

Assessing Faculty and Staff Satisfaction

Prepared for the University of Alaska Anchorage

In the following report, Hanover Research presents a discussion of faculty and staff satisfaction surveys.

Introduction

Across a wide variety of organizations, employee satisfaction (and dissatisfaction) has been linked to motivation, performance, absenteeism, and turnover.¹ Given this association with issues that are central to the functioning of any organization, it is vital that colleges and universities monitor the satisfaction levels of their employees. In this report, Hanover examines available tools for measuring employee satisfaction at institutions of higher education. In particular, **we profile six nationally recognized survey instruments**, highlighting information regarding the target audience of the surveys, content, length, pricing, and whether benchmarking data are provided. We further offer details regarding how long these surveys have been available and how many institutions have administered them. The profiled surveys include the following:

- ❖ The Institutional Performance Survey offered through the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS)
- ❖ The *Chronicle of Higher Education* “Great Colleges to Work For” Program
- ❖ The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) Faculty Survey
- ❖ The Noel-Levitz College Employee Satisfaction Survey
- ❖ The Noel-Levitz Institutional Priorities Survey
- ❖ The Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey of The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE)

It should be noted that two of these surveys, the NCHEMS Institutional Performance Survey and the Noel-Levitz Institutional Priorities Survey, are not designed primarily to measure the job satisfaction of faculty and/or staff. The Institutional Performance Survey measures job satisfaction as one part of a larger focus on institutional effectiveness. The Noel-Levitz Institutional Priorities Survey focuses on how important employees of an institution believe it is that their institution meets student expectations regarding a variety of college services and experiences, as well employees’ level of agreement that their institution is meeting these expectations.

Before proceeding to the details of the survey instruments, we further offer a **brief section discussing “in-house” versus commercially available surveys**. We also

¹ See for example: Terpstra, David E., and Honoree, Andre L. “Job Satisfaction and Pay Satisfaction Levels of University Faculty by Discipline Type and by Geographic Region.” *Education*. Vol. 124 No. 3. Spring 2004.
http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=EJ698522&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=EJ698522

provide examples of the use of both types of surveys to support college and university accreditation processes.

Key Findings

Key findings from our research are presented below.

- ❖ Both in-house and commercially available surveys have been used to **support accreditation processes**. Examples of institutions that have used satisfaction surveys for this purpose include Case Western Reserve University (internally developed survey), Grinnell College (HERI Faculty Satisfaction Survey), Nebraska Wesleyan University (Noel-Levitz College Employee Satisfaction Survey and HERI Faculty Satisfaction Survey), and the University of Wyoming (COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey).
- ❖ In general, **internally developed surveys offer a much higher level of customization** than commercially available instruments. However, the university must factor in the **time and money associated with developing, testing, administering, and analyzing** such a survey. Further, the institution will be **unable to benchmark the results** of an in-house survey against peer and national data.
- ❖ Most of the commercially available surveys we examined for this report allow the institution to add a **limited number of custom questions** to the existing instrument. These include the NCHEMS Institutional Performance Survey, the Noel-Levitz College Employee Satisfaction Survey and Institutional Priorities Survey, the HERI Faculty Survey, and the COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey.
- ❖ Additionally, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* “Great Colleges to Work For” Program, the Noel-Levitz Institutional Priorities Survey, the HERI Faculty Survey, and the COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey **offer national and/or peer benchmarking data**.
- ❖ In response to the University of Alaska Anchorage’s question regarding **nationally recognized standards or consortia**, one of the survey instruments we profile is offered through **The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education** (COACHE). Based at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, COACHE is a consortium of more than 160 North American institutions of higher education. Among the various services associated with membership, member institutions participate in the COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey.

Internally Developed versus Commercially Available Surveys

Please note that we were unable to find information directly discussing the costs and benefits associated with a university developing its own satisfaction survey versus using an existing tool or contractor. In general, however, the institution will need to consider the time and money necessary to develop, test, administer, and analyze an **in-house survey**. An additional “cost” to an internally developed survey is the inability to compare results against those of other institutions. By contrast, one of the clearest benefits of internally developed surveys is their high level of customization. While some of the commercially available instruments we profile in this report allow institutions to add a limited number of custom questions, when designing a survey of its own, an institution can tailor all survey items to its unique situation.

Given the interest of the University of Alaska Anchorage in using an employee satisfaction survey to support its accreditation process, we did identify examples of institutions that have **developed their own survey instruments and used the results for accreditation**. For instance, **Case Western Reserve University**, as part of its 2005 self-study for reaccreditation, conducted a “faculty community and climate survey” to “examine the quality of the university’s academic community”² by measuring “faculty engagement, motivation, and commitment; access to academic resources; and other academic career development issues.”³ The university modeled the survey after multiple “public-domain faculty climate surveys,” including those used by Purdue University, University of Kansas, University of Arizona School of Medicine, and the University of Michigan ADVANCE program (a program designed to address recruitment, retention, and other issues related to the faculty experience).⁴ The survey instrument also drew from the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) Faculty Survey (discussed in the profiles below).⁵ Please note that the university has conducted subsequent faculty climate surveys, descriptions and results of which are offered [online](#).

As detailed in this report, using a **commercially available tool would cut out the time needed for development and testing**, and many such tools are **bundled with services related to administration and analysis – all for a fee**. Cost and available service information for each survey tool are provided in the profiles throughout the report.

We further identified colleges and universities that have used such **commercially available tools for accreditation purposes**. Examples include:

² “Planning and Institutional Research.” Case Western Reserve University. <http://www.case.edu/provost/raa/raafacultysurveys.html>

³ “Self-Study Report of the 2004 University Community and Climate Survey.” Case Western Reserve University. <http://www.case.edu/provost/raa/pdf/climsrvy04final.pdf>, p.6.

⁴ “ADVANCE Mission.” University of Michigan. http://sitemaker.umich.edu/advance/advance_mission

⁵ Ibid.

- ❖ **Grinnell College** – The institution used Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) Faculty Satisfaction Survey data to address a component of the Higher Learning Commission accreditation standards. In particular, the survey data showed that “faculty were satisfied or very satisfied with their job, compared to the national average....faculty cited office and lab space, quality of students, and salary and benefits as elements that were satisfying.”⁶
- ❖ **Nebraska Wesleyan University** – The university included results of its administration of the Noel-Levitz College Employee Satisfaction Survey and the HERI Faculty Satisfaction Survey in its 2010 self-study report for the Higher Learning Commission. While generally positive feedback was provided in both surveys, the College Employee Satisfaction Survey helped the university identify “dissatisfaction with salary and wage levels” among staff as an area of concern.⁷
- ❖ **University of Wyoming** – The institution has used data from the COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey in its 2010 self-study report prepared for the Higher Learning Commission, as well as a means of benchmarking faculty satisfaction against other institutions. For example, the university found that it “ranked first among its peers as a place for junior faculty to work, with 70 percent satisfaction compared to 67 percent peer and national satisfaction.”⁸ In terms of areas of concern, the institution found that “the least desirable aspects [of working at the university] were teaching loads and the quality of graduate students.”⁹

All three of the commercially available surveys mentioned above – the HERI Faculty Satisfaction Survey, Noel-Levitz College Employee Satisfaction Survey, and COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey – are discussed in the next section of this report.

⁶ “Using CIRP Surveys in Accreditation.” Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. <http://heri.ucla.edu/accreditation.php>

⁷ “Self-Study Report.” Nebraska Wesleyan University. February 2010. http://www.nebrwesleyan.edu/sites/default/files/imce/higher_learning_comm/documents/Nebraska_Wesleyan_Executive_Summary.pdf, p.23.

⁸ “Enriching the University of Wyoming Learning Experience: A Thematic Self-Study.” University of Wyoming. http://www.uwyo.edu/accreditation/_files/docs/selfstudyreport.pdf, p.48.

⁹ Ibid.

Instruments to Measure Faculty and Staff Satisfaction

Please note that of the six surveys we profile, four are designed for faculty and staff: the Institutional Performance Survey, the “Great Colleges to Work For” Program, the College Employee Satisfaction Survey, and the Institutional Priorities Survey. The remaining two surveys – the HERI Faculty Survey and the COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey – are to be administered to faculty only.

Surveys for Faculty and Staff

Institutional Performance Survey (NCHEMS)

The Institutional Performance Survey (IPS) is offered through the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) and is available in versions for both two- and four-year institutions.¹⁰ While the IPS is not, at its core, a survey of faculty/staff satisfaction, it does measure faculty and administrator employment satisfaction as part of a broader gauge of institutional effectiveness.¹¹

The IPS consists of over 100 items which together measure eight dimensions of institutional performance. The IPS assesses topics such as leadership and decision styles (how respondents perceive decisions at the institution are made), institutional culture (how well an institution’s leadership and operation match its culture), institutional environment, and institutional effectiveness (whether the performance of an institution matches its mission and goals).¹² As part of its measurement of institutional effectiveness, the IPS assesses the following nine areas:

Institutional Performance Survey

- ❖ For faculty and staff.
- ❖ Consists of over 100 items which measure eight different dimensions of institutional performance, including institutional culture, institutional environment, and institutional effectiveness.
- ❖ National data are unavailable.
- ❖ Cost begins at \$1,600 for 100 survey questionnaires and analysis.

- ❖ Student educational satisfaction
- ❖ Student academic development
- ❖ Student career development
- ❖ Student personal development
- ❖ **Faculty and administrator employment satisfaction**
- ❖ Professional development/quality of the faculty

¹⁰ “Institutional Performance Survey (IPS).” National Center for Higher Education Management Systems. <http://www.nchems.org/services/surveys/ips.php>

¹¹ “Institutional Performance Survey.” Columbia College Chicago. http://www.colum.edu/Research_Evaluation_Planning/PDF_Folder/Institutional%20Resour/ips.pdf, p.4.

¹² “Institutional Performance Survey (IPS).” Op. Cit.

- ❖ System openness and community interaction
- ❖ Ability to acquire resources
- ❖ Organizational health¹³

The survey is administered to faculty, top and middle level administrators, and board members/trustees, and has been **used by over 300 different institutions**. The survey instrument is delivered via a paper questionnaire, with survey respondents mailing completed surveys directly to NCHEMS. The IPS reports data for a total campus, total faculty, and targeted populations surveyed, but **national data are not available**.¹⁴

The IPS is available as a comprehensive package which includes survey instruments (with return prepaid postage), survey analysis, and a report summary. The IPS can also be individually tailored to the needs of a specific institution, as it **can be augmented with a section where an institution asks custom questions**. Institutions can add up to 20 additional questions to the IPS at no extra charge.¹⁵ Institutions can order the Institutional Performance Survey package for \$1,600 for a set of 100 questionnaires, and additional survey instruments in quantities of 50 (for \$150 per 50 survey instruments).¹⁶ Institutions which are NCHEMS members receive a 10 percent discount on questionnaires and analysis services for the IPS.¹⁷

The Chronicle of Higher Education Great Colleges to Work for Program

One survey which is being used to assess faculty and staff satisfaction at institutions of higher education across the United States is the recently-launched *Chronicle of Higher Education* “Great Colleges to Work For” Survey.¹⁸ This survey forms part of

The *Chronicle of Higher Education* “Great Colleges to Work For” Program

- ❖ For faculty and staff.
- ❖ Consists of two separate surveys, an institutional questionnaire which audits institutional policies and practices and a “Higher Education Insight Survey” designed to measure faculty and staff satisfaction.
- ❖ The Higher Education Insight Survey consists of approximately 90 items measuring faculty/staff satisfaction with a variety of features and benefits.
- ❖ Benchmarking data are available (for an additional fee) which allow institutions to see how employees’ responses compare to those at other institutions.
- ❖ Participation is free, but institutions are charged fees for additional, more detailed data.

¹³ “Institutional Performance Survey.” Op. Cit.

¹⁴ Steiner, Lucy M., Hassel, Bryan C., et al. “Measuring Higher Education: A Compendium of Assessment Instruments for Colleges and Universities.” http://assessment.uconn.edu/docs/resources/ARTICLES_and_REPORTS/Teagle%20Foundation_Measuring%20Higher%20Education_A%20Compendium%20of%20Assessment%20Instruments%20for%20Colleges%20and%20Universities.pdf, p.15.

¹⁵ “Institutional Performance Survey (IPS).” Op. Cit.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ “Membership.” National Center for Higher Education Management Systems. <http://www.nchems.org/membership/>

¹⁸ “What Makes a Great College Workplace?” The Chronicle of Higher Education. <http://chronicle.com/article/Great-Colleges-to-Work-For/128312/>

the larger “Great Colleges to Work For” Program, which is designed to “recognize institutions that are great places to work and to compile detailed benchmarking data about industry trends.”¹⁹ The program is loosely based on the Forbes Magazine “100 Best Companies to Work For” list, but recognizes groups of colleges for specific policies and best practices. The survey includes 12 “features of an excellent academic workplace” divided into **four main categories: “leadership,” “careers,” “compensation,” and “the workplace.”**²⁰ These 12 features, and their definitions, are presented below.

Figure 1: Chronicle of Higher Education Features of an “Excellent Academic Workplace”²¹

12 Features of an Excellent Academic Workplace	
Leadership	
Collaborative Governance	Faculty members are appropriately involved in decisions related to academic programs.
Confidence in Senior Leadership	Leaders have the necessary knowledge, skills, and experience necessary for institutional success.
Supervisor or Department-Chair Relationship	Supervisor makes expectations clear and solicits ideas.
Compensation	
Compensation and Benefits	Pay is fair, and benefits meet the needs of employees.
Job Satisfaction	Overall job satisfaction.
Respect and Appreciation	Employees are regularly recognized for their contributions.
Careers	
Professional/Career-Development Programs	Employees are given the opportunity to develop skills and understand requirements to advance their careers.
Teaching Environment	Faculty members say the institution recognizes innovative and high-quality teaching (faculty only).
Tenure Clarity and Process	Faculty members say requirements for tenure are clear (4-year colleges only; faculty only).
The Workplace	
Diversity	The institution makes a concerted effort to create a welcoming and fair environment for all its employees.
Facilities, Workplace & Security	Facilities meet needs, campus appearance is pleasing, and steps are taken to provide a secure environment.
Work/Life Balance	Policies give employees the flexibility to manage their personal lives.

Source: *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

¹⁹ “FAQs – Program Basics.” The Chronicle of Higher Education.

<http://chroniclegreatcolleges.com/content/view/29/64/>

²⁰ “What Makes a Great College Workplace?” Op. Cit.

²¹ Ibid.

To participate in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* “Great Colleges to Work For” Program, respondents must complete two different questionnaires:

The ModernThink Institution Questionnaire[®] (“IQ”) which is essentially an audit of policies and management practices and the ModernThink Higher Education Insight Survey[®] which is an engagement survey specifically geared towards faculty and staff and administered to a random sample of Faculty, Administrators and Exempt Professional Staff.²²

Both surveys are administered by the human resources consulting firm ModernThink LLC, based in Wilmington, Delaware.²³ The ModernThink IQ is to be completed by one or more institutional management representatives, though it is noted that human resources involvement is recommended as many of the IQ questions deal with HR policies and practices.²⁴ This questionnaire does not need to be completed from scratch every year – if an institution has completed the questionnaire before, it must simply review the previous submission for accuracy and update it with new information as required.²⁵

The ModernThink Higher Education Insight Survey[®] itself is based on the ModernThink Insight Survey[®], an assessment which has been used in 55 “Best Places to Work” programs which involve more than 4,000 organizations. The survey was further reviewed by a panel of higher education experts, who helped to customize the survey to reflect issues unique to institutions of higher education. The survey instrument consists of **60 items which feature a five-point agreement scale:** “Strongly Agree, Agree, Sometimes Agree/Sometimes Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree.”²⁶ Respondents can also indicate “Not Applicable.”

Additionally, the survey instrument includes **15 items designed to assess respondent satisfaction with benefits, as well as two open-ended questions.**²⁷ For the 2012 administration, it appears that the component of the survey designed to assess satisfaction with benefits has been expanded to 18 items.²⁸ Respondents are asked to respond to these benefit items using a five-point satisfaction scale: (“Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Neutral, Dissatisfied, Very Dissatisfied”), and are also provided with a “Not Applicable” answer choice.²⁹ Items measure respondent satisfaction with a variety of benefits, including: “Health Insurance, Vacation/PTO, Tuition

²² “FAQs – Program Basics.” The Chronicle of Higher Education.
<http://chroniclegreatcolleges.com/content/view/29/64/>

²³ “FAQs – Survey Instruments.” The Chronicle of Higher Education.
<http://chroniclegreatcolleges.com/content/view/31/66/>

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ “The Chronicle Great Colleges to Work For 2012.” ModernThink. 2012.

http://chroniclegreatcolleges.com/images/documents/2012_highered_insight_survey.pdf, p.1.

²⁹ Ibid, p.2.

Reimbursement, Tenure Clarity & Process, Housing Assistance and Physical Workspace/Conditions.”³⁰ A further **15 demographic questions** (“Gender, Age, Race, Ethnicity, Relationship Status, Annual Salary, Job Status, Years at Institution, Tenure Status, Supervisory Status, Years in Current Role, Job Category, Job Role, School/College and Department”) are included at the end of the survey.³¹ Examples of some of the survey statements in the ModernThink Higher Education Insight Survey[©] are reproduced below.

Figure 2: Sample Survey Statements, ModernThink Higher Education Insight Survey^{©32}

1. I am provided the resources I need to be effective in my job.
2. I understand the necessary requirements to advance my career.
3. The institution takes reasonable steps to provide a safe and secure environment for the campus.
4. This institution actively contributes to the community.
5. Faculty, administration and staff are meaningfully involved in institutional planning.
6. I am proud to be part of this institution.
7. My supervisor/department chair is consistent and fair.
8. Senior leadership communicates openly about important matters.
9. I receive feedback from my supervisor/department chair that helps me.
10. People in my department work well together.

Source: ModernThink LLC.

All accredited institutions in the United States are invited to participate in the “Great Colleges to Work For” Program, and participation is free.³³ Participating institutions are asked to survey full-time faculty, administrators, and exempt professional staff at their institution, and should provide **a random sample of 400-600 individuals from these three job categories.** This sample of 400-600 individuals should be proportionally divided, “meaning that each group should represent the same proportion of the sample as it does of the entire combined population of all full-time Faculty / Administration / Exempt Professional Staff.”³⁴ If an institution’s population from these three job categories represents less than 400 individuals, then the institution should survey all full-time faculty, administration, and exempt professional staff. For a fee, institutions participating in the program can broaden their survey audience to include additional full-time faculty, administration, or exempt professional staff. Institutions can also **pay a fee to broaden the survey**

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ FAQs – Survey Audience/Job Categories Included. The Chronicle of Higher Education. <http://chroniclegreatcolleges.com/content/view/32/67/>

³⁴ Ibid.

to other populations, including part-time faculty, administration, or exempt professional staff, or non-exempt staff.³⁵

All institutions participating in the program receive three free reports, detailed below:

- ❖ **Topline Survey Results Report** – A one-page “graphical summary” which shows the institution’s overall survey results within each of the different survey “themes” such as “job satisfaction” and “supervisor relationship.”³⁶ Institutions also receive benchmarking data so that they can compare their results against “Best in Size” as well as by Carnegie Classification.
- ❖ **Topline Results by Job Category Report** – This report “shows you both the overall positive responses (percent who ‘*Strongly Agree*’ or ‘*Agree*’) and the overall negative responses (percent who ‘*Disagree*’ or ‘*Strongly Disagree*’) broken out by your Administration, Faculty and Exempt Professional Staff.”³⁷
- ❖ **Higher Education Trend Report Excerpt** – A five-to-ten page excerpt from a larger report detailing aggregate data compiled from the ModernThink Institutional Questionnaire (IQ). This report features “aggregate statistics on turnover rates, applicants per hire, salary ranges, training hours, paid holidays, and much more. The report also includes an inventory of the most popular benefits, policies and communication tools.”³⁸

Respondents can purchase additional reports, including detailed survey data and **benchmarking data which allow an institution to see how its employees’ responses compare to those at other institutions.**³⁹ With regard to benchmarking, peer averages are available for institutions within five categories including: “Best in Size, Carnegie Classification, Enrollment Size, Geography, and Public/Private.”⁴⁰

Since the “Great Colleges to Work For” Program was initially launched in 2008, participation has increased dramatically. In 2008, 89 colleges participated in the program. In 2011, 310 institutions participated – 245 four-year colleges and universities, and 65 two-year colleges.⁴¹ The 2011 “Great Colleges to Work For” survey was sent off to approximately 111,000 individuals and received almost 44,000 responses.⁴²

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ “Participation Reports.” The Chronicle of Higher Education.
<http://chroniclegreatcolleges.com/content/view/28/63/>

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ “FAQs – Reports.” The Chronicle of Higher Education.
<http://chroniclegreatcolleges.com/content/view/35/70/>

⁴⁰ “Benchmark Data Options.” The Chronicle of Higher Education.
<http://chroniclegreatcolleges.com/content/view/12/31/>

⁴¹ “What Makes a Great College Workplace?” Op. Cit.

⁴² Ibid.

Noel-Levitz College Employee Satisfaction Survey

Another survey instrument used by a variety of institutions of higher education to measure faculty and staff satisfaction is the “College Employee Satisfaction Survey” offered by the higher education consulting firm Noel-Levitz.⁴³ The survey features questions which deal with issues central to colleges and universities, such as campus mission, decision making, and interdepartmental communication. It can be administered in either **online or pencil-and-paper formats** and is appropriate for **all levels of employees**, including administrators, faculty, and other staff.⁴⁴

College Employee Satisfaction Survey

- ❖ For faculty and staff.
- ❖ Consists of 70 items measuring campus culture and policies, institutional goals, involvement in planning and decision making, work environment, and demographics.
- ❖ The survey does not provide nationally normed data for comparison purposes.
- ❖ Cost varies based on the number of surveys administered – institutions are charged at \$500 “setup fee” and then between \$2.00 and \$2.50 per completed survey (exact per survey cost depends on number of surveys completed).

The College Employee Satisfaction Survey features **70 items** in five different areas:

- ❖ **Campus culture and policies** – In the survey, employees rate their “importance and satisfaction” levels regarding various issues including employee training and recognition, pride in their work, departmental communication, and budgets and human resources, among other topics.
- ❖ **Institutional goals** – Survey respondents rate the importance of different institutional goals such as staff morale, diversity efforts, and staff retention. The survey also asks respondents to rank the three goals which should comprise the top three campus priorities.
- ❖ **Involvement in planning and decision making** – Survey respondents rate the level of involvement various campus constituents have in the decision-making process, from “not enough involvement to too much involvement.”
- ❖ **Work environment** – Respondents are asked to rate the importance of and satisfaction with issues such as “employee empowerment,” “supervisor relationships,” “professional development,” and “fulfillment and job satisfaction.”

⁴³ “College Employee Satisfaction Survey™,” Noel-Levitz Inc. <https://www.noellevitz.com/higher-education-market-research/higher-education-market-research-services/college-employee-satisfaction-survey>

⁴⁴ Ibid.

- ❖ **Demographics** – Respondents provide information on their overall satisfaction, their job position, and length of employment at the institution.⁴⁵

The survey asks employees to rate **both the importance of various survey items and their satisfaction with these items** using five-point scales (“1=not important at all and 5=very important”) and (“1=not satisfied at all and 5=very satisfied”).⁴⁶ Since the survey allows respondents to rate both the importance of many items and their satisfaction with these items, institutions can easily identify areas for improvement (items which respondents rate as highly important but that they are also dissatisfied with). Several items from the survey are sampled in the figure below.

Figure 3: Selected Items from the Noel-Levitz College Employee Satisfaction Survey⁴⁷

Selected Noel-Levitz College Employee Satisfaction Survey Items ⁴⁸
For the following items respondents rate Importance (1 = “Not important at all” and 5 = “Very important”) and rate satisfaction (1 = “Not satisfied at all” and 5 = “Very satisfied”)
Faculty take pride in their work
Staff take pride in their work
The institution treats students as its top priority
The institution promotes excellent employee-student relationships
Executive leadership communicates openly and honestly with employees of all levels
The institution involves its employees in planning for the future
There is a spirit of teamwork and cooperation at this institution
The type of work I do on most days is personally rewarding
I am proud to work at this institution
The employee benefits available to me are valuable
My department has the staff needed to do its job well
My department has the budget needed to do its job well
The technology I use in my job is replaced and updated on a regular basis
For these items, respondents rate involvement in planning and decision making on a five-point scale, with 1 signifying “Not enough involvement,” 3 signifying “Just the right involvement,” and 5 signifying “Too much involvement”
How involved are: Faculty
How involved are: Staff
How involved are: Deans or directors of administrative units

⁴⁵ “Survey Topics: College Employee Satisfaction Survey™.” Noel-Levitz Inc. <https://www.noellelvitz.com/higher-education-market-research/higher-education-market-research-services/college-employee-satisfaction-survey/survey-topics>

⁴⁶ “Noel-Levitz College Employee Satisfaction Survey.” Bluefield State College. August 2010. <http://old.bluefieldstate.edu/IRE/Documents/2010%20Noel-Levitz%20CESS.pdf>, p.1.

⁴⁷ “College of the Redwoods College Employee Satisfaction Survey (CESS).” Noel-Levitz. http://www.redwoods.edu/Accreditation/documents/RedwoodsCESS042710_000.pdf, p.15-26.

⁴⁸ Note: survey items sampled in this figure are not necessarily shown in the order that they appear on the survey instrument itself.

Selected Noel-Levitz College Employee Satisfaction Survey Items ⁴⁸
How involved are: Deans or chairs of academic units
How involved are: Senior administrators (VP, Provost level and above)
How involved are: Students
How involved are: Trustees
How involved are: Alumni

Source: Noel-Levitz.

In addition to the 70 items on the College Employee Satisfaction Survey, institutions can **add up to 29 custom questions**.⁴⁹

The survey appears to be a relatively new instrument – an April 2010 Noel-Levitz report for the College of the Redwoods noted that the survey had been used by 31 different institutions since 2008.⁵⁰ The cost of administration depends on how many surveys are completed. Institutions are charged a \$500 “setup fee” and are then charged a per-survey fee based on the number of respondents. These per survey fees are as follows:

- ❖ Up to 749 surveys - \$2.50
- ❖ 750-999 surveys - \$2.20
- ❖ 1,000 surveys or more - \$2.00

Institutions are also charged \$200 if they plan to administer the survey either as a paper survey or as a combination paper and online survey. Institutions are also charged for a number of optional services, such as if Noel-Levitz sends email invitations to the survey (instead of the institution itself sending such invitations to faculty/staff) or if Noel-Levitz mails surveys directly to potential respondents.⁵¹

Finally, the survey **does not provide nationally normed data for comparison purposes**.⁵²

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ “College of the Redwoods College Employee Satisfaction Survey (CESS).” Op. Cit., p.4.

⁵¹ “Order Form: Research Toolkit™.” Noel-Levitz.

https://www.noellevitz.com/upload/Market_Research/ResearchToolkitOrderForm.pdf

⁵² “Noel-Levitz College Employee Satisfaction Survey.” Op. Cit.

Noel-Levitz Institutional Priorities Survey

Noel-Levitz offers another survey which is designed to measure faculty and staff satisfaction – the Institutional Priorities Survey. The instrument is designed to “assess the satisfaction and priorities of campus administrators, staff, and faculty” and serves as a parallel to another Noel-Levitz survey, the “Student Satisfaction Inventory.”⁵³ However, the Institutional Priorities Survey **does not measure faculty and staff job satisfaction per se**. Instead, the survey focuses on how **important employees of an institution believe it is that their institution meet student expectations regarding a variety of college services and experiences, as well employees’ level of agreement that their institution is meeting these expectations**. By reviewing the IPS together with the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), institutions can identify areas of agreement and divergence between student and faculty/staff perceptions.

The Institutional Priorities Survey comes in versions for four-year colleges/universities and community/junior/technical colleges. For each of these two groups, the survey is available in two different versions – a longer “Form A” and a shorter version referred to as “Form B.”⁵⁴ The number of items which respondents are asked to rate by importance and agreement varies based on the survey version used, with 50 such items on the four-year institution IPS Form A, and 45 items on the IPS Form B. Note that for the purposes of this report, only the IPS versions designed for four-year colleges/universities will be examined in greater detail below. Completing the IPS is estimated to take 25 minutes for the pencil-and-paper survey version,⁵⁵ and 15-20 minutes for the online survey versions.⁵⁶ Like the College Employee Satisfaction Survey, **the IPS can also be customized with a limited number of items created**

Institutional Priorities Survey

- ❖ For faculty and staff.
- ❖ Comes in different versions of varying lengths. All versions ask faculty/staff to rate how important they believe it is that their institution meets student expectations concerning a variety of college services/experiences, as well as faculty/staff level of agreement that their institution is meeting student expectations regarding these services/experiences.
- ❖ National averages data are available for this survey.
- ❖ Cost for this survey varies based on survey administration and number of surveys completed. Institutions are charged a \$225 processing fee and a per survey fee of \$1.70. Additional charges apply for online survey administration.

⁵³ “Institutional Priorities Survey™.” Noel-Levitz. <https://www.noellevitz.com/student-retention-solutions/satisfaction-priorities-assessments/institutional-priorities-survey>

⁵⁴ “Online Implementation Guidelines Noel-Levitz Satisfaction-Priorities Surveys Pre-Purchase Instructions.” Noel-Levitz. August 2010. https://www.noellevitz.com/upload/Student_Retention/SSI/ImplementationGuidelines.pdf, p.1.

⁵⁵ “Implementation Guidelines.” Noel-Levitz. <https://www.noellevitz.com/student-retention-solutions/satisfaction-priorities-assessments/student-satisfaction-inventory/implementation-guidelines#How%20to%20customize%20the%20inventories>

⁵⁶ “Online Implementation Guidelines Noel-Levitz Satisfaction-Priorities Surveys Pre-Purchase Instructions.” Op. Cit.

by the institution administering the survey. The IPS can accommodate 10 items which are to be rated for level of importance and level of satisfaction (using the same scale used for the standard Noel-Levitz items). Additionally, three customized demographic questions can be added to the end of the IPS.⁵⁷

At the heart of the IPS survey instrument are a number of items which faculty/staff are asked to rate both on “level of importance” and on “level of agreement.” For these items, faculty/staff must rate “how important they believe it is” that their institution meet the expectation expressed in the items, as well as their level of agreement that their institution is meeting this expectation. Items on the IPS have been analyzed to form comprehensive scales. The four-year version of the IPS contains either 12 (Form A) or 9 (Form B) different scales. These scales are listed in the figure below.

Figure 4: Noel-Levitz Institutional Priorities Survey (Four-Year College/University Version) Scales⁵⁸

Form A	Form B
Academic Advising Effectiveness	Academic Advising Effectiveness
Campus Climate	Campus Climate
Campus Life	Campus Life
Campus Support Services	Campus Support Services
Concern for the Individual	Instructional Effectiveness
Instructional Effectiveness	Recruitment and Financial Aid Effectiveness
Recruitment and Financial Aid Effectiveness	Registration Effectiveness
Registration Effectiveness	Safety and Security
Responsiveness to Diverse Populations	Student Centeredness
Safety and Security	--
Service Excellence	--
Student Centeredness	--

Source: Noel-Levitz.

A sample of specific items from the survey is listed below. As noted above, faculty/staff taking the survey must rate both how important they believe it is that their institution meet these expectations, and their level of agreement that their institution is meeting these expectations.

⁵⁷ “Implementation Guidelines.” Op. Cit.

⁵⁸ Figure Adopted From: “Institutional Priorities Survey.” Noel-Levitz.
<http://www.emporia.edu/dotAsset/bf070fcb-0eb5-4797-914e-a397930eff43.pdf>, p.2.

Figure 5: Institutional Priorities Survey – Sample Items, Four-Year College/University Version Form A

Survey Items
The campus staff are caring and helpful.
Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students.
This campus provides online access to services students need.
Faculty provide timely feedback about students' academic progress.
There is a strong commitment to diversity on this campus.
On the whole, the campus is well-maintained.

Source: Noel-Levitz.

Respondents are asked to rate these and other items on the IPS using the following two seven-point scales: “1 - not important at all, 2 - not very important, 3 – somewhat unimportant, 4 - neutral, 5 - somewhat important, 6 - important, 7 - very important,” and “1 - strongly disagree, 2 - disagree, 3 - somewhat disagree, 4 - neutral, 5 - somewhat agree, 6 - agree, 7 - strongly agree.”

The Institutional Priorities Survey was first piloted in 1997. **As of 2010, it had been taken by over 146,000 campus faculty/staff at over 690 different institutions.**⁵⁹ Unlike the College Employee Satisfaction Survey, the Institutional Priorities Survey (and its corresponding instrument for students, the Student Satisfaction Inventory) **both include data on national averages for benchmarking purposes.**⁶⁰ The cost for administering the survey depends on the format in which it is administered. For online versions of the IPS, institutions are charged \$1.70 per completed survey the institution administers. Institutions are also charged a \$225 processing fee, a \$75 “additional online fee,” and an “additional online administration fee” of 25 cents per survey sent to potential respondents.⁶¹ For paper versions of the survey, institutions are charged \$1.70 per paper survey plus a processing fee of \$225. The processing fee covers the provision of a “Campus Report” that “includes the results for the campus personnel surveyed and the standard national comparison group for the appropriate institution type,” as well as cross-tabulations of results by faculty, administration, and staff. It should be emphasized that additional fees are charged for the raw data, year-to-year comparison reports, and other “optional materials.”⁶²

⁵⁹ “Institutional Priorities Survey.” Noel-Levitz. <http://www.emporia.edu/dotAsset/bf070fcb-0eb5-4797-914e-a397930eff43.pdf>, p.5.

⁶⁰ Steiner, Lucy M., Hassel, Bryan C., et al. Op. Cit., p.13.

⁶¹ “Check Prices and Order.” Noel-Levitz. <https://www.noellevitz.com/student-retention-solutions/satisfaction-priorities-assessments/institutional-priorities-survey/order>

⁶² Ibid.

Surveys for Faculty Only

Higher Education Research Institute Faculty Survey

A nationwide survey of faculty satisfaction is distributed by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at the University of California, Los Angeles. The HERI “serves as an interdisciplinary center for research, evaluation, information, policy studies, and research training in postsecondary education.”⁶³ The HERI is housed within the UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, and its research programs cover a variety of topics, such as the outcomes of postsecondary education, faculty performance, and educational equity, among others.

The HERI Faculty Survey is designed to be completed by any and all faculty members at an institution, whether they are full-time or part-time.⁶⁴ The survey is administered every three years by the HERI, and was last administered in 2010-2011.⁶⁵ The next HERI Faculty Survey will be conducted in 2013-2014.⁶⁶

Higher Education Research Institute Faculty Survey

- ❖ For faculty only.
- ❖ The survey consists of items dealing with faculty workload, job satisfaction, professional activities, and teaching practices.
- ❖ Normative data from the HERI survey are made available.
- ❖ Institutions participating in the survey are charged a \$775 participation fee plus \$3.00 per survey processed.

The 2010-2011 Faculty Survey was a web-based instrument which consisted of approximately 43 separate questions,⁶⁷ combined with **up to 20 questions individual institutions can add to the survey of their own design**. These can be multiple choice or open-ended (up to five open-ended questions can be included). Most survey respondents can complete the survey in approximately 25 minutes, though individual progress varies depending on how quickly respondents move through the survey questions.⁶⁸ The survey items cover a variety of areas including the **workload, job satisfaction, professional activities, and teaching practices of faculty and administrators**.⁶⁹ One such question from the 2010-2011 HERI Survey is reproduced below.

⁶³ “About HERI.” Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. <http://heri.ucla.edu/abtHERI.php>

⁶⁴ “HERI Faculty Survey 2010-2011 Administration Guidelines.” Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. <http://heri.ucla.edu/PDFs/surveyAdmin/fac/fac10AdminGuidelines.pdf>, p.3.

⁶⁵ “HERI Faculty Survey.” Catholic University of America. <http://assessment.cua.edu/Fac-HERI-Survey/HERIsurvey.cfm>

⁶⁶ “HERI Faculty Survey.” Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. <http://heri.ucla.edu/facoverview.php>

⁶⁷ It should be noted that several questions in this survey are designed for only part-time faculty and some other survey questions consist of multiple different items.

⁶⁸ “University of California, Los Angeles Higher Education Research Institute Faculty Survey Information Sheet.” Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. <http://heri.ucla.edu/PDFs/surveyAdmin/fac/fac10SIS.pdf>, p.1.

⁶⁹ “HERI Faculty Survey.” University of North Carolina Asheville. <http://ierp.unca.edu/ir/heri>

Figure 6: Sample HERI Faculty Survey Question, 2010-2011 Survey⁷⁰

2010-2011 HERI Faculty Survey Sample Question
28. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your job? (Responses: Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Marginally Satisfied, Not Satisfied, Not Applicable)
Salary
Health benefits
Retirement benefits
Opportunity for scholarly pursuits
Teaching load
Quality of students
Office/lab space
Autonomy and independence
Professional relationships with other faculty
Social relationships with other faculty
Competency of colleagues
Job security
Departmental leadership
Course assignments
Freedom to determine course content
Availability of child care at this institution
Prospects for career advancement
Clerical/administrative support
Overall job satisfaction
Tuition remission for your children/dependents

Source: Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA.

Other questions ask about slightly different aspects of job satisfaction. Respondents are asked, for example, if they would still come to their institution if they were to begin their career again, and are asked to indicate whether a number of statements are “descriptive” of their institution, such as “faculty here are typically at odds with campus administration” and “faculty are rewarded for being good teachers,” among other such statements. Respondents are further provided with a variety of items with which they are asked to indicate their agreement (or disagreement). These items seek to measure faculty attitudes about a number of institutional issues and practices, such as diversity on campus and within the faculty body, faculty involvement in campus decision making, the criteria for advancement and promotion of faculty, and institutional support for faculty development, among other issues. Other HERI Faculty Survey questions seek to gather data on the time faculty members spend on different job duties, sources of stress for faculty members, and faculty teaching techniques and goals.

⁷⁰ “2010-2011 HERI Faculty Survey.” Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA.
<http://heri.ucla.edu/researchers/instruments/FACULTY/2010FAC.PDF>, p.9.

The HERI survey has been used by institutions for various purposes and goals. Institutions have used results to improve the student experience at their campuses or to improve faculty development programming. Additionally, according to the HERI, and in keeping with our discussion in the previous section, **“faculty survey data have been cited in self-studies in accreditation** both to support an evidence-based approach to institutional improvement and as evidence for specific accreditation standards.”⁷¹

Schools which participate in the HERI Faculty Survey receive an “institutional profile” which breaks down survey results by “gender, full and part-time status, comparisons with other similar institutions, significance testing, effect sizes, and the new CIRP Constructs,”⁷² which are “global measures of academic and educational outcomes of interest to institutions, e.g., Habits of Mind.”⁷³ Additionally, institutions receive a data file containing faculty responses and a monograph which summarizes the national results.⁷⁴ Participating institutions are assessed a \$775 participation fee, as well as a processing fee of \$3 per survey processed. Institutions can also pay additional fees for optional survey features. **Institutions are charged \$325, for example, for integrating additional questions into the HERI survey, and \$300 for integrating additional open-ended questions.** For additional fees, institutions can receive online data analysis or have the HERI send survey invitation emails directly to the institution’s faculty (instead of the institution sending these emails to its faculty by itself), thus taking the institution “out of the loop” and removing it from any perceived intervention in the survey.⁷⁵

In 2010-2011, nearly 38,000 faculty respondents at almost 500 different institutions of higher education participated in the HERI Faculty Survey. For institutions to be included in the survey’s normative sample, HERI requires that a minimum percentage of full-time undergraduate faculty complete the survey. It should also be noted that in 2010-2011, HERI received supplemental responses from some faculty at non-participating institutions, as HERI invited supplemental responses from approximately 2,000 STEM faculty, from randomly-selected faculty, and from faculty who had participated in previous HERI Faculty Surveys. As such, the normative data for the 2010-2011 HERI Faculty Survey includes responses from 23,824 full-time undergraduate faculty at 417 baccalaureate institutions.⁷⁶ Since 1989, more than 350,000 faculty from over 1,200 two- and four-year institutions have participated in the HERI Faculty Survey.⁷⁷

⁷¹ “HERI Faculty Survey.” Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. Op. Cit.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ “HERI Faculty Survey 2010-2011 Administration Guidelines.” Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. <http://heri.ucla.edu/PDFs/surveyAdmin/fac/fac10AdminGuidelines.pdf>, p.9.

⁷⁴ “HERI Faculty Survey.” Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. Op. Cit.

⁷⁵ “HERI Faculty Survey 2010-2011 Administration Guidelines.” Op. Cit., p.5.

⁷⁶ “2010-2011 HERI Faculty Survey.” Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. <http://heri.ucla.edu/PDFs/surveyAdmin/fac/Fac10MonographAppendix.pdf>, p.4.

⁷⁷ “HERI Faculty Survey.” Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. Op. Cit.

COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey

A final survey discussed in this report which can help institutions benchmark the satisfaction of their faculty is offered through **The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE)**, an **association of over 160 colleges and universities** across North America.⁷⁸ COACHE was founded in 2002 and is housed in the Harvard University Graduate School of Education.

Since its founding, the organization has offered several surveys on faculty satisfaction to its member organizations including its Tenure-Track Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey and Tenured Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey.⁷⁹

However, in October 2011, COACHE integrated the two surveys to produce “a unified instrument with separate paths for pre-tenure and tenured faculty.”⁸⁰ Now referred to as simply the “Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey,” the instrument features three separate modules for different faculty populations:

- ❖ Tenure-track faculty member (pre-tenure)
- ❖ Tenured faculty member
- ❖ Non-tenure track faculty member⁸¹

COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey

- ❖ For faculty only.
- ❖ Survey themes include nature of work, tenure and promotion, institutional governance and leadership, global satisfaction, among others.
- ❖ Participating institutions are provided with a comparison of their results to the results of all participating institutions plus the results of five institutionally-designated “peer” institutions.
- ❖ To administer the COACHE survey, institutions pay for COACHE membership (3-year enrollment periods). Membership fees range from \$17,500 to \$35,000 for new members, depending on institution type/size.

The COACHE survey is administered electronically and all respondents must take the survey online. Survey administration time varies by respondent but is typically approximately 25 minutes.⁸² The survey’s themes include the following:

- ❖ Nature of the Work (Overall, Research, Teaching, Service)
- ❖ Resources & Support

⁷⁸ “About Us.” Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, Harvard University. <http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=coache&pageid=icb.page307143>

⁷⁹ “Florida International University Tenured Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey Institutional Report 2010-2011.” Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, Harvard University. http://academic.fiu.edu/CAC/COACHE_Survey_Summary.pdf, p.2.

⁸⁰ “How Are COACHE Surveys Different From Others?” Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, Harvard University. <http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=coache&pageid=icb.page385671>

⁸¹ “Faculty FAQs.” Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, Harvard University. <http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=coache&tabgroupid=icb.tabgroup97310>

⁸² Ibid.

- ❖ Interdisciplinary Work
- ❖ Collaboration
- ❖ Mentoring
- ❖ Tenure and Promotion
- ❖ Institutional Governance & Leadership
- ❖ Engagement
- ❖ Work & Personal Life Balance
- ❖ Climate, Culture & Collegiality
- ❖ Appreciation & Recognition
- ❖ Recruitment & Retention
- ❖ Global Satisfaction⁸³

The administration process for the survey is managed by COACHE staff, and institutions are provided with a data report detailing survey results “analyzed in the aggregate, and by gender, race/ethnicity, and academic area...”⁸⁴ **Participating institutions are also provided with a comparison of their results to the results of all participating universities and to five COACHE institutions that the participating institution selects as its “peers.”** Participating institutions receive instructions for “maximizing the impact” of their evidence, commentary provided by respondents in response to open-ended questions, and a unit-record data file. The COACHE Survey also **allows respondents to add custom questions to the end of the survey.** Institutions are charged \$500 per block of five items, not to exceed 15 total questions, and each question must have only a single response set.⁸⁵

Enrollment in COACHE is open to all four-year colleges and universities, and institutions pay for enrollment in increments of three years. The cost to participate in the survey includes membership – good for three years – and survey administration and reporting in the member’s first year. Costs for COACHE membership are as follows:

Figure 7: COACHE Membership Costs⁸⁶

Institution Type/Size	Survey Administration, Custom Reporting, and Support for Three Years
Research, doctoral, and large master’s universities	\$35,000 \$31,500 to renew
Baccalaureate colleges and small master’s universities	\$17,500 \$15,750 to renew

⁸³ “How Are COACHE Surveys Different From Others?” Op. Cit.

⁸⁴ “What We Do.” Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, Harvard University.
http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=coache_old&tabgroupid=icb.tabgroup104862

⁸⁵ “Member Toolkit.” Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, Harvard University.
http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic283641.files/COACHE_MemberToolkit_2011.pdf, p.6.

⁸⁶ “How Do I Enroll?” Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, Harvard University.
<http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=coache&pageid=icb.page307149>

Institution Type/Size	Survey Administration, Custom Reporting, and Support for Three Years
State systems and consortia	If six or more institutions join as a group, they receive additional services and substantial savings on the COACHE membership fee, reflective of economies of scale. The available discount increases as a greater number of institutions within a system or consortium enroll.

Source: Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, Harvard University.

COACHE allows institutions to spread their payment out over two or three years. The membership also includes other benefits beyond the survey. For example, COACHE members can participate in COACHE strategy sessions “at conferences where senior academic leaders convene (e.g., APLU, AAC&U, system and consortia meetings).”⁸⁷ COACHE members can also be included as a panelist or co-presenter at these national events and at one of the COACHE annual “Leaders Workshop” forums. Members further receive access to COACHE news briefs and early editions of other COACHE research, such as studies of exemplary campuses.

⁸⁷ “Membership Benefits.” Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education, Harvard University. <http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=coache&tabgroupid=icb.tabgroup100716>

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