

Faculty Climate: Differences Over Time (2014-2018)

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. 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 environment for all faculty.

This report examines changes in responses from 2014 to 2018. More specifically, independent-samples *t*-tests were used to compare the responses from 2018 with the responses of 2014. This is not matched for faculty who completed the survey both years; in some cases faculty responded each year, but the analyses provided here consist of some of the same faculty as well as some different faculty members. The total sample for 2014 (985) was greater than the total sample for 2018 (814).

The data are presented two ways: First, the mean or average score for each year is presented, which was the basis of statistical comparison. The response scales are provided in the tables as well, to provide context for the mean values. Secondly, the percent of respondents who endorsed certain categories are also presented. This is intended to help demonstrate the proportion of faculty respondents who are responding similarly, most often choosing “Somewhat” or “Strongly Agree” options.

Quality of Faculty Life

The first section assessed quality of faculty life. These items provide the most insight into overall satisfaction of faculty members and are strongly related to each other. More than 850 responses were collected on these items in 2014, and more than 700 responses were collected in 2018.

In 2018, faculty reported being more satisfied with the resources CWRU provides to support their teaching compared with 2014. Respondents felt about the same when asked if they would become a faculty member again and whether or not they would choose to come to CWRU. However, 2018 faculty reported being significantly less satisfied with being a faculty member at Case Western Reserve University, significantly less comfortable at CWRU, and were significantly more likely to leave within the next three years than compared with 2014 faculty respondents. The full data for quality of faculty life are presented in Table 1.

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Table 1. Quality of Faculty Life

Survey Item	Mean score		% responses of "4" or "5"		Sig.
<i>Response Scale: 1 = Very Dissatisfied to 5 = Very Satisfied</i>	2014		2018		
Overall, how satisfied are you with being a faculty member at Case Western Reserve University?	3.78	70%	3.60	66%	**
Overall, how satisfied are you with resources CWRU provides to support your research and scholarship?	3.22	47%	3.11	45%	
Overall, how satisfied are you with resources CWRU provides to support your teaching?	3.40	51%	3.46	54%	
Overall, how satisfied are you with the ways in which your role as a faculty member at Case Western Reserve University and your life outside of CWRU fit together?	3.66	63%	3.61	63%	
<i>Response Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree</i>	2014		2018		
CWRU is a comfortable place for me as a faculty member.	4.29	83%	4.18	79%	*
<i>Response Scale: 1 = Very Unlikely to 5 = Very Likely</i>	2014		2018		
In the next three years, how likely are you to leave Case Western Reserve University?	2.66	28%	2.80	36%	*
<i>Response Scale: 1 = I would not come to CWRU to 3 = I would come to CWRU</i>	2014		2018		
If you could decide all over again whether to be a faculty member at CWRU, what would you decide? (only % "I would come to CWRU")	2.53	60%	2.47	57%	
<i>Response Scale: 1 = Definitely No to 5 = Definitely Yes</i>	2014		2018		
If you were to begin your career again, would you still want to be a faculty member?	4.42	86%	4.36	85%	

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

Satisfaction with Resources, Services, and Responsibilities

When considering satisfaction with resources, services, and responsibilities, faculty in 2018 were more satisfied with their benefits package, clerical and administrative staff, computing support staff, and support for securing grants. These items obtained higher means and a greater percentage of faculty responding with "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied"; however, these differences are not significant. Unfortunately, faculty in 2018 were less satisfied with their salary, office space, lab or research space, library resources, and advising, committee and administrative, and clinical responsibilities, with all differences being statistically significant. The data are presented in Table 2.

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Table 2. Satisfaction with Resources, Services, and Responsibilities

<i>Response Scale: 1 = Very Dissatisfied to 5 = Very Satisfied</i>	Mean score		% responses of "4" or "5"		Sig.
	2014		2018		
The degree to which you are satisfied with each of the following:					
Salary	3.27	53%	2.99	46%	**
Start-up funds	3.09	41%	3.00	40%	
Benefits package (e.g., medical, vacation, etc.)	3.78	69%	3.82	70%	
Availability of nearby parking	3.73	64%	3.64	62%	
Office space	4.01	74%	3.88	70%	*
Lab or research space	3.67	61%	3.51	56%	*
Classroom space	3.56	60%	3.52	59%	
Library resources	4.13	77%	3.99	72%	*
Computing resources	3.95	73%	3.94	71%	
Clerical and administrative staff	3.56	58%	3.60	62%	
Technical and research staff	3.75	64%	3.77	63%	
Computing support staff	3.81	67%	3.89	70%	
Support for securing grants	3.15	43%	3.21	45%	
Other resources to support research	3.09	40%	3.00	39%	
Teaching responsibilities	3.92	69%	3.84	70%	
Access to teaching assistants	3.25	43%	3.25	46%	
Advising responsibilities	3.85	67%	3.68	61%	**
Quality of graduate students	3.74	66%	3.72	66%	
Time available for scholarly work	3.18	46%	3.07	43%	
Committee and administrative responsibilities	3.57	56%	3.43	51%	**
Clinical responsibilities	3.78	62%	3.50	53%	**

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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 about the same in 2018 as it was rated in 2014, and the same percentage (54%) felt that the workload was “About right” both years. However, there was a significant decrease in hours worked per week from 2014 to 2018. This was true even after lecturers (included for the 2018 administration) were removed from the analysis. The data for workload are presented in Table 3, with hours worked per week excluding lecturers for the 2018 average.

Table 3. Workload

<i>Response Scale: 1 = Much too light to 5 = Much too heavy</i>	Mean score		% of responses “About right”		Sig.
	2014		2018		
Overall, how would you rate the reasonableness of your workload?	3.52	54%	3.55	54%	
<i>Responses are provided in hours per week:</i>					
During an academic year, how many hours is your typical work week?	55.78		53.19		**

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

Sources of Stress

When asked about sources of stress, faculty showed quite a few changes over the past four years. The only stressor that was reported to be less impactful in 2018 compared with 2014 was “clinical responsibilities.” Of the remaining stressors, several were reported as significantly more severe than in 2014, including: “teaching and advising responsibilities,” “departmental or campus politics,” “care of someone who is ill, disabled, aging, or in need of special services,” “timing of departmental meetings or functions,” and “personal health.” The complete results, including where differences are significant, are provided in Table 4.

Table 4. Sources of Stress

<i>Response Scale: 1 = Not at all to 3 = Extensive</i>	Mean score		% of responses “Extensive”		Sig.
	2014	2018	2014	2018	
To what extent have the following been a source of stress for you over the past 12 months:					
Scholarly productivity	2.17	32%	2.19	33%	
Teaching responsibilities	1.77	12%	1.87	17%	**
Advising responsibilities	1.54	7%	1.63	10%	**
Clinical responsibilities	2.00	30%	1.94	27%	
Securing funding for research	2.36	51%	2.34	47%	
Committee and/or administrative responsibilities	1.81	16%	1.87	16%	
Managing a research group or grant (e.g., finances, personnel)	2.00	26%	2.01	25%	
Timing of departmental meetings and functions	1.59	7%	1.67	10%	*
Review/promotion process	1.85	21%	1.91	25%	
Departmental or campus politics	1.95	28%	2.11	36%	**
Managing household responsibilities	1.83	19%	1.87	20%	
Childcare	1.66	17%	1.75	21%	
Care of someone who is ill, disabled, aging, or in need of special services	1.56	13%	1.75	20%	**
Your health	1.53	6%	1.61	8%	*
Cost of living	1.67	13%	1.68	12%	

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Work Environment

Table 5 presents the data on work environment. The only improvement since 2014 was for the item “My department/unit is a place where individual faculty may comfortably raise personal and/ or family responsibilities when scheduling departmental/unit obligations.” Significant decreases were found for several items, including those regarding fit and climate.

Table 5. Work Environment

<i>Response Scale:</i> <i>1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree</i>	Mean score		% of responses of “4” or “5”		Sig.
To what extent do you agree with the following statements:	2014		2018		
My colleagues value my research/scholarship.	3.75	67%	3.63	63%	*
I am satisfied with opportunities to collaborate with faculty in my primary department/unit.	3.60	62%	3.49	59%	
I am satisfied with opportunities to collaborate with faculty in other units at CWRU.	3.58	59%	3.45	56%	*
Interdisciplinary research is recognized and rewarded by my department/unit.	3.49	55%	3.40	52%	
I have a voice in the decision-making that affects the direction of my department/unit.	3.35	56%	3.23	54%	
My chair/director/dean creates a collegial and supportive environment.	3.66	62%	3.59	63%	
My chair/director/dean helps me obtain the resources I need.	3.38	53%	3.29	50%	
I can navigate the unwritten rules concerning how one is to conduct oneself as a faculty member.	3.88	70%	3.78	68%	
My department/unit is a good fit for me.	4.03	75%	3.89	70%	*
My department is a place where individual faculty may comfortably raise personal/ family responsibilities when scheduling obligations.	3.79	65%	3.81	68%	
I feel excluded from an informal network in my department/unit.	2.46	25%	2.53	28%	
I have to work harder than some of my colleagues to be perceived as a legitimate scholar.	2.79	32%	2.92	38%	
The climate and opportunities for female faculty in my department/ unit are at least as good as those for male faculty.	3.83	66%	3.66	62%	**
The climate and opportunities for minority faculty in my department/ unit are at least as good as those for nonminority faculty.	3.78	62%	3.57	56%	**

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Leadership of the Dean

Respondents were asked in 2018 to rate their dean’s leadership using 12 items, 11 of which were asked of faculty 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 10 of the 11 items that were asked both in 2014 and 2018. Ratings decreased only slightly for the item “My dean shows commitment to diversity”, and the difference was not significant. 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. Mean ratings and percentages of agreement for all 11 items are provided in Table 6, along with the mean and percentage for the new item asked in 2018.

Table 6. Leadership of the Dean

<i>Response Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree</i>	Mean score		% of responses of “4” or “5”		Sig.
	2014		2018		
My dean...					
Maintains high academic standards	4.03	72%	3.77	63%	**
Is an effective administrator	3.72	63%	3.40	52%	**
Articulates clear criteria for tenure/ promotion/evaluation	3.72	62%	3.44	53%	**
Shows commitment to diversity	3.93	66%	3.86	64%	
Is open to constructive criticism	3.40	47%	3.16	41%	**
Treats faculty in an even-handed way	3.49	51%	3.26	44%	**
Articulates a clear vision	3.68	61%	3.28	47%	**
Honors agreements	3.79	60%	3.48	50%	**
Handles disputes/problems effectively	3.42	46%	3.15	40%	**
Communicates consistently with faculty	3.63	60%	3.37	51%	**
Articulates clear criteria for allocation of resources	3.22	45%	2.97	36%	**
Provides an environment conducive to leading-edge research	n/a	n/a	3.22	45%	

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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 three items for which an improvement was shown from 2014 to 2018: My department chair “communicates consistently with faculty,” “treats faculty in an even-handed way,” and “is open to constructive criticism,” but these differences were not significant. As seen in Table 7, the remaining items were either the same as or lower than four years ago. Only one decrease from 2014 to 2018 was statistically significant: “My department chair articulates clear criteria for tenure/promotion/evaluation.”

Table 7. Leadership of the Department Chair

<i>Response Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree</i>	Mean score		% of responses of “4” or “5”		Sig.
	2014		2018		
My department chair...					
Maintains high academic standards	4.10	78%	4.04	74%	
Is an effective administrator	3.70	66%	3.70	65%	
Articulates clear criteria for tenure/promotion/evaluation	3.81	66%	3.65	61%	*
Shows commitment to diversity	4.02	68%	3.99	68%	
Is open to constructive criticism	3.60	59%	3.65	61%	
Treats faculty in an even-handed way	3.70	62%	3.71	63%	
Honors agreements	4.00	69%	3.90	68%	
Handles disputes/problems effectively	3.58	56%	3.53	55%	
Communicates consistently with faculty	3.70	63%	3.75	65%	
Gives me useful feedback about my performance	3.64	60%	3.61	58%	
Involves me in relevant decision-making processes	3.60	61%	3.56	58%	
Articulates clear criteria for the allocation of resources	3.38	52%	3.38	50%	
Provides an environment conducive to leading-edge research	n/a	n/a	3.59	58%	

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Mentoring

Questions about their mentoring experience were also included on the survey. In 2014, 54% of the sample felt they received adequate mentoring, which is just a bit higher than the 51% 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.

Table 8. Mentoring

Survey Item	2014	2018
While a faculty member at Case Western Reserve, have you served as a mentor for another faculty member?	70%	67%
While at CWRU, have you had one or more formal mentors through programs administered by the university?	41%	46%
While at CWRU, do you feel as though you have received adequate mentoring?	54%	51%

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Tenure Criteria

In 2018, faculty were less likely to agree that the criteria for tenure are clearly communicated than they were in 2014, and less than half of the 2018 sample agreed at all.

Table 9. Communication of Tenure Criteria

Survey Item	Mean score		% of responses of "4" or "5"		Sig.
	2014	2018	2014	2018	
Do you agree that the criteria for tenure are clearly communicated?	3.48	63%	3.35	40%	

Faculty were also asked the extent to which several items are valued in the tenure process. 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. The faculty respondents from 2014 felt that those three components were more highly valued than faculty in 2018, with obtaining grants and funding significantly higher four years ago.

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Table 10. Valued Criteria in the Tenure Process

<i>Response Scale:</i> 1 = Valued slightly or not at all to 3 = Highly valued	Mean score		% responses of "Highly Valued"		Sig.
	2014		2018		
In your experience, to what extent are the following items valued in the tenure process?					
Research/scholarly work	2.89	90%	2.86	88%	
Teaching contributions	2.07	25%	2.07	23%	
Service (i.e., committee work, etc.)	1.86	12%	1.85	13%	
Clinical work	1.68	11%	1.67	10%	
Professional reputation	2.53	64%	2.48	59%	
Collegiality	1.75	15%	1.77	18%	
Fit with the department's/school's mission	2.00	22%	2.02	23%	
Assessment by peers outside of CWRU	2.60	71%	2.57	70%	
Obtaining grants/funding	2.79	80%	2.68	71%	**

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

When asked which of the above are valued appropriately, most items were rated the same from 2014 to 2018, as seen in Table 10. The means for 2014 and 2018 are significantly different for obtaining grants and funding, meaning faculty in 2014 felt this was more overvalued than it is currently.

Table 11. Appropriately Valued Criteria in the Tenure Process

<i>Response Scale:</i> 1 = Very Undervalued to 5 = Very Overvalued	Mean score		% of responses of "Valued Appropriately"		Sig.
	2014		2018		
How appropriately are these items valued in the tenure process?					
Research/scholarly work	3.25	71%	3.23	70%	
Teaching contributions	2.30	44%	2.29	40%	
Service (i.e., committee work, etc.)	2.40	47%	2.35	47%	
Clinical work	2.07	38%	2.11	33%	
Professional reputation	2.91	72%	2.93	67%	
Collegiality	2.54	50%	2.44	47%	
Fit with the department's/school's mission	2.81	67%	2.75	66%	
Assessment by peers outside CWRU	3.08	75%	3.01	74%	
Obtaining grants/funding	3.64	49%	3.50	50%	*

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Workload and Tenure Clock Adjustments

Workload and tenure adjustments were also assessed. Only a small portion of faculty experienced either a workload or tenure clock adjustment. Given the faculty who had received relief from teaching or other workload duties, faculty felt their primary academic unit was more supportive in 2018 than it was in 2014. Primary academic units seem to be less supportive of having a tenure clock slowed or stopped in 2018 than they were four years prior. The data on workload and tenure adjustments are provided in Table 12.

Table 12. Workload and Tenure Clock Adjustments

<i>Response Scale:</i> <i>1 = Very Unsupportive to 5 = Very Supportive</i>			
Survey Item		2014	2018
At any time since you started working at Case Western Reserve, have you received relief from teaching or other workload duties for personal reasons?	Number of Respondents	99	84
How supportive was your primary academic unit concerning your relief from teaching or other workload duties?	Mean	4.16	4.29
	% Somewhat or Very Supportive	80%	87%
At any time since you started working at CWRU, have you had your tenure clock slowed or stopped for personal reasons?	Number of Respondents	53	62
How supportive was your primary academic unit concerning your having your tenure clock stopped or slowed?	Mean	3.99	3.80
	% Somewhat or Very Supportive	81%	70%

Campus Climate

There have been several positive shifts between 2014 and 2018 in campus climate, along with a few negative ones. Over the four years, faculty have reported an increase in knowing how to seek help if they have been discriminated against and increased acknowledgement that “CWRU offers ample ethnic/cultural programs as special events,” “CWRU helps students understand the detrimental effects of discrimination,” “A diversity of students enriches the CWRU environment,” and “I see the value of having students from different racial, cultural, or ethnic backgrounds in classes.” However, faculty feel less comfortable, less satisfied with the ratio of men and women faculty and staff members, feel as though they have less opportunities to meet people of different backgrounds, and less likely to agree that “No one at CWRU harasses me,” all to a significant extent than four years prior. Faculty in 2018 also noted significant increases in feelings of discrimination based on age and gender. The campus climate items are presented in Table 13.

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Table 13. Campus Climate

<i>Response Scale:</i> 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree	Mean score		% responses of "4" or "5"		Sig.
	2014		2018		
Campus Climate:					
I have felt discriminated against at CWRU because of my:					
Age	1.79	14%	1.94	19%	*
Racial, cultural, or ethnic background	1.61	8%	1.74	13%	*
Disability	1.36	2%	1.38	3%	
Gender	1.87	16%	2.09	24%	**
Religious affiliation	1.45	4%	1.46	5%	
Sexual orientation	1.33	1%	1.36	3%	
Socioeconomic status	1.42	4%	1.49	5%	
CWRU is a comfortable place for me as a faculty member.	4.29	83%	4.18	79%	*
I know how to seek help if I am discriminated against.	3.73	64%	3.80	70%	
The CWRU environment encourages people of diverse racial, cultural, or ethnic backgrounds to meet.	3.90	68%	3.87	68%	
CWRU offers ample ethnic/cultural programs as special events.	3.85	64%	3.93	68%	
No one at CWRU harasses me.	4.37	82%	4.23	78%	*
CWRU helps students understand the detrimental effects of discrimination.	3.78	59%	3.89	67%	*
Classes/programs in my discipline adequately discuss cultural diversity .	3.71	57%	3.71	61%	
Classes/programs in my discipline adequately discuss women's and men's issues .	3.65	55%	3.61	57%	
A diversity of students enriches the CWRU environment.	4.58	89%	4.64	90%	
I see the value of having students from different racial, cultural, or ethnic backgrounds in classes.	4.72	94%	4.77	95%	
I am satisfied with the ratio of women and men faculty members .	3.30	47%	3.02	40%	**
I am satisfied with the ratio of women and men staff members .	3.52	50%	3.30	42%	**
I have ample opportunities to meet people of different racial, cultural, or ethnic backgrounds.	4.07	75%	3.94	70%	*

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

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Retention

There has been a slightly smaller proportion of 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 down to 16%, from 17% in 2014. This difference was not significant.

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 28% in 2014 to 36% in 2018, which is statistically significant. The results for the two retention items are presented in Table 14.

Table 14. Retention

Survey Item	2014		2018		
In the last five years, while at Case Western Reserve University, have you received a formal or informal outside job offer that you took to your department/unit chair/dean?	17%		16%		
<i>Response Scale: 1 = Very Unlikely to 5 = Very Likely</i>	Mean score		% of responses of “4” or “5”		Sig.
	2014		2018		
In the next three years, how likely are you to leave Case Western Reserve University?	2.66	28%	2.80	36%	*

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

When considering reasons to leave, faculty chose each of the options to a greater extent more frequently in 2018 than in 2014. Significant differences were found for “to increase your salary,” “to increase your time to do research,” and “to pursue a nonacademic job.” The complete list is presented in Table 15.

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Table 15. Reasons to Leave

<i>Response Scale:</i> 1 = Not at all to 3 = To a great extent	Mean score		% of responses of "To a Great Extent"		Sig.
	2014		2018		
To what extent, if at all, have you considered the following as reasons to leave?					
To increase your salary	2.00	29%	2.10	35%	*
To improve your prospects for tenure	1.46	14%	1.51	17%	
To enhance your career in other ways	2.25	43%	2.28	45%	
To find a more supportive work environment	2.01	35%	2.02	37%	
To increase your time to do research	1.64	18%	1.79	26%	**
To pursue a nonacademic job	1.32	6%	1.44	10%	**
To reduce stress	1.76	21%	1.75	23%	
To address child-related issues	1.18	4%	1.18	5%	
To address other family-related issues	1.34	7%	1.36	9%	
To improve the employment situation of your spouse/ partner	1.38	9%	1.42	12%	
To lower your cost of living	1.15	3%	1.16	3%	
Retirement	1.40	11%	1.45	13%	

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

Additional Information

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