



University of Colorado Colorado Springs

2019 Employee Ethics Survey
Summary Report of Findings

December 12, 2019

Introduction

2019 Employee Ethics Survey: *University of Colorado Colorado Springs*

This report summarizes the responses of University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS) employees to an ethics survey designed by the Ethics & Compliance Initiative (ECI). The purpose of the survey was to:

- Implement an assessment of ethics at UCCS;
- Compare employee perceptions about ethics at UCCS in 2019 to 2018;
- Provide key comparisons to U.S. employee benchmarks from ECI's Global Business Ethics Survey® (GBES®);
- Identify strengths, opportunities and potential vulnerabilities based on UCCS employee perspectives; and
- Provide a baseline for comparison against future surveys and assessment efforts.

Methodology

All 3,635 UCCS employees were invited to participate in the online survey (faculty, staff and employed students only).

Data collection dates: The survey launched September 16, 2019 and closed October 16, 2019.

Response Rates

Overall: There were 565 useable responses, yielding a response rate of 15.8%. Therefore, the UCCS results have a confidence interval (margin of error) of +/- 3.8 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.¹ For example, if 50% answered "Yes" to a particular question, we are 95% confident that the actual value is no higher than 53.8% or lower than 46.2%.

Note: An asterisk (*) is used to indicate when there is a statistically significant difference between UCCS overall 2019 and the GBES benchmark at the 95% confidence level. Statistical significance testing was not performed between the groups (faculty, staff and employed students).

¹ These compare with a response rate of 18.8% and a margin of error of +/- 3.4 percentage points in 2018.

The ECI Analysis Framework

ECI research shows that organizations with high-quality ethics and compliance programs (HQPs) are more likely to have strong ethics cultures. HQPs and strong cultures ultimately have a positive impact on ethics outcomes, including *increased* reporting of misconduct and *decreased* pressure, observed misconduct and retaliation. Progress in these areas is aligned with decreased ethics and compliance (E&C) risk. The ECI ethics survey includes questions that examine the overall ethics culture and the impact of culture on ethics outcomes.

ECI's HQP framework utilizes concepts from the Federal Sentencing Guidelines for Organizations (FSGO) (amended 2018) as well as globally accepted standards and elements of HQPs. HQPs go beyond the FSGO standards of an effective program and, as such, have a greater impact on ethics outcomes.



The Ethics Survey: Primary Areas of Focus

1. E&C PROGRAMS:

Higher quality E&C programs lead to stronger ethics cultures and improved ethics outcomes

High-quality E&C programs are comprised of key resources that inform employees and prepare them for the ethics-related issues they may encounter in their workplace. Effective resources are practical, valuable and useful to employees as they make ethics-related decisions. The better the quality of an E&C program, the more embedded E&C is within the organizational culture and business strategy. A stronger ethics program and culture ultimately improve desirable ethics outcomes such as reduced pressure for employees to compromise standards.

2. ETHICS CULTURE:

A strong ethics culture is key to achieving desired ethics outcomes

The strength of an organization's ethics culture is measured through multiple indicators of employee behaviors, at various levels within an organization—leaders, supervisors, coworkers. These behaviors exhibit an enterprise-wide approach to the ethics culture by demonstrating and promoting a commitment to ethics on a daily basis. A thriving ethics culture involves commitment, modeling and the right conduct by: leaders, supervisors and all employees.

3. ETHICS OUTCOMES:

Ethics outcomes are measured by employee perspectives, actions and behaviors

Effective E&C programs and strong cultures improve ethics outcomes which are defined as measurable, manageable actions undertaken by employees. The four key desired ethics outcomes measured by ECI are:



DECREASED PRESSURE for employees to violate ethics standards



DECREASED OBSERVED MISCONDUCT amongst employees



INCREASED REPORTING of observed misconduct by employees



DECREASED RETALIATION experienced by employees for reporting misconduct

Summary of Results — UCCS 2019 Overall



STRENGTHS

E&C Program:

- No key strengths identified.

Ethics Culture:

- UCCS employees are more likely to perceive support from their supervisor in following the organization's code of conduct compared with the GBES US benchmark (85% vs. 80%).

Key Ethics Outcomes:

- Compared with the GBES US benchmark, UCCS employees in 2019 are less likely to feel pressure to compromise the organization's code of conduct, organizational policy or the law (11% vs. 16%).
- Of UCCS employees who reported an observation of misconduct, 23% said that they experienced retaliation for reporting, approximately 50% lower than the GBES US benchmark (44%).



OPPORTUNITIES

E&C Program:

- UCCS employees are less likely to indicate that they can question the decisions of management without fear of retaliation compared with the GBES US benchmark (55% vs. 64%).
- Compared with the GBES US benchmark, UCCS employees are less likely to agree that the organization evaluates employees on their ethical conduct as part of performance evaluations (38% vs. 64%).

Ethics Culture:

- UCCS employees are less likely to agree that top management sets a good example of ethical workplace conduct compared with the GBES US benchmark (69% vs. 75%).

Key Ethics Outcomes:

- Compared with the GBES US benchmark, UCCS employees are less likely to report observations of misconduct (54% vs. 69%).

Note: Results are those where there is a statistically significant difference between UCCS 2019 overall and the GBES



E&C Program

The first step in implementing a High-Quality E&C Program (HQP) is ensuring widespread awareness of formal E&C program elements and providing effective program support for employees to guide their decisions and conduct at work.

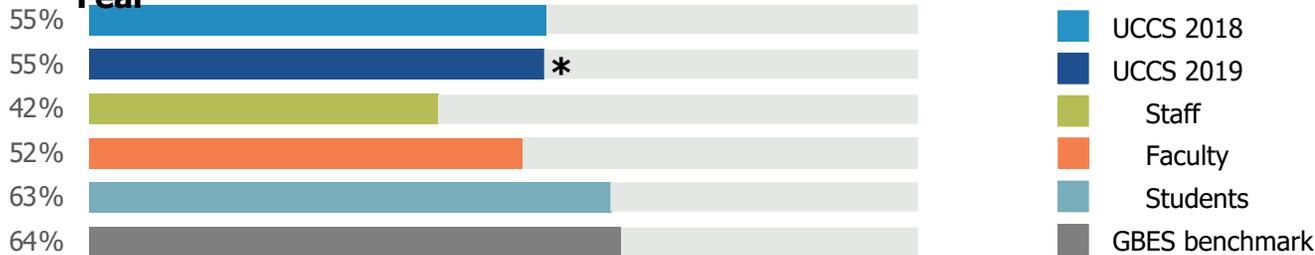
Awareness of Program Elements:

1. Written standards of conduct
2. Ethics training
3. Advice line
4. Anonymous or confidential reporting
5. Discipline system
6. Evaluation of ethical conduct[†]

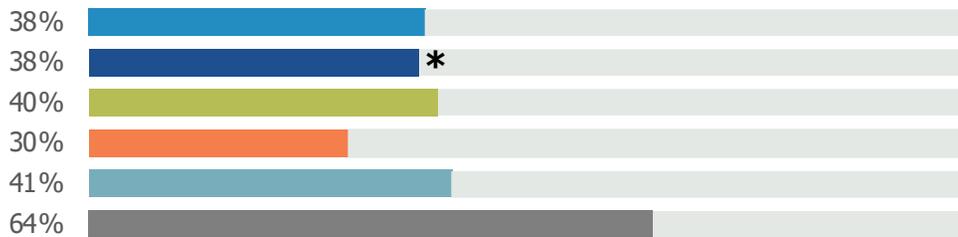
Presence of Program Effectiveness Measures:

1. Employees refer to resources at least sometimes
2. Employees can question the decisions of management without fear of retaliation[†]
3. Supervisor provides positive feedback for ethical workplace conduct
4. Organization gives recognition for ethical workplace conduct
5. Organization does not reward questionable practices that get results
6. Employees feel prepared to handle situations that could lead to violations

Employees Can Question Management Without Fear¹



Evaluation of Ethical Conduct in Performance Appraisals²



- ❑ In 2019, the percentage of UCCS employees who feel that they can question the decisions of management (55%) is lower compared with the GBES benchmark (64%).
- ❑ Compared with the GBES benchmark, in 2019 UCCS employees are less likely to agree that the organization evaluates employees on their ethical conduct as part of performance evaluations (38% vs. 64%).

¹ Employees can question the decisions of management without fear of retaliation.
² UCCS has evaluation of ethical conduct as part of regular performance appraisals.

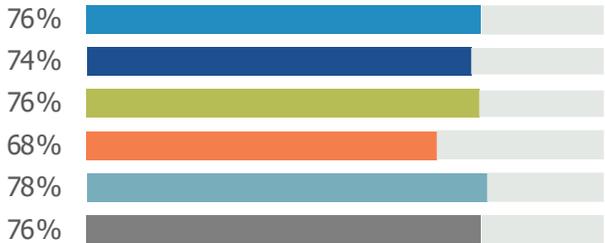
Note: An asterisk (*) indicates a statistically significant difference between UCCS 2019 overall and the GBES benchmark

Communicating the Importance of Ethics

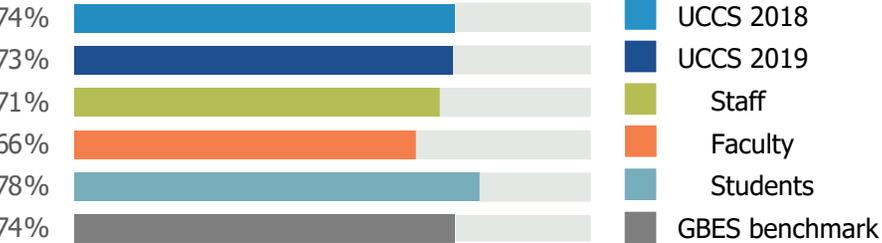
An ethical environment is formed and created through the perception that employees at all levels are engaging in ethical actions and behaviors.

Employees were asked about the following Ethics-related Actions:

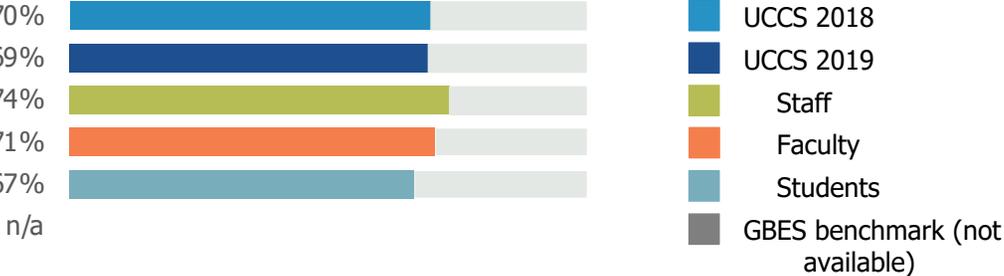
Top Management Talks About Ethics ¹



Supervisor Talks About Ethics ²



Coworkers/Peers Talk About Ethics ³



Ethical Leadership:

- Top management talks about the importance of following workplace ethics standards

Supervisor Reinforcement:

- Supervisors talk about the importance of following workplace ethics standards

Coworker Commitment:

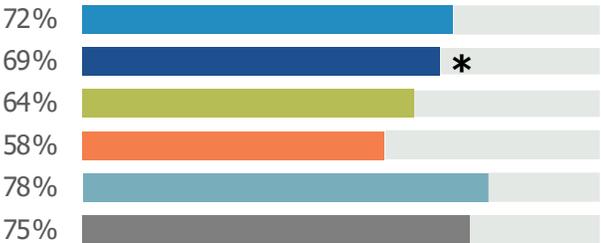
- Coworkers/peers about the importance of following workplace ethics standards.

¹ Top management talks about the importance of following workplace ethics standards.
² My direct supervisor talks about the importance of following workplace ethics standards.
³ My coworkers/peers talk about the importance of following workplace ethics standards.

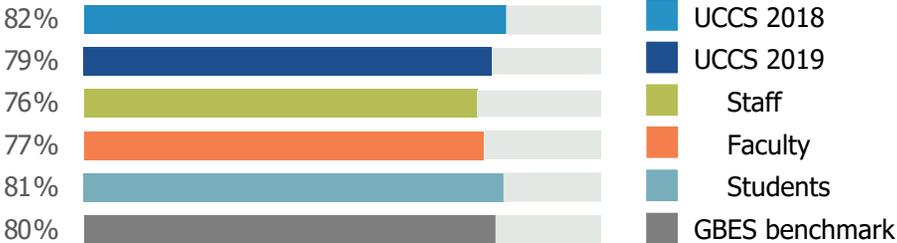
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Management Behaviors

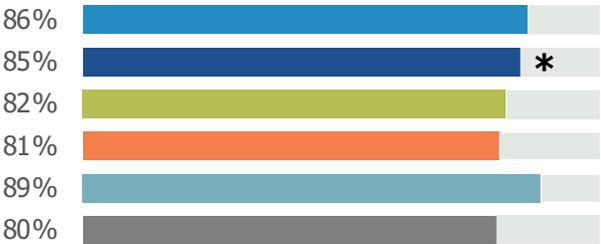
Top Management Sets a Good Example ¹



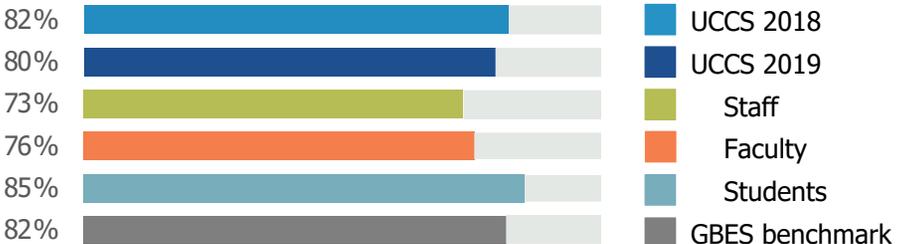
Supervisor Sets a Good Example ²



Supervisor Supports Employee ³



Supervisor Held Accountable ⁴



¹ Top management sets a good example of ethical workplace conduct.
² My direct supervisor sets a good example of ethical workplace conduct.
³ My direct supervisor supports employees' ethical workplace conduct.
⁴ My direct supervisor is held accountable if caught violating workplace ethics standards.

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates a statistically significant difference between UCCS 2019 overall and the GBES benchmark

Employees were asked about the following Ethics-related Actions:

Ethical Leadership:

- Top management sets a good example of ethical workplace conduct

Supervisor Reinforcement:

- Supervisor sets a good example of ethical workplace conduct
- Supervisor supports employees' ethical workplace conduct
- Supervisor is held accountable if caught violating workplace ethics standards

Ethics Outcomes

ECI’s research indicates that a lower level of ethics risk is related to low levels of observed misconduct and high levels of reporting of observed misconduct.

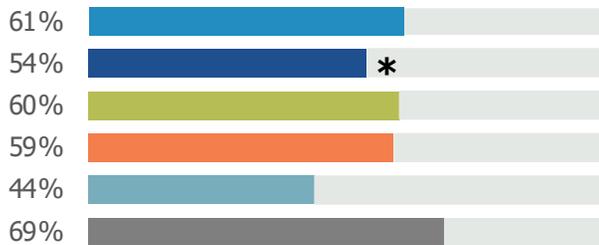
Pressure ¹



Observed Misconduct ²



Reported Misconduct ³



Perceived Retaliation ⁴



¹ Do you ever feel pressured by others to compromise your organization’s workplace ethics standards?

² During the past twelve months, did you personally observe conduct you thought violated your organization’s workplace ethics standards?

³ Did you report your observation of misconduct?

⁴ Did you experience retaliation as a result of your report of misconduct?

Note: An asterisk (*) indicates a statistically significant difference between UCCS 2019 overall and the GBES benchmark

Pressure

The predominant forms of pressure are meeting performance targets, supervisory pressure and saving one’s job.

Misconduct

Misconduct is primarily interpersonal – such as abusive behavior. Analysis of it can reveal whether the organization contains a few bad apples, or is a bad tree.

Reporting

Organizations that lack knowledge about the events taking place within are left only with an ability to react to crises and not an ability to avoid them.

Retaliation

Retaliation dampens future reporting. Whether perception or reality, an organization must still resolve employees’ reports of retaliation.

Frequently Asked Questions

How are the data weighted?

UCCS's data are weighted based on the makeup of the population of Staff, Faculty and Students. These adjustments, commonly referred to as weights, assign a weight to each survey respondent group depending on whether they are under- or over-represented in the survey results. Respondent groups that are under-presented are assigned a weight greater than 1 and those that are over-represented are assigned a weight less than 1. The weights adjust the responses so that the proportional makeup of the groups in the sample match their proportional makeup in the population.

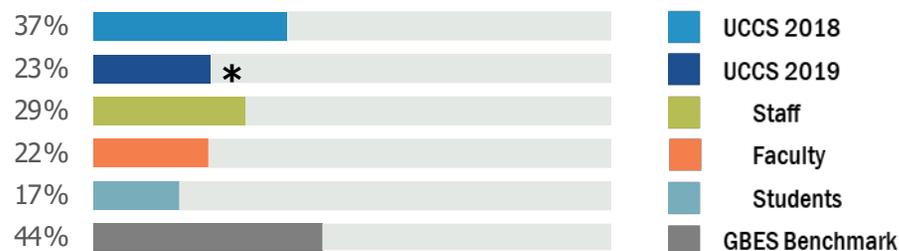
What benchmark is used to provides comparisons to UCCS's results?

The Global Business Ethics Survey® is a survey on ethics and compliance in workplaces across the globe. GBES® benchmarks included in this report are based on approximately 5,100 U.S.-based employees in for-profit companies. Statistically significant differences between UCCS's overall 2019 results and the benchmark are noted.

How do I interpret the charts?

The charts show the results for UCCS overall 2018, UCCS overall 2019, staff, faculty and students, and the GBES benchmark. An asterisk (*) indicates that there is a statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level ($p < .05$) between UCCS overall 2019 and the GBES benchmark. Statistical significance testing was not performed on the groups (faculty, staff and employed students).

In the example figure below, there is a statistically significant difference between UCCS 2019 overall and the GBES benchmark. If there is not a statistically significant difference, an asterisk will not be shown.





About ECI

The Ethics & Compliance Initiative (ECI) is a best practice community of organizations that are committed to creating and sustaining high-quality ethics & compliance programs. With a history dating back to 1922, ECI brings together ethics and compliance professionals and academics from all over the world to share techniques, research and, most of all, exciting new ideas.

Learn more at ethics.org.

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