

# Speaking Out! - Frequently Asked Questions

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## About the survey

### What is the 'Speaking Out!' survey?

Speaking Out! is a University-wide work engagement and experience survey of appointed faculty, staff and librarians. This voluntary and confidential survey will help the University's senior administration better understand four key areas for employees: equity, diversity and inclusion; engagement; career support; resilience and well-being. We anticipate completing similar surveys on a bi-annual basis in the future so that we may chart progress in these critical areas. It is offered online using a secure platform housed at the University. Appointed employees will be sent an individual invitation email with confidential links to complete the survey.

The University has previously undertaken an employee experience survey called *Speaking UP!* which was also referred to as the University of Toronto Faculty & Staff Engagement Survey (UTFSES). *Speaking Out!* expands upon this initial survey work and focusing on the four key identified areas.

*Speaking Out!* is a joint initiative of the offices of the Vice-President & Provost and the Vice-President, People Strategy, Equity & Culture.

## **When will the survey be administered?**

The online survey will be available from October 27 to November 15, 2022. Results will be analyzed in December 2022 and January 2023 with reporting beginning soon after. For those requiring an accommodation to complete the survey, please contact [surveys@utoronto.ca](mailto:surveys@utoronto.ca).

## **Why conduct a survey of University of Toronto faculty, staff and librarians?**

The primary goal of the surveys is to improve the workplace for all University employees and it is an important means of getting a 'big picture' view of how they engage with their work and the University community. The results will help inform the setting of priorities as well as the development of policies and programs. It also provides an opportunity to better leverage other University-collected data in these developments. For example, the University maintains an Employment Equity Survey that provides rich equity, diversity and inclusion data from staff, faculty and librarians but does not provide a link to work experience. Analyzing the employment equity data in concert with the experience-based data on inclusion, diversity, engagement, career support, resilience, and wellness from *Speaking Out!* is expected to provide meaningful insight for the University community.

## **What are the benefits of completing a survey?**

*Speaking Out!* is an opportunity to share an accurate reflection of the employee work experience at the University, whether this identifies and reinforces areas of strength or highlights areas of challenge that need improvement. Candid feedback can help to shape training and program delivery, policy development, strategic planning, as well as other initiatives. Ultimately, all responses provide an opportunity to enhance the work environment at the University.

## **What is the connection between the survey and the University's priorities?**

U of T is committed to being an employer of choice. The recruitment and retention of the best staff, faculty and librarians is essential to the achievement of the University's goals. The *Speaking Out!* survey will help the University to identify areas of strength and where improvement may be needed to ensure that employees have satisfying and fully engaged careers.

## Which employee groups are included in the survey population?

All appointed faculty, staff and librarians (full and part-time) at the University, including those who are on contracts of at least one year, will receive an invitation to fill out the survey.

## How were the survey questions chosen?

Development of the questions was a collaborative effort by the survey's Steering Committee, which included the Vice-Provost Faculty & Academic Life and the Vice-President, People Strategy, Equity & Culture as well as staff from their portfolios. The survey focuses on the four key areas: equity, diversity and inclusion; engagement; career support; resilience and well-being.

## Who is managing the survey project?

The 2022 Survey is a project managed by a team comprised of members from People Strategy, Equity & Culture and the Office of the Provost.

Committee Members include:

- Kelly Hannah-Moffat
- Heather Boon
- Kate Enros
- Melodie Buhagiar
- Clark Miller
- Timur Ozbilir

Committee Members are grateful to those individuals who provided feedback throughout the survey's development by reviewing questions, participating in platform and user acceptance testing.

## Why link this survey to other data sets?

Analyzing *Speaking Out!* data in conjunction other data sets is expected to better leverage existing information in decision making and develop a fuller picture of the University's employment landscape. For example, the data collected in the University's *Employment Equity Survey* provides rich equity, diversity and inclusion statistics but it does not provide a link to employee work experience. Linking the data sets will provide a picture currently unavailable to but desired by the University community.

### Why are there no demographic questions?

*Speaking Out!* does not ask specific demographic questions of respondents as the University already has access to this data and did not want to re-ask questions you have already completed. Your demographic information (UTORid/employee identification number) will be used to ensure that you receive the correct version of the survey (faculty, staff, librarian, etc.). The employee identification number will be stripped out prior to analysis and only anonymized data sets will be analyzed. See how the University is protecting your data in the [Data Management and Sharing Protocol](#).

### What if I change my mind about participating after I submit my responses?

If an employee does not wish to participate they can choose to decline participation and the survey will end.

However, if an employee submits their responses and then wants to be removed from participation, they may do so prior to the analysis period beginning. **To withdraw, participants must contact the Project Team no later than November 16, 2022 at 1 p.m. via email ([surveys@utoronto.ca](mailto:surveys@utoronto.ca))**. Once they notify the team of the desire to withdraw their completed survey, a member of the Project Team will manually delete the response record. No record is retained and emailed links become disabled.

### What is U of T going to do with the demographic information?

It is important for U of T to obtain the engagement levels of employees across a broader spectrum of diversity in order to measure and track the progress toward achieving the diversity goals set by the organization and to help to expand, develop and / or tailor future programs and services. It will help determine strategies, programs and practices that will meet the needs of a diverse University.

### Will U of T publish the demographic information?

Aggregate level information will be available (for example the percentages of respondents who are women, the age profile of respondents and other high-level information) as appropriate. No reporting will be done on respondent groups of smaller than 10 individuals and no record-level information will be published.

## The Survey Process

### Who is conducting the survey?

The University of Toronto is undertaking the survey in-house using a data collection service called [REDCap](#). REDCap (Research Electronic Data Capture) is a secure web application for building and managing online surveys and databases supported by the University of Toronto Information Services group. This is a departure from previous employee surveys which were conducted using a third-party provider.

### Is the survey confidential?

Yes. The University has taken a number of measures to ensure that the data will remain confidential.

- Surveys do not have publically accessible personal identifiers and participants do not provide any personal identification such as name or birth date.
- Only summary data will be reported by the University. Where there are units or groups of fewer than 10 employees responding to a question, data will not be reported. Your manager will not see your responses.
- Employees will receive a unique web-link to the survey via email from the RedCap Survey Tool. These links are destroyed once employees submit their completed surveys. As each link is unique, employees cannot share their link with colleagues as a way to access the survey.
- Responses to the freeform/write-in questions will have any identifying information, such as names or references to specific work units removed prior to analysis. Only edited data will be shared with the University community.
- The survey and our confidentiality measures have received approval from the University of Toronto Ethics Review Board and is conducted in accordance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (2010). Seeking approval from the Ethics Review Board demonstrates the University's commitment to appropriate confidentiality and that the University will treat your responses and participation in an ethical manner.

The University deals with highly confidential information on faculty, staff and librarians on a regular basis and has well-established methods of dealing with this appropriately and without the identification of individual employees.

Finally, the raw data itself will only be accessed by a small number of identified staff members, in the Office of the Vice-President People Strategy, Equity & Culture and the Office of the Vice-President and Provost. These individuals are not senior administrators or individuals who are in a position to make or influence personnel decisions about individual respondents.

### **Is the survey voluntary?**

Yes, the survey is completely voluntary.

We encourage everyone to participate in order to achieve the best possible understanding of what it is like to work at U of T – both the positive and the negative. A high response rate is important to achieve reliable and representative results and allow for meaningful analysis.

### **Will this survey affect my collective agreement?**

No. The survey in no way interferes with any existing collective agreements or the University's collective bargaining obligations.

We recognize the certified unions as the sole and exclusive bargaining agents for their bargaining unit members and we recognize their right to bring forward proposals during collective bargaining concerning the terms and conditions of their members' employment, as well as their right to raise issues or file grievances on behalf of their members.

As a responsible employer, we want to hear from all of our employees about their experience at the University, and we are committed to bettering their experience based on what we hear from the survey. We believe this can only contribute positively to the collective bargaining process.

### **Can I fill out the survey on work time?**

It is expected that all faculty, staff and librarians will be afforded time to complete the survey during work hours. If you prefer to complete the survey at home, you are welcome to do so.

If you have any questions in this regard, please contact your [Divisional HR Office](#).

### **Can I fill out the survey using my smartphone / tablet?**

Yes. The online survey can be completed using your smartphone or tablet, but we recommend using a computer desktop or laptop.

### **Accommodation Requests**

The Speaking Out! survey is intended to be accessible to users of assistive technologies, including screen readers. However, if for any reason you cannot access this survey, an accessible format, communication support or computer access can be made available upon request. Please contact the Speaking Out! Project Team at [surveys@utoronto.ca](mailto:surveys@utoronto.ca), and we will work with you to make appropriate arrangements.

### **I would like clarification on a question before I respond. Who can help?**

If you do not understand a question, please contact [surveys@utoronto.ca](mailto:surveys@utoronto.ca)

## **Technical Help**

### **I haven't received my survey. What should I do?**

Please send an email to [surveys@utoronto.ca](mailto:surveys@utoronto.ca) with your name and division and a link will be provided to you (in most cases) within 24 hours.

### **I have received my survey, but the link doesn't work. What should I do?**

Please contact the Speaking Out! Project Team at [surveys@utoronto.ca](mailto:surveys@utoronto.ca).

### **My colleague didn't get an email. Should I forward mine?**

No. Each email contains a unique web link that links to your survey. Your colleague should contact the Speaking Out! Project Team at [surveys@utoronto.ca](mailto:surveys@utoronto.ca).

### **I'm having a problem filling out the survey. What should I do?**

If there is a technical issue with filling out the survey, please contact the Speaking Out! Project Team at [surveys@utoronto.ca](mailto:surveys@utoronto.ca)

If you do not understand a question, please contact the Speaking Out! Project Team at [surveys@utoronto.ca](mailto:surveys@utoronto.ca).

### **Can I save my survey when it is partially complete and come back to finish it at a later time?**

Yes. You can save your responses more than once and return to complete the survey at a later date, as long as you submit your responses prior to the end of the survey administration period (November 15, 2022).

### **Is it possible to accidentally submit or complete the survey more than once?**

No. If you click on the unique link in your invitation email after you have already submitted your survey, you will be reminded that you have already completed the survey.

### **Will I be able to access and / or change my answers after I have submitted my responses to the survey?**

There is a brief window for you to withdraw your participation once you have submitted your response to the survey. If you complete the survey and then decide you wish to stop your participation, simply email: [surveys@utoronto.ca](mailto:surveys@utoronto.ca) **before 1 p.m. on November 16, 2022**. After this time, the data set will be finalized and you will not be able to remove your responses.

Unfortunately, editing responses once you have submitted the survey is not possible.

You are able to take a PDF copy of your submission prior to submitting the survey. Simply follow the links in the survey before you hit SUBMIT.

### **What happens if my computer freezes while I am completing the survey?**

It depends on your computer and the situation; while some of your responses could be retained, you may need to start over. If you are unable to get back into the survey, please contact the Survey Project Team at: [surveys@utoronto.ca](mailto:surveys@utoronto.ca)

## **Survey results**

### **When will the results be released?**

We expect to release summary level results in Spring 2023. The University community will be notified of the report's completion.

### **How will the results be released?**

The University intends to provide the results of the survey in as open and transparent a manner as possible. Overall survey results will be shared with the community through a variety of channels including this website, meeting presentations, *the Bulletin Brief*, and U of T News.

### **Will survey participation rates be reported?**

Information regarding participation rates will be reported in the final report.

### **What will be done with the survey results?**

U of T's senior administration is committed to responding to priority concerns raised in this survey. As with the results from previous University-wide surveys, the findings will be used to inform organizational priorities and drive initiatives in response to the survey results.

Accountability at the institutional level will be monitored through the Performance Indicators report made to Governing Council.

### **How will the open-ended questions be reported?**

The Survey Project Team will edit the responses to remove identifying information, such as names or references to specific work units, and then categorize the comments by theme so that quantitative analysis can be done on qualitative responses. The staff of the Survey Project Team are accustomed to working with confidential human resources data and are proficient in the use of protocols to insure confidentiality and anonymity.