

Handed by Dr. Jerry Tolenaar  
@ 10/7/94 Board of Regents'  
Meeting

III Faculty Advisory  
Council

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM FACULTY ADVISORY COUNCIL  
UT SYSTEM FACULTY SATISFACTION SURVEY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of Texas System Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) is composed of two faculty members from each of the System Academic and Health components. The Faculty Quality Committee (FQC) of the Council was authorized by Chancellor William Cunningham to develop and administer a Faculty Satisfaction Survey (FSS) as a means of establishing baseline data that could be used to improve faculty recruitment, retention and support. The FSS was mailed to all tenured and tenure track faculty having some teaching responsibility at the Academic and Health components. The survey was administered in April and August, 1993.

Of the 7498 surveys mailed, responses were returned by 4,082 faculty, for an overall system response rate of 54%. The response rate for the academic components was 56%, with 2,062 of the 3,707 eligible faculty returning the survey. The health components had a response rate of 53% with 2,020 of the 3,791 eligible faculty returning the survey.

The response rates from selected groups within the System population generally accurately track the size of these groups. For example, 27% of the respondents are female, and 27% of the System faculty are female. Of the 2004 female faculty members in the System, 1104 (55%) returned the survey. Fifty-three percent of the System male faculty members responded. The respondent population by faculty rank were: Full Professors, 35% (31% of system faculty); Associate Professors, 30% (28%); Assistant Professors, 31% (34%); and Instructors, 4% (6%).

The response rates for racial and ethnic groups also, in the main, conform to the size of these faculty populations. White faculty comprise 82% of System faculty and 83% of the respondent pool. Fifty-five percent of the white faculty returned the survey. African Americans comprise 2% of System faculty and 1.2% of the respondents. Of the 132 black faculty members in the System, 48 (36.4%) returned the survey. Hispanics total 6% of System faculty and 5% of the respondent population. Forty-four percent of the Hispanic faculty returned the survey. Asian-origin faculty make up 7% of the System faculty and 6.3% of the respondents. Almost exactly half (49.5%) of the Asian faculty returned the survey.

#### MAJOR FINDINGS

##### I. Highest Satisfaction Measures

- A. The highest levels of satisfaction among U.T. System faculty were in response to the following survey items:
  1. Freedom to use my own teaching methods
  2. Chance to work independently
  3. Freedom to use my professional competence
  4. Freedom to use my professional judgment
- B. The highest levels of satisfaction among academic component faculty were in response to the following survey items:
  1. Freedom to use my own teaching methods
  2. Chance to work independently
  3. Freedom to use my professional competence
  4. Freedom to use my professional judgment
- C. The highest levels of satisfaction among health component

faculty were in response to the following items:

1. Chance to work with other professionals
2. Chance to work independently
3. Freedom to use my own teaching methods
4. Freedom to use my professional competence

## II. LOWEST SATISFACTION MEASURES

A. The lowest levels of satisfaction among U.T. System faculty were in response to the following items:

1. Parity of faculty salary at my institution
2. Competitiveness of faculty salary with other public universities
3. The way the administration responds to faculty
4. The way policies are put into practice

B. The lowest levels of satisfaction among academic component faculty were in response to the following items:

1. Parity of faculty salary at my institution
2. Competitiveness of faculty salary with other public universities
3. The way the administration responds to faculty
4. My salary

C. The lowest levels of satisfaction among health component faculty were in response to the following items:

1. Parity of faculty salary at my institution
2. The way the administration responds to faculty
3. The way policies are put into practice
4. Competitiveness of faculty salary with other public

universities

III. ACADEMIC COMPONENT FACULTIES SCORED LOWER THAN HEALTH COMPONENT FACULTIES ON ALMOST ALL SATISFACTION MEASURES.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS REFLECTED THE GREATEST DIFFERENCES:

- A. Quality of library support
- B. The competitiveness of faculty salaries with other public universities
- C. The parity of faculty salary at my institution
- D. The health and medical benefits for faculty
- E. My salary

IV. GENERAL FINDINGS

- A. Overall, U.T. System faculty are most satisfied with issues related to academic freedom.
- B. Overall, U.T. System faculty are least satisfied with issues related to compensation and administrative response to faculty and research support.
- C. Health component faculty are consistently more satisfied than the academic faculty.
- D. Race and ethnicity are not significant predictors of different levels of satisfaction.
- E. Gender is a significant predictor of different levels of satisfaction. Female faculty had consistently lower levels of satisfaction than male faculty.
- F. Tenure status is not a significant predictor of different levels of satisfaction.
- G. Rank is a significant predictor of levels of satisfaction. Full Professors have the highest level of

satisfaction and Associate Professors the lowest.

- H. Ninety-one percent of faculty responding are covered under the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP).
- I. U.T.-Austin had the highest mean levels of satisfaction, and U.T.-Dallas had the second highest levels of satisfaction among the academic institutions.
- J. U.T.M.D. Anderson Cancer Center recorded the highest levels of satisfaction among the health components, and U.T.Health Center-Tyler recorded the second highest levels of satisfaction.
- K. Academic component faculty who report a low likelihood of leaving the System indicate a higher satisfaction with issues related to academic freedom and have more years in the System than those likely to leave. A second cluster of statistically significant variables predicting a low likelihood to leave include positive perceptions of competitiveness of salaries with other public universities and satisfaction with the current salary level and teaching load. In addition, faculty who perceive their department chairs to be responsive are less likely to intend to leave the System.
- L. Academic component faculty who are Hispanic, Black or female also report a lower likelihood of leaving the System.
- M. The most important variable predicting likelihood to leave among health component faculty is the perceived responsiveness of the department chair. This is followed

by the faculty member's satisfaction with those issues related to academic freedom. A second level of variables predicting a lower likelihood of leaving include higher satisfaction with health/medical benefits and having spent more years at the current institution. In addition, higher levels of satisfaction with salary, competitiveness of salary, retirement benefits and teaching load also are predictors of a lower likelihood of leaving among the health component faculty.

- N. Among the health component faculty, being female predicts a lower likelihood of leaving. Race and ethnicity are not statistically significant.

#### GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

##### I. RECOMMENDATIONS TO U.T. SYSTEM

- A. These data should be utilized as appropriate in the strategic planning process.
- B. The high level of dissatisfaction among female faculty accents the importance of the newly-formed Committee on the Status of Women in the System. These data should be provided to that committee and to the Committee on the Status of Minorities as well.
- C. The perceived parity of salary between U.T. System institutions and competitiveness with external institutions is a major problem among U.T. System faculty. While the FAC is aware of on-going salary

equity reviews and individual equity adjustments, there is need for continued careful assessment of salary levels and salary parity in order to establish competitive and fair compensation packages. These data should be made available to the U.T. System officials involved in the legislative appropriation request and budgeting processes.

D. The high percentage of U.T. System faculty in the Optional Retirement System makes it imperative that System continue to defend the ORP from legislative erosion.

E. The academic component faculties believe the component libraries are in need of immediate attention and require additional U.T. System support. The responses to the FSS reflect the concerns identified by other FAC committees that have recognized the deteriorating status of the academic libraries.

The FAC appreciates the commitment of the U.T. System and the U.T. Board of Regents to additional library support as evidenced in the recently approved Capital budget, but recommends that further options, including enhanced technology applications to library services, be pursued.

F. The FSS provides initial baseline data. The dynamic nature of The University of Texas System suggests that the FSS should be replicated on a periodic basis, ideally at least once every three years.

## II. RECOMMENDATIONS TO COMPONENT INSTITUTIONS

- A. These data should be utilized as appropriate in each component's strategic planning process.
- B. The low level of satisfaction by both academic and health component faculty with administrative responses to faculty concerns accents the need for both faculty and administration to address this area. The cognate concern with the ways policies are implemented accents the need for greater communication between faculty and administration. These data can be used to identify those areas in each component where there is the greatest need for cooperation.
- C. The data give some direction with respect to retention of faculty. Both academic and health component faculty are less likely to consider leaving the System if they are satisfied with those issues relating to academic freedom. Concerns with salary levels, competitiveness of salary and teaching loads are more important to academic component faculty (although all three variables also are significant with respect to health component faculty), while the responsiveness of the department chair was more important to health component faculty (although this variable also was a significant predictor for academic component faculty). Health/medical and retirement benefits were statistically significant for the medical component faculty, but not for the academic component faculty. Racial and ethnic status were significant for academic component faculty, but not for the health

component faculty. Gender was significant for both, with women less likely to indicate an intent to leave the System.

These data should serve as guidelines as components develop policies to enhance recruitment and retention of faculty.