Faculty Climate Survey 2018: Key Takeaways

Background

The faculty climate survey was administered in January 2018 to full-time faculty, full-time lecturers, and research faculty at Case Western Reserve University hired on or before November 1, 2017.

Total sample: 3,397   **Responses**: 791   **Response rate**: 23%

Sample excluding Clinical Medicine: 1,295   **Responses**: 620   **Response rate**: 48%

- Women (29%) were more likely to complete the survey than men (20%)
- Tenured/in tenure track faculty (52%) were more likely to complete the survey than faculty not in the tenure track (14%)

Quality of Faculty Life

Table 1. Quality of Faculty Life

	Mean score		% "4" or "5"		Sig.
	2014		**2018**		
Satisfaction: being a faculty member at CWRU	3.78	70%	3.60	66%	○ ◊
Satisfaction: resources to support research/scholarship	3.22	47%	3.11	45%	◊
Satisfaction: resources to support your teaching	3.40	51%	3.46	54%	
Satisfaction: role as a faculty member at CWRU and life outside of CWRU fit together	3.66	63%	3.61	63%	
Scale: 1 = Very Dissatisfied to 5 = Very Satisfied					
CWRU is a comfortable place for me as a faculty member	4.29	83%	4.18	79%	○ ◊
Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree					
Somewhat or very likely to leave CWRU in the next 3 years	2.66	28%	2.80	36%	○ ◊
Scale: 1 = Very Unlikely to 5 = Very Likely					
Would still want to be a faculty member if starting again	4.42	86%	4.36	85%	◊
Scale: 1 = Definitely No to 5 = Definitely Yes					
Would come to CWRU if given the choice again	2.53	60%	2.47	57%	◊
Scale: 1 = I would not come to CWRU to 3 = I would come to CWRU					

○ indicates difference is significant for full sample, ◊ difference is significant for matched sample. ($p < .01$)

The table above includes a comparison of all responses from 2014 and 2018. *When responses from faculty who took the survey in both years were matched, six of the eight Quality of Faculty Life items showed a significant decrease in faculty satisfaction over time*. Only satisfaction with resources to support teaching and satisfaction with work-life balance were not significantly different when matched by respondents.

Satisfaction with Resources, Services, and Responsibilities

Top four in satisfaction:

- Library resources
- Computing resources
- Computing support staff
- Office space

Bottom four in satisfaction:

- Salary
- Start-up funds
- Other resources to support research
- Time available for scholarly work

Work Environment

There are five items on work environment where faculty are significantly less satisfied than in 2014:

1. My colleagues value my research and scholarship.
2. I am satisfied with opportunities to collaborate with faculty in other units at CWRU.
3. My department/unit is a good fit for me.
4. The climate and opportunities for female faculty are at least as good as those for male faculty.
5. The climate and opportunities for minority faculty are at least as good as those for non-minority faculty.

Leadership

Leadership plays a crucial role in faculty satisfaction. Among the strongest variables related to satisfaction were focused on leadership by deans and department chairs. Table 2 presents the items that are strong predictors of faculty satisfaction, in order from strongest to weakest.

Table 2. Leadership's Role in Faculty Satisfaction

My dean…	% Agree	2014	2018	Sig.
provides an environment conducive to leading-edge research		n/a	45%	n/a
is an effective administrator		63%	52%	○ ◊
honors agreements		60%	50%	○ ◊
articulates a clear vision		61%	47%	○ ◊
handles disputes/problems effectively		46%	40%	○ ◊
treats faculty in an even-handed way		51%	44%	○ ◊
articulates clear criteria for allocation of resources		45%	36%	○ ◊
maintains high academic standards		72%	63%	○ ◊
communicates consistently with faculty		60%	51%	○ ◊
is open to constructive criticism		47%	41%	○ ◊
articulates clear criteria for tenure/ promotion/evaluation		62%	53%	○ ◊
shows commitment to diversity		66%	64%	◊
My department chair…				
provides an environment conducive to leading-edge research		n/a	58%	n/a
honors agreements		69%	68%	◊
handles disputes/problems effectively		56%	55%	◊
My chair/director/dean…				
creates a collegial and supportive environment		62%	63%	
helps me obtain the resources I need		53%	50%	◊

○ difference is significant for the full sample, ◊ difference is significant for the matched sample. ($p < .01$)

Results should be interpreted with caution because the results are presented as a whole and not indicative of the performance of an individual dean or deans. Further, given the number of deans and department chairs, there is likely great variability present in these ratings. However, these data indicate some issues or concerns present at the school level.

Likelihood of Leaving

Table 3. Likelihood to Leave within Three Years (2018)

School	Somewhat or Very Likely to Leave
Medicine – Basic Sciences	44%
Physical Education and Athletics	43%
Dental Medicine	41%
Management	41%
Nursing	39%
Engineering	37%
All Faculty	**36%**
Social Work (MSASS)	35%
Medicine – Clinical	35%
Arts and Sciences – Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences	33%
Law	29%
Arts and Sciences – Math and Natural Sciences	15%

The data indicate 36% of faculty are likely to leave CWRU within the next three years. *This has increased significantly since 2014, for both the full and matched samples.* The top four reasons to leave have all increased since 2014 and include:

1. To enhance your career in other ways
2. To increase your salary ◊
3. To find a more supportive work environment ○
4. To increase your time to do research ○ ◊

○ *difference is sig. for full sample; ◊ difference is sig. for matched sample.*

Conclusions

The data suggest faculty are unhappy with resources available to support their research and scholarship, their leadership, and to a lesser extent their salary. Overall, the environment, fit, and support for research are more indicative of faculty satisfaction than salary. This is true both when asking outright as well as when asking faculty to consider their reasons to leave. The trend suggests that faculty satisfaction has not improved in the past four years; in many cases, faculty are significantly less satisfied now than they have been previously.