Survey Terms and Definitions

**Climate:** Current attitudes, behaviors, and standards of employees and students concerning the access for, inclusion of, and level of respect for individual and group needs, abilities, and potential.

**Disability:** A person who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such impairment.

**Ethnic Identity:** A unique social and cultural heritage shared by a group of people.

**Gender Identity:** A person's inner sense of being male, female, both, or neither. The internal identity may or may not be expressed outwardly, and may or may not correspond to one's physical characteristics.

**Gender Expression:** The manner in which a person outwardly represents their gender, regardless of the physical characteristics that might typically define them as male or female.

**Institutional Status:** Within the institution, the status one holds by virtue of their position/status within the institution (e.g., staff, full-time faculty, part-time faculty, administrator, etc.)

**American Indian (Native American):** A person having origin in any of the original tribes of North America who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.

**Non-Native English Speakers:** People for whom English is not their first language.

**Physical Characteristics:** Term that refers to one's appearance.

**Racial Identity:** A socially constructed category about a group of people based on generalized physical features such as skin color, shape of eyes, physique, etc.

**Sexual Assault:** Intentional physical contact, such as sexual intercourse or touching, of a person's intimate body parts by someone who did not have permission to make such contact.

**Sexual Harassment:** A repeated course of conduct whereby one person engages in verbal or physical behavior of a sexual nature, that is unwelcome, serves no legitimate purpose, intimidates another person, and has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or classroom environment.

**Sexual Orientation:** Term that refers to the sex of the people one tends to be emotionally, physically and sexually attracted to; this is inclusive of, but not limited to, lesbians, gay men, bisexual people, heterosexual people, and those who identify as queer.

**Socioeconomic Status:** The status one holds in society based on one's level of income, wealth, education, and familial background.

**Social Support:** The resources other people provide, including a person's perception that he or she can rely on other people for help with problems or in times of crisis. Having feelings of connectedness and being a part of a community.

**Transgender:** Umbrella term for someone whose self-identity challenges traditional societal definitions of male and female.