

Spring 2024 COACHE Faculty Satisfaction Survey Narrative Summary of Results by Demographic Groups and Job Characteristics

Introduction and Background

The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) Faculty Satisfaction Survey is a national survey developed and administered by the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University. The COACHE Faculty Satisfaction Survey has been administered triennially at NC State University since AY2005-2006, most recently in Spring 2024. The survey is a comprehensive and confidential assessment tool designed to collect data regarding faculty satisfaction with a wide range of work experiences.

The COACHE questionnaire includes almost 300 questions that ask the faculty about their work experiences and opinions. Of these, 183 substantive questions are grouped by COACHE into 25 thematic “benchmarks,” which serve as a structured framework for understanding the results. Divisions across NC State use the survey results to determine where the institution is doing a good job in meeting faculty needs and expectations and to identify areas where NC State could implement improvements.

Of the 2,102 eligible NC State faculty invited to take the Spring 2024 survey, 682 submitted a valid response for an overall response rate of 32 percent. Participation rates were remarkably similar among NC State faculty ranks and tenure statuses, ranging from 32 to 33 percent. There was a seven percentage point difference between women and men who responded to the survey (36% and 29%, respectively) and a ten-point difference between white faculty and faculty of color (36% and 26%, respectively).¹ More detailed information about the survey administration and response rates can be found in the Introduction and Research Methods report, available on the [ISA website](#).

Understanding this Comparisons Report

This report summarizes the notable differences in work-related opinions and experiences by demographic and job category subgroups. In other words, it highlights the benchmarks and survey responses with the greatest magnitude of difference between subgroups (for example, between men and women or tenure-track and professional-track faculty). Concentrating on between-group variation illuminates the wide range of contrasting perceptions and experiences that the all-faculty mean ratings may obscure.

¹ The COACHE race/ethnicity categories are as follows: white (non-Hispanic); Asian, Asian-American, or Pacific Islander; Black or African-American; Hispanic or Latino; Multiracial; Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander; Middle Eastern, Southwest Asian, or North African; American Indian or Native Alaskan; Other; or Decline to answer. Faculty of color (FOC) refers to all non-white faculty. Underrepresented minorities (URM) refers to all faculty who do not identify as white or Asian.

Each measure in this report has a 5-point response scale, where “1” indicates a low rating and “5” indicates a high rating. A higher mean score on an item reveals that faculty report more favorable ratings (agreement, satisfaction, clarity, importance, etc.) regarding that area. Only “notable differences”² in means are included in this report.

The bar charts throughout this report present mean ratings of various items on the questionnaire, directly comparing notable differences between two groups. For almost all group comparisons, there are two bar charts; one displays items that group 1 (e.g., tenured faculty) rates *notably higher* than group 2 (e.g., pre-tenure faculty), and the other displays items that group 1 rates *notably lower* than group 2.

For subgroup comparisons that feature many notable mean score gaps, only the largest differences are included. These instances will be marked throughout the report.

The full reports of means comparisons by subgroup can be found on the “[COACHE AY23-24: NC State Average Ratings](#)” webpage.

Tenure Track Status: Professional Track vs. Tenure Track

Benchmarks

Professional-track faculty give six thematic “benchmarks” notably more favorable ratings than do their tenure-track colleagues. These benchmarks include Leadership: Faculty (3.55 vs. 3.24), Governance: Productivity (3.10 vs. 2.82), Facilities and Work Resources (3.83 vs. 3.56), Departmental Collegiality (3.95 vs. 3.69), Governance: Understanding the Issue at Hand (3.01 vs. 2.76), and Personal and Family Policies (3.27 vs. 3.01). Two of these benchmarks concern the shared governance model between faculty and senior leadership, which highlights professional-track faculty’s comparatively more positive view of collaborative decision-making processes at NC State. These ratings also suggest greater general satisfaction for the available facilities and work resources, and for personal and family policies, among faculty for professional-track faculty than among tenure-track faculty.

Tenure-track faculty did not rate any of the benchmarks notably higher than their professional-track colleagues.

Individual Survey Items

Professional track faculty give notably more favorable ratings than do tenure track faculty to 47 of the survey items, with 12 of them having a mean rating difference of 0.4 or more (Figure 1).

² COACHE does not report on tests of statistical significance; instead, they rely on effect sizes, which show the direction and magnitude of difference in means between two comparison groups. The phrase “notable difference” in this report refers to an effect size of 0.25 or greater. For example, the difference between a mean of 2.90 and 3.45 is a notable difference, but the difference between 3.20 and 3.40 is not.

The largest gap in mean ratings between the two groups is for the *tuition waivers, remission, or exchange policy*, where professional-track faculty have an average rating of 3.33 and tenure-track faculty have an average rating of 2.54, a difference of 0.79 points. In general, professional-track faculty tend to rate many aspects of NC State's personal and family benefits more highly than tenure-track faculty do, including *housing benefits, eldercare, and family medical/parental leave policies*.

Professional-track faculty give much higher ratings than tenure-track faculty do to three items that fall under the facilities and work resources benchmark. Professional-track faculty find the *clerical and administrative support, computing and technical support, and the support the institution offers for improving teaching* more satisfactory than do tenure-track faculty.

Two additional items that professional-track faculty rate very highly compared to tenure-track faculty pertain to departmental collegiality; specifically, their colleagues' *support of work/life balance* and satisfaction with how other department members *pitch in as needed*.

Figure 2 shows all nine items that tenure-track faculty rate more favorably than professional-track faculty. The area in which the greatest gap in mean ratings can be observed regards departmental engagement. Tenure-track faculty are more likely than professional-track faculty to say that *discussions of graduate student learning* and *discussions of current research methods* frequently occur. They also report higher levels of satisfaction with the *amount of time spent on research* and *the influence they have over the focus of their research, scholarly, or creative work*. Finally, tenure-track faculty, more than professional-track faculty, indicate that *the importance and effectiveness of mentoring relationships outside the institution are valuable to their success as a faculty member*.

Figure 1: Items rated notably more favorably by professional-track faculty than by tenure-track faculty (mean ratings)

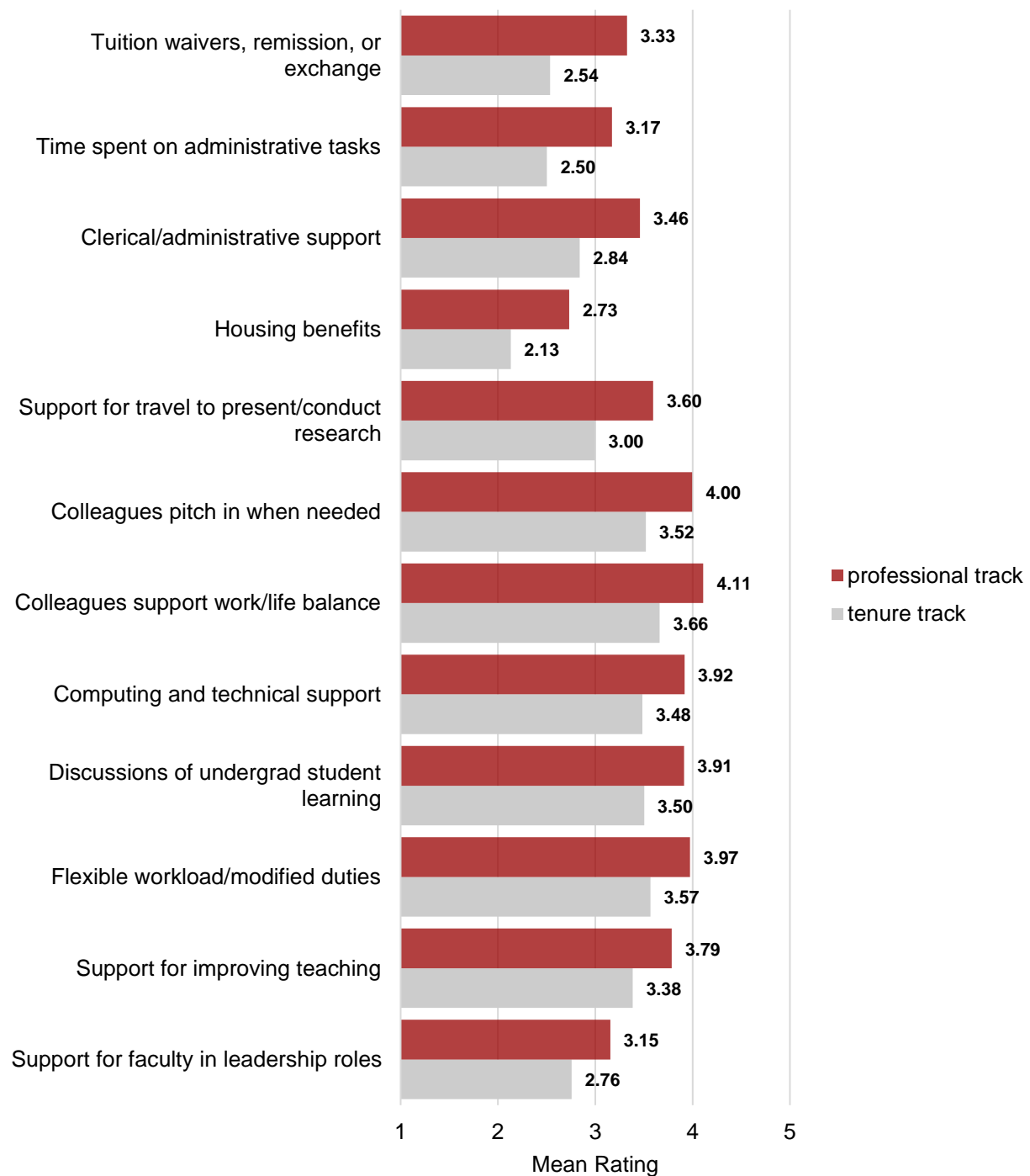
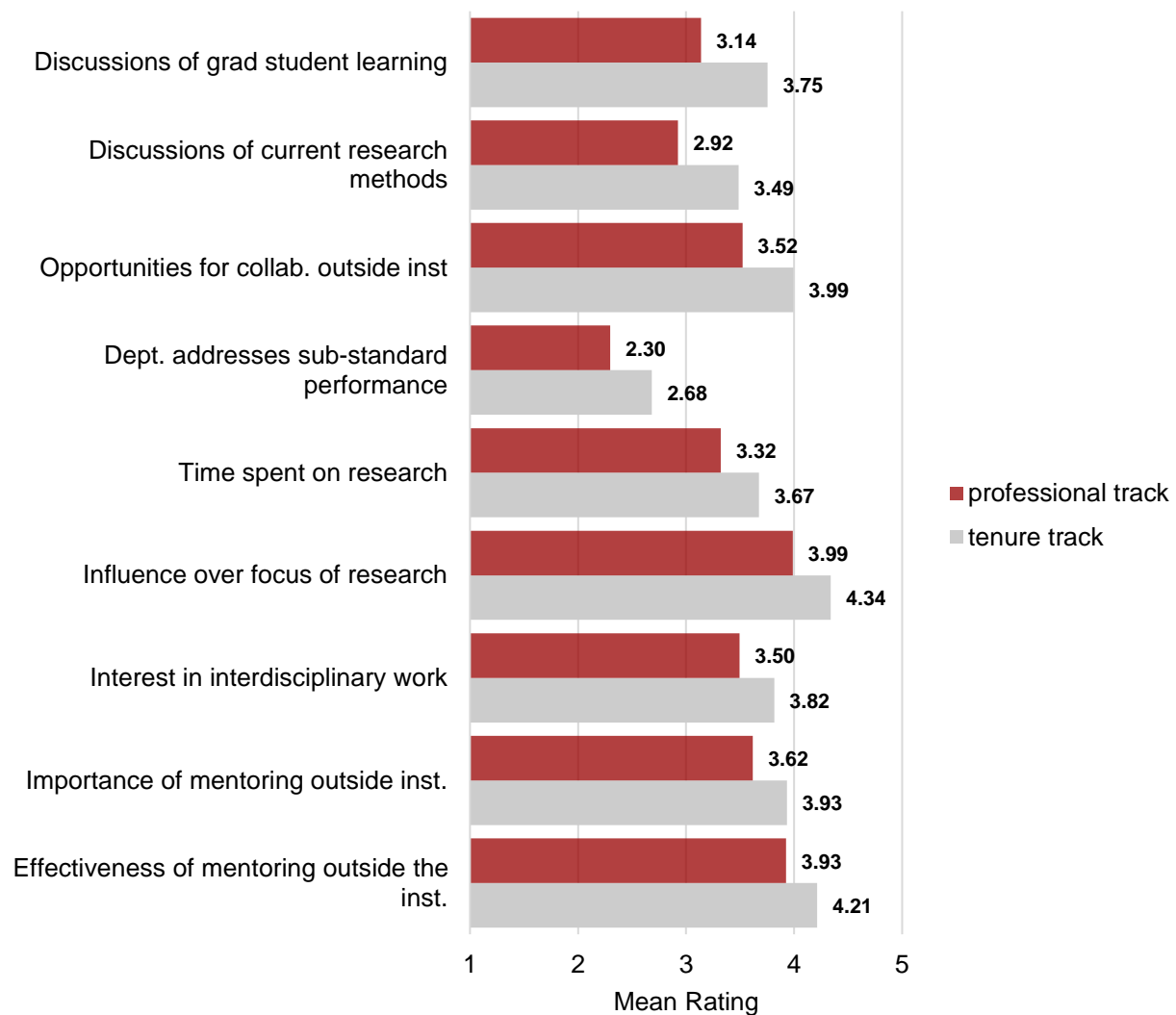


Figure 2: Items rated notably less favorably by professional-track faculty than by tenure-track faculty (mean ratings)



Tenure Status: Pre-tenure vs. Tenured Faculty

Benchmarks

There are notable differences between pre-tenure and tenure faculty for four benchmarks. Mentoring is an area that is generally given positive ratings by faculty at NC State, yet there is a large difference in mean scores by tenure status. Tenured faculty give the Mentoring benchmark a mean rating of 3.2, while pre-tenure faculty give it a rating of 3.67, a 0.47 point gap. Pre-tenure faculty, compared to tenured faculty, also express notably more favorable opinions regarding the benchmarks for Departmental Leadership, Divisional Leadership (e.g., dean), and Governance: Shared Sense of Purpose at NC State.

Tenured faculty did not rate any of the benchmarks notably higher than their pre-tenure colleagues.

Individual Survey Items

There are 25 items that pre-tenure faculty rate notably more favorably than tenured faculty, with the top 12 presented in Figure 3. The single largest gap relates to *eldercare*. Pre-tenure faculty give this item a neutral rating of 3.08, while tenured faculty give it a 2.32, which indicates negative opinions about this family policy.

Just as the overall mean benchmark score for mentoring is higher for pre-tenure faculty than for tenured faculty, two items from this benchmark appear in the top 12 list of items that pre-tenure faculty rate higher. Specifically, pre-tenure faculty are more likely than tenured faculty to say that *mentorship outside the department* and *outside the institution is important to their success as a faculty member*.

Four survey items associated with the departmental and divisional leadership benchmarks also appear in Figure 3. Pre-tenure faculty express greater satisfaction with both the *dean's* and *department head's ability to ensure opportunities for faculty to have input into college priorities* than do tenured faculty. Pre-tenure faculty also have more positive opinions about their *department head's support in adapting to the changing mission of the university* and about their *dean's communication of priorities* compared to tenured faculty.

Figure 4 lists the five items that tenured faculty rate notably more favorably than pre-tenure faculty. The largest gap in ratings occurs for the statement, *I have been able to find the right balance, for me, between my professional life and my personal/family life*. Tenured faculty have positive feelings about this statement; as a group, they rate it 3.18 out of 5. In contrast, pre-tenure faculty have negative feelings; they give this item a mean rating of 2.76.

Whereas pre-tenure faculty rated their department head and college dean more highly than tenured faculty in a number of specific areas, tenured faculty express more

favorable opinions than pre-tenure faculty about *the chancellor's pace of decision-making* and *the chancellor's communication of institutional priorities*.

Figure 3: Items rated notably more favorably by pre-tenure faculty than by tenured faculty (mean ratings)

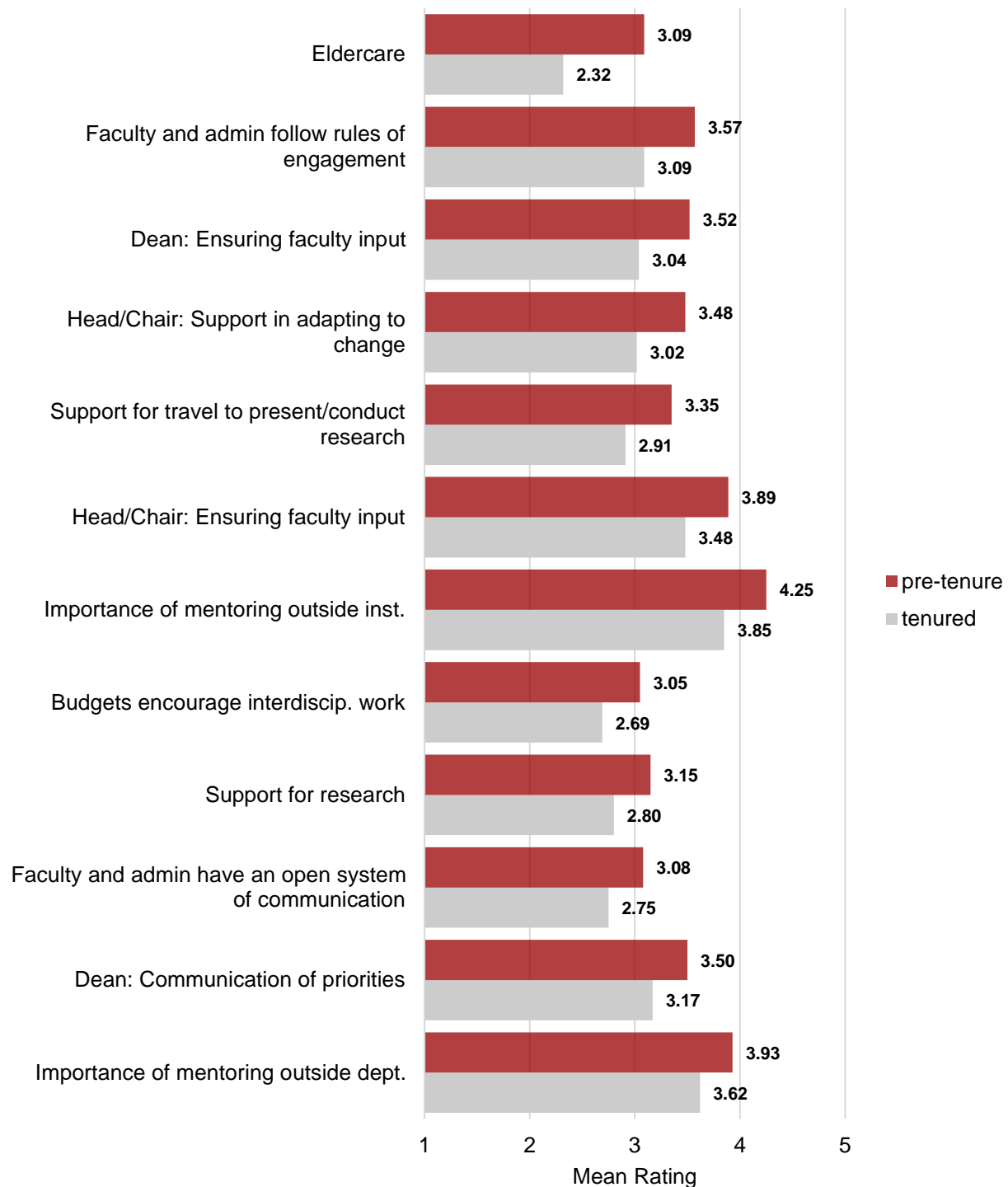
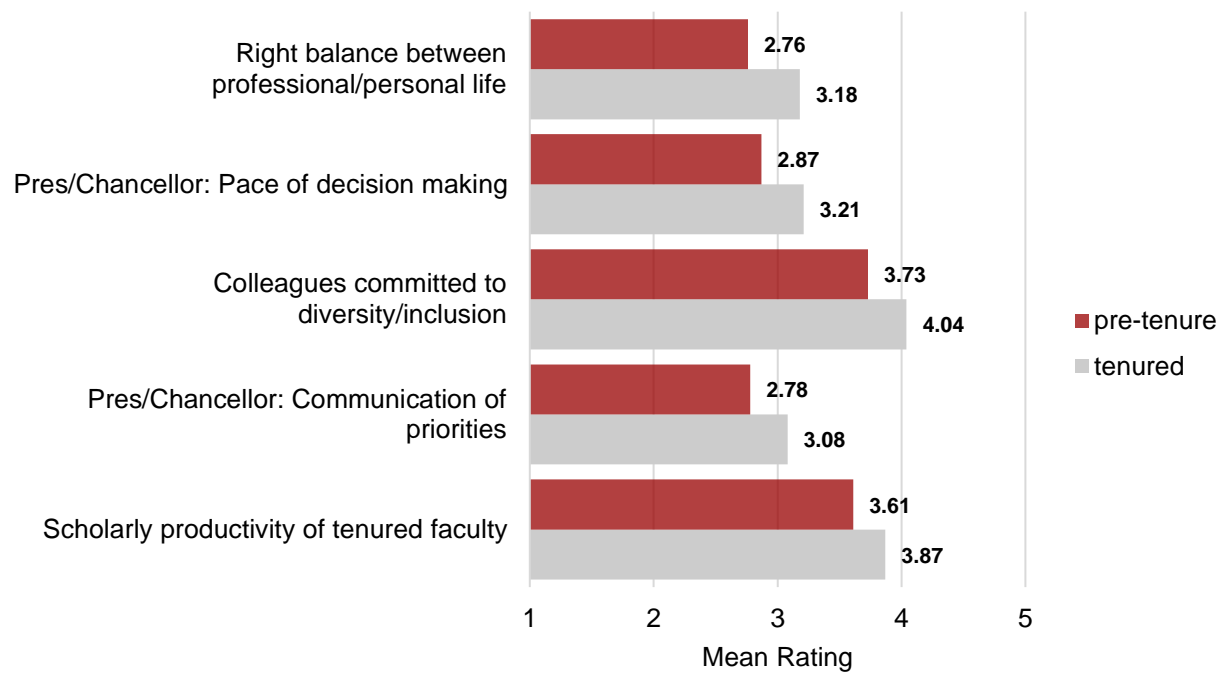


Figure 4: Items rated notably less favorably by pre-tenure faculty than by tenured faculty (mean ratings)



Rank: Associate vs. Full Professors (incl. tenure-track and professional-track faculty)

Faculty at the rank of associate professor (including tenure-track and professional-track faculty) at NC State did not rate any benchmarks or individual survey items on the COACHE faculty satisfaction survey more favorably than faculty at the rank of full professor (including tenure-track and professional-track faculty). Therefore, the following sections highlight only the benchmarks and items where faculty at the rank of full professor give higher ratings than do faculty at the rank of associate professor.

Benchmarks

Five benchmark areas are rated notably more favorably by faculty at the rank of full professor than by faculty at the rank of associate professor. The largest gap regards the Promotion to Full benchmark (e.g., the process and standards for being promoted from associate to full rank); there is a 0.88 point difference in mean scores. Other benchmarks with notable differences are Mentoring, Collaboration, Departmental Quality, and Appreciation and Recognition.

Individual Survey Items

There are 72 total survey items that faculty at the rank of full professor give notably more favorable ratings to than do faculty at the rank of associate professor. This constitutes about 39% of the benchmark-related items on the survey, signaling a substantial difference of opinion between the two groups. The thirteen items with the largest difference in mean scores, all of which have gap sizes of 0.5 or greater, are in Figure 5.

Seven of the 13 items with the greatest variation in ratings between associate professors and full professors involve promotion from associate to full rank (asked only of tenured faculty). The biggest difference is for the statement, *generally, the expectations for promotion from associate to full professor are reasonable to me* (with a mean score of 4.31 for those of full rank vs. 3.22 for those of associate rank). A cluster of items regarding the clarity of various aspects of earning a promotion from associate to full professor, including the *time frame for promotion* as well as the *process, standards, criteria, and body of evidence used in decisions*, all had mean rating differences of between 0.66 and 1.04 between full and associate professors.

A similar pattern unfolds when looking at the four items in Figure 5 that are asked exclusively of professional-track faculty. Professional-track faculty at the rank of full are much more likely to say that their *sense of promotion* and *sense of contract renewal* are clear than are their associate counterparts.

Finally, there are clear differences in opinion about the effectiveness of mentoring within the department. Tenured and professional-track faculty at the rank of full professor are notably more likely than tenured and professional-track faculty at the rank of associate

professor to say that there is *effective mentoring of pre-tenure, associate, and professional-track faculty*. They are also more likely to agree that *the institution provides adequate support for faculty to be good mentors*. It is important to note that ratings on this latter question are very low overall, with tenured and professional-track faculty at the rank of full professor giving it an average rating of 2.86 and tenured and professional-track faculty at the rank of associate professor giving it an average rating of just 2.34.

Figure 5: Items rated notably less favorably by associate rank faculty than by full rank faculty (mean ratings)



**item asked of tenured faculty*

†item asked of professional-track faculty

Gender: Women vs. Men

Benchmarks

There is one difference in benchmark ratings between men and women faculty at NC State. Men rate the area of Tenure Expectations: Clarity higher than do women (with mean scores of 3.42 vs. 3.16, respectively).

Individual Survey Items

Figure 6 displays all 12 survey items for which women express more positive opinions than men. Five of these items relate to mentoring, an area where women express particularly strong approval. A clear pattern emerges: women are significantly more likely than men to consider *having mentors—within their department, outside the department but within the institution, and outside the institution*—important to their success. Women are also more likely than men to rate *the mentoring they receive from someone within the department* and *the mentoring they receive from someone outside the institution* as effective.

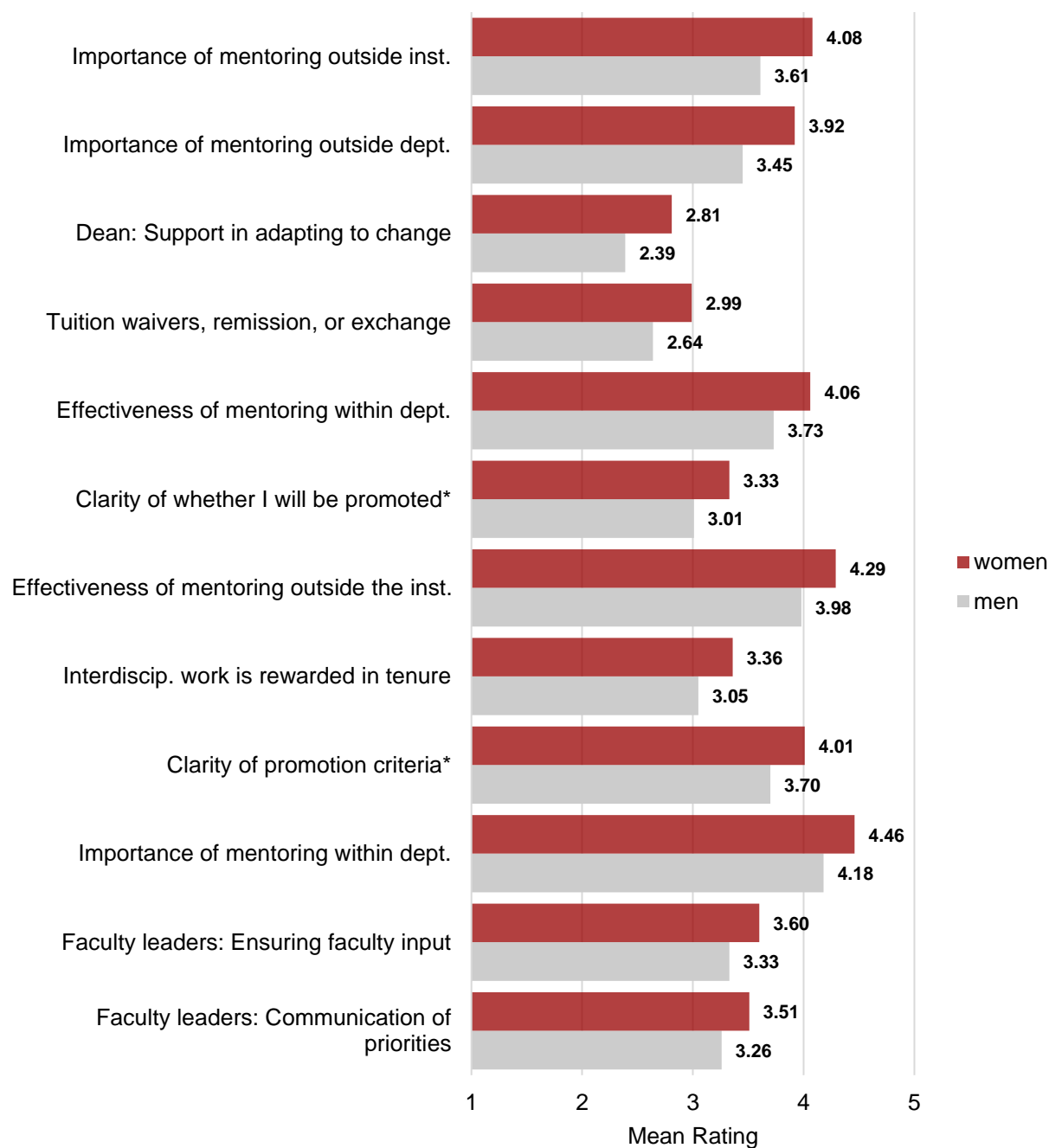
Among tenured faculty, women are more likely than men to indicate that *the criteria for promotion from associate to full professor rank* are clear; they also express having greater clarity about *whether they will be promoted*.

Conversely, Figure 7 presents 12 of the 19 items that men rate more favorably than women. First, among pre-tenure faculty, men report having greater *clarity of tenure expectations* (e.g., what is expected of them in order to earn tenure) than women do across multiple roles: as an *advisor, colleague, teacher, and campus citizen*.

Two other items that men give more favorable ratings to than women relate to finding balance. Women express a neutral standpoint about the statement, *“I have been able to find the right balance, for me, between my professional life and my personal/family life,”* with a mean rating of 2.99. Men are more likely to agree with the statement, with a rating of 3.34. Men are also more likely than women to say that they are *able to balance the teaching, research, and service activities expected of them*.

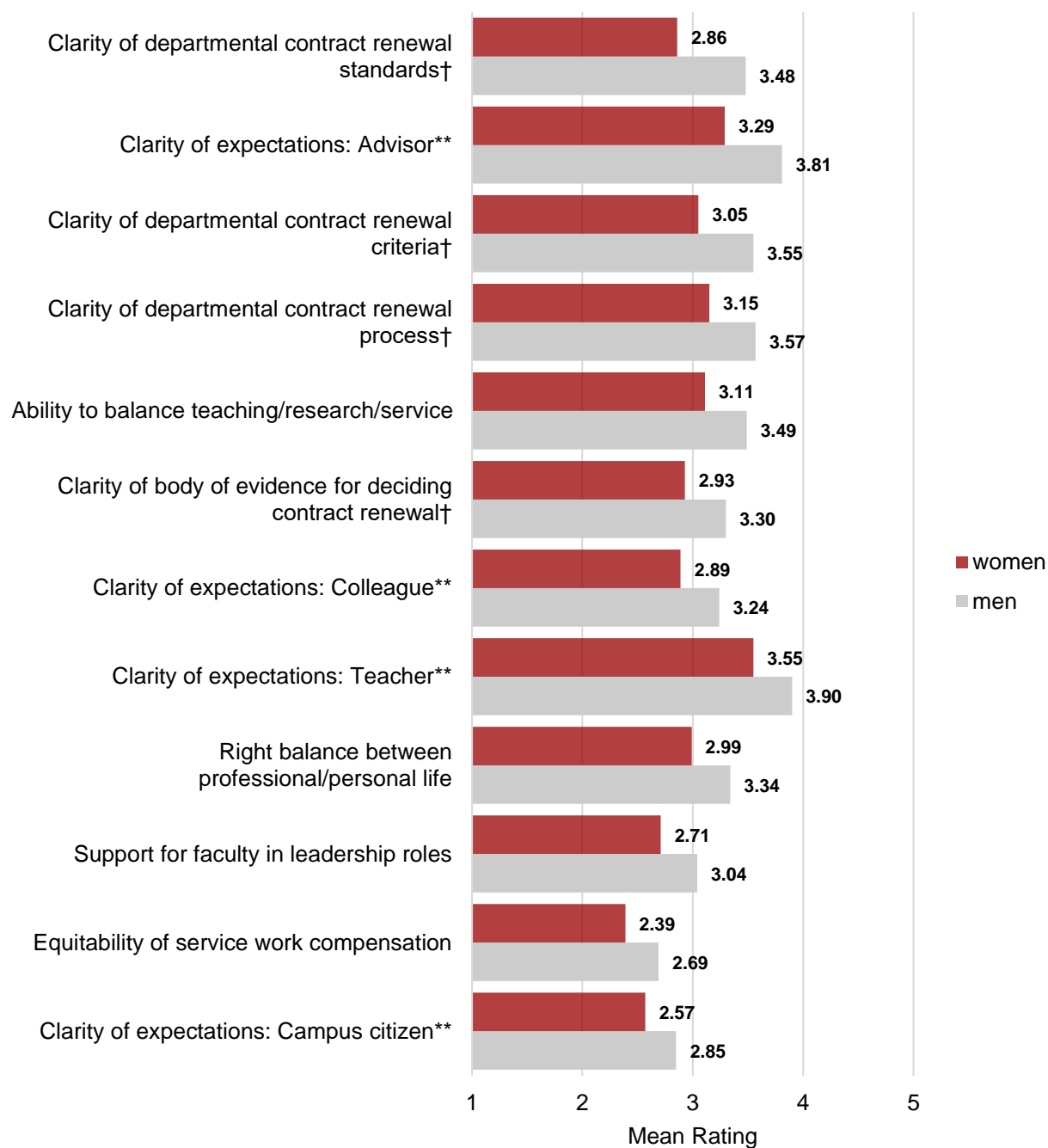
Another cluster of survey items that men rate more highly than women are asked only of professional-track faculty and concern the clarity of the contract renewal process. Men on the professional track are more likely than women on the professional track to say that the *standards, criteria, process, and body of evidence considered for contract renewal* are clear. While men generally agree, women tend to feel neutral or even slightly disagree with these statements.

Figure 6: Items rated notably more favorably by women than by men (mean ratings)



**item asked of tenured faculty*

Figure 7: Items rated notably less favorably by women than by men (mean ratings)



****item asked of pre-tenure faculty**

†item asked of professional-track faculty

Faculty of Color (FOC) vs. White Faculty

Benchmarks

Faculty of color (FOC), which includes Asian faculty and those who identify as underrepresented minorities, rate two benchmarks more favorably than do white faculty. FOC rate the Governance: Understanding the Issue at Hand and Governance: Productivity benchmarks slightly more positively, with mean ratings of 3.08 and 3.15, respectively. White faculty have a negative opinion of these shared governance topics, with mean ratings of 2.77 for Understanding the Issue at Hand and 2.84 for Productivity.

Individual Survey Items

Eleven of the 43 survey items for which FOC give notably more favorable responses than white faculty are presented in Figure 8. The most significant gap in mean ratings concerns the *importance of mentoring outside the department but within the institution*. FOC rate this item 4.09, falling between “important” and “very important,” compared to 3.56 from white faculty.

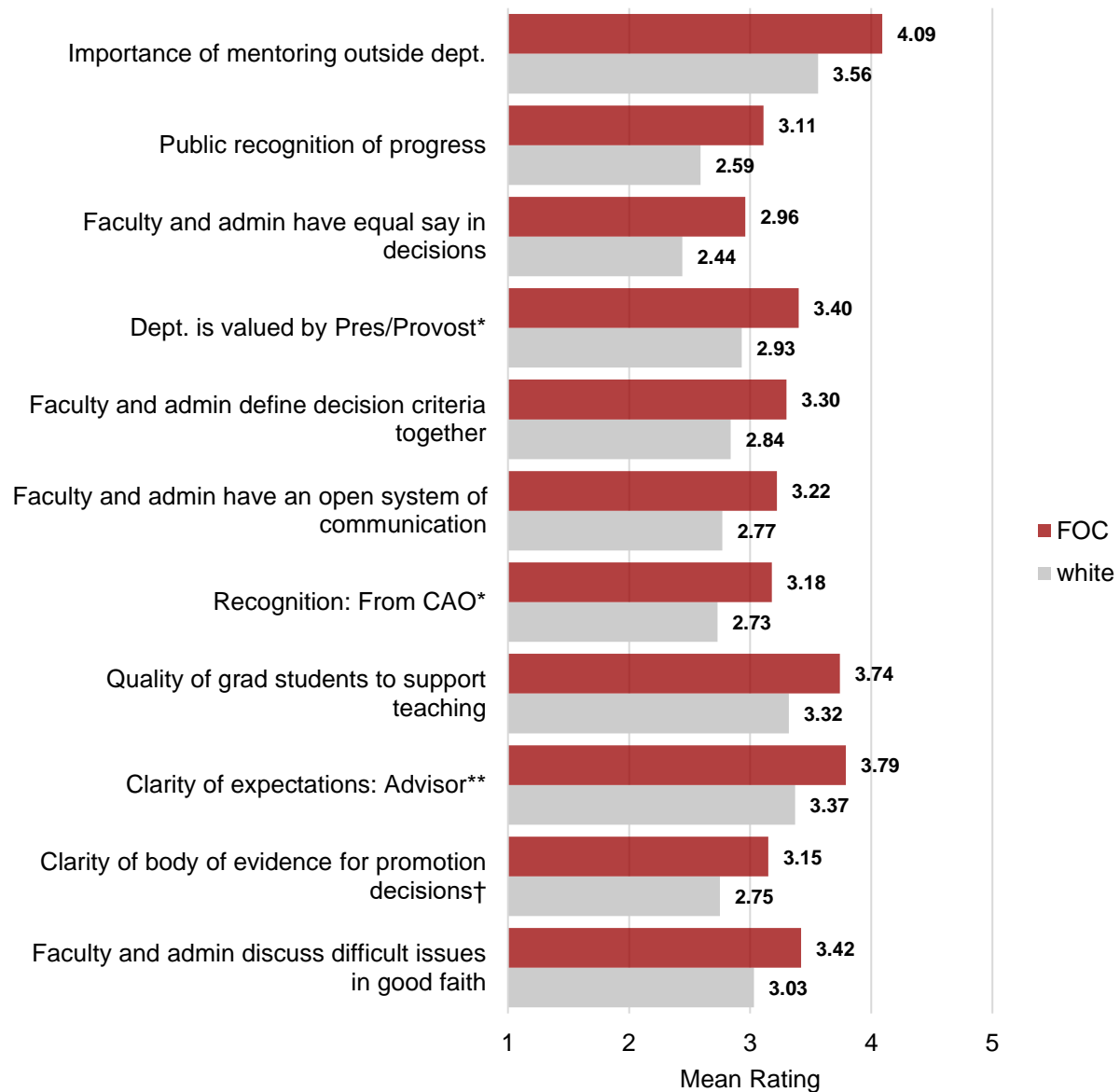
Five of the top 11 items that FOC rate more highly than white faculty regard the relationship between faculty leadership and senior administration. FOC are more likely than white faculty to “somewhat agree” or “strongly agree” that *faculty and administration have an equal say in decisions, define decision criteria together, have an open system of communication, discuss difficult issues in good faith*, and that there is *public recognition of progress* made by the shared governance system.

Two survey items that fall under the Appreciation and Recognition benchmark are included in the top 11 items displayed in Figure 8, and five items from this benchmark fall under the top 20 items for which there are notable differences, suggesting that FOC feel more positively than white faculty about the recognition they receive for their work.

Figure 9 displays the nine items where white faculty give notably more positive ratings than FOC. Two items stand out: white faculty are more likely to report *there is visible leadership for the support and promotion of diversity on campus* and to say *their colleagues are committed to the support and promotion of diversity and inclusion within their department*.

There are notable differences by race in perceptions of the clarity of tenure, promotion, and contract renewal processes at NC State. Among those with tenure, white faculty express having greater *clarity regarding their promotion prospects* and believe *departmental culture encourages promotion* more strongly than FOC. Among professional-track faculty, white faculty report having a better *sense of whether they will have their contract renewed* and/or a *sense of whether they will earn a promotion* than do FOC.

Figure 8: Items rated notably more favorably by faculty of color (FOC) than by white faculty (mean ratings)

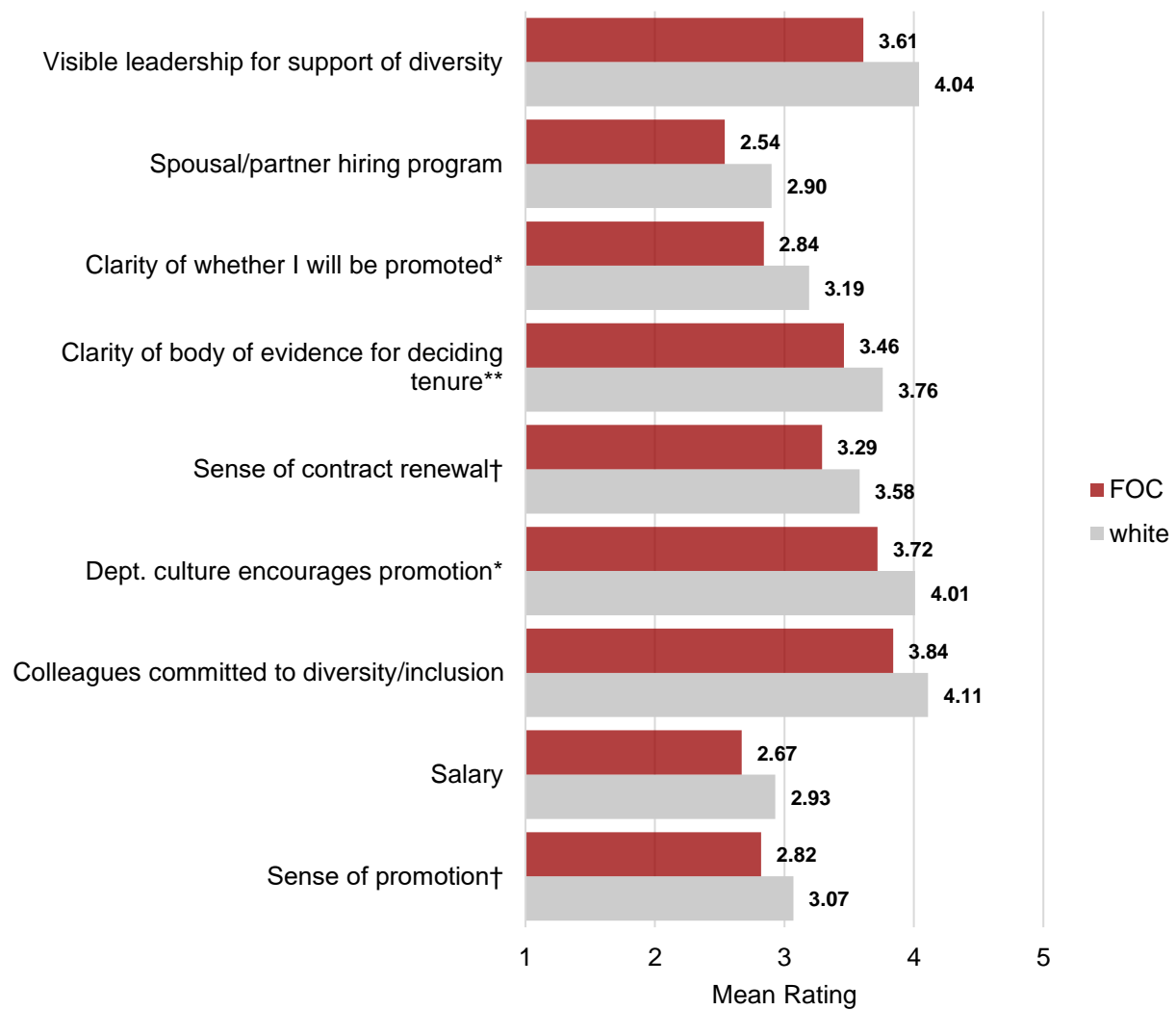


**item asked of tenured faculty*

***item asked of pre-tenure faculty*

†item asked of professional-track faculty

Figure 9: Items rated notably less favorably by faculty of color (FOC) than by white faculty (mean ratings)



**item asked of tenured faculty*

***item asked of pre-tenure faculty*

†item asked of professional-track faculty

Race/Ethnicity: Asian vs. White Faculty

Benchmarks

Asian faculty rate seven benchmarks more favorably than white faculty. The largest gap in overall benchmark mean ratings is for the area of Appreciation and Recognition. Asian faculty rate this area 3.60 out of 5, while white faculty rate it 3.19, a 0.41 point difference.

Asian faculty also give higher ratings to three Shared Governance benchmarks: Productivity, Adaptability, and Understanding the Issue at Hand. The Understanding the Issue at Hand benchmark, in particular, was rated slightly positively by Asian faculty (3.14) but negatively by white faculty (2.77; a 0.37 point difference). Another benchmark with a 0.37 point gap in ratings between Asian and white faculty is Mentoring (3.58 vs. 3.21). The last two benchmarks with notable differences in mean ratings between Asian and white faculty are Interdisciplinary Work and Tenure Expectations: Clarity.

White faculty did not rate any of the benchmarks notably higher than their Asian colleagues.

Individual Survey Items

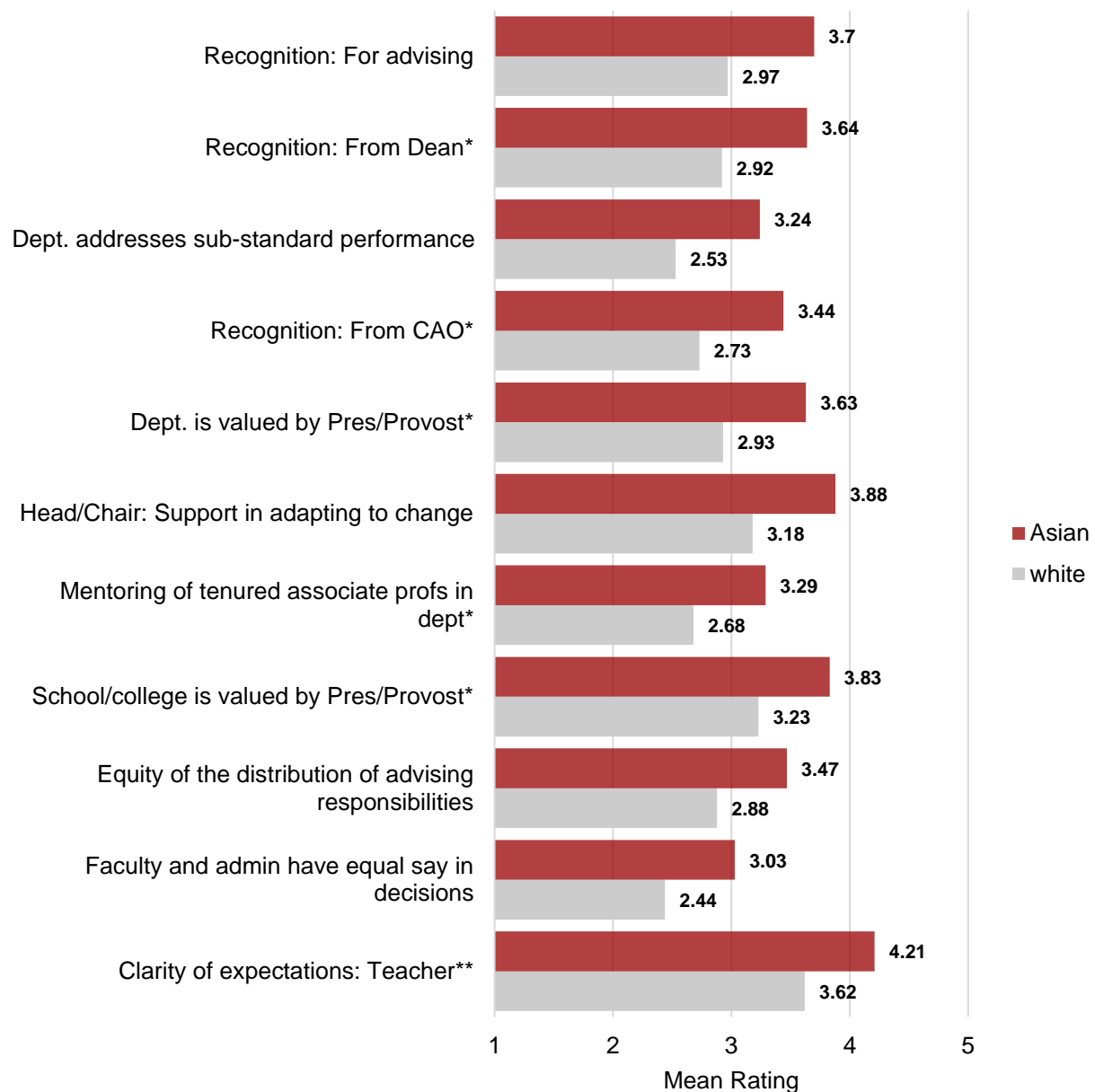
Asian faculty rate 72 survey items notably more favorably than white faculty members. Figure 10 shows the top 11 items with the largest gap in mean ratings. The most significant gap is in satisfaction with the *recognition received for student advising*. Asian faculty, on average, rate this 3.70, indicating satisfaction, while white faculty rate it 2.97, reflecting a neutral stance.

Asian faculty members are more likely to indicate they feel as though *their work contributions are recognized by their college deans and the CAO (i.e., the provost)*, with mean ratings gaps of 0.72 and 0.71 points, respectively. They are also more likely to say that *their department and institution are valued by the provost* than white faculty.

In contrast, white faculty rate fourteen items notably higher than Asian faculty; the top eleven are displayed in Figure 11. In general, Asian faculty rate the compensation and benefits at NC State more negatively than white faculty. While both groups express dissatisfaction with *salary*, Asian faculty are only slightly dissatisfied (mean rating of 2.93), while white faculty report greater dissatisfaction (mean rating of 2.48). A similar pattern emerges for *family health benefits*, *the tuition waiver program*, and *office space*.

Among professional-track faculty, white faculty rate six survey items related to contract renewal and promotion higher than Asian faculty. These items include the *clarity of the departmental renewal and promotion processes*, as well as the *sense of whether their contract will be renewed and/or whether they will be promoted*.

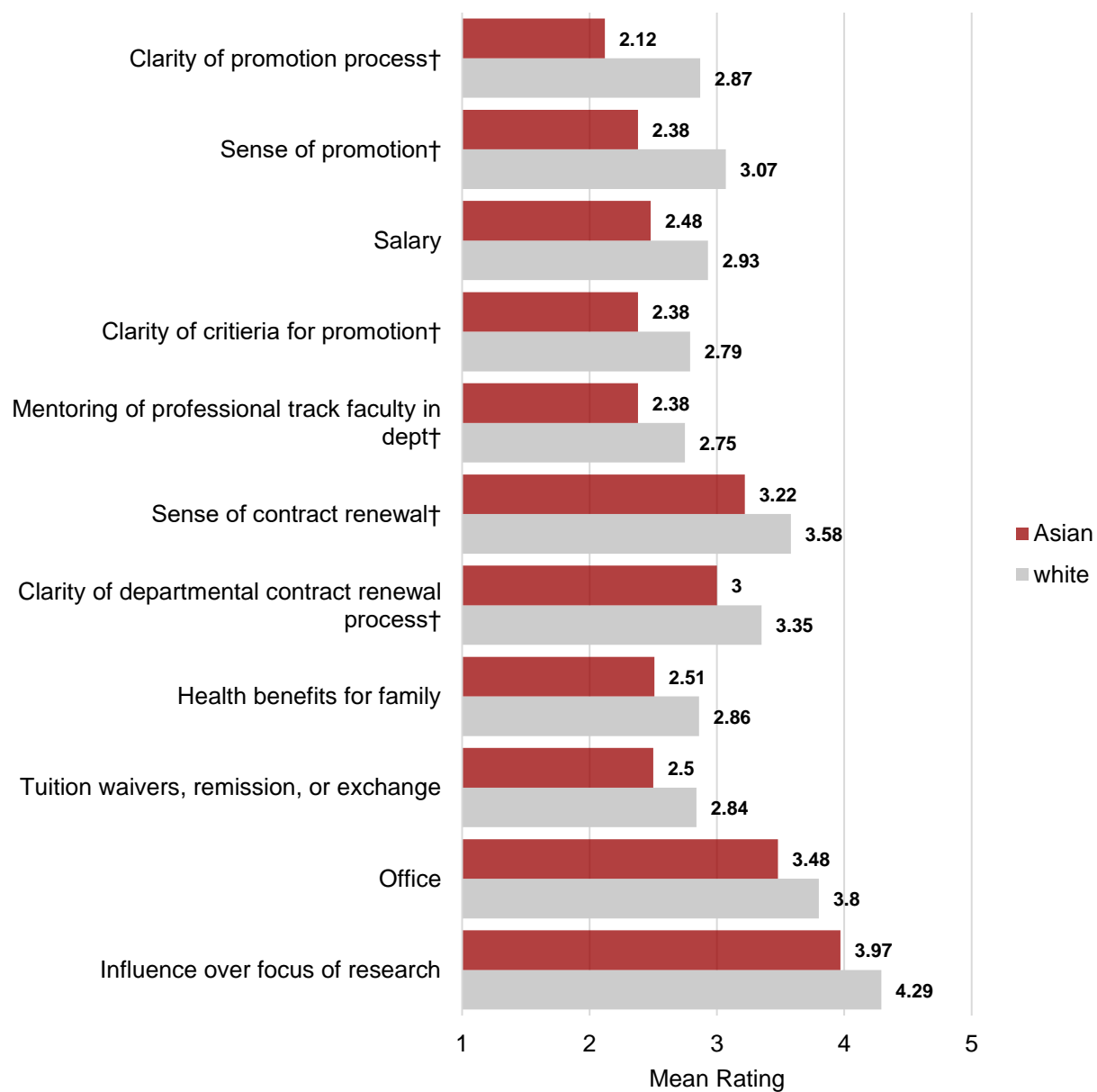
Figure 10: Items rated notably more favorably by Asian faculty than by white faculty (mean ratings)



**item asked of tenured faculty*

***item asked of pre-tenure faculty*

Figure 11: Items rated notably less favorably by Asian faculty than by white faculty (mean ratings)



†item asked of professional-track faculty

Underrepresented Minority (URM) vs. White Faculty

Benchmarks

Similarly to the comparison between all faculty of color and white faculty, faculty who identify as underrepresented minorities (URM) rate the shared governance system at NC State more favorably than do white faculty. Three Shared Governance benchmarks—Productivity, Understanding the Issue at Hand, and Shared Sense of Purpose—are all rated slightly positively by URM faculty and slightly negatively by white faculty.

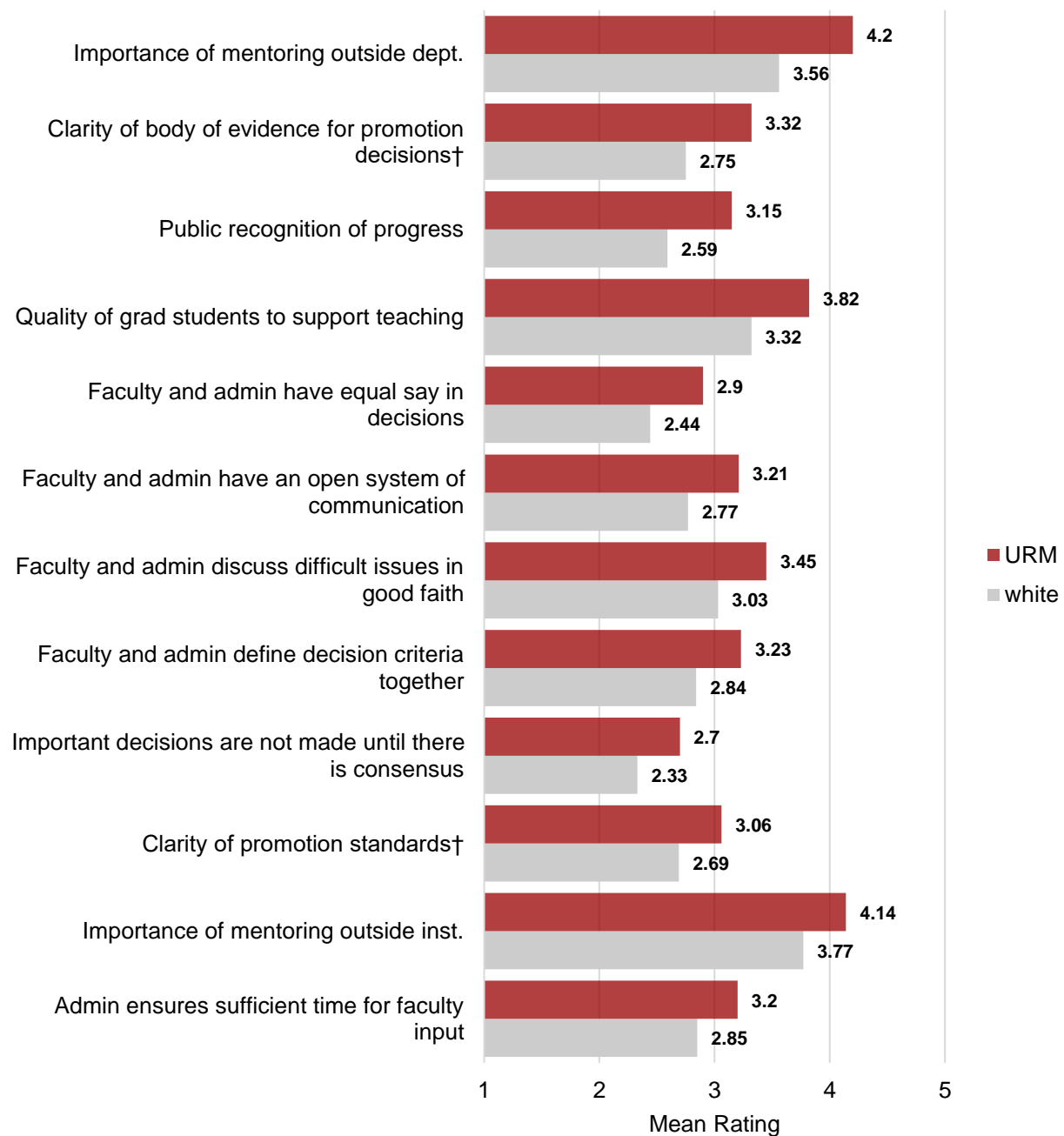
White faculty rate the Tenure Policies benchmark (asked only of pre-tenure faculty) and the Promotion to Full benchmark (asked only of tenured faculty) more highly than do URM faculty.

Individual Survey Items

There are 37 survey items that URM faculty rate notably more favorably than white faculty, and the top 12 are presented in Figure 12. There is considerable overlap between these items and those reported as major differences between FOC and white faculty, but four new items emerge. Two of these new items relate to shared governance at NC State. URM faculty are also more likely than white faculty to agree that *mentoring relationships outside the department and outside the institution are important*.

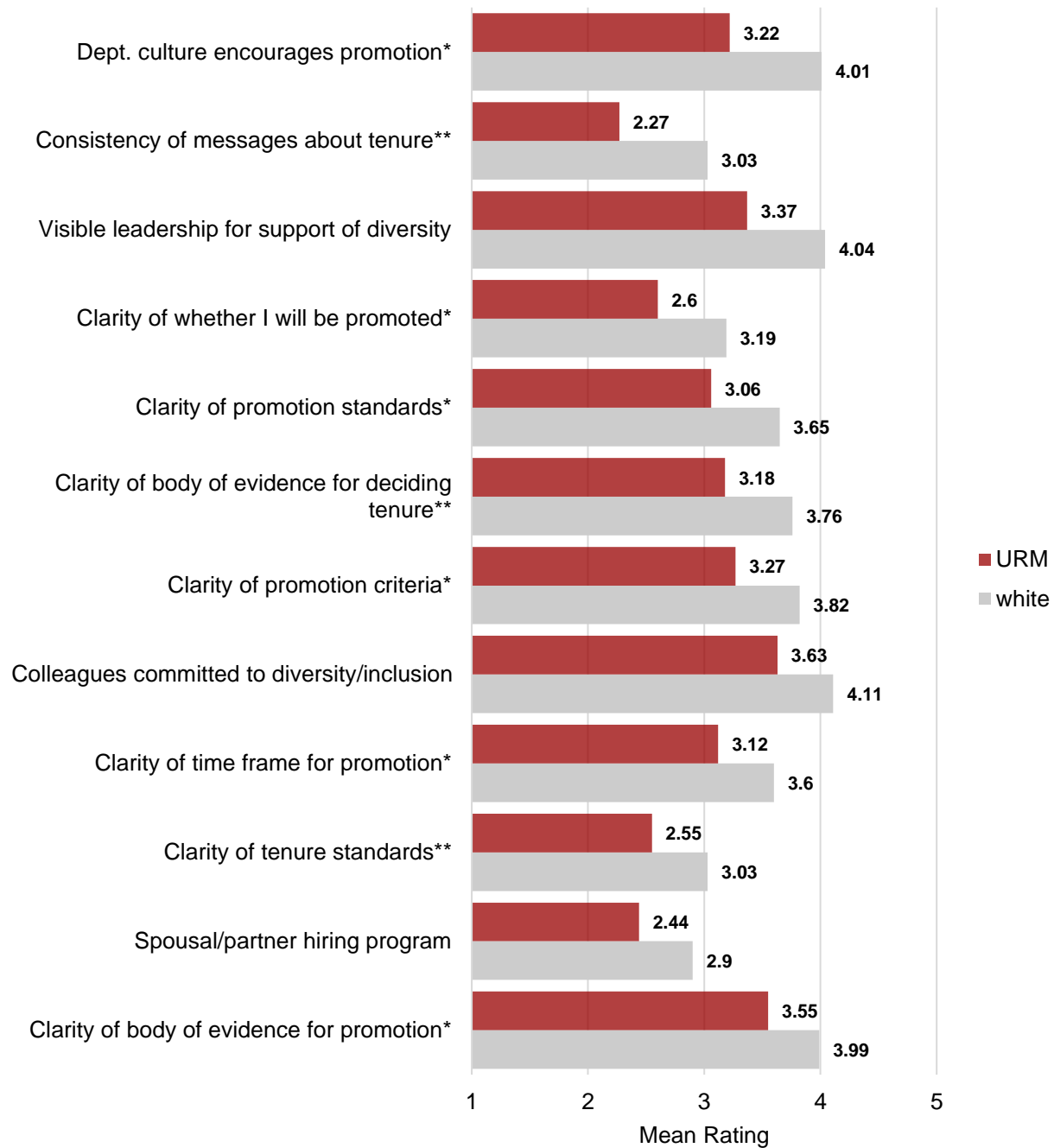
Figure 13 shows the top twelve out of 20 items that white faculty rate notably higher than URM faculty. There are gaps in the perceived clarity about promotion to full rank between white and URM faculty. Among tenured professors, white faculty were consistently more likely than URM to say that there is *clarity around the standards, the time frame, and the criteria and body of evidence used in promotion decisions*. Similarly, among pre-tenure faculty, white faculty are notably more likely than URM faculty to say that the *standards and body of evidence considered for achieving tenured status* are clear.

Figure 12: Items rated notably more favorably by faculty identifying as underrepresented minorities (URM) than by white faculty (mean ratings)



†item asked of professional-track faculty

Figure 13: Items rated notably less favorably by faculty identifying as underrepresented minorities (URM) than by white faculty (mean ratings)



**item asked of tenured faculty*

***item asked of pre-tenure faculty*