

Faculty Climate: Changes Over Time

The Faculty Climate Survey (2018) was administered to full-time faculty, full-time lecturers, and research faculty at Case Western Reserve University hired on or before November 1, 2017. The survey was a continuation of the 2010 and 2014 surveys and was designed to help the university better understand the experience of and improve the academic environment for all faculty members. The 2018 Faculty Climate Survey collected information on the broad faculty experience, with items covering topics such as the atmosphere of the individual’s department, center, or school, campus climate, stressors, the process of tenure and promotion (for those who are tenure-track), and individuals’ perceptions of their department chair and dean.

This report examines changes in responses from 2014 to 2018. More specifically, paired-samples *t*-tests (*N* = 367) were used to compare the responses of faculty who completed the climate survey both years. The tables and graphs below, unless otherwise noted to contain all responses from the 2018 Faculty Climate Survey, reflect the results of participants for which items were completed during both 2018 and 2014 administrations.

Quality of Faculty Life

Overall, faculty are consistently and significantly less satisfied than they were in 2014 (65% in 2018 vs. 77% in 2014) with being a faculty member at CWRU. Faculty feel less comfortable, less satisfied with their role and the support they are provided, and less likely to choose being a faculty member at CWRU if they could begin their career again. Faculty are also more likely to leave CWRU within the next three years than reported in 2014. Most differences between 2014 and 2018 are statistically significant, and all are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Quality of Faculty Life

2014	2018	Survey Items
77%	65%	Satisfied with being a faculty member at CWRU**
52%	43%	Satisfied with the resources CWRU provides to support research and scholarship**
59%	54%	Satisfied with the resources CWRU provides to support teaching
53%	50%	Rated the reasonableness of their workload as "About right"*
87%	79%	Agreed that CWRU is a comfortable place for them as a faculty member**
50%	45%	Feel as though they have received adequate mentoring while at CWRU*
22%	37%	Likely or very likely to leave CWRU within the next three years**
67%	63%	Satisfied with the ways in which their role as a faculty member at CWRU and life outside of CWRU fit together
62%	55%	Would choose to be a faculty member at CWRU again**
89%	86%	Would still want to be a faculty member if they began their career again**

* indicates difference is significant at *p* < .05; ** indicates significant at *p* < .01.

Faculty Climate Survey Changes Over Time: Matched Pairs Analysis

Satisfaction with Resources, Services, and Responsibilities

Faculty in 2018 were most satisfied with office space, computing and library resources, and computing support staff, which were also rated highly in 2014. The only items that saw an increase compared with 2014 were satisfaction with computing and support staff and availability of nearby parking.

Items that garnered the least amount of satisfaction included start-up funds, resources to support research, and time available for scholarly work. The largest decreases from 2014 to 2018 were found for clinical responsibilities and start-up funds, but these differences were not statistically significant.

Significant differences were found for several other items, including the substantial drops in satisfaction with time available for scholarly work, salary, and committee and administrative responsibilities. All items and their respective percentage of respondents at least “Satisfied” are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Satisfaction with Resources, Services, and Responsibilities

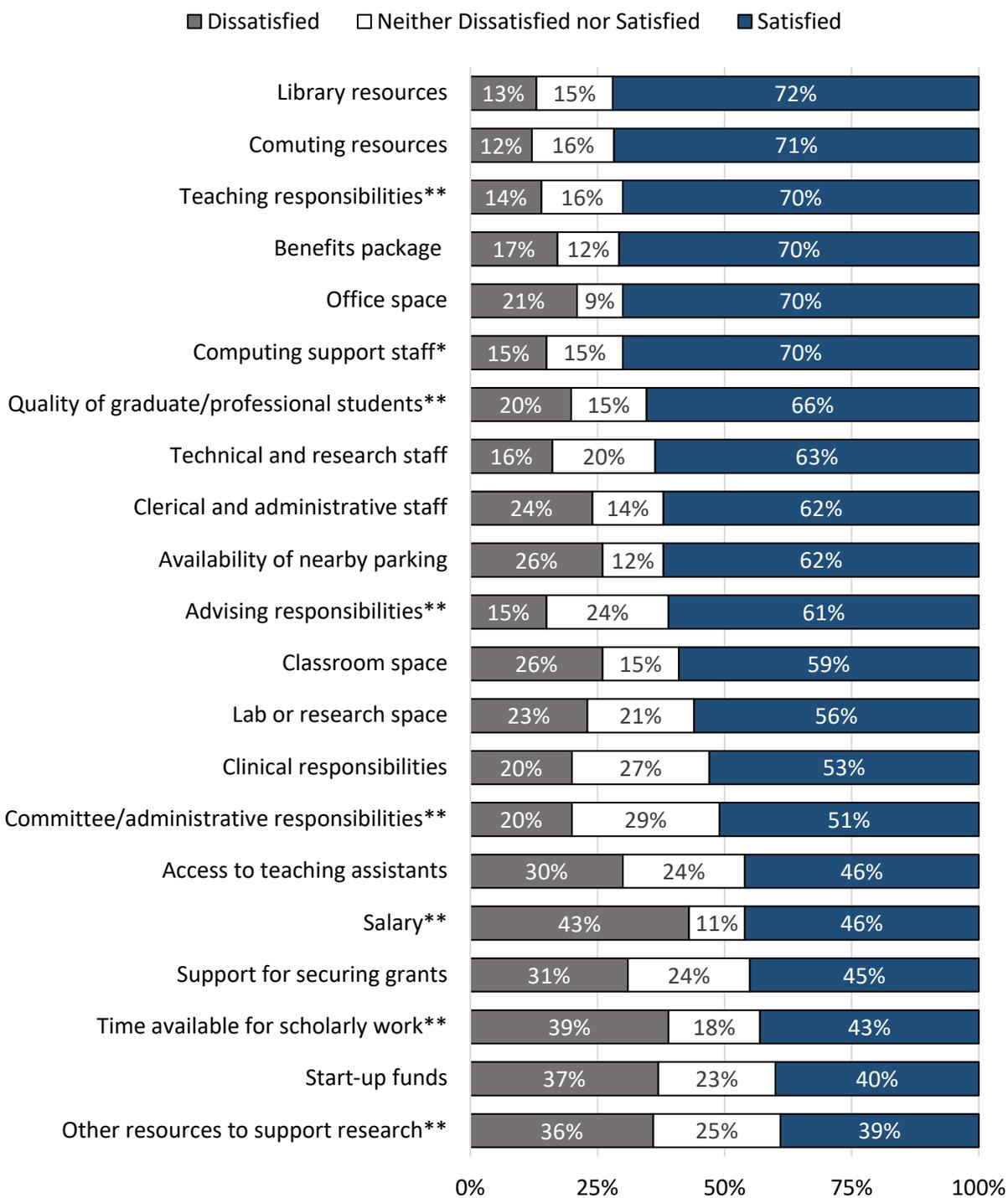
2014	2018	Survey Item
77%	74%	Office space
73%	73%	Computing resources
75%	71%	Library resources
67%	70%	Computing support staff*
74%	69%	Teaching responsibilities**
66%	68%	Availability of nearby parking
68%	67%	Benefits package (medical, retirement, vacation, etc.)
67%	62%	Technical and research staff
69%	61%	Advising responsibilities*
64%	61%	Quality of graduate/professional students**
60%	59%	Classroom space
63%	58%	Lab or research space
60%	58%	Clerical and administrative staff
55%	47%	Committee and Administrative Responsibilities**
46%	45%	Access to teaching assistants
52%	44%	Salary**
46%	44%	Support for securing grants
55%	44%	Clinical Responsibilities
48%	39%	Time available for scholarly work**
42%	38%	Other resources to support research*
46%	36%	Start-up funds

* indicates difference is significant at $p < .05$; ** indicates significant at $p < .01$.

Faculty Climate Survey Changes Over Time: Matched Pairs Analysis

Figure 1 presents faculty satisfaction with all of the above items from the entire sample of 2018 respondents. Because the sample was expanded, the numbers in Figure 1 do not align with those presented in Table 2, which was just faculty who could be matched with their 2014 responses. Significant differences between 2014 and 2018 are still flagged with an asterisk.

Figure 1. Faculty Satisfaction in 2018: All Faculty



Faculty Climate Survey Changes Over Time: Matched Pairs Analysis

Workload

Faculty were asked to rate the reasonableness of their workload using a 5-point scale ranging from “Much too light” to “Much too heavy”. Faculty overall reported their workload was significantly heavier in 2018 compared with four years prior ($t = 2.72, p < .05$). A breakdown of response frequencies is provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Reasonableness of Workload

2014	2018	How would you rate the reasonableness of your workload?
0%	1%	Much too light / Too light
53%	50%	About right
46%	49%	Too heavy / Much too heavy

Sources of Stress

When asked about sources of stress, faculty showed quite a few changes over the past four years. Securing funding for research remains the single greatest stressor for faculty, but the percentage of respondents who identified it as an extensive source of stress decreased from 48% to 47%. Departmental and campus politics has become a major stressor (up to 38% from 26%). The complete results, including where differences are significant, are provided in Table 4.

Table 4. Faculty Stressors

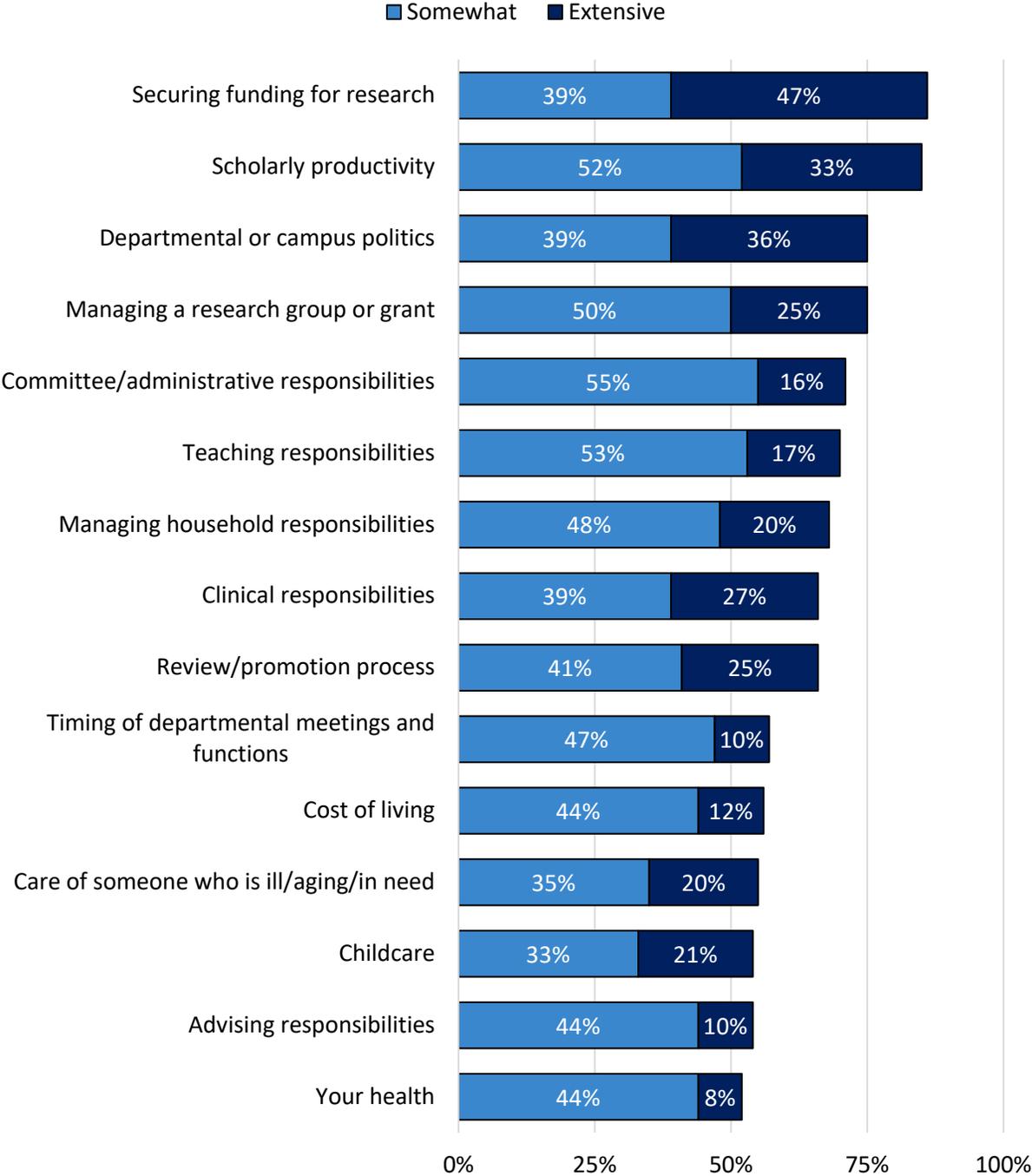
2014	2018	Source of Stress
48%	47%	Securing funding for research
26%	38%	Departmental or campus politics**
34%	33%	Scholarly productivity
21%	30%	Clinical responsibilities
32%	25%	Managing a research group or grant
22%	23%	Review/promotion process
19%	21%	Managing household responsibilities
14%	19%	Care of someone who is ill, disabled, aging, or in need of special services*
18%	18%	Childcare
20%	18%	Committee and/or administrative responsibilities
14%	16%	Teaching responsibilities
15%	13%	Cost of living
8%	10%	Advising responsibilities
6%	10%	Timing of departmental meetings and functions**
7%	10%	Your health*

* indicates difference is significant at $p < .05$; ** indicates significant at $p < .01$.

Faculty Climate Survey Changes Over Time: Matched Pairs Analysis

Figure 2 presents faculty sources of stress with all of the above items from the entire sample of 2018 respondents. Because the sample was expanded, the numbers in Figure 2 do not align with those presented in Table 4, which was just faculty who could be matched with their 2014 responses.

Figure 2. Faculty Sources of Stress in 2018: All Faculty



Faculty Climate Survey Changes Over Time: Matched Pairs Analysis

Work Environment

Similar to the quality of faculty life and satisfaction items, faculty overall felt that things were more difficult in 2018. They were often significantly less likely to agree with items related to satisfaction with their work environment and colleagues, but also more likely to feel excluded and that they needed to work harder to be perceived by their colleagues as a legitimate scholar. Ultimately, faculty in 2018 feel less valued and that the environment is not as supportive as it was in the past. Table 5 provides the percentages of agreement for the work environment items.

Table 5. Work Environment

2014	2018	Survey Item
70%	64%	My colleagues value my research and scholarship**
64%	59%	I am satisfied with opportunities to collaborate with faculty in my primary department/unit.*
63%	59%	I am satisfied with opportunities to collaborate with faculty in other units at CWRU.**
58%	52%	Interdisciplinary research is recognized and rewarded by my department/unit.**
62%	56%	I have a voice in the decision-making that affects the direction of my department/unit.*
63%	62%	My chair/director/dean creates a collegial and supportive environment.
54%	48%	My chair/director/dean helps me obtain the resources I need.**
73%	70%	I can navigate the unwritten rules concerning how one is to conduct oneself as a faculty member.*
77%	68%	My department/unit is a good fit for me.**
69%	68%	My department/unit is a place where individual faculty may comfortably raise personal/family responsibilities when scheduling departmental obligations.
23%	26%	I feel excluded from an informal network in my department/unit.
31%	37%	I have to work harder than some of my colleagues to be perceived as a legitimate scholar.
68%	65%	I feel that the climate and opportunities for female faculty in my department/unit are at least as good as those for male faculty.*
62%	57%	I feel that the climate and opportunities for minority faculty in my department/unit are at least as good as those for nonminority faculty.**

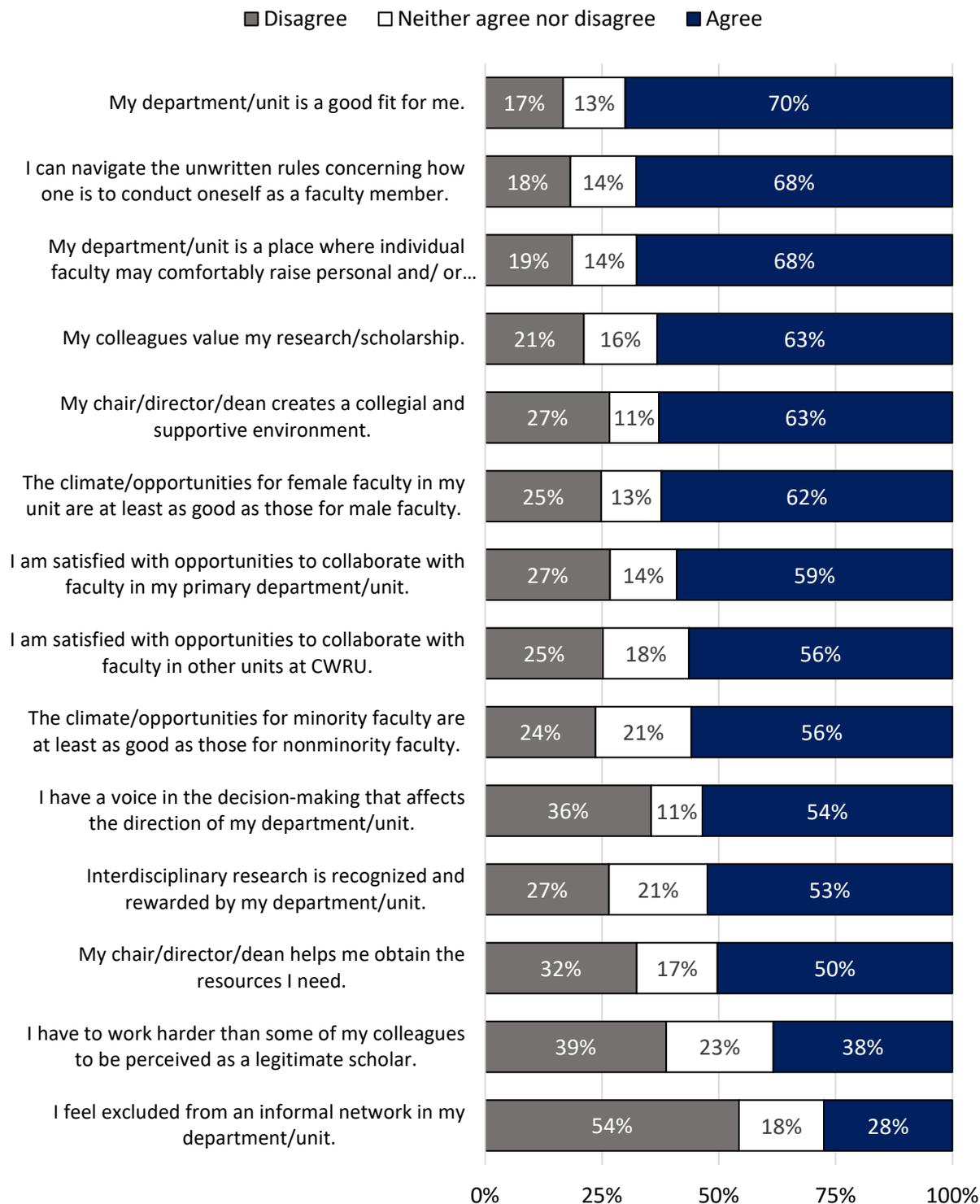
* indicates difference is significant at $p < .05$; ** indicates significant at $p < .01$.

Faculty are noting significantly more challenges and fewer opportunities for collaboration across departments/units. Faculty are receiving less assistance in obtaining resources and agree that the opportunities for women and minorities are not as good as they were four years ago. This leads faculty to feel significantly less that the department or unit is a good fit for them.

Faculty Climate Survey Changes Over Time: Matched Pairs Analysis

Figure 3 represents the work environment for faculty with all of the above items from the entire sample of 2018 respondents. As before, the numbers in Figure 3 do not align with those presented in Table 5, which was just faculty who could be matched with their 2014 responses.

Figure 3. Faculty Work Environment in 2018: All Faculty



Faculty Climate Survey Changes Over Time: Matched Pairs Analysis

Leadership of the Dean

Respondents were asked in 2018 to rate their dean's leadership using 12 items, 11 of which were asked to the same sample back in 2014. Comparing those items, respondents feel significantly less favorable of their deans' abilities than they did four years ago ($p < .01$). This is true for all 11 items that were asked both in 2014 and 2018. Results should be interpreted with caution because the results are presented as a whole and not broken down by school due to sample size constraints. Percentages of agreement for all 12 items are provided in Table 6.

Table 6. Leadership of the Dean

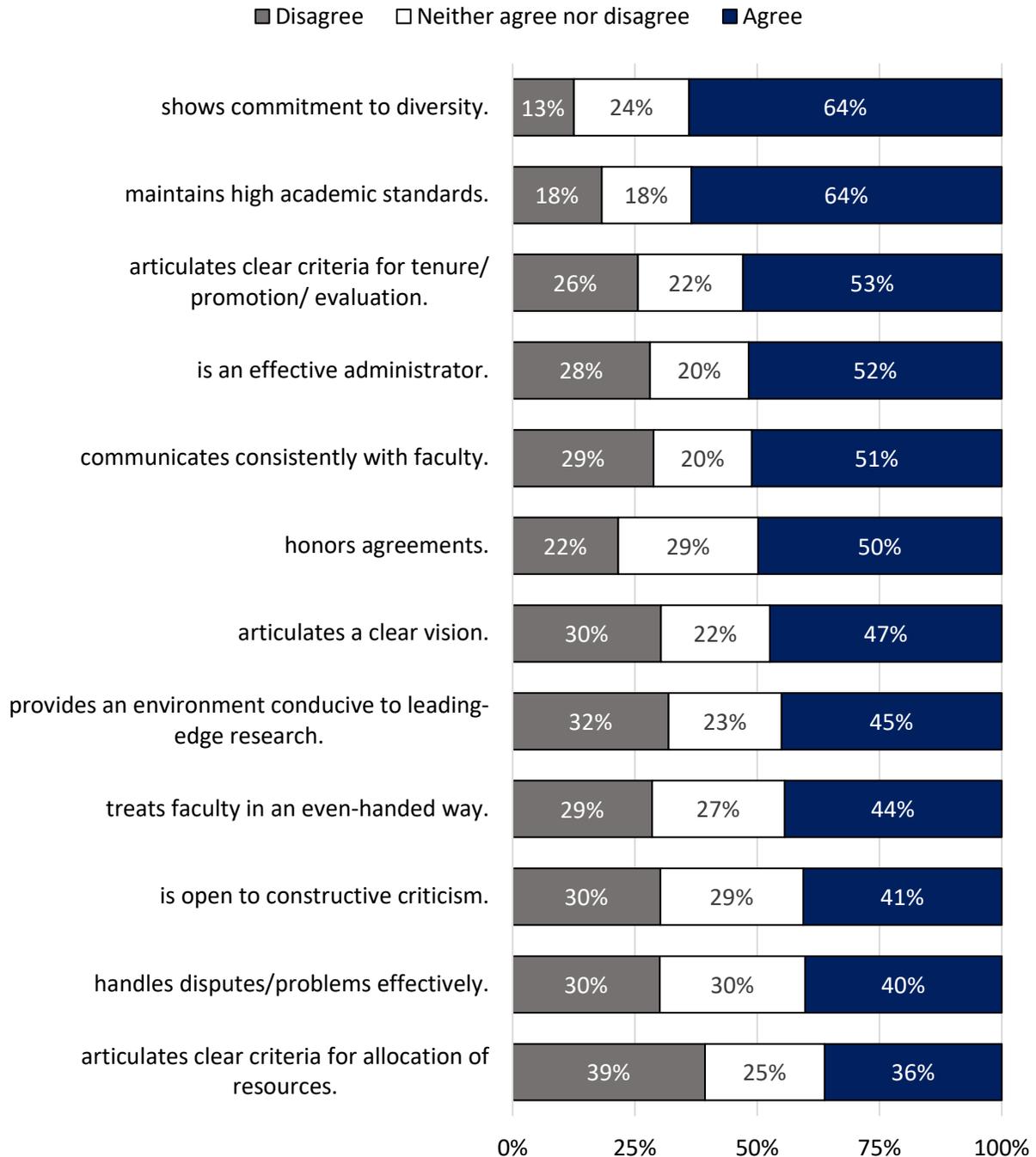
2014	2018	My dean...
71%	67%	Shows commitment to diversity
75%	64%	Maintains high academic standards
66%	58%	Articulates clear criteria for tenure/ promotion/evaluation
65%	54%	Communicates consistently with faculty
68%	53%	Is an effective administrator
64%	52%	Honors agreements
63%	47%	Articulates a clear vision
56%	45%	Treats faculty in an even-handed way
52%	42%	Handles disputes/problems effectively
53%	41%	Is open to constructive criticism
46%	37%	Articulates clear criteria for allocation of resources
---	46%	Provides an environment conducive to leading-edge research

* indicates difference is significant at $p < .05$; ** indicates significant at $p < .01$.

Faculty Climate Survey Changes Over Time: Matched Pairs Analysis

Figure 4 represents the deans' ratings from the entire sample of 2018 respondents.

Figure 4. My Dean...



Faculty Climate Survey Changes Over Time: Matched Pairs Analysis

Leadership of the Department Chair

Faculty were asked to rate their department chair using the same items that were presented for dean ratings. There were two items for which an improvement was shown from 2014 to 2018: My department chair “communicates consistently with faculty” and “is open to constructive criticism.” As seen in Table 7, the remaining items were either the same as or lower than four years ago. Some differences between 2014 and 2018 were statistically significant.

Table 7. Leadership of the Department Chair

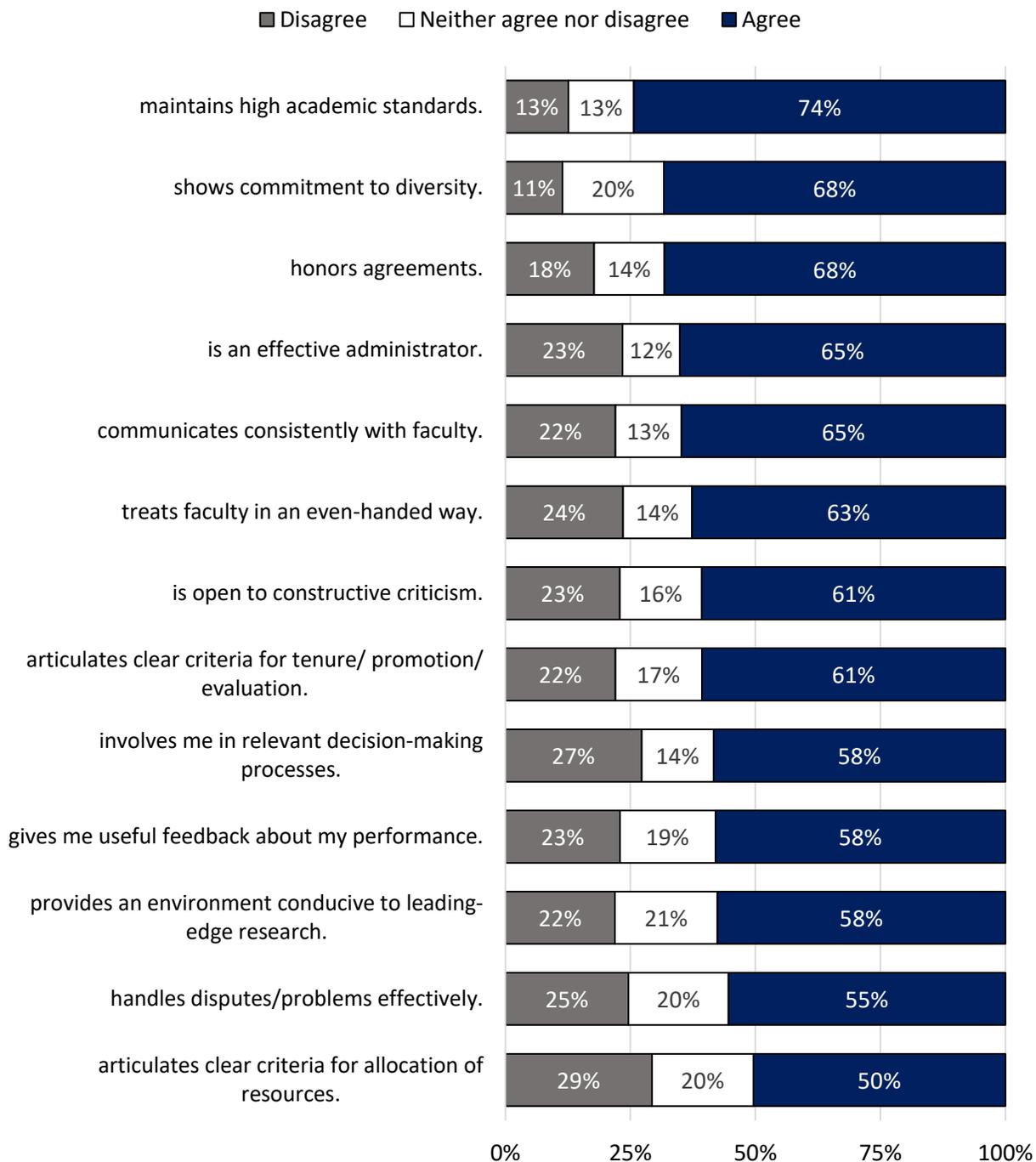
2014	2018	My department chair...
77%	74%	Maintains high academic standards**
75%	69%	Honors agreements**
70%	68%	Shows commitment to diversity**
62%	64%	Communicates consistently with faculty
59%	63%	Is open to constructive criticism
63%	63%	Treats faculty in an even-handed way
65%	62%	Is an effective administrator*
67%	61%	Articulates clear criteria for tenure/promotion/evaluation**
64%	60%	Involves me in relevant decision-making processes
60%	56%	Gives me useful feedback about my performance*
---	56%	Provides an environment conducive to leading-edge research
55%	53%	Handles disputes/problems effectively**
55%	52%	Articulates clear criteria for allocation of resources*

* indicates difference is significant at $p < .05$; ** indicates significant at $p < .01$.

Faculty Climate Survey Changes Over Time: Matched Pairs Analysis

Figure 5 represents the ratings of department chairs from the entire sample of 2018 respondents.

Figure 5. My Department Chair...



Mentoring

Faculty Climate Survey Changes Over Time: Matched Pairs Analysis

Faculty were asked about their mentoring experience with the question “While at CWRU, do you feel as though you have received adequate mentoring?” In 2014, 55% of the sample felt they received adequate mentoring, which is just a bit higher than the 53% who said the same in 2018. The difference was not statistically significant.

Table 8 presents the results of the other mentoring items from 2014 and 2018, which shows that faculty have served more frequently as mentors and mentees over the past four years.

Table 8. Mentoring

2014	2018	Survey Item
74%	83%	While a faculty member at Case Western Reserve, have you served as a mentor for another faculty member?
46%	51%	While at CWRU, have you had one or more formal mentors through programs administered by the university, whether or not the programs are mandatory?

Tenure Criteria

Faculty were asked for the first time in 2014 if they agreed that the criteria for tenure are clearly communicated, and the comparison between then and now is presented in Table 9.

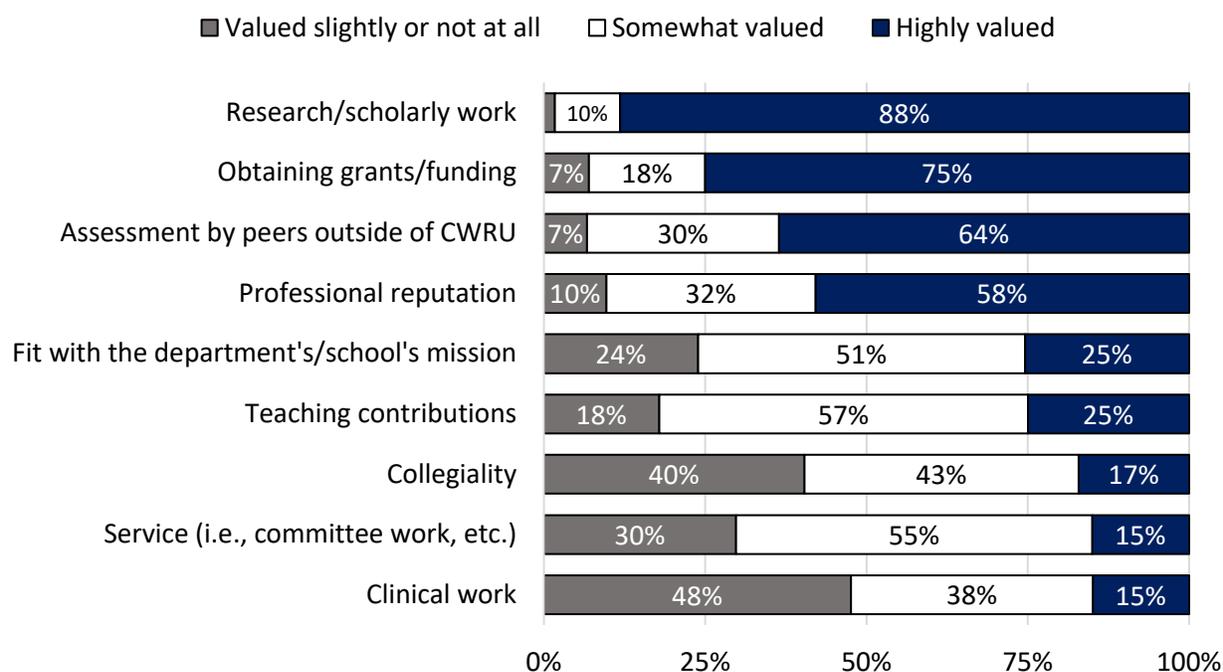
Table 9. Tenure Criteria

2014	2018	Do you agree the tenure for criteria are clearly communicated?
28%	26%	Disagree
10%	12%	Neither Agree nor Disagree
63%	62%	Agree

Faculty were also asked the extent to which several items are valued in the tenure process. Figure 6 presents data from the full 2018 sample in response to “To what extent are the following items valued in the tenure process?”

Faculty Climate Survey Changes Over Time: Matched Pairs Analysis

Figure 6. Value in the Tenure Process 2018: All Faculty



Research and scholarly work, obtaining grants and funding, and assessment by peers outside of CWRU continue to dominate among highly valued items in the tenure process. When asked which of the above are valued appropriately, several items were rated differently from 2014 to 2018, as seen in Table 10.

Table 10. Item Value in the Tenure Process

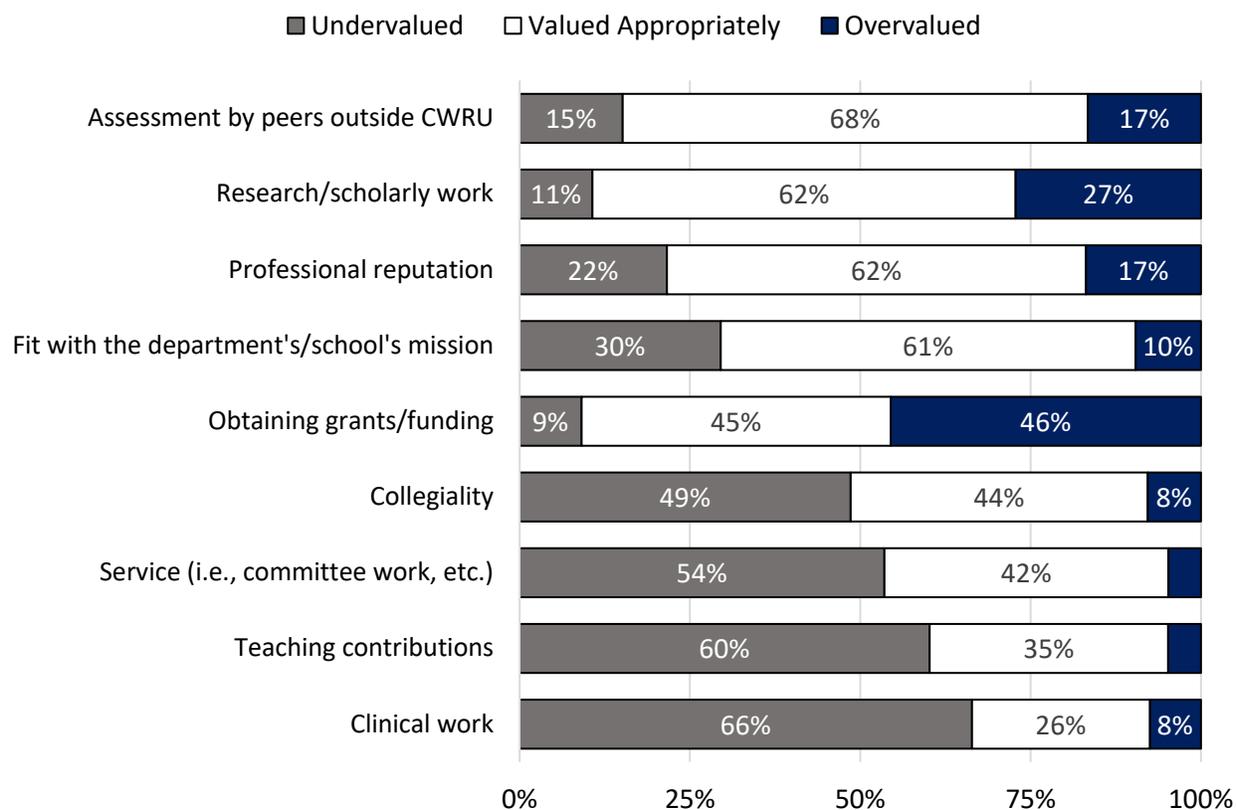
2014	2018	To what extent are the following items "valued appropriately" in the tenure process?
71%	70%	Assessment by peers outside of CWRU
65%	64%	Research/scholarly work
66%	63%	Fit with the department's/school's mission
67%	62%	Professional reputation
45%	47%	Obtaining grants/funding*
49%	45%	Collegiality*
42%	42%	Service (i.e., committee work, etc.)
36%	36%	Teaching contributions
39%	26%	Clinical work

* indicates difference is significant at $p < .05$; ** indicates significant at $p < .01$.

Faculty Climate Survey Changes Over Time: Matched Pairs Analysis

Figure 7 provides the responses to the question “How appropriately are these items valued in the tenure process?” with the full 2018 sample. This provides more insight than Table 10 as it identifies what the full sample thought was over- and under-valued in the tenure process.

Figure 7. Valued Appropriately in the Tenure Process 2018: All Faculty



The data from 2018 suggest that obtaining grants/funding is very much over-valued, followed by research/scholarly work, assessment by peers outside CWRU, and professional reputation. These were also among the items that most frequently were “valued appropriately” as well. It remains the case that clinical work, teaching contributions, and service are proportionally under-valued, a trend that was evident back in 2014 as well.

Retention

There have been a few more faculty who have taken outside job offers to their department/unit chair or dean within the past three years. The number of faculty 2018 is up to 18%, from 17% in 2014. The difference was not significant.

Faculty Climate Survey Changes Over Time: Matched Pairs Analysis

Faculty were also asked “In the next three years, how likely are you to leave Case Western Reserve University?” The number of faculty who reported at least “likely” jumped from 22% in 2014 to 37% in 2018, which is statistically significant. The results for the two retention items are presented in Table 11.

Table 11. Faculty Retention Items

2014	2018	Survey Item
17%	18%	In the last 5 years, while at CWRU, have you received a formal or informal outside job offer that you took to your department chair/dean?
22%	37%	In the next 3 years, how likely are you to leave CWRU?*

* indicates difference is significant at $p < .001$

When considering reasons to leave, faculty chose “to enhance your career in other ways,” “to find a more supportive work environment,” “to improve your research environment,” or “to increase your salary” most frequently “to a great extent”. The response option for “Other” was high as well, with reasons such as “fit”, personnel, and dissatisfaction as reasons cited by faculty. The complete list is presented in Table 12.

Table 12. Reasons to Leave CWRU

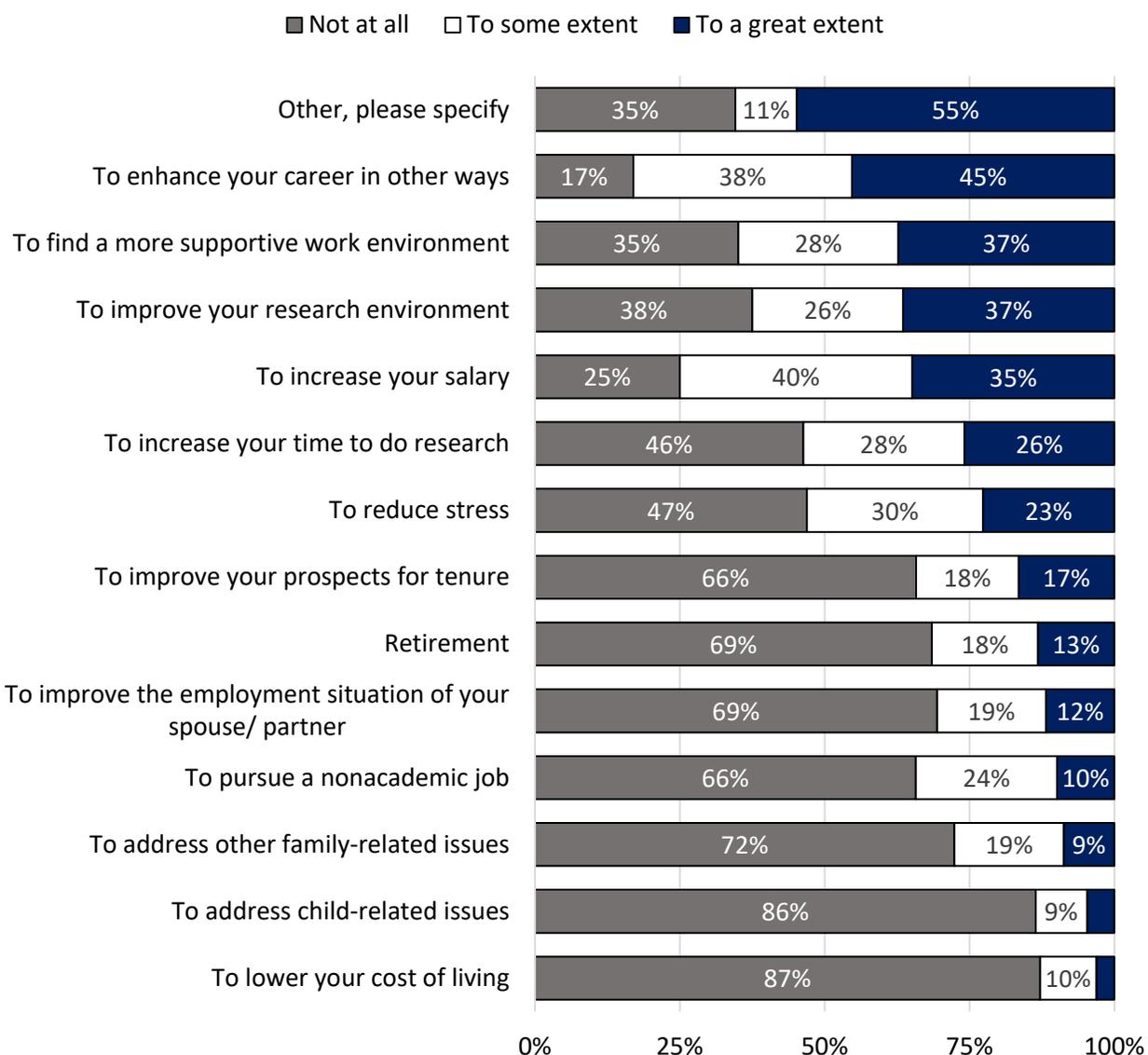
2014	2018	I would consider leaving CWRU for the following reasons “To a great extent”:
46%	67%	Other
43%	46%	To enhance your career in other ways
32%	41%	To find a more supportive work environment**
32%	37%	To increase your salary
---	37%	To improve your research environment
19%	26%	To increase your time to do research*
19%	22%	To reduce stress
8%	14%	Retirement**
15%	13%	To improve your prospects for tenure
10%	9%	To improve the employment situation of your spouse or partner
5%	8%	To pursue a nonacademic job
4%	7%	To address other family-related issues
4%	4%	To address child-related issues
4%	3%	To lower your cost of living

* indicates difference is significant at $p < .05$; ** indicates significant at $p < .01$.

Faculty Climate Survey Changes Over Time: Matched Pairs Analysis

Figure 8 presents the responses to the item “To what extent have you considered the following as reasons to leave?” as responded to by the full 2018 sample.

Figure 8. Considering Reasons to Leave 2018: All Faculty



Additional Information

For additional information about the Faculty Climate Survey or this report, please contact:

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