



2010-2011 HERI Faculty Survey Executive Summary

Institutional Research

November 2011

The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) Faculty Survey was designed to measure faculty perceptions and satisfaction with institutional priorities, administrative decisions, and personal and professional development opportunities. The HERI Faculty Survey also serves to assess the goals and expectations faculty have for students and the pedagogical strategies they use to engage students to meet those goals. The HERI Faculty Survey is administered every three years and was administered at ECU in the spring semester of the 2010-2011 academic year.

The findings below are grouped by critical themes or areas of emphasis including results in these areas that were rated as statistically significant as reported by the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA.

Professional Practice: Teaching – These items relate to use of pedagogical practices and evaluation methods as well as the prevalence of specific types of teaching assignments. Overall, ECU faculty answer similarly to our comparison groups in this section. Respondents indicate that teaching is essential and very important to them personally, they participated in a teaching enhancement workshop, and they collaborated with the local community in research/teaching. Respondents from both groups indicate they use similar methods of teaching and evaluating their students, many using class discussion, cooperative learning (small groups), and real life-problems in all or most of their classes. Both groups also indicate that they spend an average of 9 or more hours actually teaching per week. However, the amount of time ECU respondents spend preparing for teaching (including reading student papers and grading) with the response of 13 or more hours was found to be statistically significant compared to other public universities with 37.1% and 45.8% respectively.

Professional Practice: Scholarship – These items relate to faculty's involvement and opinions about activities associated with the scholarship component of faculty work. In this category, ECU faculty responses were once again similar to the comparison group. Respondents indicate that research is essential and very important to them personally and they use scholarship to address local community needs. Faculty from ECU and the comparison groups responded similarly to engaging in the following activities: collaborating with the local community in research/teaching, working with undergraduates on research projects, and engaging in academic research that spans multiple disciplines. Faculty at ECU, however, respond with '3 or more' when asked how many of their professional writings have been published or accepted for publication in the last two years, which is statistically significant with 32.4% compared to the 27.2% of the respondents from other public universities.

Professional Practice: Service – These items relate to faculty's involvement and opinions about activities associated with the service component of faculty work. Again, ECU respondents indicate that service is essential and very important to them personally. The majority of both groups also indicate they mentor new faculty to great or some extent and that mentoring the next

generation of scholars is essential and very important to them. EKU faculty and those at comparison institutions indicate that they spend 1 or more hours of community or public service on average per week. They also use their scholarship to address local or community needs and engage in public service and/or professional consulting without pay.

Institutional Support and Resources – These items gauge faculty involvement and opinions regarding professional development and support for faculty available on campus. Faculty at both EKU and the comparison group institutions indicate they participate in teaching enhancement workshops. The majority of both also indicate that travel funds were paid by the institution. Respondents felt that statements such as “Faculty are rewarded for being good teachers”, “There is respect for the expression of diverse values and beliefs”, and “Faculty are rewarded for their efforts to use instructional technology” were descriptive of their college and universities at EKU and in the comparison group. Both groups also felt that their research and teaching are valued strongly by faculty in their departments. EKU faculty, however agree that there is adequate support for faculty development (69.7%) compared to 61.2% of the respondents from the comparison groups.

Goals for Undergraduate Education – These items gauge faculty opinion regarding common goals for undergraduate education. In this particular section, many of the EKU faculty responses were found to be statistically significant compared to the faculty from other public institutions. When rating the importance of education goals as essential or very important, developing the ability to think critically (99.2% and 99.4%), preparing students for graduate or advanced education (83.1% and 86%), developing creative capacities (65.4% and 79.2%), instilling a basic appreciation of the liberal arts (51.1% and 68.4%), helping students evaluate the quality and reliability of information (93.1% and 96.2%), engaging students in civil discourse around controversial issues (55% and 68.6%), teaching students tolerance and respect for different beliefs (78.9% and 83.4%), and encouraging students to become agents of social change (49.6% and 56.7%) are all categories that were found to be statistically significant. EKU faculty also indicate that they agree that their institution takes responsibility for educating underprepared students with 85.1% of their respondents reporting, compared to 70.2% of the comparison group, a difference that was also found to be statistically significant.

Diversity – These items relate to social attitudes and experiences with diversity on campus. EKU respondents answered similarly to those of the comparison group. Responses found statistically significant included thinking that teaching students tolerance and respect for different beliefs is essential or very important (78.9% and 83.4%), describing the administration as being open about its policies (82.7% and 71.4%), agreeing that the institution takes responsibility for educating underprepared students (85.1% and 70.2%) and that the institution should not offer remedial/developmental education (20.3% and 23.7%).

Satisfaction – These items gauge satisfaction with various aspects of the faculty experience. EKU faculty responses were statistically significant compared to the comparison group when discussing satisfaction and being very satisfied and/or satisfied with salary (33.9% and 43.7%), opportunity for scholarly pursuits (51.4% and 48.4%), teaching load ((53.9% and 46.0%), job security (80.9% and 69.5%), availability of child care (16.9% and 35.7%) and tuition remission for children/dependents (75.5% and 52.0%).

Institutional Priorities – These items gauge faculty opinion on various types of institutional priorities. ECU faculty responses were statistically significant in two areas, noting if their institution placed highest or high priority to facilitate student involvement in community service (38.3% and 44.5%) and to create and sustain partnerships with surrounding communities (63.4% and 49.4%). Respondents indicate similar feelings about other institutional priorities, including that faculty are committed to the welfare of their institutions, are strongly interested in the academic problems of undergraduates, that colleges should encourage students to be involved in community service activities and that colleges have a responsibility to work with their surrounding communities to address local issues.

Interaction with Students – These items relate to the amount and types of interactions faculty have with students on campus. Both ECU faculty and faculty at the comparison institutions indicate they have worked with undergraduates on a research project, advised student groups involved in service/volunteer work, supervised an undergraduate thesis, and engaged undergraduates on their own research project. Respondents also indicate that it is easy for student to see faculty outside of regular office hours, that faculty are rewarded for being good teachers, and that students have been a source of stress for them in the past two years. Both groups also feel that faculty is interested in students' personal problems and that faculty is strongly interested in the academic problems of undergraduates.

Habits of Mind – These items illustrate the extent to which faculty ask students to engage in the behaviors and traits associated with academic success. In this category, both ECU faculty and the faculty at the comparison group institutions frequently or occasionally encourage their students to ask questions in class, support their opinions with a logical argument, seek solutions to problems and explain them to others, revise their papers to improve their writing, evaluate the quality or reliability of information they receive, seek alternative solutions to a problem, explore topics on their own, accept mistakes as part of the learning process, seek feedback on their academic work, and integrate skills and knowledge from different sources and experiences.

Health and Wellness – These items gauge faculty behaviors, attitudes, and experiences related to health and wellness issues, including stress. Overall, the respondents from both ECU and the comparison groups indicate they are similarly stressed by the same factors in their personal lives. In their professional lives, statistically significant sources of stress were job security (31.4 % and 44.1%) and institutional budget cuts (77.3% and 84.8%).

Relationship with Administration – These items relate to faculty perception and experience with the campus administration. ECU faculty indicated responses that were statistically significant when compared to the comparison group faculty in several areas. When asked if faculty are typically at odds with campus administration, ECU had 48.5% of faculty respond that it was very or somewhat descriptive compared to 69.2% of the comparison group faculty. When asked if administrators consider faculty concerns when making policy, 78.6% of ECU faculty considered this as being very or somewhat descriptive, compared to 70.4% of the comparison faculty. There were 82.7% and 71.4%, respectively, that felt that the administration is open about its policies and 76.6% and 72.7% that agree that the criteria for advancement and promotion decisions are clear.