

## NC State University COACHE AY11-12 Faculty Satisfaction Survey

### Highlights:

### Survey Background, Overall Satisfaction, Sub-Group Comparisons, Peer Comparisons, Trends

(Additional reports on the AY11-12 COACHE Survey are available online at

[http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/archives/survey/reports/coache/coache.ay11\\_12.toc.htm](http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/archives/survey/reports/coache/coache.ay11_12.toc.htm))

### Background

The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) Faculty Satisfaction Survey, administered by the Harvard Graduate School of Education, is designed to collect information from faculty on areas deemed critical to their professional success, such as the nature of work in research, teaching and service; resources; compensation; departmental collegiality; leadership and governance; mentoring; and the tenure and promotion process. NC State pre-tenured, tenured, and non-tenure track (NTT) faculty participated in the 2011-2012 COACHE survey, which was administered online from mid-October 2011 through January 2012. Pre-tenured faculty had also participated in the COACHE survey in 2008 and in 2005.

The AY11-12 COACHE survey population included all full-time faculty hired prior to July, 2011 who were not in their terminal year after being denied tenure. Clinical faculty (i.e., those in the College of Veterinary Medicine) were excluded. Almost 60% of the eligible pre-tenured and tenured faculty at NC State participated in the survey (800 of 1,362), as did 46% of the non-tenure track faculty (197 of 432).

### Overall Satisfaction

The majority of faculty overall are satisfied working at NC State. Two-thirds or more said they are satisfied with NC State and with their department as a place to work, and said if they had to do it over again they would still choose to work here. Only about five percent said they would not recommend their department as a place to work to someone of their same rank.

A plurality of faculty selected *geographic location* and *quality of colleagues* from a long list of options as the best aspects of working at NC State. *Compensation* was by far the most common response selected as the worst aspect of working at NC State. Other than *retirement*, the most commonly mentioned reasons faculty gave for possibly leaving NC State were to *improve their salary/benefits*, to *find an employer who provides more resources to support their work*, and to *work at an institution whose priorities match their own*.

Out of approximately 150 specific aspects of work faculty were asked to rate, they were most favorable about issues related to academic freedom (including as related to both their teaching and research), library resources, department meeting times being compatible with personal needs, and, among those on the tenure track, the clarity and reasonableness of various tenure and promotion processes and expectations. Faculty were least satisfied with a range of benefits (e.g., health, childcare, tuition remission), support and rewards for interdisciplinary work, the effectiveness of and support for the mentoring of faculty, and institutional priorities being stated and acted on consistently. NTT faculty were particularly dissatisfied with everything related to the promotion process for them.

### Sub-Group Comparisons: Faculty on the Tenure Track (Pre-Tenured and Tenured)

Gender: Female faculty on the tenure track were consistently less satisfied than male faculty in almost all aspects of their work at NC State. They gave especially lower ratings to the clarity of various aspects of promotion, to their department encouraging promotion, and to tenure decisions being based on performance. Women were also less satisfied with being able to balance their teaching, research and service obligations, as well as with the balance between their professional and personal lives. They were less likely to think their department and college is valued by senior administration, and to believe their colleagues are committed to diversity and inclusion. Finally, women were also less satisfied than men

with mentoring within the department, but were more likely than men to see faculty mentoring from outside the department as important and effective.

Race/Ethnicity: Tenure track faculty of color were more favorable than white faculty about several aspects of their work, including support for travel to present/conduct research, and the support for faculty in leadership roles. Faculty of color were more likely than white faculty to believe interdisciplinary work is rewarded in the tenure process, and gave higher ratings to the clarity of the body of evidence for deciding tenure, and to the clarity of expectations as an advisor. Finally, they were more satisfied than white faculty with their ability to balance their teaching, research and service obligations.

However, faculty of color were less likely than their white peers at NC State to say they would again choose to work at NC State if they had to do it over again. They were less likely to believe there is visible leadership in support of diversity and inclusion, or that their colleagues are committed to diversity and inclusion. Faculty of color were more negative than white faculty about opportunities for collaboration in their department, and were less likely to believe their department is successful in retaining faculty. They were less satisfied with their salary, and with stop-the-clock policies. Finally, tenured faculty of color were less satisfied than tenured white faculty with the clarity of a range of aspects related to promotion.

Tenure Status: The only item for which pre-tenured faculty gave lower, or less favorable, ratings than tenured faculty was having the right balance between their professional and personal lives. Pre-tenured faculty were more satisfied than tenured faculty with the support they get for travel to present/conduct research, and the clerical/administrative support they get. They were more likely to say their department head fairly evaluates their work, and that their dean provides support to adapt to changing priorities. Pre-tenured faculty were more likely than those who are tenured to see mentoring within the department, outside the department, and outside the institution as important. The pre-tenured faculty also gave higher ratings to the effectiveness of mentoring from outside the institution than did those already tenured.

Rank: Associate professors were consistently less satisfied than full professors with numerous aspects of working at NC State. They gave especially lower ratings to the clarity of numerous aspects of promotion (e.g., process, time frame, criteria, standards, body of evidence), the reasonableness of expectations for promotion, and to their department culture encouraging promotion. They were also less positive about opportunities for collaboration with others in their department, and with their ability to balance their teaching, research, and service obligations. Finally, associate professors were less satisfied than full professors with the mentoring of associate faculty and with support for faculty to be good mentors. Associate professors were more likely than full professors to see mentoring from outside the department and institution as important.

### **Sub-Group Comparisons: Non-Tenure Track vs Tenure Track Faculty**

While NTT faculty were more satisfied than those on the tenure track (pre-tenured and tenured combined) with the nature of their work as related to teaching, with personal and family policies, and with health and retirement benefits, they were markedly less satisfied with other aspects, in particular those related to department life. NTT faculty were less likely than those on the tenure track to say they feel like they “fit in” their department. They were less likely to report having professional and/or personal interactions with pre-tenured and tenured faculty in general, and, more specifically, less likely to report being engaged in discussions related to graduate student learning or current research methods. NTTs also gave lower ratings than those on the tenure track to the teaching effectiveness of pre-tenured and tenured faculty. The NTTs were less satisfied with the influence they have over the focus of their research, and with the recognition they get for their scholarship. Finally, NTTs said they see fewer opportunities for collaboration with those outside the institution, and gave lower ratings to the effectiveness of mentoring from outside the institution.

### **NC State vs COACHE Peer Comparisons**

Institutions participating in the COACHE survey each selected five other participating institutions to include in their peer comparison group. NC State’s COACHE peer group consisted of Clemson, Kansas

State, Purdue, SUNY-Albany, and University of Tennessee. On the vast majority of areas asked about on the survey there were no notable differences in the satisfaction of NC State pre-tenured and tenured faculty and compared to those at our COACHE peer institutions (combined). (Note: NTTs were not included in peer comparisons.) There were, however, a few areas in which NC State faculty gave relatively more favorable ratings than their COACHE peers, and others where they gave less favorable ratings.

NC State faculty were more satisfied than their COACHE peers with the library resources available to them, their offices, and classrooms. Tenured faculty at NC State were more likely than their COACHE peers to agree that their department culture encourages associate professors to work towards promotion to full professor. While faculty were generally dissatisfied with the mentoring of associate professors, NC State tenured faculty were slightly more likely than their COACHE peers to agree that such mentoring is effective.

Of all the various aspects of their employment asked about in the survey, NC State faculty gave some of the lowest ratings to benefits. Not only were the ratings low, they were notably lower than those from our COACHE peer institutions. NC State faculty were especially more likely than their peers to be dissatisfied with family health benefits, followed by personal health benefits, and retirement benefits. The COACHE survey asked faculty about various other employee benefits or policies that the university may or may not offer, including tuition waivers, remission or exchange - - something not currently available at NC State. While almost half of the NC State faculty and about 40 percent of faculty at our COACHE peer institutions responded that such a benefit was "not offered at my institution" or said "not applicable" or "don't know," among those expressing an opinion, dissatisfaction was notably higher at NC State. Finally, NC State faculty were more likely than faculty at our COACHE peer institutions to be dissatisfied with clerical/administrative support.

#### **Trends: Pre-Tenured Faculty, AY08-09 - - AY11-12**

NC State pre-tenured faculty participated in the COACHE survey in Fall 2008, providing the opportunity for some trend comparisons for that group. The survey instrument, however, was extensively revised between the two administrations, thereby limiting the number of items available for a trend analysis. For those items that were comparable, there were few notable differences in the satisfaction of pre-tenured faculty in the AY08-09 versus the AY11-12 COACHE surveys. Pre-tenured faculty were slightly more positive about the reasonableness of tenure expectations as a teacher, colleague, and campus citizen in the more recent survey than they were a few years earlier. They were also slightly more satisfied now than in the past with the expectations for finding external funding. On the other hand, while still generally positive, pre-tenured faculty responding to the AY11-12 survey were slightly less likely than those in AY08-09 to say they would choose to work at NC State if they had to do it over again. They were also less satisfied with clerical/administrative support, and slightly less likely to believe that senior administration cares about faculty of their rank.