

Dear Colleagues,

In spring 2019, the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) faculty job satisfaction survey was administered for the second time here at the University of Pittsburgh to all full-time tenured, tenure-stream, and appointment stream faculty (excluding clinical faculty, faculty in administrative roles, and recently hired faculty). Nearly 45% of eligible faculty shared some insight into their experience as a faculty member at Pitt. Our final response rate (42%) was slightly lower than the 46% overall response rate for all 103 institutions that participated.

The goal of the COACHE survey is to identify areas of strength and concern, and to guide conversations on plans for improvement. Survey items are aggregated into 25 benchmarks that provide a general sense of how faculty feel about a particular aspect of their work. These benchmarks include areas such as nature of work, leadership, personal and family policies, appreciation and recognition, and mentoring.

The COACHE survey is unique because it not only assesses the satisfaction of our faculty across multiple areas of their work, but it also provides the ability to compare Pitt data to that from a cohort of participating institutions. Compared to all participating institutions, Pitt faculty are more satisfied, or in the top third, in ten of the twenty-five benchmarks. These benchmarks are:

- Nature of Work: Research
- Nature of Work: Teaching
- Facilities and Work Resources
- Personal and Family Policies
- Health and Retirement Benefits
- Interdisciplinary Work
- Collaboration
- Leadership: Senior
- Leadership: Divisional
- Governance: Shared Sense of Purpose

Pitt faculty are less satisfied (in the bottom third) in only one benchmark: Leadership: Departmental. Importantly, Pitt faculty showed an increase in satisfaction from 2016 to 2019 on four benchmarks: Health and Retirement Benefits, Leadership: Divisional, Tenure Clarity, and Tenure Expectations Clarity.

Although we have much to be proud of, there are still areas where we can improve. These results serve merely as a guide for future discussions on how to increase job satisfaction and how to help ensure the continued success of our faculty. Over the next few months, I will meet with groups of faculty and other members of the University community to review our results and begin these critical conversations on enhancing the faculty experience at Pitt.

Please check the COACHE website often. Here we will share additional results and materials, including an executive summary, infographics, and best practices. We will also provide updates on our collaborative efforts to improve key areas that are critical to the success of our faculty.

Laurie J. Kirsch
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