Using Multi-institutional Collaboration to Unleash the Potential of Senior Faculty

Christy Crutsinger, University of North Texas
Kiernan Mathews, COACHE/Harvard
November 5, 2010
Objectives

deeper understanding of tenured professors

data-driven discussion

practices that advance a vital workforce

voice to shape COACHE's efforts
COACHE
The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education
at the Harvard Graduate School of Education
Cost of turnover ("leavers")

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search committee (person hours)</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>$7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel (3 candidates)</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relocation</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start-up package</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporation/Orientation</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Estimate:** $96,000
What do faculty *really* want... and what can we *really* do about it?
What we’ve learned about cross-institution collaboration

Make someone accountable (paying for it helps)

Don’t “brand” the survey narrowly

Distill, distill, distill

Don’t shame your partners
effectiveness of formal mentoring program

Top 25% of comparable institutions’ scores

Middle 50% of comparable institutions’ scores

Bottom 25% of comparable institutions’ scores

◆ = your mean

〇 = peer means
COACHE Dashboards
Tenure practices clarity of tenure process clarity of tenure criteria clarity of tenure standards clarity of tenure body of evidence clarity of sense of achieving tenure consistent messages about tenure from tenured colleagues tenure decisions based on performance upper limit on committee assignments periodic, formal performance reviews written summary of performance reviews Tenure expectations: Clarity clarity of expectations: scholar clarity of expectations: teacher clarity of expectations: advisor clarity of expectations: colleague in department clarity of expectations: campus citizen clarity of expectations: member of community Tenure expectations: Reasonableness reasonableness of expectations: scholar reasonableness of expectations: teacher reasonableness of expectations: advisor reasonableness of expectations: colleague in department reasonableness of expectations: campus citizen reasonableness of expectations: member of community Nature of the work: Overall way you spend your time as a faculty member number of hours you work as a faculty member quality of facilities amount of access to TA's, RA's, etc. clerical/administrative services computing services Nature of the work: Research amount of time to conduct research expectations for finding external funding influence over focus of research research services professional assistance in obtaining grants travel funds paid/unpaid research leave Nature of the work: Teaching level of courses you teach number of courses you teach degree of influence over which courses you teach discretion over course content number of students you teach quality of undergraduate students quality of graduate students teaching services upper limit on teaching obligations professional assistance for improving teaching Work and home childcare stop-the-clock spouse/partner hiring program elder care modified duties for parental or other family reasons part-time options faculty in your department place on your work amount of professional interaction with tenured colleagues amount of personal interaction with tenured colleagues amount of professional interaction with pre-tenure colleagues amount of personal interaction with pre-tenure colleagues how well you fit climate of tenured colleagues intellectual vitality of pre-tenure colleagues participation in governance of institution participation in governance of department on the whole, institution is collegial Compensation and benefits financial assistance with housing tuition waivers compensation Global satisfaction department as a place to work institution as a place to work CAO cares about quality of life for pre-tenure faculty would again choose to work at this institution overall rating of institution

Not merely interesting, but actionable.
"My question is: Are we making an impact?"
Correlation of COACHE benchmarks with “Global Satisfaction”

**Climate (0.676)**
- Nature of Work: Overall
- Tenure Practices
- Tenure Clarity
- Nature of Work: Teaching
- Tenure Reasonableness
- Nature of Work: Research
- Work & Home

**Compensation (0.366)**

*Pearson’s correlation coefficient*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Dimension</th>
<th>% dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>interest tenured faculty take in my professional development</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunities to collaborate with tenured faculty</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amount of professional interaction I have with tenured colleagues in my department</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intellectual vitality of tenured colleagues in my department</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the value faculty in my department place on my work</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Aging Professoriate

• Mean age of full-time faculty at four-year colleges and universities in the U.S. is 55.

• 46% of the tenured faculty are 55 and older.
• 9% of the tenured faculty are 65 and older.

• Between 1973 and 2003:
  – Percentage of faculty 65 and over increased from 2% to 6%
  – Percentage of faculty over 55 increased from 15% to 30%

National Center for Education Statistics and the U.S. National Science Foundation (2006)
“Vital professors may be campus leaders, inspiring teachers, prolific scholars, excellent advisors, but they do not necessarily perform all faculty roles with equal zest or skills” (p. 180).

The Aging Professoriate
Background Literature

- Administration
- Resources and Support
- Culture and Collegiality
- Salary and Benefits
- Autonomy and the Pursuit of Knowledge
- Workload
Method

• Focus group discussions were conducted with 73 randomly selected tenured professors (associate and full) at six public institutions.

• A professional moderator facilitated the focus groups using semi-structured questions.
Vital faculty members...

- Have strong reputations.
- Are high producers of scholarly or creative work.
- Offer excellent teaching.
- Oversee the work of graduate students.
- Receive external grants.
- Provide valuable mentoring.
- Engage in service to the discipline and the university.
Academic Leadership

• Provosts, deans, and department chairs play major roles in shaping the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of senior faculty.

• Administrative leadership viewed as hierarchical and overly authoritative.
Appreciation and Recognition

• For most senior faculty, there is a disconnect between expectations and appreciation for external service.

• Senior faculty expressed dissatisfaction with the use of student evaluations as a proxy measure for teaching effectiveness.
“It’s your responsibility; you’re sitting in a higher desk, and getting higher pay. You need to know how to value us, not let another university let you know how much to value us by having us seek outside offers.”

Faculty voices...
Clarity of Expectations

- Expectations at department level are relatively clear for promotion.
- Expectations at the institutional and state levels are less clear and often contradictory.
Collaboration

• Disciplinary and interdisciplinary collaboration were positive factors for senior faculty.

• Academic partnerships, however, do not occur organically but require faculty innovation.
Equity and Fairness

• The inequitable distribution of resources and work assignments within departments and across schools and colleges frustrates senior faculty.

• Senior faculty view the evaluation and promotion process as ‘political’ and unfair.
Faculty voices...

“I think the equitable way of doing that is if [“dead wood” faculty members] have a higher teaching load so that they can free up junior faculty to do the research. I think that is equity. If they have a higher committee load, I think that is equitable...if they are able to fulfill the race to tier one in other ways than going out and generating research dollars, I think that is a fair way to do it. But they clearly don’t have the same job expectation as somebody else.”
Mentoring

• Mentoring assistant and associate professors is a critical function of a vital, senior faculty member.

• Beyond tenure, associate professors seek meaningful mentoring relationships and professional development opportunities.
Promotion

• Ambiguous expectations for promotion to full was pervasive among senior faculty.

• Only when associates received the ‘nod’ do they consider putting their materials forward.

• Lack of clear incentives prevent many associate professors from pursuing promotion to full.
Workload and Work-Life Balance

• Administrative duties, huge enrollment increases, and lack of support often leave senior faculty members feeling overwhelmed and frustrated.

• Conversely, some senior faculty members felt that they have more work-life balance now than when they were junior faculty members.
“It just seems like there’s constantly another report that you have to put together for somebody, and then there are meetings to plan meetings, to plan other meetings, you now? It’s just lots of meetings.”
Next steps...
Discuss Your Perspectives

What does your campus do to engage and motivate your senior faculty to remain vital?

How do/might you measure the impact?

Have any themes been overlooked?

How might we make effective use of the results?

Ultimately, how can the academy create new paradigms that ensure engaged/vital senior faculty?
Report Back
(and turn in your notes)
More information

Research & Reports

Resource Fair Tonight @ 5:15pm – 6:45pm

www.coache.org