1. Why is WMU conducting a survey of its employees?

Western Michigan University is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that attracts and retains world-class faculty and staff. Gathering employee perspectives on their work experiences helps the administration understand what currently works and what needs to be improved. Improvement occurs when we openly solicit candid and confidential feedback and act upon this feedback. Disciplined follow-up on the survey findings will help us continue to drive our University to future success.

2. Who is eligible to participate in the survey?

All WMU full- and part-time benefits-eligible faculty and staff, and members of the Professional Instructors Organization and Teaching Assistants Union are invited and encouraged to participate in the survey.

3. Why is now the right time for this survey?

There’s always room for improvement. Our last comprehensive employee survey was conducted in 2012. Now more than ever, we need to understand what factors are important to our employees. WMU
is committed to our **people** and our **community**, and our leaders need to hear from you on our direction and our work environment.

We plan to use this survey to determine the current level of employee engagement that we can build on to meet the University’s employee-related strategic goals and priorities. The University plans to periodically conduct additional surveys to assess employee engagement and satisfaction concerns and to monitor progress on addressing concerns.

4. **Why was ModernThink selected to administer the survey?**

ModernThink LLC is a nationally recognized organization specializing in surveys of this kind for higher education. The higher education benchmark data ModernThink will provide through the WMYou survey will give our University valuable insight into how we compare to other schools across the nation.

5. **How was the survey process designed?**

A 15-member survey committee representative of WMU's employee groups and ModernThink worked in consultation with the University’s senior leadership (President’s Cabinet) to develop the survey. ModernThink representatives are working with the committee to customize and administer the survey, ensure confidentiality and disseminate the results.

6. **What areas will the survey focus on?**

The survey statements solicit feedback on a broad range of topics focused on the following themes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Satisfaction/Support</th>
<th>Shared Governance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Environment</td>
<td>Pride</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>Supervisors/Department Chairs</td>
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<td>Compensation and Benefits</td>
<td>Work/Life Balance</td>
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<td>Facilities</td>
<td>Senior Leadership</td>
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<td>Policies, Resources and Efficiency</td>
<td>Faculty, Administration and Staff Relations</td>
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<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Communication</td>
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<td>Respect and Appreciation</td>
<td>Fairness</td>
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In addition to 60 core survey statements, the survey committee has included additional statements that focus on WMU-specific initiatives and concerns.

7. **How much time will it take to complete the survey? How long is the survey, and what is the format?**

The online survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. If you are unable to complete the survey after you begin, you will have the option to save your responses and access them later.

The survey consists of statements that employees respond to using a five-point agreement scale (*Strongly Agree, Agree, Sometimes Agree/Sometimes Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree*). Additionally, there is a **Not Applicable** response option.

The survey instrument also includes an itemized benefits-satisfaction component and open-ended questions that offer the opportunity to enter comments.

There are several demographic questions at the end of the survey (*Gender, Age, Job Category, etc.*). Respondents are encouraged to provide responses; however, you have the option of skipping any of the demographic questions if you have concerns regarding the anonymity of your responses. (See “Are my survey responses confidential?” next.)
8. Are my survey responses confidential?

Yes. The purpose of the survey is to get candid feedback. It is web-based and automated with a secure internet connection.

Eligible employees will receive an email invitation from ModernThink to participate in the survey. Once you click on the survey link, you will be directed to ModernThink’s secure server. Please note:

- **WMU has no access to this website or the raw data collected.**
- Your responses will be submitted directly to ModernThink’s database, and ModernThink will handle all processing.
- You will not be asked your name on the survey.
- The email invitation you will receive from ModernThink will include unique password information for each user. This information is stored on the ModernThink server, and it is for access only and will not be linked to your individual survey responses.
- **At no point will your manager or any other WMU employee see your individual survey results;** they are combined and only reported back in aggregate/grouped format. No one at the University will know if or how you personally responded.

9. Can my email address be used to track my responses?

No. The survey will be completed on ModernThink’s private server. Your email address is only used to access the survey, send reminders to complete the survey and to ensure that only one survey is completed per employee. Addresses will be purged from ModernThink’s system once the survey project has been completed.

10. Why is my participation important?

First, as a WMU employee, **your voice matters.** Second, higher response rates give a more accurate picture of the University as a whole and as an organization with many individual units. The survey is a significant opportunity for you to **share your opinions, ideas and solutions** regarding issues that are important to you and your fellow employees.

11. Is my participation in this survey optional?

Yes. Participation is completely voluntary.

12. How do I take the survey?

Eligible employees will receive an invitation via email to take the survey hosted on ModernThink’s secure server. You will be asked to enter a unique username and password, which will be provided in an e-mail invitation sent to you directly by ModernThink.

The survey will be available Monday, March 18, through Friday, April 5. You may take the survey at any time you have access to an internet-enabled computer or mobile device, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, from work or from home. Employees without access to an internet-enabled device are welcome to visit a University computer lab to complete the survey, confidentially, by using the unique login credentials provided in the email invitation received from ModernThink.

- The Bernhard Center computer lab ([wmich.edu/labs/bcc](http://wmich.edu/labs/bcc)) offers 24-hour access beginning at 10:30 a.m. Sunday and continuing through midnight Friday.
- Employees are also welcome to drop in to the computer lab in the University Computing Center ([wmich.edu/labs/ucc](http://wmich.edu/labs/ucc)), which is open 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fridays.
13. If I am interrupted once I start the survey, can I access it again?

Your answers will be stored each time you select the SAVE & CONTINUE button at the bottom of a survey page. If you are interrupted, you can come back to the survey by logging back on to the ModernThink survey site. To protect your confidentiality, you will not be able to access the survey after you click the SUBMIT button on the last page of the survey.

14. What if I have problems accessing the survey site?

For technical questions or problems with the survey site, contact ModernThink at (888) 684-4658 or surveys@modernthink.com, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST. After hours, leave a message and your call will be returned as promptly as possible.

15. How many employees does WMU need to respond to the survey to get the data it needs?

Our goal is to achieve a 100 percent response rate. Average response rates for ModernThink surveys typically range between 40 and 65 percent. During the three weeks the survey is available, the University will share the response rate with the campus community. Our hope is that you will participate and encourage your colleagues to participate, as well.

16. Why are demographics asked on the survey?

The demographic information (i.e. Gender, Age, Job Role, School, etc.) will help ModernThink better understand the patterns and themes in the survey data. To absolutely ensure your responses remain confidential, ModernThink will not report individual demographic data. **Group demographic data will only be reported when there are five or more respondents in a particular group.** Although the demographics are an optional component of the survey, you are strongly encouraged to provide this information, as it is crucial to help WMU better understand its role as an employer.

17. Once all the results are received, what’s next?

President Montgomery, his cabinet, and the survey committee are focused on gathering feedback, sharing the findings, identifying and prioritizing areas of action, and developing follow-up plans to address your concerns. We anticipate reporting the first round of survey findings in late May. Campus meetings hosted by ModernThink with senior leadership and key stakeholders are expected to occur in late May/early June. A dedicated webpage is available to keep you apprised of progress and to serve as a repository for survey findings, reports and related materials.

18. How often will this type of survey occur?

While the formal timeline for the next survey is not yet established, WMU will likely be repeating this process every two to three years. This year’s results will provide us with important baseline data to help senior leadership (President’s Cabinet) chart our progress moving forward.

19. Whom can I contact with additional questions about the employee survey?

If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions regarding the survey and/or the survey process, contact robert.brady@wmich.edu or ModernThink Project Manager Liz Flood at (888) 684-4658 or lflood@modernthink.com.

For more information, visit the survey website: wmich.edu/wmyou