

# Higher Education WORKPLACE

TREND SUMMARY 2021

EXCERPT

2021  
**GREAT  
COLLEGES  
TO WORK FOR®**

PREPARED BY  
**ModernThink**

# FACULTY AND STAFF WELL-BEING

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## HOW THE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED

The Great Colleges to Work For® program is designed to recognize institutions that have been successful in creating great workplaces, and to further our research and understanding of the factors, dynamics and influences that have the greatest impact on organizational culture at institutions of higher education. This year, the Great Colleges to Work For® program celebrated its 14th anniversary of being the largest and most comprehensive workplace study in higher education, promoting our mission to help colleges and universities become great places to work and to learn.

**The 2021 Great Colleges to Work For® survey received responses from almost 39,000 people at 196 institutions: 120 four-year colleges and universities and 76 two-year colleges. All accredited institutions in the United States with an enrollment of at least 500 were invited to participate, at no cost to them.**

THE SURVEY WAS SENT TO OVER 87,000 EMPLOYEES, WITH AN OVERALL RESPONSE RATE OF 44 PERCENT.

### RESPONDENTS BY JOB CATEGORY

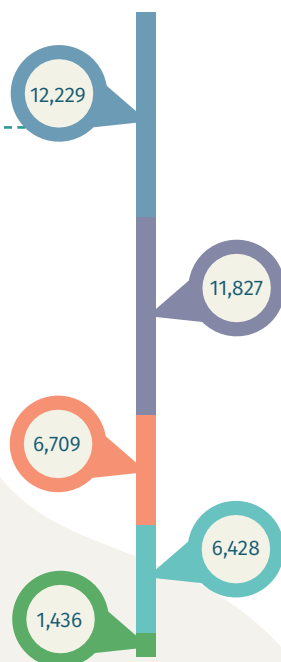
FACULTY

EXEMPT PROFESSIONAL STAFF

NON-EXEMPT STAFF

ADMINISTRATORS

ADJUNCT FACULTY



Each participating institution was asked to submit a list of full-time employees randomly selected across four job categories: administration, faculty, exempt professional staff, and non-exempt staff. Adjunct faculty members were included for two-year colleges. The sample size, as large as either 400 or 600, was based on the number of employees in those categories. Institutions with fewer than 500 people in the designated categories were invited to survey the entire employee population.

The assessment had two components: a questionnaire about institutional characteristics and a faculty/staff questionnaire about individuals' evaluations of their institutions. The assessment also included an analysis of demographic data and workplace policies, including benefits, at each participating college. The questionnaires were administered online in the spring.

In the faculty/staff questionnaire, employees responded to 55 statements, plus an additional 5 Faculty Experience statements for Faculty and Adjuncts only. The instrument utilizes a five-point agreement scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Sometimes Agree/Sometimes Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree), along with a Not Applicable response option. The survey instrument also includes a 20-item benefits satisfaction component and two open-ended questions. The survey measures 10 core dimensions reflecting managerial and organizational competencies and from those the Great Colleges recognition categories, such as Confidence in Senior Leadership and Faculty & Staff Well-Being, were determined.

To determine the colleges to be recognized in each category, we divided the applicant pool into two classifications: four-year institutions and two-year institutions. Within each, there were three groups, based on total enrollment: small (500 to 2,999 students), medium (3,000 to 9,999), and large (more than 10,000).



**Recognition as a Great College to Work For® in each recognition category was given to the 10 highest-scoring institutions in each size for four-year colleges, and the four highest-scoring institutions in each size for two-year colleges. Institutions recognized in the most recognition categories were given the special distinction of being named to the Honor Roll.**

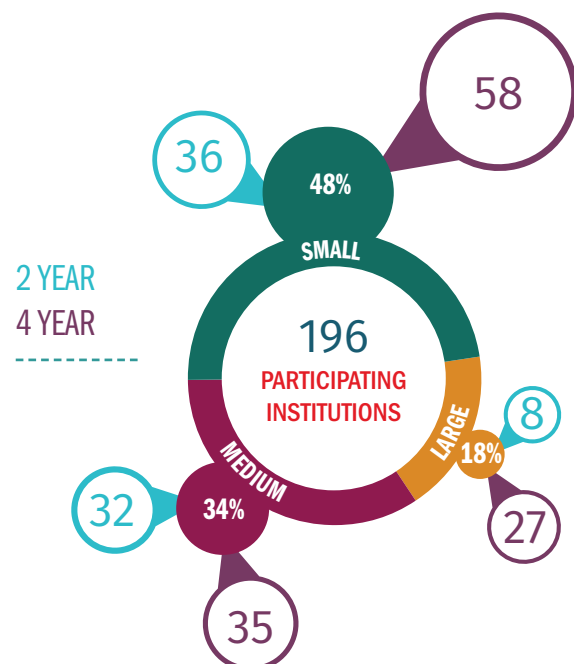
Honor Roll status, for four-year colleges, was given to the 10 institutions in each size that were cited most often across all of the recognition categories. For two-year colleges, Honor Roll status was given to the four institutions that were recognized most often within each size category.

The primary factor in deciding whether an institution receives recognition is the feedback collected from the *ModernThink Higher Education Insight Survey*®. There is no minimum response rate that institutions have to achieve to be eligible for consideration. However, in analyzing the data we review confidence levels and confidence intervals to ensure statistical significance.

**SMALL - < 2,999 STUDENTS**

**MEDIUM - 3,000 - 9,999 STUDENTS**

**LARGE - > 10,000 STUDENTS**



## 2021 SURVEY UPDATES

The world is looking very different these days, and that means higher education is changing as well. In an effort to deliver the most timely and thorough workplace engagement survey possible to our clients, this year we redesigned our *ModernThink Higher Education Insight Survey*® to better align with the current themes of workplace engagement. In addition to being the primary assessment tool for our higher education clients across the country, this survey is also used in the annual Great Colleges to Work For® program.

Our updated instrument includes

**11 NEW SURVEY STATEMENTS** and **4 NEW SURVEY THEMES**

Our new Faculty Experience survey theme drills down to assess hurdles that are specific to faculty and adjuncts so that colleges can more accurately pinpoint issues unique to their instructors, and remedy them more effectively. The updated survey also includes substantial revisions to our demographics. New questions around **REMOTE WORK** and **GENDER IDENTITY** are intended to create a more inclusive experience for those completing the survey, and yield actionable data for today's college workplace.

A panel of our colleagues from across higher education helped shape the final survey instrument. The panel included representatives from two- and four-year institutions, hailing from departments in research, diversity, administration, and more. We also included panelists from respected higher education organizations like CUPA-HR.

In accordance with the survey upgrades, our recognition categories have also been updated. We will now be honoring Great Colleges participants in **FACULTY & STAFF WELL-BEING** and **MISSION & PRIDE**, in addition to mainstays in college employee engagement excellence like Shared Governance, Confidence in Senior Leadership and Professional Development.

People are constantly changing with the world around them, and so too must our methods for engaging employees be ever evolving and improving. The Great Colleges program team strives to deliver a survey that is both of the moment and enduring enough to allow us to provide benchmarks across the more than 1,200 participants who have contributed to our research. To those participants and the many more to come, we thank you for coming on our journey to improve higher education, one college workplace at a time.

# THE RENEWED IMPORTANCE OF BENEFITS PACKAGES

A key element of any employee’s compensation is the benefits package. Many human resources departments have long recognized that an attractive benefits plan can influence recruitment and/or retention strategies of their faculty and staff. But never has this been more the case than in the past two years, as the demand for flexibility and support to manage work and home life has increased.

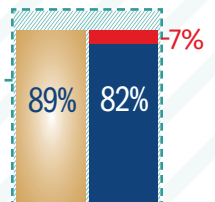
We consider employee responses to the 20-item benefit satisfaction component of our survey as part of our recognition analysis process. Comprehensive benefit offerings can be fundamental to an employee’s satisfaction with their workplace and their overall levels of engagement. As the graphs below indicate, employees at the institutions named to this year’s Honor Roll reported higher satisfaction in the following benefit categories than faculty and staff at institutions who were not recognized as a Great College to Work For® this year. Included in this section are examples of notable benefit offerings from our participating institutions.

## VACATION/PTO

“Campus is closed from Christmas Eve until the day after New Year’s. The Christmas holiday leave allows employees to spend the holidays with family and friends without having to use their vacation time.”

“27 vacation and sick days per year that begin to accrue upon hire as well as 16 holidays that people may begin to participate in immediately upon hire.”

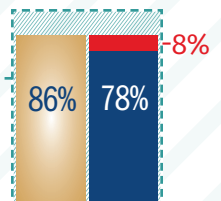
“Employees are also provided with a full time rate of 25 work days of non-accumulative sick leave for the care of a member of your immediate family or immediate household.”



## MEDICAL INSURANCE

“Employees pay \$0 for our high-deductible health plan.”

“The College funds the Medical and Dental insurance benefits at 90% and funds the deductible of the health insurance at 100% with an employer funded health reimbursement account.”

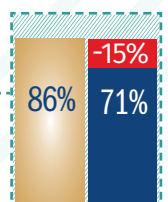


## 403B/401K

“The 403(b) program affords employees up to a 10% match from day 1.”

“Free retirement investment advising through our 403b provider.”

“Under our matching retirement plan, you contribute 5% of your base salary, and we contribute 10%. You will be fully vested after three years of continuous, regular, full-time service.”



The examples on these pages were collected from responses to the Institution Questionnaire, the institutional audit component on the Great Colleges to Work For® program. Percentages reflect percent positive, that is the percentage of respondents who selected “Strongly Agree” or “Agree”.

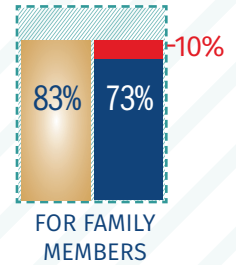
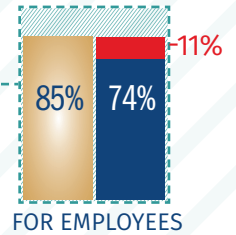
## TUITION REIMBURSEMENT/REMISSION

“The program allows the employee to obtain an undergraduate or graduate degree tuition free. Dependents and spouses of the employee are also able to obtain an undergraduate degree tuition free.”

“A tuition exchange that provides access for dependent tuition assistance at more than 300 participating colleges and universities worldwide.”

“The College offers tuition reimbursement up to \$9,000 annually for full-time employees that can be used for Professional Development, including obtaining of a bachelors, master’s or doctoral degrees.”

“Tuition waivers for all courses at the associate degree level for full-time employees and eligible dependents. Agreements with three state universities for employees to receive tuition discounts. Local tuition reimbursement by the college for eligible coursework not covered by the university discount or for institutions with whom we do not have a formalized agreement.”

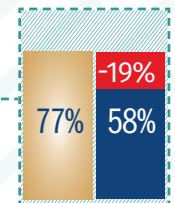


## WELLNESS PROGRAMS

“Employees enrolled in the Wellness Program receive three hours of leave time (during the workday) each week to exercise on campus. Employees can walk/run, participate in fitness courses, or exercise in the employee gym.”

“The program includes regular visits with an RN on-site to review health issues, questions, concerns and develop a plan to improve health. Rewards are provided to employees who follow the plans established by the Nurse. Spouses are also eligible.”

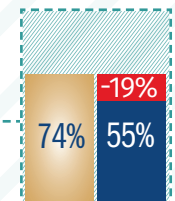
“Free Chiropractic services.”



## WORK/LIFE BALANCE PROGRAMS

“Our employees also get a paid day off to celebrate their birthdays.”

“The 8 hour Birthday leave and 8 hour Child Involvement leave is another benefit appreciated by employees.”

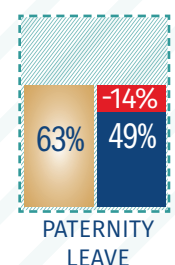
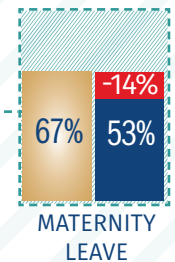


## PARENTAL/FAMILY LEAVE AND BENEFITS

“Pays 100% salary for the first 6 weeks of leave following the birth or adoption of a child.”

“Family Bonding leave. This leave type affords new parents 6 weeks of paid bonding leave.”

“Lactation Facilities for Breastfeeding Mothers: We currently have 5 mother friendly rooms around campus that have grown in usage.”



HONOR ROLL  
NON-RECOGNIZED  
DIFFERENCE

## ASPECTS OF WELL-BEING: Institutional Policies

MANY FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO AN EMPLOYEE'S OVERALL SENSE OF WELL-BEING. THE GREAT COLLEGES TO WORK FOR® PROGRAM MEASURES THESE BY ANALYZING INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AS WELL AS SURVEY RESPONSES.



### HEALTH & FITNESS

COVID-19 TESTING FOR EMPLOYEES

58%



HEALTH PROGRAMS/ ASSISTANCE (SMOKING CESSATION, STRESS MANAGEMENT)

71%



HEALTH SCREENINGS (FLU SHOTS)

80%



EXERCISE/WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAMS/GYM ACCESS OR SUBSIDIES

77%

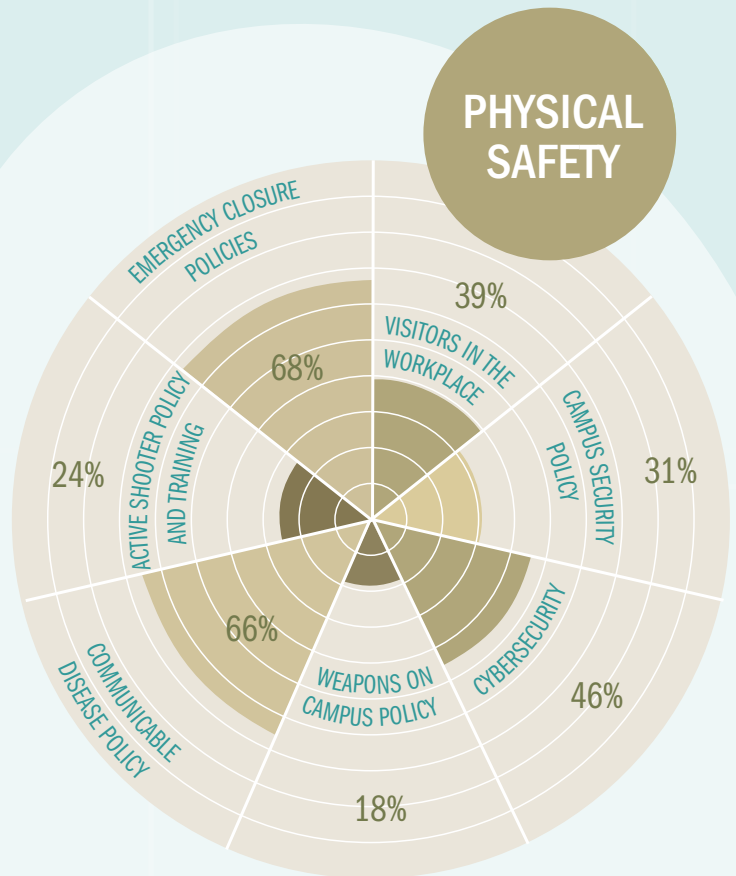


REMOTE WORKSPACE SUPPORT (TECHNOLOGY, ERGONOMIC CONCERNS, ETC.)

65%



### PHYSICAL SAFETY



Data reflects the percentage of institutions that revised or initiated the corresponding safety policies in the last 12 months.

Unless otherwise indicated, percentages reflect the percent of institutions that reported offering the stated benefit.



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