

University of California, Davis
COACHE SURVEY OF FACULTY JOB SATISFACTION: 2012-13

**Thematic Area Report:
Technical Information**

INTRODUCTION

This document provides background information that is relevant to each report in the series of thematic reports which present the descriptive results for the 2012-13 UC Davis Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) Survey of Faculty Job Satisfaction, that are posted UC Davis Office of the Vice Provost –Academic Affairs website.

Description of the COACHE survey

The COACHE (Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education) Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey is conducted annually by the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and has been administered to colleges and universities nationwide since 2003. The survey is designed specifically for tenure-stream faculty and it aims to measure the faculty population’s levels of engagement in the teaching, research, and service, their level of satisfaction with the terms and conditions of their employment, and how supported they feel in the work.

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The survey questions are organized to measure faculty satisfaction in multiple areas:

- Nature of the Work (Research, Teaching, Service)
- Resources & Support
- Interdisciplinary Work
- Collaboration
- Mentoring
- Tenure and Promotion
- Institutional Governance & Leadership
- Engagement
- Work & Personal Life Balance
- Climate, Culture & Collegiality
- Appreciation & Recognition
- Recruitment & Retention
- Global Satisfaction

Survey population:

The survey was administered to UC Davis Faculty who are:

- Full-time
- Pre-tenure or tenured
- Not hired in current year (new hires are unable to answer many survey questions)
- Not in terminal year after being denied tenure
- Not in a senior administrative position, e.g., Dean, Assistant Dean, Associate Provost (but chairs were included)
- Not clinical faculty, e.g., in Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Pharmacy

These criteria yielded a total population of 1,358 faculty who were sent the online survey. The response rate was 46%, yielding 629 faculty respondents. Response rates were:

- Higher among pre-tenure (59%) than tenured (45%) faculty
- Higher among associate (52%) than full (43%) professors
- Higher among women (56%) than men (42%)
- Higher among white faculty (50%) than faculty of color (37%)

The resulting sample sizes by college/division/school, gender, race/ethnicity, and rank are:

Agriculture = 103	Female = 242
Biological Sciences = 48	Male = 387
Education = 8	
Engineering = 65	URM = 47
Law = 12	Asian/Asian American = 71
Ls: Hacs = 89	White = 511
Ls: Math/Phy Sci = 83	
Ls: Soc Sci = 108	
Management = 10	Assistant = 82
Medicine = 64	Associate = 151
Veterinary Medicine = 39	Full = 396

COACHE Benchmark Indicators of faculty satisfaction

To increase the utility of the COACHE results and to ease interpretation, individual survey items are combined into “Benchmark Indicators.” These multi-item scales of faculty satisfaction combine responses on a series of survey questions that cover multiple dimensions of an aspect of faculty work life. For example, the Benchmark Variable for “Interdisciplinary Work” combines variables measuring faculty members’ level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements:

1. Budget allocations encourage interdisciplinary work
2. Campus facilities are conducive to interdisciplinary work
3. My department understands how to evaluate interdisciplinary work
4. Interdisciplinary work is rewarded in the tenure/promotion system

There are 20 Benchmark Indicators covering the various aspects of faculty work life. The thematic reports focus on 1-3 Benchmark indicators that represent a definable area of faculty work life and present the results for the individual survey questions that are included for each of those areas. The Benchmark indicators cover the following areas:

- Nature of the Work - Research
- Nature of the Work - Teaching
- Nature of the Work - Service
- Facilities and Work Resources
- Personal and Family Policies
- Health and Retirement Benefits
- Interdisciplinary Work
- Collaboration
- Mentoring
- Tenure Policies (Note: this benchmark includes responses to questions asked only of pre-tenure faculty)
- Tenure Clarity (Note: this benchmark includes responses to questions asked only of pre-tenure faculty)
- Tenure Reasonableness (Note: this benchmark includes responses to questions asked only of pre-tenure faculty)
- Promotion (Note: this benchmark includes responses to questions asked only of tenured faculty)
- Leadership: Senior
- Leadership: Divisional
- Leadership: Departmental
- Department Collegiality
- Departmental Engagement
- Departmental quality
- Appreciation & Recognition

All of the survey questions combined into the Benchmark Indicators are measured on a 5-point scale that distinguishes levels of agreement or satisfaction and are coded such that higher values indicate greater levels of agreement/satisfaction:

1. Strongly disagree / Very dissatisfied
2. Somewhat disagree / Dissatisfied
3. Neither agree nor disagree / Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4. Somewhat agree / Satisfied
5. Strongly agree / Very satisfied

Peer institutions

All institutions that participate in the COACHE survey are asked to select five institutions that are also participating in the current year of the survey as “peers” against whom to compare the COACHE Survey results. The results at these peer institutions, aggregated across all 5 institutions, are presented (labeled as “Peers”) to provide context for the interpretation of our campus-specific results. The peer institutions selected by UC Davis are:

- Indiana University - Bloomington
- Johns Hopkins University
- Purdue University
- University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill
- University of Virginia

Presentation of the results in the thematic reports

Figure 1 of each report presents the average variable values within the thematic area for all faculty respondents and rank-orders the variables from that with the highest average value, i.e., the variables for which faculty express the greatest average level of satisfaction, to that with the lowest average value, i.e., the variable for which UC Davis faculty have the lowest level of satisfaction (within the thematic area). This rank order is then maintained throughout all figures in this report to facilitate comparisons across the graphs.

The significance of differences between-groups is assessed with effect sizes. Cohen’s *d* is used to test for the magnitude of differences since it is a systematic test that is applicable when sample sizes are small. Effect sizes are calculated using:

$$\frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{\sqrt{(sd_1^2) - (sd_2^2)}}$$

The following thresholds are the generally-accepted ranges of effect size magnitude:

- Less than .1 Trivial difference
- Between .1 and .3 Small difference
- Between .3 and .5 Moderate difference
- Greater than .5 Large difference

For all charts in these reports, the height of the bars represent the mean value of the faculty responses for specific survey items.

In all reports, differences that meet the lower threshold of “moderate differences,” i.e., 0.3, are identified as “significant.” This designation is indicated by solid color bars in this report.

Group differences that meet the lower threshold for “small differences, i.e., 0.1, are identified with shaded bars.

The absence of significant between-group differences is designated by outlined bars; outlines of the bars indicate the mean value of faculty responses for the survey item.

