



collaborative on academic
careers in higher education

Illinois State University

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Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey

Report Preview



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Introduction

You are holding in your hands a preview of the COACHE Chief Academic Officer Report. The CAO Report data and design are the culmination of our work since 2003 with faculty focus groups, two pilot studies (for pre-tenure and tenured faculty), and ongoing dialog with academic leaders at our partner institutions.

While there are many approaches to report design, our choices at COACHE leverage our comparative data to help you, your leadership team, and your faculty move more swiftly from survey results into dissemination, engagement and action.

To the uninitiated, the CAO Report can be daunting. However, just a few minutes spent with the Results at a Glance and Benchmark Dashboard will unlock the broad themes of your survey results and the areas deserving of immediate scrutiny.

Your faculty's strengths and concerns will be revealed, layer by layer, as you follow the green, grey, and red colors of your CAO Report. These colors illustrate your faculty's attitudes relative to peers of your own choosing and to a larger, labor-market cohort (e.g., women to women, associate professor to associate professor). The yellow and orange colors will identify gaps between groups within your own institution (e.g., women and men, associate and full professors).

This preview is just a glimpse of what lies within your CAO Report—a beginning, not the end. The digital files that follow this preview contain item-level analysis, faculty's qualitative opinions coded by survey theme, results disaggregated by school/college and discipline, and more tools for understanding the conditions faculty need in order to do their best work.

You are about to discover that many faculty concerns can be dealt with immediately and inexpensively, while others present themselves as opportunities for broad involvement in designing collaborative solutions.

The questions at the end of this preview should help you get this process of inquiry underway. Yet, at COACHE, we have learned that the most important analysis has yet to occur. Analysis is a social process of engagement with your colleagues and—most importantly—your faculty. The COACHE partners who succeed do so by inviting faculty to be agents of institutional improvement.

As you embark upon the next steps of "collective sensemaking" and action, we have many examples to share. Your research-practice partnership with COACHE continues beyond this report delivery for many months of advice and networking. Allow us to develop your capacity for evidence-driven leadership in the academy.

Your Cohort and Peers

Based on the number of ISU faculty and other organizational characteristics, your comparison "cohort" includes 82 COACHE partners who identify as generally similar. The complete list is available in the CAO Report's appendices. You selected five comparison institutions – "peers" in the report – to represent those most similar to you in the faculty labor market. They are listed at the right.

- Baylor University (2020)
- Clemson University (2022)
- Kent State University (2022)
- Old Dominion University (2019)
- University of North Carolina - Charlotte (2021)

Response Rates

Your report summarizes the findings from 48% of your eligible faculty. Given an average survey completion time of 22 minutes, this report constitutes approximately 162 hours of your faculty's time and, more importantly, their candor. Your response rate is nearly identical to the average of your five selected comparison institutions.

Differences in rates of response between demographic groups matter, as well. The table below summarizes response rates by tenure status, rank, gender, and race. As you read this preview and the complete CAO Report, keep in mind how large or small these subgroups' representation is among your survey responses.

	Response Rates		
	You	Peers	Cohort
All Faculty	48%	48%	42%
Tenured	53%	48%	45%
Pre-tenure	51%	46%	46%
Non-tenure Track	35%	48%	37%
Full Professor	53%	48%	47%
Associate Professor	55%	47%	43%
Men	45%	41%	39%
Women	49%	53%	49%
White	51%	50%	46%
Faculty of Color	42%	41%	39%
Asian/Asian-American	45%	34%	35%
Underrepresented Minorities	40%	48%	43%

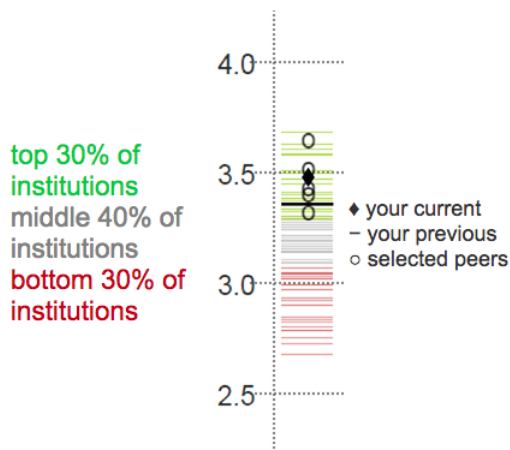
¹ "Faculty of color" are, for the purposes of this report, those individuals not categorized as White, non-Hispanic.

² "Underrepresented minorities" are individuals who identify as neither White, non-Hispanic nor Asian/Asian-American.

Understanding the COACHE Benchmarks

The following five pages offer a view of your faculty from 10,000 feet. Each survey theme is summarized by a “Benchmark,” the mean of several five-point Likert-scale survey questions that share a common theme. A Benchmark score provides a general sense of how faculty feel about a particular aspect of their work/life at your institution; your CAO Report delivers results for Benchmarks and for specific survey items.

In this preview, we compare your Benchmark scores, shown as diamonds, to the scores of other COACHE partners, represented as horizontal lines. Green lines represent the top 30 percent of institutional means, red lines represent the bottom 30 percent, and grey lines represent institutions in the middle 40 percent. The circles locate the five institutions your team selected as most nearly competing with yours (or resembling yours) in the market for faculty. The black line represents your prior results (if applicable).



Your Strengths and Concerns

As shorthand, COACHE defines as an "area of strength" any Benchmark where your institution scores first or second among your selected comparison group and in the top 30 percent (the green section) of the cohort.

Conversely, an "area of concern" is where your faculty rating of a Benchmark falls fifth or sixth among your peers and in the bottom 30 percent (the red section) of the cohort. The survey themes at the right met these criteria for ISU.

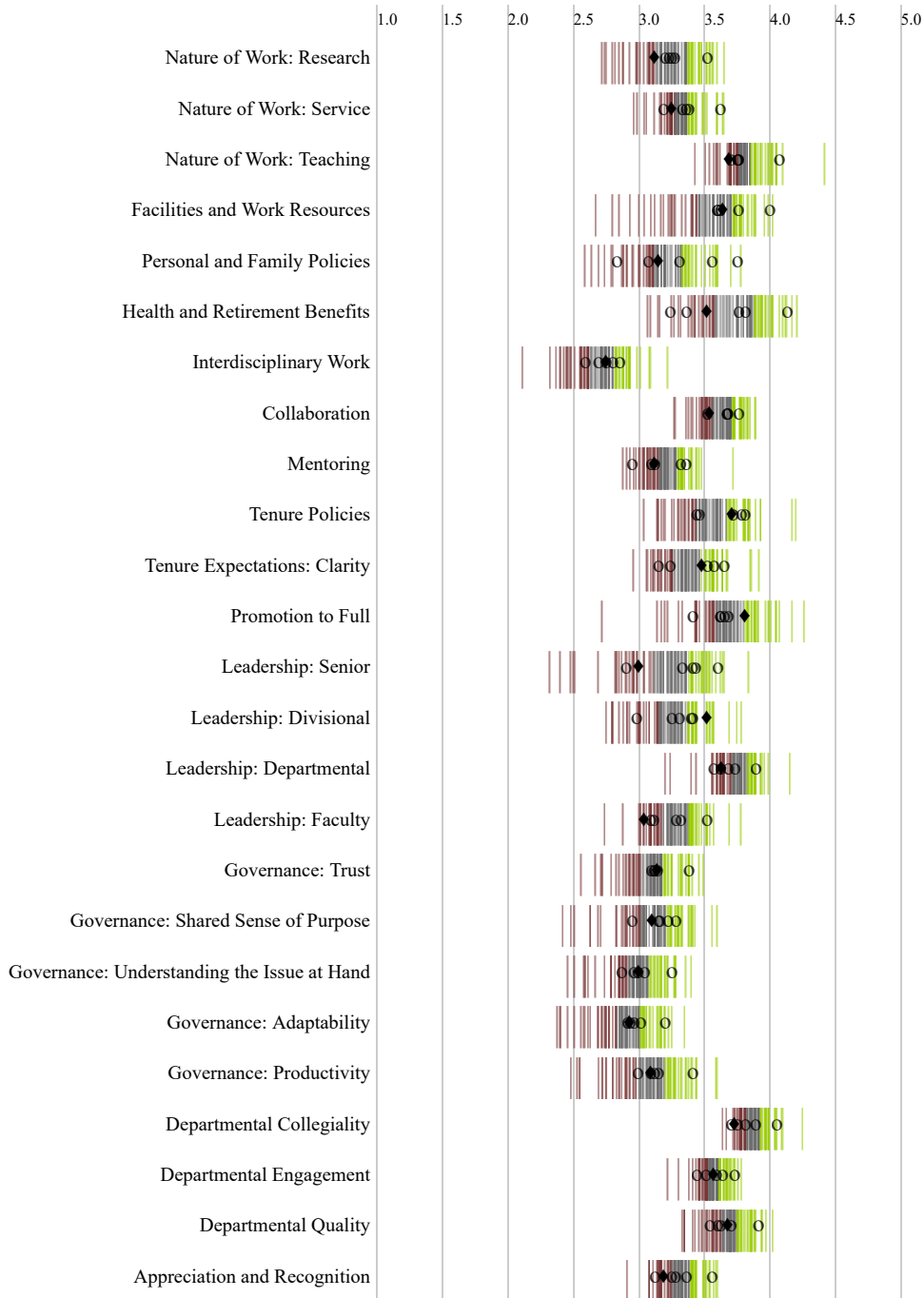
Note that between-group differences could alter your conclusions about these aspects of academic life on your campus—and suggest tailored approaches to improving them. Keep this in mind as you consider, after the overall results, the subsequent charts for pre-tenure faculty, for associate professors, for women, and for faculty of color. Look to your CAO Report for other subgroups and more detailed displays.

Areas of strength (all faculty combined)

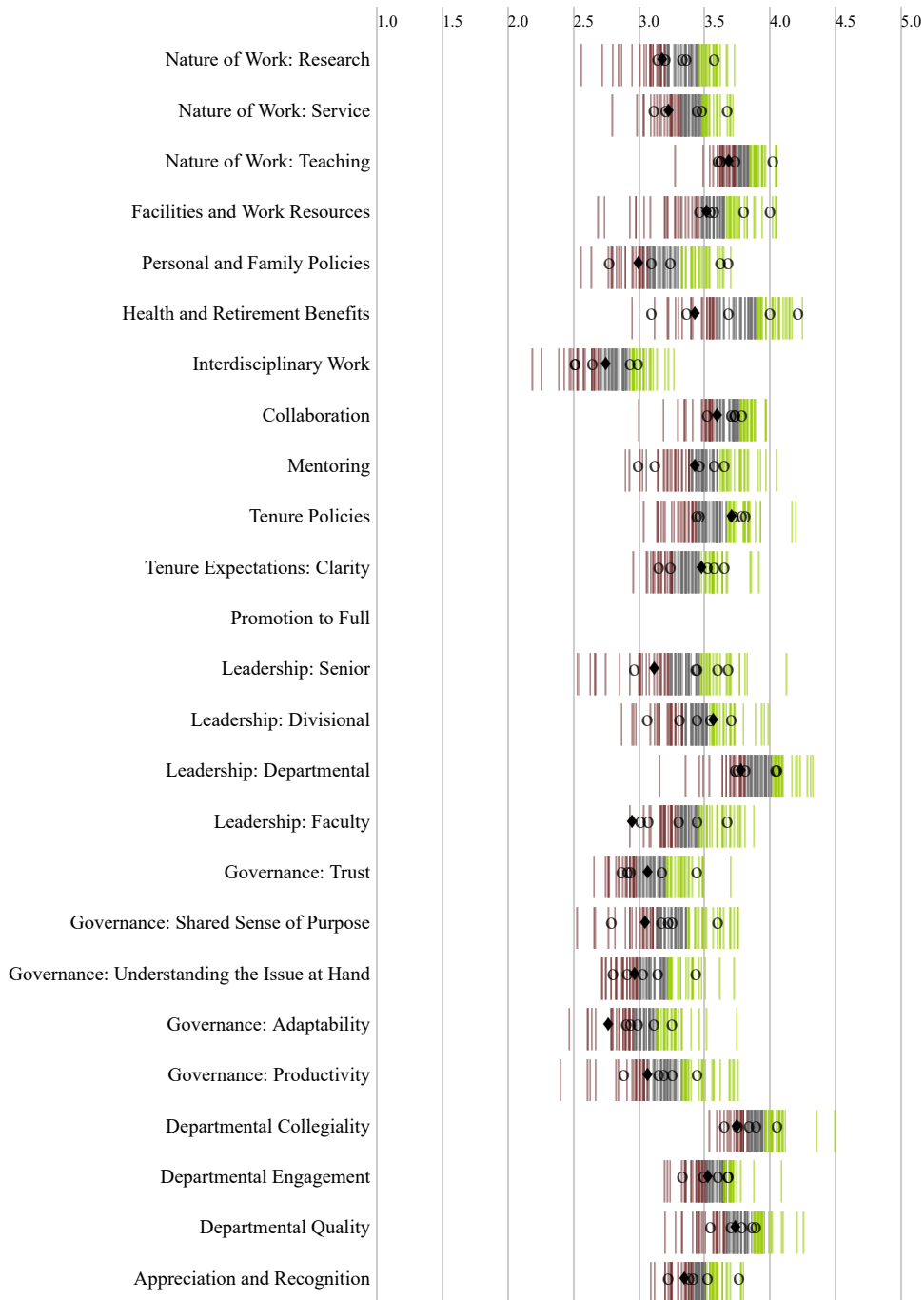
- *Leadership: Divisional*
- *Promotion to Full*

Areas of concern (all faculty combined)

- *Appreciation and Recognition*
- *Departmental Collegiality*
- *Leadership: Departmental*
- *Leadership: Faculty*
- *Leadership: Senior*
- *Nature of Work: Service*
- *Nature of Work: Teaching*



Data are masked in instances where your institution or a peer institution has insufficient data for reporting.



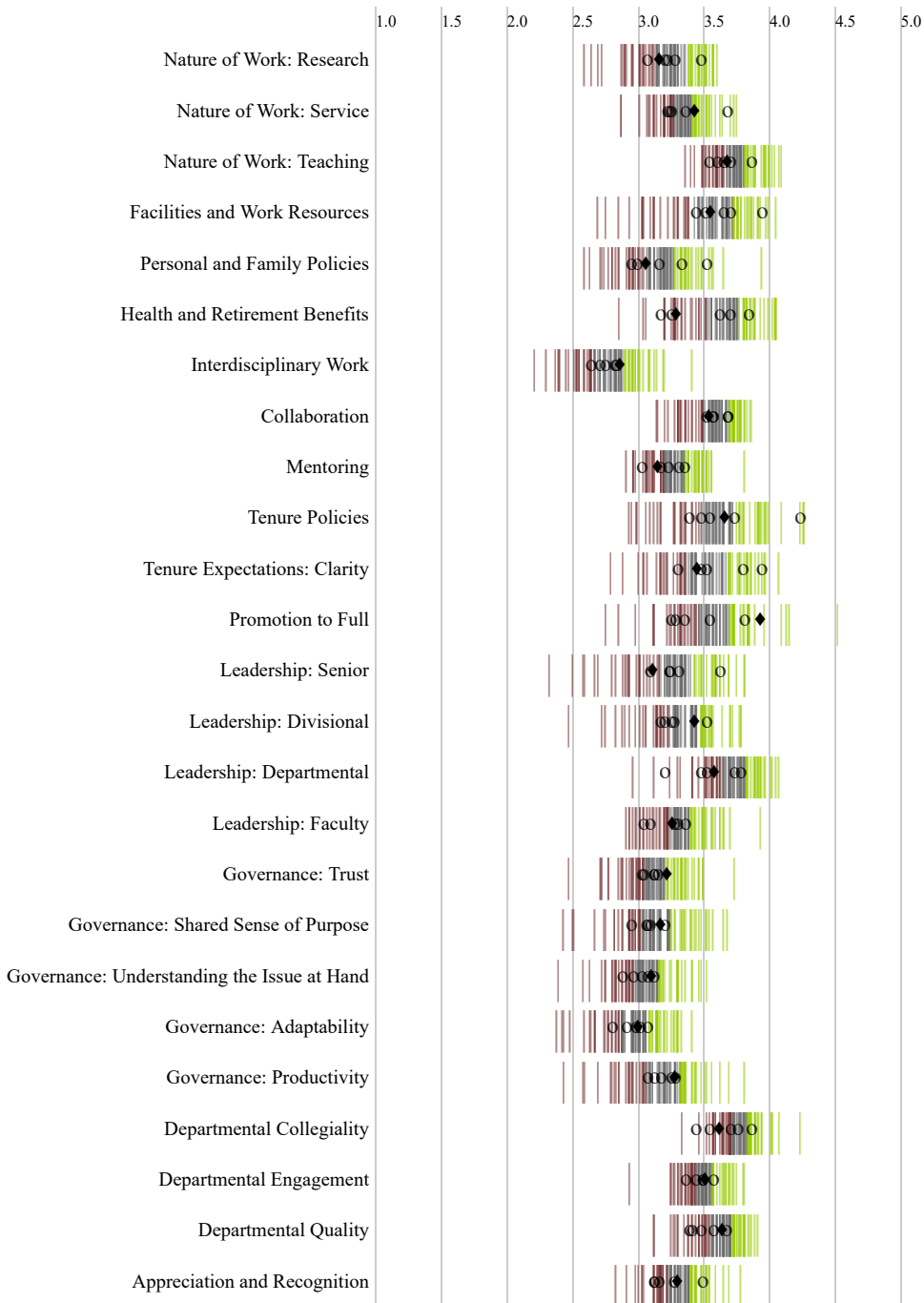
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Near the conclusion of the survey, we ask faculty to think about the institution as a whole and identify those issues (both good and bad) that are most on their minds. Here, faculty are given the opportunity to select the two best aspects of working at your institution. Your CAO Report

includes these results compared to peers and the COACHE cohort and, therefore, your competitive advantages in faculty recruitment and retention. The most frequently cited responses at your institution are highlighted in red.

	Overall	Pre-tenure	Associate	Women	FOC
Quality of colleagues	28%	24%	30%	24%	23%
Support of colleagues	22%	24%	20%	26%	26%
Opportunities to collaborate with colleagues	5%	4%	3%	7%	6%
Quality of graduate students	7%	12%	8%	8%	5%
Quality of undergraduate students	14%	14%	9%	15%	14%
Quality of facilities	2%	0%	2%	1%	0%
Compensation	1%	1%	2%	0%	1%
Support for research/creative work	2%	3%	1%	1%	2%
Support for teaching	9%	9%	9%	12%	6%
Support for professional development	2%	3%	1%	3%	2%
Assistance for grant proposals	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Childcare policies	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%
Spousal/partner hiring program	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Diversity	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%
Presence of others like me	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%
My sense of "fit" here	10%	8%	10%	9%	7%
Geographic location	9%	10%	8%	9%	6%
Commute	6%	3%	7%	5%	5%
Cost of living	19%	19%	17%	18%	23%
Protections from service/assignments	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Teaching load	10%	10%	8%	8%	5%
Manageable pressure to perform	12%	13%	13%	12%	14%
Academic freedom	15%	15%	16%	14%	22%
Tenure/promotion clarity or requirements	8%	10%	11%	6%	10%
Quality of leadership	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%
There are no positive aspects	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%
Decline to answer	3%	4%	4%	3%	6%

Faculty are also asked to identify the two worst aspects of working at your institution. The worst aspects can be particularly helpful in narrowing down your priorities, especially when a review of your Benchmarks suggests many concerns to address: when everything needs fixing,

we tend to fix nothing. In the CAO Report, these worst aspects are a heat map of your institution's competitive threats. The most frequently cited responses at your institution are highlighted in red.

	Overall	Pre-tenure	Associate	Women	FOC
Quality of colleagues	3%	3%	3%	2%	1%
Support of colleagues	4%	5%	3%	7%	1%
Opportunities to collaborate with colleagues	2%	4%	1%	2%	1%
Quality of graduate students	2%	0%	3%	1%	2%
Quality of undergraduate students	7%	10%	5%	5%	3%
Quality of facilities	8%	12%	7%	9%	8%
Compensation	34%	26%	34%	32%	27%
Lack of support for research/creative work	13%	14%	17%	14%	15%
Lack of support for teaching	2%	1%	2%	2%	0%
Lack of support for professional development	2%	0%	2%	1%	0%
Lack of assistance for grant proposals	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Childcare policies	2%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Spousal/partner hiring program	3%	6%	2%	4%	8%
Lack of diversity	11%	13%	14%	11%	17%
Absence of others like me	4%	8%	4%	2%	9%
My sense of "fit" here	4%	9%	3%	5%	7%
Geographic location	12%	10%	12%	9%	16%
Commute	2%	4%	0%	2%	2%
Cost of living	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Too much service/too many assignments	15%	12%	22%	17%	7%
Teaching load	12%	17%	9%	13%	14%
Unrelenting pressure to perform	4%	4%	5%	6%	3%
Academic freedom	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Tenure/promotion clarity or requirements	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Quality of leadership	12%	6%	13%	12%	3%
There are no positive aspects	3%	3%	4%	3%	7%
Decline to answer	4%	3%	3%	5%	5%

Global Considerations: In Your Faculty's Own Words

The final item in our survey is an open-text response to the prompt, "What is the one thing your institution could do to improve the workplace for faculty?" The comments from your faculty were reviewed by our team, redacted of identifying information, and coded according to the survey themes. The five most common themes in your faculty's responses were:

- *Compensation and benefits* - 35%
- *Culture* - 33%
- *Leadership: General* - 27%
- *Nature of work: General* - 20%
- *Appreciation and recognition* - 20%

The complete and coded open-text responses in your CAO Report are a tool for prioritizing your results. By adding a dose of humanity to the quantitative results, these comments direct you and your team to be more sensitive to what is in the minds of your faculty. The mean and standard

deviation for Tenure Clarity tell you which faculty are unclear about expectations for tenure. An open-text comment describes the impact on faculty's lives—their careers, their health, their families—and may even include helpful ideas on how to fix the problem.

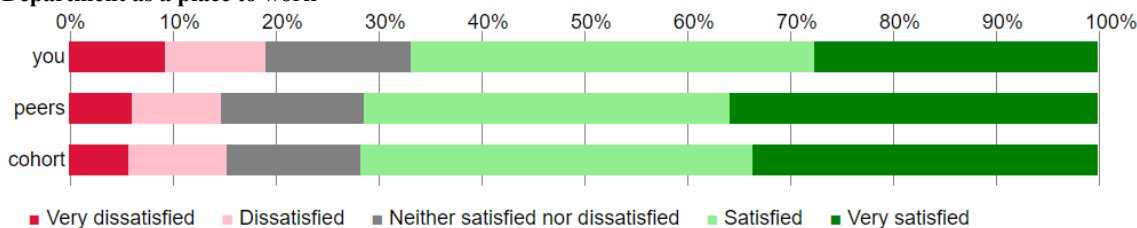
In the complete digital report, you may access these redacted comments all at once, coded thematically, and accompanied by a chart of theme frequencies. In addition, when a comment mentions a topic that is related to a Benchmark, your CAO Report attaches that comment to the appropriate section. With salient, open-text prompts associated with each theme, you will find it easy to incorporate them into your presentations and discussions with faculty. Doing so reinforces that you are listening and trying to understand—the first step toward improving the faculty workplace.

Global Considerations: The Department and Institution as a Place to Work

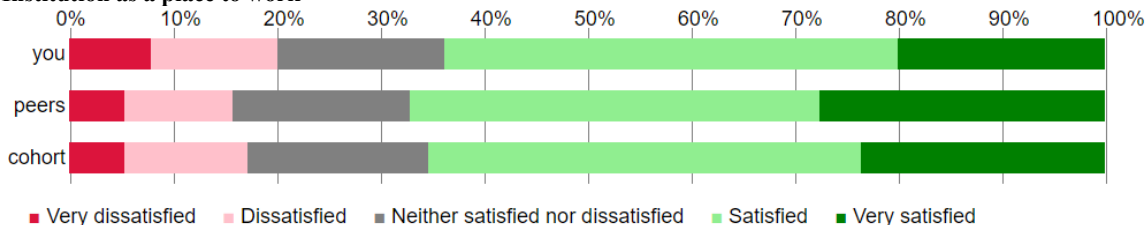
There are other "big picture" results in your report concerning overall satisfaction, intent to leave, and the likelihood that a faculty member would recommend her/his department as a place to work. For the purposes of this

preview, we are sharing respondents' overall satisfaction with their departments and with their institution as a place to work.

Department as a place to work



Institution as a place to work



Next Steps: Distributed Leadership

While some are tempted to see these results and jump immediately to strategies for fixing problems, others know that institutional change is more effective and sustainable under models of distributed leadership. At COACHE, we have learned from our partners that analysis and sensemaking are a community process. Treat this document and the full report as a discussion guide, not a report card. Engage your faculty as partners in improving the workplace. Leverage their skills, expertise, and their personal experiences. Thoughtful, transparent engagement establishes trust among faculty. How you engage your faculty throughout this process is just as important as any policies or programs that result. Very few things can be accomplished in the academy without trust.

- A series of video tutorials for navigating and interpreting your full report
- Sample meeting agendas
- Discussion guides for your team
- Promising practices from other partner institutions

Your CAO Report contains additional materials that describe how to dig deeper, build communication plans, disseminate broadly, take ownership, and engage with peer institutions. If you are ever in doubt about what to do, call us. COACHE succeeds only when you are equipped to create the conditions in which faculty do their best work.