebraska community to learn and work.

We thank the many students, faculty and staff who took time to complete the survey. With their input, we now have a valuable baseline on which we can — and will — build. Each of us, together with our leadership teams, will use the data to inform our ongoing planning with regard to climate, the student experience, and our goal of becoming an employer of choice for all.

Gallup research reminds us that it's important to identify and celebrate what we do well. In that vein, we're pleased to see that strong majorities of our students, faculty and staff say they are treated with respect, well above national averages — suggesting that we have the right foundation in place for ensuring inclusive, welcoming, trustworthy campus communities.

We are also pleased that high shares of students say their instructors get them excited about learning, and that students say their University of Nebraska education is preparing them well for life after college. To us, this is evidence of the high quality of our faculty and staff and their commitment to our fundamental mission to educate Nebraska's future leaders. Students also reported regular exposure to diverse people and ideas, and agreed they have opportunities to share their opinions in meaningful ways — both vital to our role as a forum for the robust and free exchange of ideas.

Survey results also point to opportunities for action. In particular:

- While faculty and staff report high levels of collaboration with their colleagues, they also indicate a desire for more advancement opportunities, particularly among our staff members; greater clarity around the vision for the future of the university and their role in achieving it; and more direct communication, including at the leadership levels.
- As is the case nationally during this period of unprecedented challenge, many of our colleagues report battling burnout, including higher shares of women.
- People of color, and our Black students and colleagues in particular, responded less favorably on some measures of inclusiveness and engagement. We are not an outlier nationally in this regard. Yet these results tell us that while we can be proud of our strong foundation, we must make certain that our work to make the University of Nebraska a destination of choice is inclusive of people of all backgrounds.

Strengthening our campus climate will always be a work in progress. It is vital that we turn our intent into action, and that our strategies are informed by thoughtful input from our students, faculty and staff. That's one reason we are pleased to have this initial set of data in hand and available for all members of the university community to review. While this is only one survey, it will serve as another tool as we consider opportunities to refine our existing plans and focus new energy and efforts. And it gives us a baseline for future years so that we can assess our progress in a holistic way.

Thank you again to all those who are working every day to help us become a better university. Your input makes a real difference for our faculty, staff and 52,000 students.

Ted Carter

President, University of Nebraska System

Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D.

Chancellor, University of Nebraska Medical Center

Ronnie D. Green, Ph.D.

Chancellor, University of Nebraska–Lincoln

Douglas A. Kristensen, J.D.

Chancellor, University of Nebraska at Kearney

Joanne Li, Ph.D., CFA

Chancellor, University of Nebraska at Omaha

Introduction

Cultivating trust, diversity and inclusion is a key priority at the University of Nebraska. In its [five-year strategy](#), the university outlined its desire to be “a place where diverse backgrounds and ideas are welcomed and celebrated, where robust dialogue is encouraged, and where we are intentional and transparent in exploring how we can be a better place to learn, work and study.”

Gallup partnered with the University of Nebraska (NU) to develop two distinct climate surveys to identify strengths and opportunities related to the university’s goal to proactively assess and improve its campus climate — one of students and the other of faculty and staff. The student survey focused on students’ education, campus diversity and inclusiveness, and relationships with other students. The faculty and staff survey concentrated on workplace satisfaction, diversity and inclusion, and communication.

This report includes findings from both NU web surveys, which were conducted in the fall of 2021. Results are from surveys of more than 6,700 currently enrolled students, 2,000 faculty, 3,900 staff members and 350 administrators.

Where available, data is shown to provide nationally representative comparisons to the NU study. These data are from three primary sources:

- students enrolled in degree-granting institutions nationally, from the Gallup-Lumina Foundation 2020 State of the Student Experience study¹
- employees nationally from Gallup’s 2021 employee experience Overall and Education-Postsecondary/Higher Ed Workgroup Level databases, which include more 13 million employees across industries and more than 118,000 employees at degree-granting institutions
- the Gallup 2021 Faculty and Staff Survey, which includes over 9,000 employees at degree-granting institutions nationally

Like any survey, the NU surveys represent one moment in time and should be viewed as a valuable baseline upon which the university can build. The surveys identify several key strengths and opportunities for the university.

In some areas, NU outperforms or matches national averages. In areas where there is opportunity for improvement, national data show many other higher education institutions are facing similar challenges. This report details the findings.

¹ <https://www.gallup.com/education/327485/state-of-the-student-experience-fall-2020.aspx>

Key Findings

- Majorities of students at the University of Nebraska feel respected by their classmates (53%), faculty (53%) and staff (58%), which is above college graduates nationally. Like national trends, historically underrepresented students and marginalized groups are less likely to report feeling respected.
- On par with their peers nationally, about four in 10 NU students strongly agree they feel as though they belong at the university. While an identical percentage of NU students (38%) think the institution is welcoming to all students, the national average is higher (49%).
- Few NU students, 16%, strongly agree the climate on their campus prevents people from saying things others might find offensive. At the same time, 17% strongly agree they are comfortable sharing an opinion held by few people.
- Roughly six in 10 NU students strongly agree they have at least one professor who makes them excited about learning. NU students rate the institution less positively on key supportive metrics — mentorship and perceived care.
- Nearly three-quarters of NU students say they have never experienced harassment or discrimination while enrolled at the University of Nebraska because of their race or ethnicity, which is 12 points more favorable than the national average. Fewer Black (51%) and Asian (56%) students say the same.
- Most students report feeling safe at the university, but, as is the case nationally, NU female students are less likely than males to report feeling safe and are less confident about sexual assault reporting processes.
- NU faculty and staff exceed national averages in strongly agreeing they are respected (42%), feeling valued for their unique strengths (28%) and believing the institution would do the right thing if faced with an ethics complaint (32%).
- Three in 10 NU faculty and staff strongly agree they are treated equitably, which is 10 points greater than higher education employees nationally.
- Almost four in 10 NU employees strongly agree someone at work went out of their way to help them recently, but just one-quarter register the same level of agreement when asked if they are satisfied with cooperation from colleagues in other departments.
- NU employees are in roughly the 25th percentile of all workgroups in Gallup's employee database for job satisfaction and having opportunities for advancement.
- One-third of NU employees, including nearly two in five women, say they struggle with burnout "always" or "very often." These readings, however, are at least 10 points lower than national averages.



The Student Experience

Gallup research confirms that how you go to college matters far more than where you go to college. That is, students' experiences during their time in college shape their lives after graduation, and having supportive experiences is linked to long-term outcomes, including wellbeing, workplace engagement and alumni's attachment to their alma mater.²

Majorities of NU students feel classmates, staff and faculty respect them.

Feeling respected is an essential component of creating an inclusive campus culture. When students feel respected, they are more likely to feel like they belong and are able to engage more effectively in their coursework and the greater community.^{3,4} University of Nebraska leaders share a deep commitment to embracing diverse backgrounds and creating a "university for everyone."

Overall, majorities of NU undergraduates feel respected by one another, university staff and faculty members. While 53% of NU students strongly agree they are treated with respect by both their classmates and faculty members, slightly more (58%) say the same of their treatment by staff members.

NU students are significantly more likely than students nationally to strongly agree they are treated with respect by each of these three groups — other students (+10 percentage points), staff members (+8) and faculty (+5).

2 <https://news.gallup.com/poll/168848/life-college-matters-life-college.aspx>

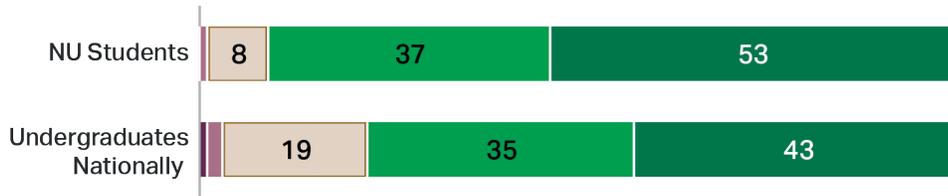
3 <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/242108/diversity-inclusion-perspective-paper.aspx>

4 <https://news.gallup.com/poll/311249/half-grads-treated-respect-fellow-students.aspx>

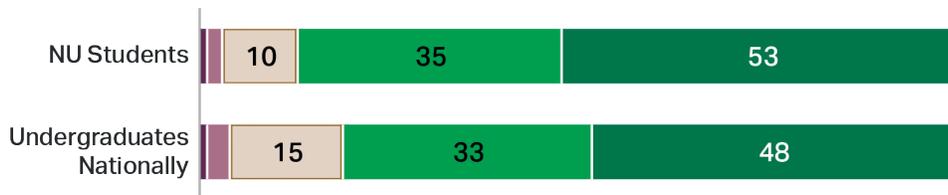
Majorities of Students Feel Treated With Respect

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree

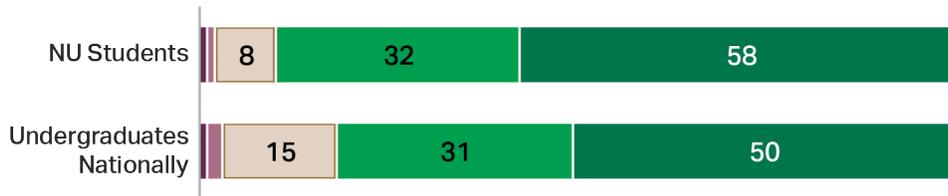
I am treated with respect by other students at the University of Nebraska.



I am treated with respect by faculty members at the University of Nebraska.



I am treated with respect by staff members at the University of Nebraska.



Percentages shown when >4%; “Don’t know” responses are omitted.

Black students at NU are significantly less likely than those of other races and ethnicities to report feeling respected. Forty-five percent of Black NU students strongly agree they are treated with respect by their peers, 49% by faculty and 53% by staff members, while majorities of White, Hispanic and Asian students do.

This trend among racial and ethnic groups is not unique to the University of Nebraska. According to the 2020 Lumina-Gallup national student study,⁵ 43% of Black undergraduates nationwide feel respected by other students, 46% by faculty and 50% by staff members.

⁵ <https://www.gallup.com/education/327485/state-of-the-student-experience-fall-2020.aspx>

Racial and Ethnic Differences in Perceptions of Respect

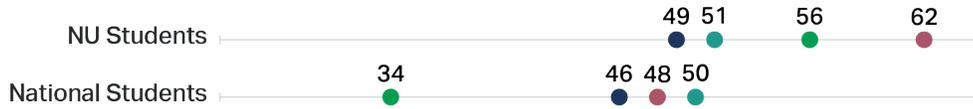
■ Asian ■ Black ■ Hispanic ■ White

% Strongly agree

I am treated with respect by other students.



I am treated with respect by faculty members.



I am treated with respect by staff members.



There are also differences in perceptions of respect between male and female students. While 51% of female NU students strongly agree they are treated with respect by both other students and faculty members, they are significantly less likely than male NU students to feel that way. Meanwhile, nearly equal shares of female (57%) and male (60%) students strongly agree staff members treat them with respect.

Both male and female NU undergraduates are more likely than students nationally to feel respected by all three groups.

Gender Differences in Perceptions of Respect

■ Female ■ Male

% Strongly agree

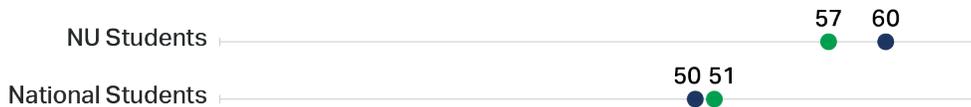
I am treated with respect by other students.



I am treated with respect by faculty members.



I am treated with respect by staff members.



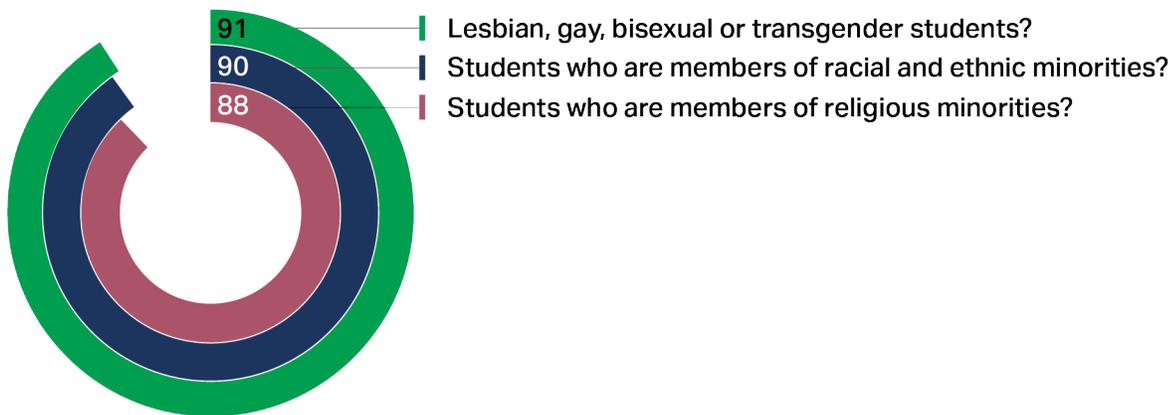
The University of Nebraska is viewed as a good place for historically marginalized groups, although it has opportunities to be more inclusive, foster an even greater sense of belonging and be more welcoming to all students.

Gallup asked NU students whether they feel NU is a “good place” or “not a good place” for certain student populations. Overall, strong majorities of NU undergraduates feel their university is a good place for racial and ethnic minorities (90%), lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender students (91%), and members of religious minorities (88%).

Most Students Feel the University of Nebraska Is a “Good Place” For Historically Marginalized Student Groups

Is the University of Nebraska a good place or not a good place for:

% Good place



Nine in 10 White NU students (91%) think NU is a good place for members of racial/ethnic minorities, while 83% of Black, 89% of Hispanic and 91% of Asian students think the same.

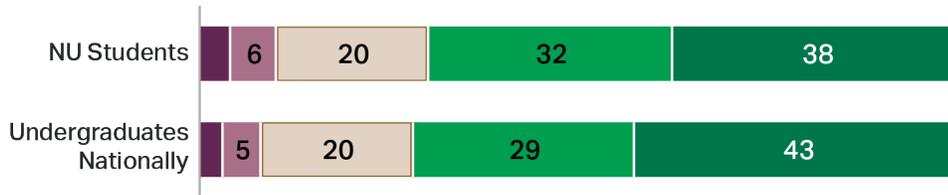
Likewise, there is little difference in views of NU as a good place based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Ninety-one percent of male and female students and 86% of those who identify as another gender say it is a good place for LGBTQIA+ students.

Meanwhile, two-thirds of NU students agree that the university is committed to ensuring an inclusive environment for all. Shares of NU students who reported feeling as if they belong at the University of Nebraska are in line with national trends.

Percentage of Students Who Feel as if They “Belong” at the University of Nebraska

I feel as if I belong at the University of Nebraska.

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree



Percentages shown when >4%; “Don’t know” responses are omitted.

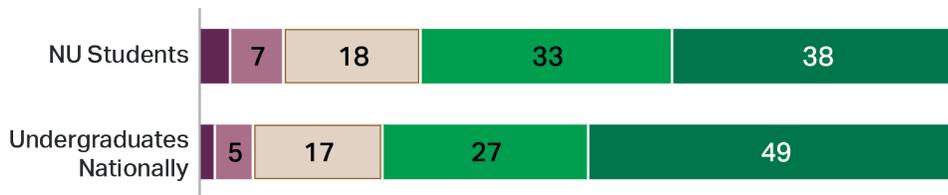
There are also differences by race and ethnicity on this measure of belonging, with 28% of Black students strongly agreeing they feel like they belong at the university, which is 10 percentage points lower than White and Hispanic students and seven points lower than Asian students.

On perceptions of the University of Nebraska as a “welcoming place for all students,” 38% of NU undergraduate students strongly agree NU is a welcoming place for all. This finding trails the 49% of students nationally who say the same.

Percentage of Students Who Strongly Agree the University of Nebraska Is a “Welcoming Place For All Students”

The University of Nebraska is a welcoming place for all students.

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree



Percentages shown when >4%; “Don’t know” responses are omitted.

Black students (37%) are about as likely as White students (35%) to strongly agree NU is a welcoming place for all, while more Hispanic (44%) and Asian students (43%) strongly agree.

Many NU students are regularly exposed to people with a diverse range of backgrounds and ideas.

Inclusive Experiences Produce Emotionally Attached Alumni

Nationally, alumni who strongly agree they felt very comfortable sharing ideas that were held by a small number of students are more emotionally attached to their institution.

Students who are exposed to more diversity when enrolled are also more likely to report their degree was worth the cost after graduation.

A welcoming, equitable university culture fosters learning and free exchange of ideas and helps students feel confident they can trust one another, faculty and staff. In this type of environment, students are not only more engaged, but also more likely to feel valued, respected and accepted.

As described in its five-year strategy, the University of Nebraska aims to foster a robust dialogue, celebrate diverse perspectives and encourage students to speak their ideas freely and comfortably. Currently, a strong majority of NU students agree they have regular opportunities at the university to interact with people from different backgrounds.

While attending the University of Nebraska, I interact with people from different backgrounds on a regular basis.

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree



Percentages shown when >4%; "Don't know" responses are omitted.

Few NU students (16%), strongly agree the climate on their campus prevents people from saying things they believe because others might find them offensive. Male students are more likely than female students to strongly agree the climate on their campus prevents them from "saying things they believe because others might find them offensive" (20% vs. 13%).

Most NU students agree they have "many opportunities" to share their opinions in a meaningful way. At the same time, less than half report feeling "very comfortable sharing ideas in class that are probably held by only a small number of students."

Given that a recent Knight Foundation-Gallup study⁶ found 70% of U.S. college students say they want an open learning environment, there is an opportunity for the University of Nebraska to continue to promote an inclusive atmosphere that encourages all students to express themselves freely.

6 <https://www.gallup.com/education/257939/inclusive-environments-produce-attached-alumni.aspx>

Students feel supported by their professors and many have strong peer relationships at the University of Nebraska.

Prior to entering the workforce, undergraduates often rely on their university’s support to guide their learning and development in a meaningful way. Gallup measures the support a university provides its undergraduate students by asking whether graduates strongly agree they had at least one professor who made them excited about learning, had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams and had a professor who cared about them as a person. Gallup research shows mentorship and supportive student experiences are predictive of long-term outcomes, including wellbeing and preparedness for life outside of college.^{7,8}

Mentorship experiences (involving friends, professors, family members or others) are strongly linked to increased employee engagement, higher wellbeing later in life and graduates feeling their degree was worth the cost.⁹

A strong majority of NU students agree they have at least one professor who makes them excited about learning.

I have at least one professor at the University of Nebraska who makes me excited about learning.

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree

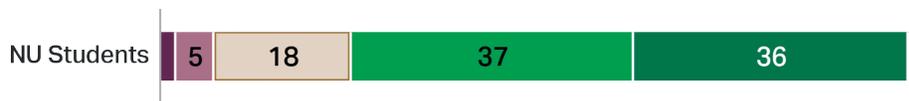


Percentages shown when >4%; “Don’t know” responses are omitted.

In addition, almost four in 10 NU students strongly agree their professors care about them as a person, and more than three in 10 strongly agree they have a mentor at UN who encourages them to pursue their goals and dreams. Both readings are identical to the national comparison group of undergraduates.

My professors at the University of Nebraska care about me as a person.

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree



Percentages shown when >4%; “Don’t know” responses are omitted.

7 2014 Gallup-Purdue Index Report

8 <https://news.gallup.com/poll/182306/big-six-college-experiences-linked-life-preparedness.aspx>

9 Gallup-Purdue Index Report 2016

I have a mentor at the University of Nebraska who encourages me to pursue my goals and dreams.

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree

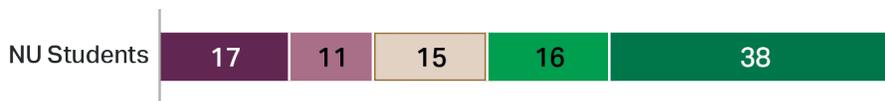


"Don't know" responses are omitted.

Social support from friends and family has been directly linked to a student's persistence in college.¹⁰ Overall, 38% of students strongly agree they have a best friend at the University of Nebraska.

I have a best friend at the University of Nebraska.

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree



Percentages shown when >4%; "Don't know" responses are omitted.

Students of different racial and ethnic groups report different experiences with friends. Black NU students (26%) are significantly less likely than White (40%), Asian (34%) and Hispanic (38%) students to strongly agree they have a best friend at the university. This trend is consistent with national research that confirms historically marginalized and underrepresented students are less likely to experience the same sense of community and belonging as their peers.¹¹

While most NU students agree that students "look out for one another," Black students were less likely to agree with that statement than their White, Asian and Hispanic classmates.

¹⁰ <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/236063/using-strengths-based-approach-retain-college-students.aspx>

¹¹ "Do I Belong? Underrepresented Students Sense of Belonging," 2021;

"Ten Simple Rules for Supporting Historically Underrepresented Students in Science," 2021;

"Promoting Persistence and Success of Underrepresented Students: Lessons for Teaching and Learning," 2008

Students from every background feel NU is preparing them well for life after college.

More than eight in 10 NU students agree they are challenged academically at the University of Nebraska, and 80% expressed confidence that their major field of study will lead to a good job. Three-quarters of students also agree the knowledge and skills they are learning at the university will be relevant in the workplace. Overall, two-thirds of NU students agree the university is preparing them well for life outside of college and that the University of Nebraska is a “perfect place” for someone like them.

Great Experiences, Great Jobs, Great Lives

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree

I am challenged academically at the University of Nebraska



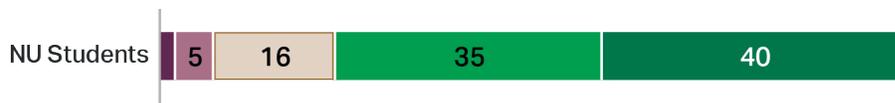
I am confident my major field of study/studies will lead to a good job.



The University of Nebraska is preparing me well for life outside of college.



The knowledge and skills I am learning in my coursework at the University of Nebraska will be relevant in the workplace.



Percentages shown when >4%; “Don’t know” responses are omitted.

NU students across racial and ethnic groups are about as likely to report they feel prepared for life outside of college. There are some differences in their overall assessments.

Demographic Differences in Students' Perceptions of Their Overall University Experience

■ Asian ■ Black ■ Hispanic ■ White

% Strongly agree

I am challenged academically at the University of Nebraska.



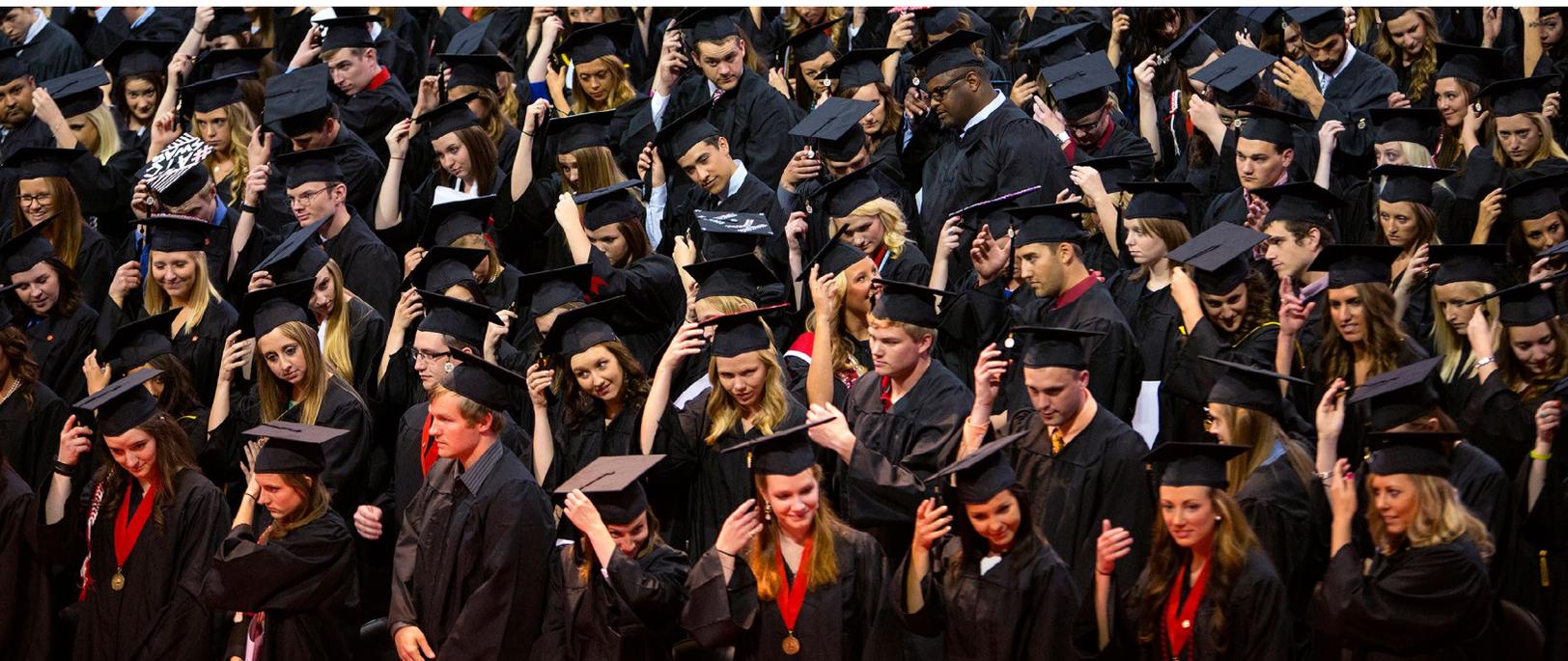
I am confident my major field of study/studies will lead to a good job.



The knowledge and skills I am learning in my coursework at the University of Nebraska will be relevant in the workplace.



The University of Nebraska is preparing me well for life outside of college.

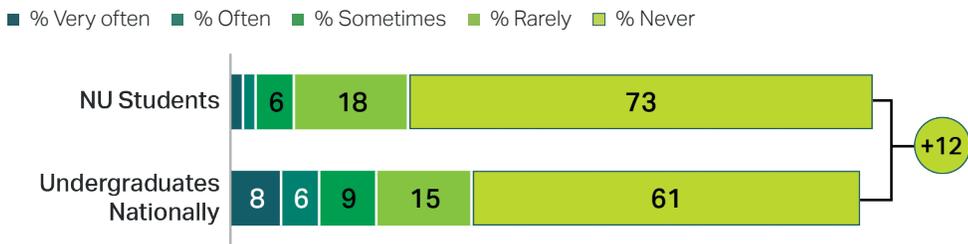


A strong majority of NU students overall say they have never experienced racial discrimination, but fewer Black and Asian students agree.

Overall, 73% of NU students say they have never experienced harassment or discrimination while enrolled at the University of Nebraska because of their race or ethnicity. This is more favorable than the national average of 61%.

Experiences With Harassment or Discrimination

How often, if at all, have you experienced harassment or discrimination while enrolled at [SCHOOL] because of your race or ethnicity?



Percentages shown when >4%.

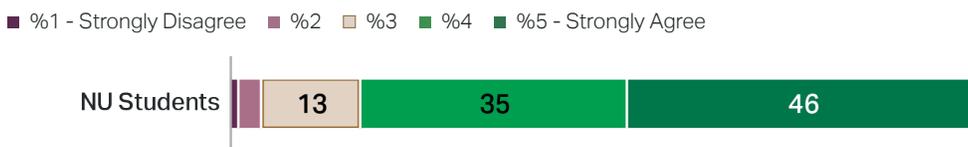
However, the numbers are not as positive for Black, Asian and Hispanic NU students. While 79% of White students say they have never experienced harassment or discrimination while enrolled at NU, 51% of Black, 56% of Asian and 65% of Hispanic students say the same. These findings are similar to, though marginally better, than national trends.

Most students agree, if they raised a concern about discrimination on campus, the university would “do what is right.” However, Black students are less likely to express confidence in the university doing what is right. This is in line with Gallup’s findings that historically marginalized and underrepresented students are less likely to feel confident in reporting systems at their schools.

Most students feel safe at NU, but fewer female students do.

An atmosphere that promotes learning and collaboration is not only psychologically safe, but also physically safe. A strong majority of students report feeling safe at the University of Nebraska.

I feel safe at the University of Nebraska.



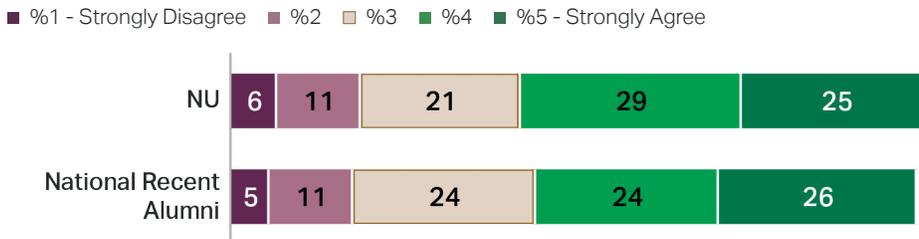
Percentages shown when >4%; “Don’t know” responses are omitted.

Slight differences exist by race and ethnicity, with fewer Black students reporting they feel safe. However, the greatest demographic difference is by gender identity. Eighty-six percent of male students agree they feel safe, while 78% of female students and 69% of students identifying as non-binary or another gender feel the same. This finding is consistent with national trends, which show female students are less likely than their male peers to strongly agree they feel safe on campus.

The University of Nebraska has an opportunity to build students' confidence that it would respond appropriately if students raised concerns about discrimination or assault. Only about half of students agree the university would "do what is right" if they raised a concern about sexual assault on campus.

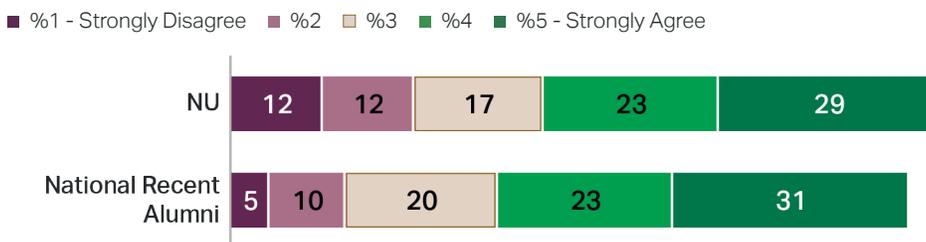
These findings are consistent with national trends for colleges and universities: Gallup data show 32% of recent college graduates nationally strongly agree their institution would do the right thing if they reported an issue of sexual assault on campus.¹²

If I raised an issue about discrimination on campus, I am confident the University of Nebraska would do what is right.



"Don't know" responses are omitted.

If I raised an issue about sexual assault on campus, I am confident the University of Nebraska would do what is right.



"Don't know" responses are omitted.

When it comes to raising an issue about discrimination, Asian and Hispanic students are slightly more likely than Black and White students to strongly agree the University of Nebraska would do what is right. Meanwhile, female and White students are least likely to strongly agree the university would do the right thing if they raised an issue about sexual assault.

12 <https://news.gallup.com/poll/311675/alumni-reflect-college-responsiveness-sex-assault.aspx>

Employee Experiences

Universities are among the least engaged workplaces in the world.¹³ Gallup research finds student perceptions of faculty-student engagement are positively correlated with university employee engagement.¹⁴ That is, higher student engagement is linked with higher faculty and staff engagement.

Gallup research has identified three critical experiences that employees in every workplace must have to perceive a truly inclusive culture: feeling respected, believing their individual strengths are appreciated and trusting their leaders to do the right thing when faced with an ethics issue.¹⁵ These requirements reflect the shared responsibility of employees, managers and leaders.¹⁶

NU strives to create a thriving, engaged campus where everyone feels heard. When leaders and managers welcome many backgrounds, experiences and viewpoints, they create a culture that truly promotes, embraces and seeks each employee’s unique contributions.

NU already has a strong foundation to build a thriving culture; identifying gaps in employees’ experiences will help the university develop action plans to better support faculty and staff.

The University of Nebraska has a strong foundation for an inclusive culture that embodies respect, a commitment to building strengths and trust in leadership.

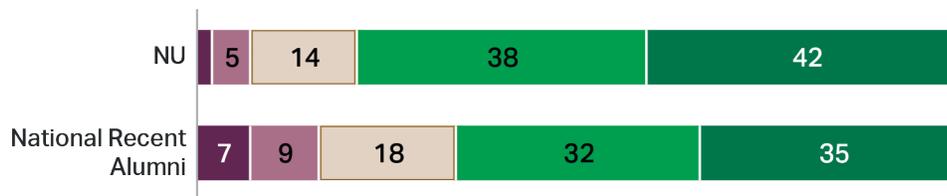
Ratings of NU faculty, staff and administrators on each of the three metrics that are essential to an inclusive culture — respect, building unique strengths and doing what is right — outpace national postsecondary higher education workgroups from Gallup’s employee engagement database.

Respect

A strong majority — 80% of University of Nebraska employees agree they are treated with respect at work, including 42% who strongly agree with this statement. This is higher than the national average of 35% for faculty, staff and administrators, and it is near the 50th percentile for Gallup’s postsecondary higher education workgroup, which means about 50% of workgroups in the database are more likely to strongly agree.

At work, I am treated with respect.

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree



Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100%, +/-1 percentage point.

13 <https://www.gallup.com/education/194321/higher-education-employee-engagement.aspx>

14 <https://www.gallup.com/education/330167/faculty-engagement-linked-better-student-experience.aspx>

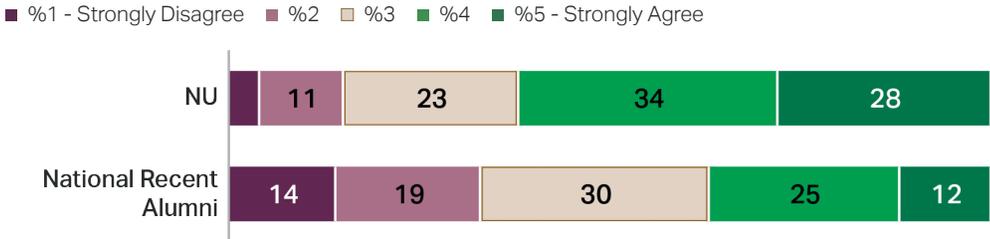
15 <https://www.gallup.com/education/284339/third-faculty-report-treated-respect-work.aspx>

16 <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/242108/diversity-inclusion-perspective-paper.aspx>

Building Strengths

When it comes to managers' appreciation of their team members' unique characteristics, the University of Nebraska exceeds national averages. NU employees (28%) are more than twice as likely than the national comparison group (12%) to strongly agree their workplace is committed to building the strengths of each team member and associate.

My workplace is committed to building the strengths of each team member/associate.



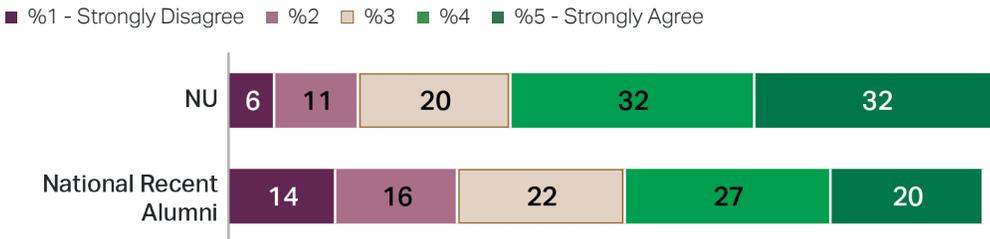
Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100%, +/-1 percentage point.

However, administrators (41%) are more likely than faculty (27%) and staff (28%) to strongly agree their workplace is committed to building each person's strengths.

Trust in Leadership

Nearly two-thirds of employees across the university system agree that the university would do the right thing if they raised a concern about ethics and integrity. These numbers exceed national figures.

If I raised a concern about ethics and integrity, I am confident my employer would do what is right.



Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100%, +/-1 percentage point.

Faculty and staff, however, are less likely than administrators to express confidence the university would do the right thing if they raised a concern about ethics and integrity.

NU employees rate the university below the 50th percentile on openly discussing diversity and inclusiveness and making them feel like their opinions count.

While most employees agree diversity and inclusiveness issues are openly discussed at work, the 36% who strongly agree with that statement is lower than the 50th percentile in Gallup’s Overall Workgroup Level Database.

Diversity and inclusiveness issues are openly discussed.

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree



Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100%, +/-1 percentage point.

Black employees see more opportunity for discussion, as 23% across the university system strongly agree diversity and inclusiveness issues are openly discussed, compared with 37% among both White and Asian employees.

Percentage of Employees Who Strongly Agree Diversity and Inclusiveness Issues Are Openly Discussed

Employees at the University of Nebraska



Critical to feeling included in one’s community is feeling that one’s opinions matter to the institution. Most NU employees agree their opinions count, but the 29% who strongly agree is lower than the 50th percentile for comparable workgroups in Gallup’s overall database, including the higher education workgroup.

At work, my opinions seem to count.

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree



Furthermore, Black employees are less likely to say their opinions count, and faculty and staff are less likely than administrators to say their opinions count.

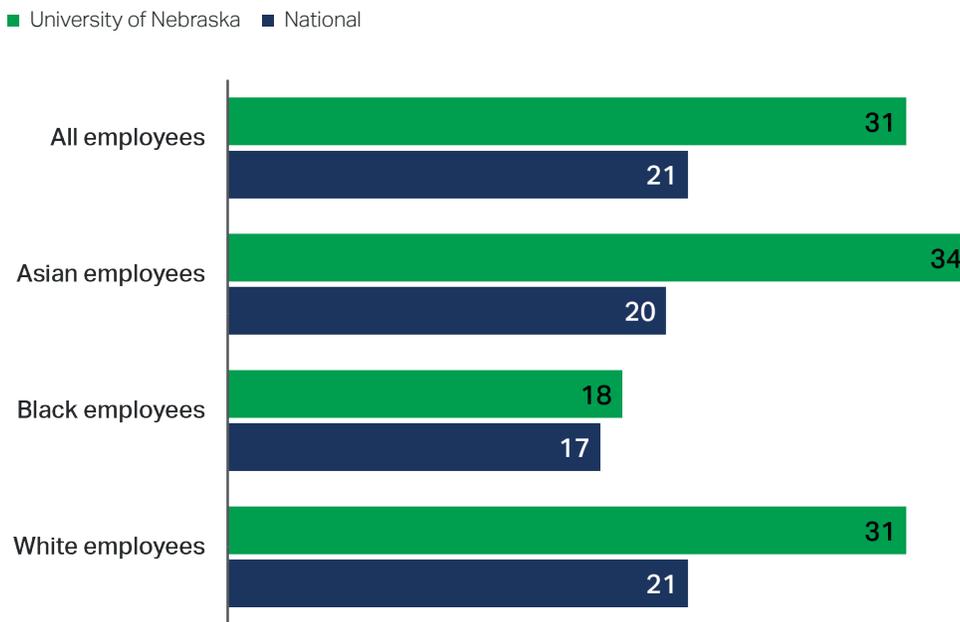
NU employees are more likely than their national counterparts to think they are treated equitably.

Most employees across the university system agree everyone is treated fairly, regardless of ethnic background, race, gender, age, disability or other differences not related to job performance, with 31% strongly agreeing.

Compared with higher education employees nationally, those in the NU system are more likely to strongly agree people are treated fairly (31% vs. 21%), respectively.

However, Black employees at NU (18%) are substantially less likely than White (31%) and Asian (34%) employees to strongly agree people are treated fairly. Black NU employees' perceived treatment is similar to their national peer group, but NU Asian employees outpace their national counterparts by 14 percentage points.

Percentage Who Strongly Agree That Everyone at the University Is Treated Fairly Regardless of Ethnic Background, Race, Gender, Age, Disability or Other Differences Not Related to Job Performance



Source: 2021 University of Nebraska Climate Study; 2021 National Faculty and Staff Survey

Collaboration among employees at the University of Nebraska is strong, as they particularly feel supported by their colleagues.

When collaboration is high, it can have a multiplier effect as people may discover and accomplish more together than they can as individuals. But when collaboration is low, it can contribute to burnout.

More than two-thirds of employees across the NU system say someone went out of their way recently to help them. Administrators stand out from staff and faculty on this reading as 51% strongly agree that someone recently went out of their way to help them vs. 36% of staff and 38% of faculty.

Someone at work recently went out of their way to help me.

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree



Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100%, +/-1 percentage point.

One in four employees across the university system strongly agree that they are satisfied with the cooperation they receive from colleagues in other departments. The reading on this question is below the 50th percentile for workgroups in Gallup’s database.

I am satisfied with the cooperation I receive from colleagues in other departments.

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree



Percentages shown when >4%.

While most employees agree it is easy for them to get the information they need to do their job, only 22% strongly agree, which is also below the 50th percentile for workgroups in Gallup’s database.

It is easy for me to get the information I need to do my job.

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree



Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100%, +/-1 percentage point; percentages shown when >4%.

Opportunities exist to increase employee engagement.

Based on over 50 years of employee engagement research, Gallup knows engaged employees produce better business outcomes than other employees. Gallup defines employee engagement as the involvement and enthusiasm of employees in their work and workplace. Engaged employees are emotionally and psychologically committed, and Gallup finds engaged employees are less likely to leave their institution, represent lower healthcare costs for their employer, have fewer absences and are more likely to recommend their institution as a place to work.¹⁷

Highly engaged employees in a higher education setting — including faculty, staff and administrators — in turn, produce more engaged and emotionally attached students with lower levels of absenteeism, higher academic achievement and greater levels of on-time completion.

NU results on several metrics of employee engagement stand out as areas where the university can improve.

Job Satisfaction

The 23% of NU employees who strongly agree they are satisfied with the university as a place to work is in the bottom 25% for workgroups in Gallup’s overall database, and just above the 50th percentile for workgroups in higher education. Black employees are slightly less likely to express satisfaction (17%) than their White (23%) or Asian (26%) colleagues.

Satisfaction With the University of Nebraska as a Place to Work

■ %1 - Extremely Dissatisfied ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Extremely Satisfied



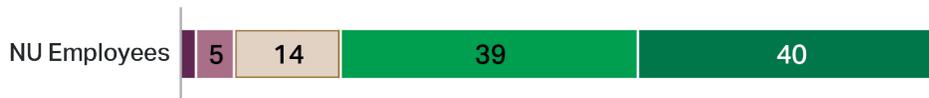
Percentages shown when >4%.

Understanding Expectations

Defining and clarifying the outcomes to be achieved is perhaps the most basic of all employee needs and manager responsibilities. This metric is the lowest-performing engagement item among employees at the University of Nebraska. The 40% who strongly agree they know what is expected of them are in the 37th percentile of all workgroups in Gallup’s database and workgroups in higher education.

I know what is expected of me at work.

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree



Percentages shown when >4%.

17 <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/285674/improve-employee-engagement-workplace.aspx>

Opportunity for Advancement

Previous Gallup research finds most employees need to know they are improving and have opportunities to build their knowledge and skills. At the University of Nebraska, 22% of employees strongly agree they have adequate opportunities for career advancement, which is just slightly above the 25th percentile of all workgroups in Gallup’s database.

I believe that I have adequate opportunities for career advancement at my organization.

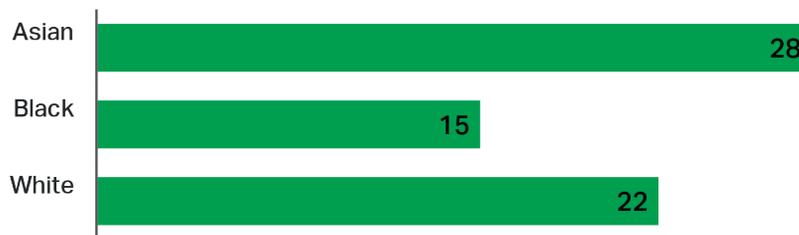
■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree



Staff members (17%) are substantially less likely than faculty (28%) or administrators (38%) to feel this way. Black NU employees (15%) are less likely than their White (22%) or Asian (28%) colleagues to strongly agree they have these opportunities.

I believe that I have adequate opportunities for career advancement at my organization.

% Strongly agree



Having opportunities at work to learn and grow is both a key driver of engagement for higher education employees and a cause of turnover. At the University of Nebraska, 39% of employees strongly agree they have opportunities at work to learn and grow, placing the university in the 50th percentile of workgroups in higher education.

Effective Communication

Open, clear and honest communication is a springboard for collaboration, which gets people working together toward a common goal. Overall, fewer than one in five University of Nebraska employees strongly agree there is open communication throughout all levels of the university (14%), leadership communicates effectively (17%) or communication at work is direct and honest (18%).

Perceptions of Communication at the University of Nebraska

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree

At work, we are direct and honest in all our communications.



Leadership communicates effectively with the organization.



There is open communication throughout all levels of my organization.



Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100%, +/-1 percentage point.

These percentages are just above the 25th percentile of all employee workgroups in Gallup’s database, meaning nearly 75% of workgroups in the database are more likely to strongly agree than NU employees.

Valued Input

Asking for employees’ input can often lead to better decision-making, and when employees feel they are involved in decisions, they take greater ownership of the outcomes. More than one in four NU employees (26%) strongly agree they are asked for input regarding changes that affect their work, which is below the 50th percentile in Gallup’s database.

I am asked for my input regarding changes that affect my work.

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree



Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100%, +/-1 percentage point.

Earning Trust

Institutions need to do what they say they will do to earn their employees' trust. Moving from intent to action is a concern for University of Nebraska employees, as just 12% across the university system strongly agree they are confident the university will act on the results of this climate survey.

I am confident that the findings arising out of this survey will be acted upon.

■ %1 - Strongly Disagree ■ %2 ■ %3 ■ %4 ■ %5 - Strongly Agree



In challenging times, burnout and work-life balance are challenging employees.

The top causes of burnout nationally:

- 1) unfair treatment at work
- 2) unmanageable workload
- 3) unclear communication from managers
- 4) lack of manager support
- 5) unreasonable time pressure

Low employee engagement resulting from less collaboration and teamwork and unhealthy work-life balance can contribute to employee burnout which can trigger a downward spiral in individual and organizational performance.¹⁸ Burned out employees are much more likely to take a sick day or actively seek a different job. If they stay, they typically have lower confidence in their performance and are less likely to discuss how to approach performance goals with their manager.

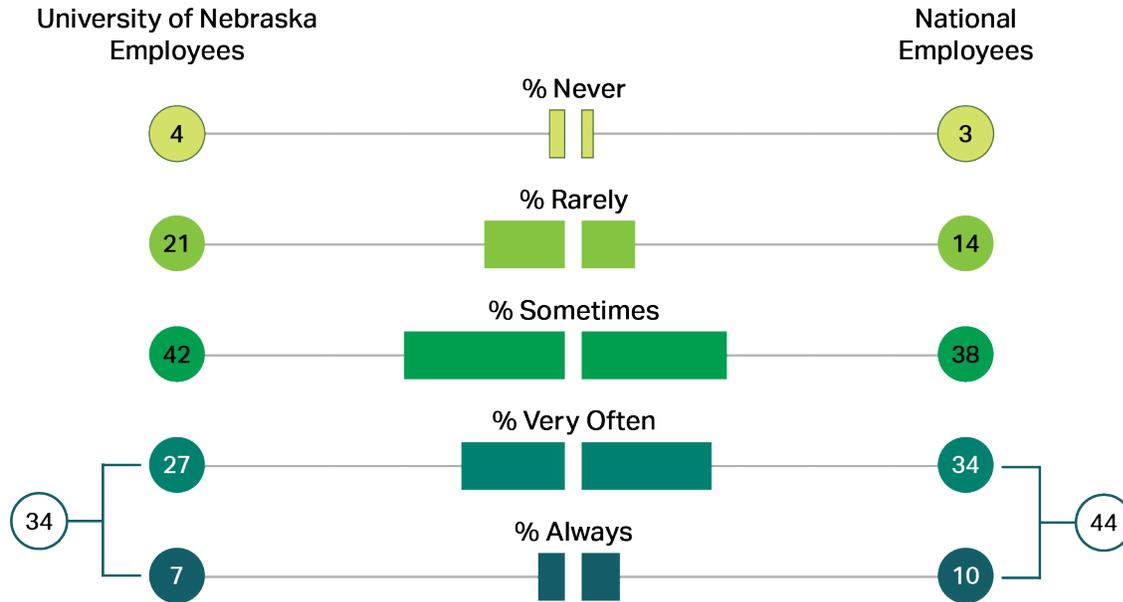
While 34% of employees at the University of Nebraska report they are struggling with burnout "always" or "very often," that is lower than the 44% who say the same nationally. Still, the reading jumps to 76% when the percentage who say they feel burned out at least "sometimes" is included.

18 <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/237059/employee-burnout-part-main-causes.aspx>

Work-Life Balance at the University of Nebraska

How often do you feel burned out at work?

■ % Never ■ % Rarely ■ % Sometimes ■ % Very Often ■ % Always



Source: 2021 University of Nebraska Climate Study; 2021 National Faculty and Staff Survey

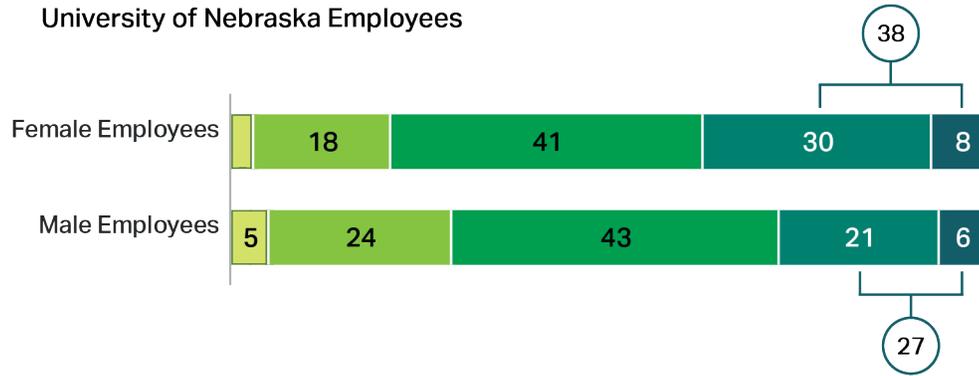
Nationally, female employees are more burned out a work than men, and this gap has more than doubled since 2019. As is the case nationally, women working at the University of Nebraska (38%) are more likely than men (27%) to say they are burned out very often or always. NU employees are, however, less likely than their national counterparts to be burned out.

Employee Burnout at the University of Nebraska and Nationally, by Gender

How often do you feel burned out at work?

■ % Never ■ % Rarely ■ % Sometimes ■ % Very Often ■ % Always

University of Nebraska Employees



National Employees



Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100%, +/-1 percentage point; percentages shown when >4%.

Additionally, several other metrics suggest the University of Nebraska can work to improve employees' work and life experience. Fewer than one in five strongly agree:

- they can maintain a healthy balance between work and personal commitments (19%)
- appropriate resources are available to them when they are feeling overwhelmed (17%)
- they have enough time to complete their work (15%)

National readings on these three measures are similar.

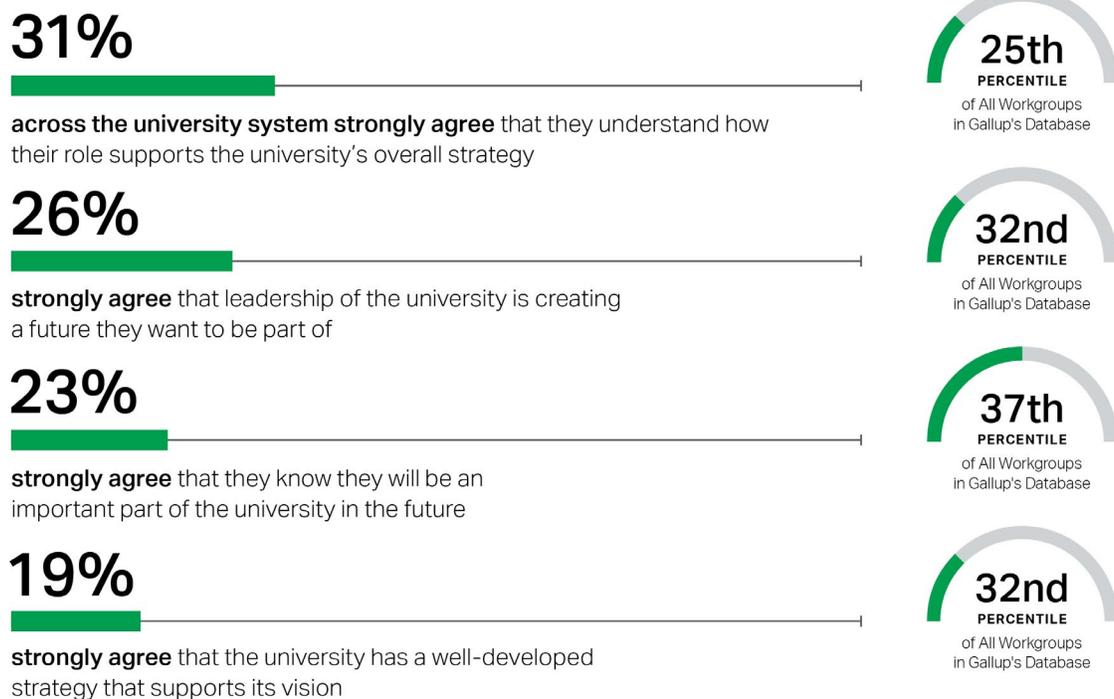
The University of Nebraska can do more to articulate its vision for the future and employees' role in it.

For the University of Nebraska to realize its vision of becoming America's preeminent public university system — a broad, diverse, collaborative system of higher learning that leads the world in education and discovery — it will need its employees to believe in this vision and see their place in it. The results from Gallup's study suggest there is a clear opportunity for the University of Nebraska to articulate its vision for the future and the role of employees in achieving that vision.

Fewer than one in five employees (19%) strongly agree the university has a well-developed strategy that supports its vision, which places NU in the 32nd percentile of Gallup's Overall Workgroup Level Database on this measure.

Additionally, 31% of employees strongly agree they understand how their role supports the university's overall strategy, 26% strongly agree leadership of the university is creating a future they want to be part of, and 23% strongly agree they know they will be an important part of the university in the future. Each of these readings are well below the 50th percentile in Gallup's database.

Where Do Faculty and Staff See Themselves in the University's Future?



Source: 2021 University of Nebraska Climate Study



Methodology

Gallup partnered with the University of Nebraska to conduct this study. Gallup conducted a series of stakeholder interviews at study start, and collaborated with system leaders, to develop a quantitative survey of employees and students that would inform the University's objectives. The employee and student surveys were conducted via the web. The NU system provided Gallup a list of all currently enrolled undergraduate students and employees for the purposes of this survey effort. All data were collected Oct. 11-Nov. 5, 2021. Gallup sent an initial email invitation and series of email reminders throughout this data collection period to maximize response rates. Gallup invited 5,697 faculty members, 8,367 staff members, 510 administrators and 39,701 currently enrolled students to complete the survey.

For results based on the total sample of 6,721 students, the margin of sampling error is ± 1.20 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. For results based on the total sample of 2,076 faculty, the margin of sampling error is ± 2.15 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on the total sample of 3,935 staff, the margin of sampling error is ± 1.56 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

For results based on the total sample of 351 administrators, the margin of sampling error is ± 5.23 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

Throughout this report, Gallup compares NU results with other studies it has conducted nationally. These studies include the Gallup-Lumina Foundation 2020 study, which was a nationally representative study of currently enrolled students in degree-granting institutions. Gallup compares employee data with its Gallup employee experience Overall Workgroup Level Database, which includes over 13 million respondents across a series of industries and Gallup's Education-Postsecondary/Higher Education Workgroup Level Database, which includes 118,770 employees at degree-granting institutions.

About Gallup

Gallup delivers analytics and advice to help leaders and organizations solve their most pressing problems. Combining more than 80 years of experience with its global reach, Gallup knows more about the attitudes and behaviors of employees, customers, students and citizens than any other organization in the world.

Gallup has served more than 1,000 education organizations with advice and analytics based on 85+ years of research, including nearly half a million interviews with education leaders and their teams about their workplace experiences and the perspectives of more than 6 million students and alumni captured by the Gallup Student Poll and Gallup Alumni Survey. Gallup assists districts, schools, universities and institutions nationwide with research-based strategies to provide a culture shift in education to help students on their path toward great careers and great lives.

About the University of Nebraska System

The NU System comprises four campuses: the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, the University of Nebraska at Omaha, the University of Nebraska Medical Center, and the University of Nebraska at Kearney — a land-grant flagship campus, an academic medical center, a metropolitan campus serving our urban citizens and a campus focused on undergraduates. Collectively, these four unique institutions are known as the University of Nebraska System.

GALLUP®

World Headquarters

The Gallup Building
901 F Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004

t +1.877.242.5587

f +1.888.500.8282

www.gallup.com