

Linking Faculty Climate Perceptions to Campus Diversity Strategic Plans

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ABSTRACT

Monitoring the current opinions and experiences of university faculty enables the university to **identity our strengths** and **areas of focus for growth and future direction**. In 2009, UNC Charlotte ADVANCE Faculty Affairs Office developed an internal climate survey for consistent measurement of tenure track faculty attitudes toward institutional and departmental climate. The survey was conducted in March 2010 as a means of providing consistent and comparable benchmark data for diversity assessment within the overall institution's strategic plans. Overall response rate was 31% for tenure track faculty across the institution's colleges, with lower response rates for individual colleges. Results indicate that faculty are fairly satisfied in their jobs, plan to remain at the university, and feel that they achieve work/life balance. However, significant differences were found for gender and rank. One novel aspect of this survey effort is the linkage to the university's and colleges' diversity measures and initiatives through a scorecard tool. We present the unique dissemination process and implications for the university.

Challenges & Lessons Learned

Obtaining a representative faculty sample is key to utility of the Faculty Climate Survey for setting benchmarks and alignment with university goals.

- Obtain input and support from Deans to ensure use of outcomes
- Implement future survey in segments to reduce participation time (e.g. offer department chair section in spring, job satisfaction in fall)

Institutionalizing the survey to become part of the culture of assessment and accountability for faculty diversity.

- Provide timely, meaningful information to Academic Affairs and Colleges
- Share highlights and detailed reports to avoid oversimplification
- Provide data to Colleges for additional and unique analyses

Developing Trust

- Address concerns for anonymity and confidentiality by use of vendor for collection
- Remove demographic data from all datasets shared with Colleges
- Disseminate survey outcomes and link to strategic planning, policy evolution and program implementation

Faculty Climate Survey Findings Dissemination Cycle



Implications for UNC Charlotte Advance

Survey results show differences among gender and rank on job satisfaction, intent to stay at the university, and sense of community

❖ Strengthens case for continuation of Mentoring programs

- ❖ New Faculty Mentoring
- ❖ New Faculty Year-Long Orientation
- ❖ Mid-Career Faculty Mentoring

❖ Outlines issues for Future of the Faculty Committee to review

- ❖ Promotion & Tenure clarity
- ❖ Workload

❖ Guides professional development topics and speakers

- ❖ Salary Negotiation
- ❖ Work-Life Balance

Methodology

Tenure track faculty were surveyed in April 2010 (N=1044); 31% response rate

Survey Development: Constructs and items were developed from UNC C and university system instruments, ADVANCE surveys, and Tucker (1984,1993). Face validity determined by panel of experts.

Analysis: ANOVAs were performed on two dependent variables, gender and rank. Two constructs, Department Chair Satisfaction and Diversity Equity Climate, were transformed due to strong positive skewness.

Items were rated on a 4 point Likert-scale with 1 being strong negative and 4 being strong positive, e.g. 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree.

Survey Constructs

Job Satisfaction
 Diversity Equity Climate
 Work-Life Balance
 Intent to Stay at the university
 Department Chair Satisfaction
 Sense of Community

Additional Items:
 Demographics
 Mentoring

Significant Differences by Gender & Rank

❖ **Women** and unspecified gender respondents indicated **significantly lower job satisfaction than men** (respective means of 2.79, 2.48, 2.83), $p=.016$.

❖ **Associate professors reported significantly less job satisfaction** (respective means of 2.67, 2.85, 2.75; $p=.001$), and **intent to stay at the university** (respective means of 2.73, 3.04, 2.81, $p=.006$) than Professors and Assistant Professors.

❖ **Assistant professors reported significantly lower sense of community** than Associate and Full Professors (respective means of 3.17, 3.48, 3.66), $p=.008$.