



CU-Colorado Springs

UCLA HERI Survey 2001 Responses from CU-Colorado Springs Faculty *Research Brief No. 2*

Introduction

The purpose of the University of California, Los Angeles Higher Education Research Institute's national survey is to obtain data on college faculty, including background and demographic information, attitudes and values, professional activities and pedagogy.

In Fall 2001 CU-Colorado Springs faculty participated in the HERI Faculty Survey. Of the 269 faculty surveyed, 121 or 45 percent responded. The responses from CU-Colorado Springs' faculty comprise a small portion of the national normative sample of 32,840 compiled by UCLA.

CU-Colorado Springs' participation both provides information on its own faculty and allows for comparison to the national norm-based data.

The appended information summarizes the responses from CU-Colorado Springs' faculty. Emphasis in the remainder of this brief is on comparisons of the:

- local full-time faculty to the national norms for participating public universities;
- responses of the local tenured/tenure-track faculty based on gender.

Comparison of CU-Colorado Springs' Faculty and their Peers

In many ways, CU-Colorado Springs' full-time faculty are different from their peers at Public Universities.

Background and Demographics: CU-Colorado Springs faculty have held their degrees and been with the institution for a shorter period of time than their national counterparts. While less than half (47 percent) of the Colorado Springs faculty earned their degree prior to 1989, almost two-thirds (64 percent) of those at public universities reported the same. And while 50 percent of those at public universities were appointed at their present institution prior to 1989, only one-third of the Colorado Springs faculty were.

Attitudes and Values: The greatest disparity between Colorado Springs faculty and their national counterparts is illustrated with the factors noted as very important in their decision to work at their institution.

Colorado Springs is an attractive place to live. A lot of other colleges are located in places that are not as desirable. Accordingly, 70 percent of Colorado Springs faculty reported that location was a very important reason for working at the institution while only 40 percent of their national counterparts listed the same.

Teaching and Research: Nearly half of the Colorado Springs faculty indicated that the institutional emphasis on teaching was very important, while less than a third of their counterparts agreed. More of the Colorado Springs faculty members were drawn to the academe because they wanted to teach.

On the flipside, more of the faculty at public institutions thought an institutional emphasis

on research was very important, while few Colorado Springs faculty agreed. Fewer members of the Colorado Springs faculty indicated research facilities were a very important factor in their decision to work at the institution compared to their counterparts at public universities.

Attitudes about Teaching/Research	Colo. Spgs. Faculty	Public Universities	Difference
Institutional Emphasis on Teaching Very Important	47%	29%	18%
Institutional Emphasis on Research Very Important	16%	39%	23%
Research Facilities Very Important at University	7%	20%	13%
Very Important Reason to pursue academic career was teaching	76%	60%	16%

Sources of Stress: Sources of stress are similar for the faculty both at CU-Colorado Springs and nationally. At least half of both groups consider committee work, faculty meetings and colleagues significant sources of stress. More than 70 percent of faculty members agree institutional procedures and “red tape” are a significant source of stress. While three-quarters indicate time pressures or lack of personal time as a significant source of stress.

Professional Activities: The Colorado Springs faculty members differ from their national counterparts on publication activity. Almost twice as many of the Colorado Springs faculty note having nothing published or accepted for publication in the last two years compared to their national counterparts.

Professional Activities	Colo. Spgs. Faculty	Public Universities	Difference
No publications accepted within last two years	38%	20%	18%

However, the Colorado Springs faculty were more involved than their national counterparts

in community service and reform efforts at the university. While three-quarters of the Colorado Springs faculty participate in community or public service, less than two-thirds of their national counterparts do. Also, more Colorado Springs faculty report being very involved with efforts to reform general education, faculty roles/rewards, governance and curriculum.

Involvement in	Colo. Spgs. Faculty	Public Universities	Difference
At least one hour per week of community or public service	74%	63%	11%
General education reform	32%	23%	9%
Faculty roles/rewards reform	27%	18%	9%
Governance reform	22%	16%	6%
Curriculum reform	52%	39%	13%

About half of both groups report serving as paid consultants.

Pedagogy: Faculty at the Colorado Springs campus and faculty nationally were equally as likely to: consider goals for undergraduates very important or essential, agree that undergraduates should be able to think clearly; believe preparing students for employment after college and preparing students for graduate or advanced education are important goals; and consider development of moral character important.

About half of both groups report placing or collecting assignments on the Internet and participating in a teaching enhancement workshop during the last two years.

Comparison of Responses from CU-Colorado Springs Men and Women

Background and Demographics: There are some known, distinct differences between the tenured/tenure-track faculty based on gender.

For example, while 67 percent of assistant professors are female, 86 percent of full-professors are male. The women tend to be younger, hold more recent appoints to the university, and were awarded tenure more recently. Perhaps since the men are older and thus in a later stage of life, nearly all of them are married and have children, whereas, a slight majority of women are married and less than two-thirds have children.

Characteristic	Men	Women	Difference
Average age	52	48	4 years
Average year of appointment to University	1985	1994	9 years
Average year awarded tenure	1986	1994	8 years
Percent married	92%	59%	33%
Percent who have children	95%	61%	34%

Attitudes and Values: CU-Colorado Springs faculty held very different attitudes based on their gender. Some of the issues on which they vary include: reasons for coming to the university, sources of stress and approaches to teaching.

Reasons for coming to the University:

Women note different reasons for coming to the university than men. A slight majority of women indicate colleagues are very important, while less than a third of men do.

Approximately a quarter of the women indicate academic rank, salary and benefits, and prestige of the department are very important factors in their decision to work at CU-Colorado Springs. Considerably fewer men note the same items.

Percent noting very important reason for coming to university	Men	Women	Differences
Colleagues	30%	54%	24%
Academic rank offered	17%	27%	10%
Salary and benefits	7%	22%	15%
Prestige of department	0%	20%	20%

The differences between the women's and the men's responses on these factors indicates that

the two groups are in different stages of their careers. Since the women are concentrated among the assistant professor rank, their responses are likely due to being in the early stages of their academic careers. Whereas the men, being concentrated at the full professor rank, are more concerned with issues related to later stages of careers.

Sources of Stress: Men and women find the same items to be the most stressful. These include institutional procedures and "red tape," time pressures or lack of personal time, and research and publishing demands. There are differences in perception of stress for other factors.

In particular, men note several personal factors as somewhat or extensive sources of stress during the last two years. These factors include childcare, care of elderly parent, personal physical health and children's problems. The women do not find these items as stressful.

Percent noting somewhat or extensive source of stress during last two years	Men	Women	Differences
Child care	37%	29%	8%
Care of elderly parent	26%	22%	4%
Personal physical health	46%	42%	4%
Children's problems	30%	20%	10%

Work-related issues rather than personal life issues tend to be more stressful for female faculty than for their male counterparts.

Women find eight work-related issues greater sources of stress than their male counterparts. These include the review/promotion process, subtle discrimination, committee work, faculty meetings, colleagues, teaching load, research/publishing demands, and keeping up with information technology. Men find two work related issues more stressful than their female counterparts: students and institutional procedures/"red tape." Though many of the women also find these issues stressful as well.

Pedagogy: The faculty's approach to teaching varies by gender. Women tend to use more non-traditional teaching methods than men. This is illustrated by courses taught in the last two years. In particular, a greater percentage of women engage in interdisciplinary, ethnic studies, and women's studies courses as well as team-teaching, and service-learning. Although more men collect assignments on the internet and teach honors courses.

Engaged in	Men	Women	Differences
Interdisciplinary Courses	46%	68%	22%
Ethnic Studies Courses	7%	17%	10%
Women's Studies Courses	5%	34%	29%
Team-Teaching	49%	65%	16%
Service-learning	9%	36%	27%
Collect Assignments on Internet	68%	55%	13%
Teach Honors Courses	16%	9%	7%

Some of the goals noted as very important or essential for undergraduates vary significantly by the faculty's gender. Women are more likely to indicate as very important or essential the goals of: enhancing students' knowledge of and appreciation for other racial/ethnic groups, preparing students for responsible citizenship, instilling in students a commitment to community service and preparing students for graduate or advanced education.

Percent noting goal is very important or essential for undergrads	Men	Women	Differences
Enhance students' knowledge of and appreciation for other racial/ethnic groups	52%	78%	26%
Prepare students for responsible citizenship	55%	71%	16%
Instill in students a commitment to community service	25%	59%	34%
Prepare students for graduate or advanced education	47%	63%	16%

Cautionary Note

Although the previous discussion indicates many areas in which male and female faculty members perceive differences, these differences may be an artifact of the distribution of men and women in the academic ranks.

Since men and women are unequally distributed across the academic ranks, the responses from men may be indicative of their higher academic ranks as much as they reflect differences based on gender. Likewise responses from the women who tend to hold lower ranks may reflect experiences of those early in their academic careers as much as they reflect differences between men and women.

Comparisons of the perceptions of Assistant Professors to those of Full Professors yields similar findings to the comparisons of women and men.

Conclusion

CU-Colorado Springs faculty participation in the HERI Faculty Survey in 2001 provides for many useful comparisons -- both against national counterparts and within the T/TT ranks. Many different comparisons are possible. Some of those have been illustrated in this report. The Office of Institutional Research has prepared more detailed reports. These are available by request.

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