

Faculty Work/Life Assessment
-- Selected Findings --
-- Initial Thoughts on Action Steps --

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Faculty Work/Life Assessment

Why Focus On This?

- Academic Plan and Diversity Plan
 - Need to address work/life issues to compete for quality faculty and build a world-class diverse faculty
- Changing workforce and technology
- Fiscal challenges
- Factual base needed for strategic decision-making
- WFD Consulting conducted assessments
 - Faculty - Winter 2003
 - Staff - Autumn 2001

Summary Findings:

Support

- Supportiveness of chair/director and immediate colleagues are key contributors to quality of faculty work/life integration
- Over 50% report their chair/director and colleagues are supportive of family responsibilities

Summary Findings:

Feeling Valued

- A majority of faculty feel valued by their academic unit for what they do best (teaching, research, or service)

Summary Findings:

Differences in Impact

- All categories of faculty report:
 - Work/life issues and concerns
 - High levels of stress and burnout
 - Difficulty integrating work and personal life
- More prevalent among women and those with dependent care responsibilities

Summary Findings:

Satisfaction and Engagement

- Efforts to improve faculty's ability to integrate work and personal life could have a positive effect on faculty:
 - Satisfaction and engagement
 - Health, well-being and retention
- Especially with women and minority faculty

Summary Findings:

Productivity and Work/Life Balance

- Work/life integration and high productivity appear not to be in conflict
- Highly productive faculty (self assessed) have very similar work/life profiles and concerns as other faculty

Summary Findings:

Areas of High Leverage Organizational Impact

- Affirming and strengthening role of deans and department heads in fostering work/life integration
- Providing resources, technology, and flexibility to alleviate stress and dissatisfaction associated with workload
- Developing programs and policies to address common dependent care and life cycle issues

Specific Findings:

Distinct Groups of Faculty Exist

- Most findings are specific to rank and gender
- Male full professors are most satisfied with positions and ability to integrate work/life
- Associate professors are most dissatisfied with positions – particularly those in rank 15 or more years
- Women are more dissatisfied with ability to integrate work/life issues
- Men are 2.5 times more likely to have spouse/partner available to assist with household/family responsibilities

Specific Findings:

Satisfaction and Engagement

- 3 in 5 faculty are satisfied with their positions and fully engaged with OSU
- Satisfaction and engagement are associated with:
 - Manageable workload
 - Supportive chair/director
 - Value and respect
 - Quality of work/life integration
- 1 in 3 faculty feel Ohio State and its policies are supportive of personal life – but half feel their chairs are supportive

Specific Findings:

Expectations and Resources

- 2/3 feel expectations for teaching, service, and advising are “about right”
- 1/2 report a lack of resources and internal funding for scholarship and creative activities
- 1/2 or more show some signs of stress and burnout:
 - Greatest among women faculty and faculty with dependent care responsibilities
 - Male full professors exhibit lower levels
 - Associate professors exhibit highest levels

Specific Findings:

Self Assessed Productive Faculty

- Similar to peers with satisfaction of ability to integrate work with personal and family responsibilities
- Experience similar levels of work/life support (or lack of support) as other faculty
- Experience similar levels of stress and burnout

Specific Findings:

Academic Mission

- Teaching, research, and service:
 - More than 75% feel valued by colleagues, staff, and students
 - More than 50% strongly connected to department/school/program
 - 33% feel valued by the university
 - 33% “strongly disagree” or “disagree” that the university values these contributions
 - Male full professors more likely to feel valued than others
- Direction of university outlined in the Academic Plan:
 - 40% feel positive
 - 33% disagree

Specific Findings:

Professional Development Programs

- Most valued:
 - One academic quarter with a research focus and no teaching responsibilities
 - Resources and technology for home office
- 3/5 have not taken professional leaves for which they are eligible; reasons cited:
 - Loss of income
 - Dependent care issues
 - Spouse/partner employment
 - No one to cover workload/overworked colleagues

Specific Findings:

Department Chairs Play Pivotal Role

- Greater assistance from chair/director to ensure success of work is highest rated professional development resource
- More than 50% feel their chair/director is supportive of work/life integration
- Faculty who are satisfied with quality of work/life integration are twice as likely as others to have a chair/director who is seen as supportive of personal/family responsibilities

Specific Findings:

Faculty Turnover

- 20% of faculty overall plan to leave Ohio State within four years
- 35% of assistant and 26% of associate women (versus 32% and 18% of men, respectively) plan to leave within four years)
- 33% of minority faculty plan to leave within four years
- Faculty more dissatisfied with their positions or work/life integration have greater intent to leave

Specific Findings:

Integration of Faculty and Parenting Responsibilities

- 1/3 of women have delayed starting a family due to progress of academic careers
- Back-up child care cited as a strong need
- More women than men report child care difficulties
- Male faculty more likely to have spouse/partner not working full time outside the home

Specific Findings:

Adult Dependent Care

- 2/5 of faculty indicate current or future concern
- Majority of care givers provide hands on care or manage financial or legal matters
- Many experience long-distance care giving issues
- Women more likely than men to report difficulty

Specific Findings:

Most Valued Work/Life Benefits and Programs

- Partner/spouse employment assistance
- Phased in retirement
- Domestic partner benefits
- Paid maternity/parental leave
- Emergency back-up child care
- Child/elder care referral
- Reduction of hours and salary in exchange for more personal time

Initial Thoughts on Follow-up Actions

- Reaffirm and intensify institutional commitment to balancing work/life
- Designate leadership roles for
 - Communicating findings and implications
 - Defining recommendations and action plan, coordinated with staff process
 - Implementing
 - Measuring effectiveness

Initial Thoughts on Follow-up Actions

- Current plans
 - The Executive Vice President & Provost is executive leader of this initiative
 - Work/life (including work environment and professional development) should become a component of the leadership agenda for the Academic Plan
 - OAA and OHR have over-arching responsibilities for organization, communication, implementation; the Planning Group that has been in place could continue as additional advisory/oversight role—particularly in communications and measurement
 - A small group has been assembled to formulate recommendations in Autumn Quarter (1 dean, 2 chairs, 1 faculty expert from Human Ecology, OAA vice provost, OAA assistant vice provost, and OHR Work/Life program director/coordination)

Initial Thoughts on Follow-up Actions

- Affirm and support pivotal role of deans and chairs for faculty development, satisfaction and work/life integration
- Example actions
 - Include a focus on these issues in annual reports at the department, college and university levels
 - Include information in new chair orientation and faculty orientation
 - Provide training and ongoing consulting assistance to chairs
 - Find a way to celebrate and exchange “best practices” of deans
 - Enhance resources for working from home for faculty

Initial Thoughts on Follow-up Actions

- Develop and implement university-wide programs and policies to address common difficulties experienced integrating work/life responsibilities in (1) faculty, (2) family, and (3) personal dimensions
- Enhance flexibility in career paths and professional leaves
- Example actions
 - Implement a paid parental leave program
 - Provide eldercare information and referral
 - Address the issue of ensuring an academic quarter as a research quarter as an alternative to or substitute for sabbatical leaves, on an annual or periodic basis
 - Determine how to assess traditional approaches to work and work expectations...how can faculty time and expertise be leveraged?