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**The Work Environment for Tenure-Track/Tenured Faculty at the University of Maryland**

**ADVANCE Research and Evaluation Report for AGNR**

by

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## Introduction

The UMD Work Environment Survey assessed specific aspects of faculty work environment, such as faculty perceptions of their own professional growth, institutional and unit supports for professional growth, climate for work-life balance, fair treatment and diversity, and satisfaction, all of which have been linked to retention and advancement. There were 488 tenure track respondents, approximately 32% of full-time UMD tenure track faculty in fall 2010. Here major findings are reported for tenure track/tenured respondents in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. For additional information about the survey development and results for the University of Maryland over all, please see *The Work Environment for Tenure-Track/Tenured Faculty at the University of Maryland: ADVANCE Research and Evaluation Report 1*, which can be accessed at the UMD ADVANCE research and evaluation website: <http://www.advance.umd.edu/research-evaluation>.

## Respondents

The analytical sample for this report is the tenure track faculty respondents of the UMD Faculty Work Environment Survey from AGNR (n=60), 35% of the 2010 tenure-track/tenured AGNR faculty. Of the AGNR tenure track respondents, 35% were female and 65% were male. Regarding race, 10% were faculty of color, 88% were White faculty, and 2% were international faculty. Lastly, AGNR respondents were 18% Assistant Professors, 52% Associate Professors, and 30% Full Professors. There were 8% AGNR respondents who were administrators (Chairs, Directors, and Deans).

## Data Analysis

We first ran descriptive statistics (e.g. frequencies and means) on each survey item for all respondents. Then, we conducted statistical testing (chi-squared analyses, t-tests, or ANOVA)

for differences by gender. Testing for racial and rank differences could not be conducted due to low sample size. Means, standard deviations and statistically significant differences at  $p < .05$ ,  $p < .01$ , or  $p < .001$  are noted within the tables in Table 15. Any differences described within the text of this report refer to statistically significant differences unless otherwise noted. When conducting statistical testing on a number of items (such as the case in this report), caution should be used when interpreting differences in any one single survey item. Throughout the results section we also include some open ended comments related to specific themes.

## **Results**

### **Organizational Commitment and Intent to Leave**

#### TOP FINDINGS

- 33% of AGNR participants stated they were likely to leave the university in the next two years (v. 31% for all of UMD respondents).
- 92% of AGNR participants stated that there was at least one faculty member in their unit who left in the past three years (v. 87% for all of UMD respondents).
- 45% of AGNR respondents had had an outside offer while at UM (compared to 41% of all UMD respondents)
- For AGNR participants who wanted to leave, the most frequent reasons listed for wanting to leave UMD were for a higher salary (67%), for a more prestigious institution or department (33%), or for collegiality (28%).

Table 1. *Participants' reasons for intending to leave UMD*

If you are likely to leave the University or the academic profession in the next two years, what would be the main reasons? [Select up to three]	AGNR N=18 % Selected	UMD % Selected
An offer with a higher salary	67	57
An offer from a more prestigious department or institution	33	41
Lack of collegiality in my unit	28	24
Potential for better work-life balance in a different type of position	22	22
An offer from an institution in a more desirable geographic location	11	16
Retirement	22	15
To be closer to family	17	14
Poor likelihood of tenure/promotion or contract renewal	6	10
Career opportunities at another institution for my spouse/partner	0	9
An offer for a position outside academe	6	8
Better campus climate for women at another institution	0	5
Not well suited to the faculty career	6	4
Better policies related to child-care, parental leave	0	3
Better campus climate for faculty of color at another institution	0	3
Better campus climate for GLBTQ faculty at another institution	0	2

### **Satisfaction with Department and UMD**

#### **TOP FINDINGS**

- 69% of AGNR participants were satisfied with their overall experience working in their unit and 61% were satisfied with their overall experience at UMD (compared to 61% and 60% respectively for all UMD respondents).
- The most AGNR participants were satisfied with the autonomy they have in their role (71%) and the diversity on campus (76%). These are the same top two satisfaction areas for all UMD respondents.

- The least AGNR participants were satisfied with research administration in their unit (18%), the salary and benefits (22%), the assistance they received in finding grants (22%), and the amount of access to TAs/RAs (22%).

Table 2. *Percentage of participants who were satisfied with resources and conditions at UMD*

Survey Item*	AGNR % Satisfied/ Very Satisfied	UMD % Satisfied/ Very Satisfied
The amount of autonomy I have in my role as a faculty member here	71	74
The diversity on campus	76	68
My overall experience working in my unit	69	61
My unit's national reputation	55	61
My overall experience working at UM	61	60
The University's national reputation	69	59
The quality of the graduate students	59	58
The support of colleagues here	62	58
The University's location	48	54
The sense of fit between my values and those of my unit	44	49
The quality of the undergraduate students	49	45
Clerical/administrative support	36	38
The amount of time I spend on research versus teaching and service	33	38
Assistance with research administration in your unit *	18	37
The transparency of decision-making within my unit	34	37
Amount of access to TAs, RAs	22	33
Professional assistance for improving teaching	33	33
Expectations for committee service	28	32
My salary and benefits	22	30
Assistance with finding grants	22	22

\* = statistical difference in means between AGNR and UMD respondents at  $p < .05$

## **Fair Treatment and Diversity**

### TOP FINDINGS

- The majority of AGNR respondents perceive that diversity is important (77% for AGNR v. 80% for UMD), units work hard to create diverse representation (85% for AGNR and 79% for UMD), and female faculty\* and faculty of color receive fair treatment (65% and 62%, respectively, for AGNR v. 60% and 57% for UMD).
- 18% of AGNR faculty agree that they have experienced discrimination (v. 23% for UMD).

Table 3. *Faculty perceptions of diversity, diversity climate, and fairness at UMD.*

Survey Item*	AGNR % Agree / Strongly Agree	UMD % Agree / Strongly Agree
A diversified faculty is important for UM's academic excellence.	77	80
My unit makes a conscious effort to generate a diverse applicant pool for full-time faculty positions.	85	79
The opportunities for female faculty at UM are at least as good as those for male faculty. *	65	60
The opportunities for faculty of color at UM are at least as good as for those for White faculty.	62	57
I have to work harder than some of my colleagues to be perceived as a legitimate scholar.	27	33
I have experienced discrimination (either overt or subtle) in my unit based on my individual identities (e.g. gender, race/ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation).	18	23

\* = statistical difference in means between AGNR and UMD respondents at  $p < .05$

## Work-Life Climate

### TOP FINDINGS:

- 27% of AGNR respondents were satisfied with their unit's culture for work-life balance (v. 42 for UMD).



- 18% of AGNR respondents agreed that the university does what it can to make family life and the tenure track compatible (v. 25% for UMD).
- 16% of AGNR respondents agreed that there are role-models for work-life balance (v. 30% for UMD). \*
- Similar to UMD respondents, AGNR respondents rated many of UMD's policies and programs for work-life balance as valuable, but few respondents took advantage of these programs and many had not heard of the programs.

Table 4. *Perceptions of work-life climate at UMD.*

Survey Item*	AGNR % Agree / Strongly Agree	UMD % Agree / Strongly Agree
I have taken strategic steps toward creating a satisfactory work-life balance.	63	67
In my unit, faculty can be honest with colleagues about family/life roles and responsibilities.	50	57
In my unit it is generally expected that people need to make work their top priority.	59	55
My unit supports faculty scheduling work commitments around family schedules.	48	54
The amount of work my unit expects me to perform makes work-life balance difficult.	63	52
In general, I feel I have control over creating a satisfying work-life balance.	38	48
There is <b>NO</b> bias against family care-giving in my unit.	40	44
I am satisfied with my unit's culture around work-life balance.	27	42
There are role-models in my unit of how to create a satisfying work-life balance. *	16	30
The institution does what it can to make family life and the tenure track compatible.	18	25

\* = statistical difference in means between AGNR and UMD respondents at  $p < .05$

Table 5. *Work-life policies and programs at UMD.*

Policy/Program [% of AGNR respondents]	%		%	%	%
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	Very Valuable	Used it	Anticipate using it	Have not heard of it
Campus childcare	60	8	9	18
Tenure delay/Stop the tenure clock	68	15	5	18
Family leave without pay/FMLA	52	0	10	13
Mentoring program (i.e. assigned mentor)	54	46	30	12
Childcare referral service	40	0	5	28
Dual career support services	40	5	6	43
New faculty orientation	51	55	2	8
Relocation assistance services	30	20	3	32
Part-time tenure track policy	46	0	0	48

It is important to note that the part-time tenure track policy was established December 17, 2009. The Family Care Resource and Referral Service began in fall of 2010. The tenure delay policy was established March 6, 2007.

### **Tenure and Promotion Process**

#### TOP FINDINGS

- More than half of AGNR participants perceived clear requirements and fair processes for tenure (64% and 63%, respectively, for AGNR vs. 68% for both for UMD).
- 45% of AGNR respondents believe the process for advancing to Full Professor is fair (vs. 59% for UMD) and 46% of AGNR respondents perceived clear requirements for promotion to Full Professor (v. 52% for UMD).
- 29% of AGNR respondents had concerns about their own advancement (v. 41% of UMD).\*

Table 6. *Respondent perceptions of own career advancement and institutional support of advancement.*

	Survey Item*	AGNR % Agree / Strongly Agree	UMD % Agree / Strongly Agree
Career Advancement	I have intentionally made choices to focus my career in ways that are personally meaningful to me.	81	85
	I seize opportunities when they are presented to me to advance in my career.	76	75
	I have been strategic in achieving my career goals.	69	66
	Do you have any concerns about your own opportunities to advance in your career at UM? [% that select “yes”] *	29	41
	I feel stuck in my ability to advance in my career.	23	23
	In general, I feel that I have little control over whether I advance in my career.	28	20
Institutional Support of Career Advancement	Faculty in my unit have the freedom to succeed here if they work hard.	68	68
	In my unit, the tenure requirements are clear.	64	68
	In my unit, the tenure process is fair.	63	68
	In my unit, the promotion process for advancing to Full Professor is fair.	45	59
	In my unit, the promotion requirements for advancing to Full Professor are clear.	46	52
	I have received helpful feedback from my department chair/unit head in support of my career advancement.	48	43

\* = statistical difference in means between AGNR and UMD respondents at  $p < .05$

### Evaluation of Teaching, Research, and Creative Work

#### TOP FINDINGS

- About half agreed that their unit supports effective teaching (46% AGNR v. 45% UMD), interdisciplinary scholarship (41% AGNR v. 44% UMD), engaged scholarship (52% AGNR v. 40% UMD), or collaborative research (51% AGNR v. 49% UMD).

Table 7. Respondent perceptions of the Evaluation of Teaching, Research, and Creative Work.

Survey Item*	AGNR % Agree / Strongly Agree	UMD % Agree / Strongly Agree
Collaborative research and grant work where there are co-authors and/or co-principal investigators is encouraged in our unit's reward system.	51	49
There is support in my department for effective teaching.	46	45
Interdisciplinary scholarship is rewarded in my unit.	41	44
Engaged scholarship is rewarded in my unit.	52	40
In our unit faculty are rewarded for taking risks and trying to be cutting edge in their research.	50	37

Note: No statistical differences in means between AGNR and UMD respondents.

### **Management of Teaching, Research and Service Responsibilities**

#### TOP FINDINGS

- 73% of AGNR respondents felt in charge of their research (v. 90% UMD)\*.
- 61% of AGNR respondents felt managing their teaching responsibilities were under their control\* (v. 69% UMD).
- 51% of AGNR respondents felt in control of their participation in service activities (v. 52% UMD), but 28% of AGNR believed it is possible to say no to additional service without consequences for their career (v. 49% UMD)\*.
- AGNR respondents reported less control over their research agenda and less ability to say no to service when compared to UMD respondents overall.

Table 8. *Respondent perception of evaluation and support of research and scholarship.*

Survey Item*	AGNR % Agree / Strongly Agree	UMD % Agree / Strongly Agree
I am in charge of the direction of my research agenda. *	73	90
Managing my teaching responsibilities is largely under my control.	61	69
I feel in control of my participation in service activities.	51	52
It is possible for me to say no to additional on-campus service activities without negative consequences for my career. *	28	49

\* = statistical difference in means between AGNR and UMD respondents at  $p < .05$

## Recognition

### TOP FINDINGS

- More than half of AGNR respondents believed that their research (64% v. 66% UMD), service (55% v. 54% UMD), and teaching contributions (52% v. 57% UMD) were valued by colleagues in their unit.
- 43% of AGNR respondents said they had been nominated by someone at UMD for an award (v. 40% UMD).

Table 9. Respondent perceptions of recognition and valuing one's commitments.

Survey Item*	AGNR % Agree / Strongly Agree	UMD % Agree / Strongly Agree
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Faculty in my unit value my research/scholarship.	64	66
Faculty in my unit are aware of the service that I do for our program.	62	58
Faculty in my unit value my teaching contributions.	52	57
Faculty in my unit value my service contributions.	55	54
Faculty in my unit care about my personal well-being.	56	53
Over the last three years, have you ever been nominated by someone at UM for an award? [% Yes]	43	40

Note: No statistical differences in means between AGNR and UMD respondents.

## Leadership Opportunities

### TOP FINDINGS

- About a third to one half of AGNR respondents said they would like to hold a leadership position at UMD at the institution (36%) and unit\* (45%) levels (v. 37% for UMD).
- 64% of AGNR respondents had leadership self-efficacy (v. 60% for UMD).

Table 10. *Leadership opportunities for AGNR.*

Leadership Position	% that have not applied or been asked	% that applied, but were not selected	% that were asked but did not serve	% that serve now or served previously
Assistant/Associate Chair or Director	82	4	7	7
Department Chair or Director	79	4	4	14
Director of a Center, Institute or Program	74	2	6	19
Assistant/Associate Dean	87	4	4	6
Dean	100	0	0	NA
All Leadership Positions	46	5	13	36

\* NA due to low n for confidentiality

Table 11. *Respondent perceptions regarding leadership.*

Survey Item*	AGNR % Agree / Strongly Agree	UMD % Agree / Strongly Agree
I have the knowledge and skills needed to be an effective leader at this University.	64	60
I would like to serve in a leadership role in the broader UM community (college or University level).	36	37
I would like to serve in a leadership role within my unit. *	45	37
During the past twelve months, how many times have you been encouraged, by anyone at UM, to pursue any leadership positions? [% at least once]	33	36

\* = statistical difference in means between AGNR and UMD respondents at  $p < .05$

### Information, Communication, and Decision-Making

#### TOP FINDINGS

- A majority of AGNR participants felt open to share their opinions (62% v. 63% for UMD), that major decisions are made with adequate input from faculty (57% v. 54% UMD), and that their voice does make a difference in their department (57% v. 60% for UMD).
- Less than half of AGNR participants agreed that their unit was transparent in terms of information sharing (33% v. 35% for UMD), resource allocation (40% v. 32% for UMD) or salary increases (36% v. 31% for UMD).

Table 12. *Respondent perceptions of decision-making and communication.*

Survey Item*	AGNR % Agree / Strongly Agree	UMD % Agree / Strongly Agree
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I feel that I can voice my opinions openly in my unit, even if my colleagues disagree with me.	62	63
I have a voice in decision-making that affects the direction of my department.	57	60
Major decisions in my unit are made with adequate input from faculty.	57	54
Information is available to understand my relative standing among my peers.	33	35
Resource allocation in my unit (e.g. space, funded research assistants) is transparent.	40	32
Decisions regarding salary increases in my unit are transparent.	36	31

Note: No statistical differences in means between AGNR and UMD respondents.

## Faculty Learning

### TOP FINDINGS

- 57% of AGNR respondents reported learning a great deal regarding their research in the past year (v. 72% for UMD).\*
- 42% of AGNR respondents reported that their unit provides an environment that stimulates their academic learning (v. 50 for UMD) and 28% of AGNR respondents reported that the university provides such an environment (v. 43% for UMD).
- The pressure to publish was noted as a barrier to learning for 40% of AGNR respondents (v. 28% for UMD), and the pressure to seek grants a barrier to learning for 57% of AGNR respondents (v. 39% for UMD)\*.
- AGNR respondents were less likely to agree that they had learned a great deal in their research when compared to UMD respondents overall. AGNR respondents also rated certain institutional supports for learning less favorably than UMD overall. AGNR respondents were more likely to agree that the pressure to seeks grants is a barrier to scholarly learning, in comparison to UMD respondents overall.

Table 13. *Respondent assessment of faculty learning and institutional support for learning.*

Survey Item*	AGNR % Agree / Strongly Agree	UMD % Agree / Strongly Agree
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Faculty learning	In the past 12 months, I learned a great deal regarding my research.*	57	72
	In the past 12 months, I set aside time to advance my scholarly learning.*	52	68
	In the past 12 months, I gained knowledge or skills that made me a better teacher.	71	65
Institutional Support of Faculty Learning	My unit provides an environment that stimulates my academic learning.	42	50
	My unit supports my learning external to campus (e.g. conferences).*	58	46
	My unit has financially supported my learning in my field or discipline.	40	44
	My unit has helped me to make room to immerse myself in my learning (e.g., sabbaticals, course release).*	22	43
	The University provides an environment that stimulates my academic learning.	28	43
	The pressure to seek grants is a barrier to my scholarly learning.*	57	39
	The pressure to publish is a barrier to my scholarly learning.	40	28

\* = statistical difference in means between AGNR and UMD respondents at  $p < .05$

## Professional Networks and Collegiality

### TOP FINDINGS

- Most AGNR faculty respondents perceived their professional network was helpful in a number of areas, including influence, visibility, feedback, advice, and awareness of professional opportunities.
- 70% of AGNR respondents said that their core discussion network was mainly off campus (v. 63% for UMD).
- AGNR respondents rated certain aspects of their professional network less favorably than UMD respondents overall. AGNR respondents also rated institutional supports for their

professional network as less favorable than UMD overall, such as mentoring, access to senior colleagues, and personal and career support by faculty colleagues.

Table 14. *Respondent assessment of professional networks and institutional support for professional networks.*

	Survey Item*	AGNR % Agree / Strongly Agree	UMD % Agree / Strongly Agree
	I try to support junior colleagues.	94	90
	My core discussion network includes one or more members who are influential in my field.	78	83
	My core discussion network stimulates my thinking and creativity.	73	82
	My core discussion network includes at least one senior colleague. *	71	81
	My core discussion network enhances my visibility in my field.	72	76
	My core discussion network provides helpful feedback on my research. *	64	73
	My core discussion network is an important source of professional advice when I have a work related problem.	73	72
	My core discussion network is primarily in my direct field.	70	68
	My core discussion network lets me know of professional opportunities.	64	64
	I have found it difficult to establish connections with others in my field.	12	12
	I don't have regular contact with others about my work.	7	7
Institutional Support of Professional Networks	I have relationships with students on campus that advance my scholarly learning. *	46	68
	My core discussion network is primarily off campus.	70	63
	I have relationships with faculty at UM that support me personally. *	53	61
	I have relationships with other faculty on campus that have supported my career advancement (e.g. tenure, promotion, contract renewal). *	43	54
	I am satisfied with the collegiality in my unit.	53	52
	Most of the personal support I receive is from colleagues off-campus.	60	49
	I am satisfied with the opportunity I have to collaborate with other UM faculty.	31	45

I receive useful feedback from colleagues at UM that improves my work.	28	44
I am satisfied with the amount of professional interaction I have with senior colleagues at the University. *	32	41
I have been effectively mentored by someone in my unit.	18	33
My core discussion network is primarily on campus.	24	28
Individuals at this institution have made an effort to connect me with important people in my field.	17	27
I feel isolated in my department.	22	24

\* = statistical difference in means between AGNR and UMD respondents at  $p < .05$

### Perceptions of Productivity

#### TOP FINDINGS

- 36% of AGNR respondents ranked themselves as more productive than researchers in their field and rank nation-wide (v. 51% for UMD).
- 29% of AGNR respondents ranked themselves as less productive than researchers in their field and rank nation-wide (v. 27% for UMD).
- 29% of AGNR respondents believed their unit views them as more productive than researchers in their field and rank nation-wide (v. 38% for UMD).
- 31% of AGNR respondents believed their unit views them as less productive than researchers in their field and rank nation-wide (v. 33 for UMD).

### AGNR Gender Differences

#### TOP FINDINGS

- In most areas of the survey, AGNR responses did not differ significantly by gender ( $p < .05$ ). However, there were 13 items where women AGNR respondents were less favorable than men.

- There were a few patterns of differences in AGNR responses by gender:
  - **Professional relationships at UM:** AGNR women were less likely to state that they receive personal support from UM colleagues, more likely to report they are isolated in their department, and less satisfied with collegiality in their unit when compared to AGNR men.
  - **Fairness of advancement process:** Women AGNR respondents were less likely to agree that faculty can succeed if they work hard and less likely to agree that the tenure process is fair when compared to men.
  - **Diversity and discrimination:** Women AGNR respondents were more likely to agree that diversity is important for UM, less likely to agree that there are at least as many opportunities for women as for men, more likely to agree that they have to work harder than their colleagues to be perceived as legitimate, and more likely to agree they had experienced discrimination.

Table 15. *Survey items that showed statistically significant differences in AGNR responses by gender.*

Survey Item*	Women		Men		p-value
	M	SD	M	SD	
I have relationships with faculty at UM that support me personally.	2.71	1.10	3.46	0.91	<.01

I am satisfied with the collegiality in my unit.	2.70	1.30	3.56	1.00	<.05
I feel isolated in my department.	3.15	1.23	2.41	1.04	<.05
Faculty in my unit have the freedom to succeed here if they work hard.	3.30	1.03	3.95	0.94	<.05
In my unit, the tenure process is fair.	3.25	0.91	4.03	0.93	<.01
I would like to serve in a leadership role within my unit.	2.68	1.20	3.70	1.00	<.01
It is possible for me to say no to additional on-campus service activities without negative consequences for my career.	2.53	0.87	3.22	0.93	<.05
The amount of work my unit expects me to perform makes work-life balance difficult.	3.95	0.71	3.32	1.18	<.05
My overall experience working in my unit	3.37	1.01	4.00	0.87	<.05
A diversified faculty is important for UM's academic excellence.	4.39	0.61	3.71	1.10	<.05
The opportunities for female faculty at UM are at least as good as those for male faculty.	3.35	0.86	4.06	1.06	<.05
I have to work harder than some of my colleagues to be perceived as a legitimate scholar.	3.37	1.17	2.53	0.90	<.05
I have experienced discrimination (either overt or subtle) in my unit based on my individual identities (e.g. gender, race/ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation).	2.94	1.31	1.85	1.03	<.01
Decisions regarding salary increases in my unit are transparent.	2.37	1.12	3.06	1.15	<.05

Notes:

Coding: Strongly Agree = 5; Strongly Disagree = 1