

Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education

COACHE Survey

Conducted by the Harvard Graduate School of Education

2013-14

During the fall and early spring of the 2013-14 academic year, tenured, tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty on the University of Arkansas campus participated in the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) survey. The survey asks faculty to rate their level of satisfaction on a variety of issues related to job satisfaction along with various aspects of the campus climate and leadership at the institutional and college level. Although tenured, tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty were surveyed, the initial report from COACHE compares us with peers only on tenured and tenure-track faculty responses.

Response Rate

At the U of A, 354 of the 735 tenured and tenure-track faculty responded to the survey for a response rate of 48%. This rate was comparable to response rates at the other five institutions in our selected peer group that had an average response rate of 49% -- the same response rate for all institutions which participated in the 2013-14 survey. The strong response rate validates drawing meaningful conclusions on the state of the satisfaction among the tenured and tenure-track faculty and targeting efforts toward the issues addressed through the survey responses. The point at which faculty members are in their academic careers has an impact on the satisfaction level and allows the Provost and campus leadership to target communication and faculty development efforts as the institution moves forward on its overarching goals.

Peer Group

The university was asked to identify five institutions among this year's participants for peer comparisons of the faculty satisfaction. The five institutions selected are members of our normal SEC and benchmark schools on which the university benchmarks a variety of data. The peer group for the COACHE survey comprises: Auburn University; the University of Alabama; the University of Kansas; the University of Missouri, and the University of Tennessee.

The institutions identified have similarities of size, geography, student quality, and curricular offerings to those of the University of Arkansas. Four of the five are sister institutions within the SECU, an academic consortium of Division I schools which share

programs in support of faculty and students across the southeastern region of the country.

The COACHE report provided to the Provost contains a ranked comparison between the University of Arkansas and these selected peer institutions as well as a comparison with all participating institutions.

Peer Comparison – Highest Among Peers

There were three general areas in which the faculty at the University of Arkansas responses were the highest among all five of the peer institutions.

Nature of work: Teaching

UA mean	UA rank among peers	Peer 1 mean	Peer 2 mean	Peer 3 mean	Peer 4 mean	Peer 5 mean	All institutions mean
3.83	1	3.82	3.75	3.81	3.78	3.62	3.71

Institutional response: Despite the recent period of rapid growth in undergraduate students, the quality of the students has remained high; additional class sections have been added to keep the teaching load of the core faculty in line with that at peer schools, and additional facilities have helped keep average class sizes steady. The institution is committed to the concept that the faculty have full control over the academic content and standards at the University of Arkansas. With the support of the faculty, the course evaluation system moved online in the last two years allowing for a broader evaluation of the aspects of teaching. Discussions with department chairs about the importance of reviewing various aspects of teaching have been conducted during training sessions to ensure that teaching strength is factored into the merit evaluation of each faculty member.

Personal and Family Policies

(This area was scored particularly high by full professors.)

UA mean	UA rank among peers	Peer 1 mean	Peer 2 mean	Peer 3 mean	Peer 4 mean	Peer 5 mean	All institutions mean
3.27	1	3.23	3.14	3.20	2.91	3.14	3.01

Institutional response: The university remains committed to the development and implementation of family-friendly policies for faculty. The development of maternity and paternity policies has been a major step in recognizing the importance of work/life balance. The creation two years ago of the Chancellor’s Commission on Women has

kept this issue at the forefront of discussions, and the allocation of funds to the Provost to assist colleges in pursuing spousal hires will begin to help address the ongoing issue of two-career academic families.

Facilities and Work Resources

(This area was scored particularly high by full professors.)

UA mean	UA rank among peers	Peer 1 mean	Peer 2 mean	Peer 3 mean	Peer 4 mean	Peer 5 mean	All institutions mean
3.63	1	3.54	3.63	3.51	3.49	3.57	3.41

Institutional response: With a combination of public, private, and bonded resources, the University of Arkansas has launched over \$200 million in improvements of existing and the building of new facilities that address the nearly 150-year-old core campus. The University of Arkansas has a long tradition of providing support for teaching through the Teaching Academy and the Teaching and Faculty Support Center. Additional classroom space, teaching laboratory space, residence hall space, and campus amenities have been added over the past two to three years. Although there are challenges to keeping up with office and research space as new faculty are added, the survey responses indicate more satisfaction on these two factors than is evident at peer universities.

Peer Comparison – Among the Highest Satisfaction

There were four areas in which UA faculty ranked among the highest in the peer group.

Interdisciplinary work

(This area was scored particularly high by full professors)

UA mean	UA rank among peers	Peer 1 mean	Peer 2 mean	Peer 3 mean	Peer 4 mean	Peer 5 mean	All institutions mean
2.76	2	2.93	2.73	2.63	2.59	2.67	2.63

Institutional Response: The university continues to provide funding and support for interdisciplinary research and academic programs. At both the graduate and undergraduate levels, the interdisciplinary programs allow students to synthesize their academic experience and interests to provide a broader and more comprehensive educational background. Programs as diverse as international relations and cell and molecular biology continue to attract strong enrollments and dedicated faculty. The recently-constructed Nanotechnology building houses faculty from chemistry, physics, biological sciences along with mechanical, electrical, civil, chemical and biological and

agricultural engineering to facilitate research across the disciplinary lines. Despite the strong showing among the peer universities on this factor, the somewhat lower overall mean indicates that there is still some work to be done on incorporating the interdisciplinary work into the overall promotion and tenure process.

Leadership: Senior

UA mean	UA rank among peers	Peer 1 mean	Peer 2 mean	Peer 3 mean	Peer 4 mean	Peer 5 mean	All institutions mean
3.31	2	2.94	3.35	3.31	3.12	2.90	3.12

Institutional response: The faculty at the University of Arkansas are more satisfied or equally satisfied with the senior leadership of the institution than are their colleagues at four of the five peer institutions. From the beginning of his term, Chancellor G. David Gearhart has focused his efforts on identifying and communicating a vision and goals for the University of Arkansas. Through the Transparency and Accountability to the People of Arkansas (TAP) document, he developed a consensus vision for the institution and continues to align funding and policy decisions toward the goal of becoming a Top 50 public research university by the year 2021, the sesquicentennial of the university. Provost Gaber’s communication of the campus priorities and her attention to decision-making are also factors in the university’s being near the top of the peer group when asked about satisfaction with Senior Leadership. Communication strategies to both internal and external constituencies are a focus of the campus efforts through University Relations. The responses indicate that the message and priority setting are receiving support from the core faculty at the University of Arkansas.

Departmental engagement

(This area was scored particularly high by full professors)

UA mean	UA rank among peers	Peer 1 mean	Peer 2 mean	Peer 3 mean	Peer 4 mean	Peer 5 mean	All institutions mean
3.53	2	3.44	3.57	3.51	3.53	3.48	3.46

Institutional response: The Provost conducts meetings with department chairs and heads twice a semester. In addition to sharing critical information, the sessions include wide-ranging discussions on various topics that have an impact on faculty, staff and students. The sharing of information across departments not only helps ensure consistent standards and expectations but also allows the chairs to learn from each other about policy implementation and challenges that confront those in these leadership positions.

Appreciation and recognition

(This area was scored particularly high by full professors)

UA mean	UA rank among peers	Peer 1 mean	Peer 2 mean	Peer 3 mean	Peer 4 mean	Peer 5 mean	All institutions mean
3.31	2	3.28	3.29	3.43	3.21	3.16	3.28

Institutional response: The university has a long tradition of focus on awards and recognition for faculty at both the institutional and college levels. Recognition is a cornerstone of faculty support and will continue to be critical to the campus leadership. A new focus on faculty development is being created in Academic Affairs, including new and renewed efforts to support faculty for prestigious national and international awards as a demonstration of the strength of the core faculty at the University of Arkansas. The Provost has initiated breakfasts with the faculty over the course of the academic year. Attendance is on a first-come basis, and she attempts to keep the groups small to accommodate discussion and interaction. The slots fill up within minutes of the announcement of the date and time. The feedback on the value of the sessions has been overwhelmingly positive.

Peer Comparison – Areas of Lowest Satisfaction

There were three areas in which UA faculty were less satisfied than all five peer schools:

Tenure policies (as scored by tenure-track faculty only)

(This area was ranked lowest by Caucasian faculty)

UA mean	UA rank among peers	Peer 1 mean	Peer 2 mean	Peer 3 mean	Peer 4 mean	Peer 5 mean	All institutions mean
3.07	5	3.42	3.62	3.76	3.75	3.35	3.45

Tenure Clarity (as scored by tenure-track faculty only)

UA mean	UA rank among peers	Peer 1 mean	Peer 2 mean	Peer 3 mean	Peer 4 mean	Peer 5 mean	All institutions mean
3.17	5	3.31	3.50	3.39	3.39	3.20	3.37

Institutional response: Both through department chair training and through an open faculty forum, the Provost has discussed the expectations and process of tenure policies

at the University of Arkansas. Some confusion may be inherent in the process because there is not, nor will there be created, an objective, purely numerical list of book authoring, article publishing, or required productivity. There will continue to be subjectivity in the amount, placement, and value of research and creative productivity that warrants the granting of tenure with its accompanying rights and privileges. However, if the process is perceived to be clearer and more consistent at the peer institutions, further work on clarifying the tenure process needs to be done at both the college and institutional level.

Departmental leadership

UA mean	UA rank among peers	Peer 1 mean	Peer 2 mean	Peer 3 mean	Peer 4 mean	Peer 5 mean	All institutions mean
3.45	5	3.57	3.53	3.67	3.48	3.53	3.67

Institutional response: While the marks that the UA faculty gave their local leadership were good (slightly exceeding the marks given senior leadership), the fact that the responses fell below those of the peer institution suggests that the support needed for the individuals in those positions should be strengthened. The Provost will work with the deans to determine ways to support the departmental leaders who are critical to the faculty members’ success and work climate. There is broad consensus that chairing an academic department is one of the most difficult jobs on any campus, but one of the most important. Setting a climate for good teaching and valuable research and scholarship with the challenge of providing resources requires a unique set of skills and diplomacy, and these individuals are some of the institution’s least sung heroes.

Peer Comparison – Areas of Lower Satisfaction

There were three areas in which UA faculty expressed lower satisfaction than four of our five peer institutions:

Tenure reasonableness (as scored by tenure-track faculty only)

(This area was scored lower by male faculty)

UA mean	UA rank among peers	Peer 1 mean	Peer 2 mean	Peer 3 mean	Peer 4 mean	Peer 5 mean	All institutions mean
3.81	4	3.94	3.93	3.98	3.88	3.78	3.84

Promotion (as scored by tenured faculty only)

(This area was scored lower by associate professors and female faculty)

UA mean	UA rank among peers	Peer 1 mean	Peer 2 mean	Peer 3 mean	Peer 4 mean	Peer 5 mean	All institutions mean
3.61	4	3.68	3.63	3.80	3.65	3.47	3.59

Institutional response: UA faculty appear to have concerns about the reasonableness of expectations for both tenure and promotion that slightly outweigh those at the peer universities. The times of both tenure and promotion are pivotal in the careers of the faculty. In recognition of that fact, the Chancellor and Provost have phased in an increase in the promotion increments that are funded centrally at the time that faculty are promoted. In an attempt to begin to address salary compression, funding in the amount of the increment increase is provided to those who hold the professor ranks and whose salary increments were lower in past years. The promotion increment increase and modest merit increases over the past five years are beginning to close the gap on average faculty salaries among the benchmark schools. Continued focus on developing and maintaining competitive salary and start up packages is one of the key goals of the University of Arkansas.

Leadership: Divisional

UA mean	UA rank among peers	Peer 1 mean	Peer 2 mean	Peer 3 mean	Peer 4 mean	Peer 5 mean	All institutions mean
3.17	4	3.29	3.37	3.28	3.21	3.08	3.22

Institutional response: Supporting the college leadership continues to be a high priority for the Provost. She consults with the deans regularly on academic and financial issues and is committed to providing the autonomy the colleges need while ensuring that the college priorities are in concert with the overall institutional goals. While the UA faculty responses are similar to those at the peer institutions, the overall mean on this factor places the University of Arkansas at the lower end of the peer group. The challenge of disseminating information and expectations across the broad spectrum of the university has led the Provost to develop meetings involving vice provosts, associate deans, budget officers, faculty governance officers and faculty in addition to meetings with the deans.

Comparison to 2009

The University of Arkansas participated in the COACHE survey in the 2008-09 academic year. The survey was conducted only among pre-tenured faculty during this time frame. On the items for which the same question was included in the 2008-09 survey, the report provides a notation of whether the response was more positive (+) or more negative (-) than the response in the previous survey.

The report indicates that for questions from this survey that were also asked when we administered the survey in 2009 to pre-tenured faculty only, there were two questions which showed a large difference. Satisfaction with "Salary" and "Tenure reasonableness" both showed a large positive difference over the 2009 survey.

The report provides a wealth of information about the attitudes and priorities of faculty in various ranks, demographics, and disciplines. Much further study is needed to "hear" the voices represented by the survey, but the summary report affords the opportunity to focus efforts toward improving the careers and working conditions of the faculty who are key to the university being the best it can be for the future of the State of Arkansas and the many dedicated supporters of the institution.

Overall the report does provide a snapshot of areas where our faculty show marked differences with our peers and other institutions. However, this initial report provides the UA rank compared only with those of the five peer institutions and as such the differences may or may not be statistically significant. For example, if all five of our peers had a mean of 3.5 on a question, and we had a mean of 3.4, then we would rank last, but that may not mean that there is the difference in our score is significant. Testing the significance of the results will be a factor in using the data for policy and program development.

This summary highlights areas and factors on which the peer comparison was at or near the top of the peer group or at or near the bottom of the peer group. On most factors in the survey, the UA faculty responses are generally in line with those at the peer institutions selected for comparison. Further research into the areas of faculty concern on the basis of the actual mean or on the basis of other breakdowns such as tenure status, demographics and discipline area will be done in the coming months. Findings will be shared with groups across campus as they are developed.

The Appendix contains the actual questions from the survey instrument on which the broad categories included in the summary were based.

Appendix

Summary of questions used to survey faculty regarding their satisfaction on a variety of issues related to job satisfaction, campus climate, and leadership at the institutional and college level.

Nature of work: Teaching

Please rate your level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the following:

- A. The number of courses you teach
- B. The level of courses you teach
- C. The discretion you have over the content of the courses you teach
- D. The number of students in the classes you teach, on average
- E. The quality of students you teach, on average
- I. The quality of graduate students to support your teaching
- F. The support your institution has offered you for improving your teaching
- G. How equitably the teaching workload is distributed across faculty in your department

Very satisfied	5
Satisfied	4
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Dissatisfied	2
Very dissatisfied	1
Decline to answer	98
Not applicable	99

Personal and Family Policies

Please rate your level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the following aspects of your employment:

- A. Health benefits for yourself
- B. Health benefits for your family (i.e. spouse, partner, and dependents)
- C. Retirement benefits
- D. Housing benefits (e.g. real estate services, subsidized housing, low-interest mortgage)
- E. Tuition waivers, remission, or exchange
- F. Spousal/partner hiring program
- G. Childcare
- H. Eldercare
- I. Phased retirement options
- J. Family medical/parental leave
- K. Flexible workload/modified duties for parental or other family reasons
- L. (*Tenure-Track Only*): Stop-the-clock for parental or other family reasons

Very satisfied	5
Satisfied	4
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Dissatisfied	2
Very dissatisfied	1
Not offered at my institution	96
I don't know	97

Decline to answer	98
Not applicable	99

Facilities and Work Resources

Please rate your level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the following aspects of your employment:

A. Office	
B. Laboratory, research, or studio space	
C. Equipment	
D. Classrooms	
E. Library resources	
F. Computing and technical support	
G. Salary	
H. Clerical/administrative support	
Very satisfied	5
Satisfied	4
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Dissatisfied	2
Very dissatisfied	1
Decline to answer	98
Not applicable	99

Interdisciplinary Work

Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

A. Budget allocations encourage interdisciplinary work.	
B. Campus facilities (e.g. spaces, buildings, centers, labs) are conducive to interdisciplinary work.	
C. Interdisciplinary work is rewarded in the merit process.	
D. <i>(NTT or Tenured Associate or Full Professor Only)</i> : Interdisciplinary work is rewarded in the promotion process.	
E. <i>(Tenure-Track Assistant Professor Only)</i> : Interdisciplinary work is rewarded in the tenure process	
F. <i>(NTT Only)</i> : Interdisciplinary work is rewarded in the reappointment process	
G. My department understands how to evaluate interdisciplinary work.	
Strongly agree	5
Somewhat agree	4
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Somewhat disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1
I don't know	97
Decline to answer	98
Not applicable	99

Leadership: Senior

Please rate your level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the following:

My institution's president's/chancellor's:

- A. Pace of decision making

- B. Stated priorities
- C. Communication of priorities to faculty

My institution's chief academic officer's (provost, VPAA, dean of faculty):

- L. Pace of decision making
- M. Stated priorities
- N. Communication of priorities to faculty

Very satisfied	5
Satisfied	4
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Dissatisfied	2
Very dissatisfied	1
Decline to answer	98
Not applicable	99

Departmental Engagement

How often do you engage with faculty in your department in conversations about:

- A. Undergraduate student learning
- B. Graduate student learning
- C. Effective teaching practices
- D. Effective use of technology
- E. Use of current research methodologies
- F. The amount of professional interaction you have with non-tenure track faculty in your department
- G. The amount of personal interaction you have with non-tenure track faculty in your department

Frequently	5
Regularly	4
Occasionally	3
Seldom	2
Never	1
Decline to answer	98

Appreciation and Recognition

Please rate your level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the following:

How satisfied are you with the recognition you receive for your...

- A. Teaching efforts
- B. Student advising
- C. Scholarly/creative work
- D. Service contributions (e.g., department/program administration, faculty governance, committee work, advising/mentoring students, speaking to alumni or prospective students/parents), technology transfer, economic development, K-12 education)

For all of your work, how satisfied are you with the recognition you receive from...

- J. Your chief academic officer (provost, VPAA, dean of faculty)

K. Your dean or division head
 L. Your department head or chair
 I. Your colleagues/peers

Very satisfied	5
Satisfied	4
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Dissatisfied	2
Very dissatisfied	1
Decline to answer	98
Not applicable	99

Tenure Policies

Please rate the clarity of the following aspects of promotion in rank from associate professor to full professor:

A. The promotion process in my department
 B. The promotion criteria (what things are evaluated) in my department
 C. The promotion standards (the performance thresholds) in my department
 D. The body of evidence (the dossier's contents) considered in making promotion decisions
 E. The time frame within which associate professors should apply for promotion
 F. (*Associate Professor Only*) My sense of whether I will be promoted from associate to full professor

Very clear	5
Somewhat clear	4
Neither clear nor unclear	3
Somewhat unclear	2
Very unclear	1
Decline to answer	98

Tenure Clarity

Is what's expected in order to earn tenure clear to you regarding your performance as:

A. A scholar
 B. A teacher
 C. An advisor to students
 D. A colleague in your department
 E. A campus citizen
 F. A member of the broader community (e.g., outreach)

Very clear	5
Somewhat clear	4
Neither clear nor unclear	3
Somewhat unclear	2
Very unclear	1
Decline to answer	98
Not applicable	99

Departmental Leadership

My institution's president's/chancellor's:

A. Pace of decision making

B. Stated priorities

C. Communication of priorities to faculty

My institution's chief academic officer's (provost, VPAA, dean of faculty):

L. Pace of decision making

M. Stated priorities

N. Communication of priorities to faculty

O. Ensuring opportunities for faculty to have input into the institution's priorities

Very satisfied 5

Satisfied 4

Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 3

Dissatisfied 2

Very dissatisfied 1

Decline to answer 98

Not applicable 99

Tenure Reasonableness

Is what's expected in order to earn tenure reasonable to you regarding your performance as:

A. A scholar

B. A teacher

C. An advisor to students

D. A colleague in your department

E. A campus citizen

F. A member of the broader community (e.g., outreach)

Very reasonable 5

Somewhat reasonable 4

Neither reasonable nor unreasonable 3

Somewhat unreasonable 2

Very unreasonable..... 1

Decline to answer 98

Not applicable 99

Promotion

Please rate the clarity of the following aspects of promotion in rank from associate professor to full

professor:

A. My department has a culture where associate professors are encouraged to work towards promotion to full professorship

Strongly agree 5

Somewhat agree 4

Neither agree nor disagree 3

Somewhat disagree 2

Strongly disagree 1

I don't know 97

Decline to answer	98
Not applicable	99
A. The promotion process in my department	
B. The promotion criteria (what things are evaluated) in my department	
C. The promotion standards (the performance thresholds) in my department	
D. The body of evidence (the dossier's contents) considered in making promotion decisions	
E. The time frame within which associate professors should apply for promotion	
F. (<i>Associate Professor Only</i>) My sense of whether I will be promoted from associate to full professor	
Very clear	5
Somewhat clear	4
Neither clear nor unclear	3
Somewhat unclear	2
Very unclear	1
Decline to answer	98

Leadership: Divisional

Please rate your level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the following: (*Please select 'Not Applicable' if you serve in this capacity*)

My dean's or division head's:

- D. Pace of decision making
- E. Stated priorities
- F. Communication of priorities to faculty
- G. Ensuring opportunities for faculty to have input into school/college priorities

Very satisfied	5
Satisfied	4
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Dissatisfied	2
Very dissatisfied	1
Decline to answer	98
Not applicable	99