

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The UCSB Work/Life Survey was conducted in the Spring of 2002. The main issues identified in this survey were flexible work schedules, affordable and quality childcare, elder care, and general wellness. The need for the campus to recognize the importance of a work/life balance was mentioned throughout the survey. Flexible work arrangements, especially for staff, were cited in order to provide employees greater ability to manage their work/life needs. Respondents noted that training supervisors and managers to be sensitive to work/life issues will be essential to developing policies for balancing work/life issues. Providing workshops on stress management and fitness/exercise will benefit both staff and academics who report a high level of interest in these subjects.

There was greater response to the survey from female employees, both staff and faculty. This may indicate work/life issues impact female employees to a greater extent, as females have traditionally taken on more of the caretaking responsibilities in our society. Some of the written comments by female survey respondents indicate the desire for increased support and opportunities (such as job-sharing) for part-time employment.

Traditionally, the issue of spousal employment has been more of an academic issue. There were a greater number of academic respondents who reported that their partners/spouses had difficulty finding employment when relocating to Santa Barbara than did those of staff respondents. Not surprisingly, more academic respondents felt that it would be helpful to have a UCSB office addressing this issue.

The cost of housing was mentioned throughout the comment section of the survey. The cost of housing is problematic for the entire community of Santa Barbara and is beyond the scope of this office, however we note that the Council on Faculty Issues and Awards has addressed affordable housing as its top priority for the coming year.

The state budget deficit, and corresponding budget cuts to the University, will impact everyone on campus. As we head into a more uncertain future of economic downturn, the University can take steps to provide support in the areas discussed above at a relatively small cost. This is an important time for creative solutions in the form of work/life initiatives that will benefit UCSB's workforce.

A number of other factors also contribute to work/life balance and were cited in the survey comments. These, not surprisingly, include the cost of living, commuting, improved alternative transportation, perceived employee quality of life, and benefits. As we accept that some things are not under University control (cost of housing, state budget cuts, health care costs), we can identify and enhance programs, policies, or activities where the campus can make an impact in improving the quality of life for its employees.

Some of those programs are:

- **Childcare:** The availability of affordable and quality childcare continues to be an important work/life issue. In 2005, the new Student Resources Building will offer 48 more spaces for infants and toddlers, half of which will be allotted to the children of staff and academics. We need to continue to identify additional resources for the future.
- **Elder Care:** In addition to the data provided by the survey and after the first year of the establishment of the Work/Life Office, it became evident that information on various areas of elder care is becoming increasingly important to the campus. A growing number of UCSB's workforce is impacted by elder care needs.
- **Flexible work schedules:** Perhaps the single most important need for staff trying to balance work/life issues is the ability to have flexible work schedules. The Chancellor has asked the Work/Life Coordinator to develop a program for increasing the use of flextime and telecommuting for staff. This is an important first step in promoting a healthier work/life balance.

Assessing workforce needs was one of the primary tasks assigned to the Work/Life Office. The Work/Life Survey report, while not claiming to be statistically representative of the UCSB workforce, provides an insight into campus work/life needs and helps the campus to promote a healthier and more productive work environment. Addressing the various concerns brought up in this survey will provide direction for the Work/Life Office.