

## COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey Results, 2019

SJSU administered Harvard University's COACHE (Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education) faculty job satisfaction survey in Spring 2019 in order to better understand and measure tenure track faculty members' perceptions of their teaching loads and research productivity. SJSU's response rate, 51%, was higher than other comparable institutions. The survey compares our university against five pre-selected peer institutions (see COACHE Peers table), as well as a larger COACHE cohort of all recent survey participants (n=103). The survey results indicate 7 areas of strength and 7 areas for improvement, indicating SJSU's score as among the top (or bottom) two peers and top (or bottom) 30% of the COACHE cohort.

### Areas of Strength

- *Departmental engagement* (i.e., perceptions of the interactions between faculty within departments)
- *Departmental quality* (i.e., perceptions of the impact and value of teaching, research, recruitment, etc. at the department level)
- *Departmental leadership* (i.e., perceptions of department chairs)
- *Divisional leadership* (i.e., perceptions of deans)
- *Mentoring* (i.e., perceptions of colleagues' availability for and receptivity to mentoring relationships)
- *Promotion to full* (i.e., perceptions of the clarity of and equity in policy and procedure for promotion to full)
- *Health and retirement benefits* (i.e., perception of opportunities for, and clarity of messaging around, benefits)

### Areas for Improvement

- *Nature of work: Teaching* (i.e., faculty satisfaction with teaching load)
- *Collaboration* (i.e., perceptions of campus support for and efforts to remove barriers to collaboration)
- *Interdisciplinary work* (i.e., perceptions of campus support for and efforts to remove barriers to interdisciplinary collaboration)
- *Facilities and work resources* (i.e., faculty perceptions of their physical workspace, including instructional and research spaces such as their offices, classrooms, laboratories, and studios, as well as support for technology in those spaces)
- *Governance, shared sense of purpose* (i.e., faculty perceptions of the conditions that foster or undermine relationships between faculty and administration)
- *Senior leadership* (i.e., faculty perceptions of actions undertaken by senior leadership, as well as how senior leadership discuss and engage in shared governance with respect to those actions)
- *Personal and family policies* (i.e., perceptions of support for families, including work-life balance)

### Noteworthy SJSU-Specific Findings

- *Location in Silicon Valley*: Our geographic location contributes significantly to our faculty's satisfaction with working at SJSU. Many of our faculty cite Geographic Location and Diversity as the best aspects of working at SJSU; however, Cost of Living and Compensation rise among the worst aspects of working at SJSU.
- *Nature of Work, Teaching vs. Research*: Our faculty report feeling as though they spend too much time on their teaching, and that this limits their scholarly productivity. This suggests that, while faculty appreciate the importance of teaching well, they have a desire to engage more fully in research, scholarship and creative activity. This provides more than anecdotal support for the campus RSCA Assigned Time Program.
- *Support for Diversity*: It is noteworthy that more than 70% of URM faculty and Faculty of Color agreed/strongly agreed that there is "visible leadership for support of diversity." For benchmark categories, there were few substantial differences between white and non-white faculty. Where there was statistical significance, white faculty often expressed greater dissatisfaction.
- *Shared Sense of Purpose*: Tenured faculty felt greater dissatisfaction than pre-tenure faculty regarding a shared sense of purpose. Pre-tenure faculty responses were more positive even relative to those in peer institutions. It may be that tenured faculty are, in their response, indicating discomfort with organizational change occurring at the time of survey administration (whereas pre-tenure faculty would not share the same expectations or points of comparison).
- *Overall*: The survey asks faculty to identify the 2 best and 2 worst aspects of working at SJSU. Faculty responses laud the quality and support of colleagues, our geographic location, and our diversity. They identify areas for improvement in the quality of SJSU facilities, and teaching load, as well as the challenges associated with our geographic location (compensation relative to cost of living, commute). Nevertheless, geographic location emerged as an important advantage of working for SJSU, particularly for URM faculty and Faculty of Color.

## Next Steps

The high response rate suggests faculty appreciation for an opportunity to discuss their perceptions of working conditions at SJSU. Next steps in advance of a planned re-administration of the COACHE job satisfaction survey in 2022 include:

- Communication Strategy, 2019 Results
  - Discuss major themes and share results with leadership
  - Disseminate results broadly and openly
  - Provide avenues for faculty to discuss and provide feedback
    - Promote existing or impending responses to faculty members' concerns
    - Celebrate noteworthy institutional strengths
    - Organize appropriate stakeholders to revise processes and practices
  - Share value of the process with comparable CSUs

- Convene Leadership Group, anticipated 2022 survey administration
  - Include all faculty in survey administration (including lecturers)
  - Review COACHE questions and, if appropriate, propose campus-specific items
  - Consider administering COACHE faculty retention and exit survey