

ADVANCE Program for Inclusive Excellence

Advancing women, transforming the University, investing in a culture of inclusive excellence



College of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences

The UMD ADVANCE Grant Towards an Institution for Inclusive Excellence (UMD = TI2E), the Office of Faculty Affairs, and the Office of Diversity & Inclusion, are all engaged in efforts to improve professional growth opportunities and work environment for UMD faculty. A critical part of those efforts is research to benchmark the current status of faculty work environments and to see if there are important differences by gender, race and ethnicity, career stage, and college. This report presents findings from a spring 2013 UMD work environment survey.

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, advancement, and productivity. Here major findings from the college are reported for respondents. A full institutional report with all data and tables, as well as college-specific reports can be found at the ADVANCE website:

www.advance.umd.edu.

RESPONDENTS

39% (136) of full-time UMD tenure track or tenured CMNS faculty completed the work environment survey. Demographics of respondents included:

- 27% female, 73% male
- 17% Faculty of Color, 83% White
- 10% Assistant, 29% Associate, and 61% Full Professors

SURVEY RESULTS

Comparisons are provided between CMNS and university-wide University of Maryland respondents.

Organizational Commitment and Intent to Leave

- 23.8% of CMNS participants stated they were likely to leave the university in the next two years.
- 36.7% of CMNS respondents had had an outside offer while at UMD.

The most frequent reasons CMNS participants listed for wanting to leave UMD were:

- for a higher salary (26.5%),
- a more prestigious institution or department (25.7%),
- an offer from an institution in a more desirable geographical location (15.4%),
- because of a lack of collegiality in the unit (14.7%), and
- retirement (14%).

Open-ended responses on the topic of organizational commitment and reasons for leaving UMD fell into 5 categories: climate, quality of the institution, better outside offer, tenure, and personal reasons. Comments on climate focused on having experienced a negative climate and lack of support within the institution. In regards to quality, participants noted access to better students at other institutions, the rank and prestige of the institution, and lack of services and opportunities provided and available at UMD. Closely related were comments about having received a better outside offer

based on criteria such as prestige, salary and opportunities. A few participants noted negative tenure decisions as a reason for leaving the institution and others mentioned a variety of personal reasons, many related to a spouse or partner.

DIFFERENCES BY RANK

Assistant Professors were more likely to intend to leave due to lack of collegiality in their unit.

Satisfaction with Department and UMD

- 66.4% of CMNS participants were satisfied with their overall experience working in their unit and 62.8% with their overall experience at UMD.

The smallest number of CMNS respondents were satisfied with:

- professional assistance for improving teaching (32.6%),
- assistance with finding grants (34.4%),
- the transparency of decision-making within their unit (39.8%), and
- priorities and vision of their college/school (39.8%).

DIFFERENCES BY GENDER, RACE, AND RANK

- CMNS women were overall less satisfied than men with support of colleagues, the quality of campus facilities, amount of access to TAs, RAs, and expectations for committee service.
- Faculty of Color were overall more satisfied with the transparency of decision-making within their unit, the quality of campus facilities, and their overall experience working in their unit than White Faculty. They felt more sense of fit between their values and those of their unit.
- Assistant Professors were less satisfied with expectations for committee service than were Associate or Full Professors.

Fair Treatment and Diversity

CMNS respondents were overall more satisfied with their experiences than other faculty at UMD:

- a majority of CMNS respondents perceived that female faculty and Faculty of Color receive fair treatment (63.3% and 66.4%, respectively,

for CMNS compared to 49.3% and 48.1%, respectively, for all UMD respondents),

- 19.7% believe they must work harder than some of their colleagues to be perceived as legitimate scholars (27.3% for UMD).

There were no significant differences between CMNS and UMD respondents in their experience of discrimination (16.1% for CMNS vs. 18.5% for UMD).

DIFFERENCES BY GENDER

CMNS women were more likely than men to report experiencing discrimination in their unit based on their individual identities.

Open-ended responses on the topic of experienced discrimination focused mostly on gender; a few comments addressed age and parenting. Women noted that there was less motivation to hire women, that women were graded more severely on student evaluations, were not included in certain discussions, and were valued less. However, a male participant noted that “less qualified women in my unit get paid more than I do.” Age discrimination was experienced in discussions about hiring decisions and subtly against “young-ish” faculty members. Parents noted difficulties related to parental leave and career advancement.

“Greater support for hiring women faculty in my unit is needed. My colleagues are not sufficiently motivated to hire women.”

“It would be subtle things like not being included in ‘behind the scenes’ discussions by my [all male] colleagues in my specific area. These discussions would be related to hiring, etc. I don’t know if it was that I was a female but it certainly felt that way.”

Work-Life Climate

There were no significant differences between CMNS and UMD respondents in perceptions of work-life climate in the unit and the institution.

DIFFERENCES BY GENDER AND RACE

- CMNS women were less likely to agree that there was no bias against family care-giving in their unit.

- Faculty of Color were overall more satisfied with their unit's culture around work-life balance and were more likely to report role models in their unit of how to create a satisfying work-life balance, than White Faculty.

Career Advancement and Institutional Support of Career Advancement

Most participants perceived clear requirements and fair processes for tenure (75.4% and 79.1%, respectively).

- 67.7% of CMNS respondents believe the process for advancing to Full Professor is fair and 63.1% of CMNS respondents perceived clear requirements for promotion to Full Professor.
- Yet, 28.7% of CMNS respondents had concerns about their own advancement.

DIFFERENCES BY RACE AND RANK

- There were a number of differences by race and rank. Faculty of Color were more likely than White faculty to agree that the tenure process was fair in their unit, and more likely to report that they have received helpful feedback from their department chair/unit head in support of their career advancement.
- Associate Professors were most likely and Full Professors least likely to feel stuck in their ability to advance their career. Associate Professors were least likely and Full Professors more likely to feel that they have freedom to succeed if they work hard. Assistant Professors were least likely to agree that tenure and promotion requirements were clear and fair.

"Leadership in my unit and college has actively blocked initiatives which could have improved student outcomes, lowered cost of content delivery and increased equity, largely because these would require engagement which is inconvenient for them."

"I'm primarily worried about the grim climate for external funding, which is essential for me to advance. This is only partly addressable by UM, but

administrative support is key to putting out good proposals in bulk."

Evaluation of Research and Creative Work

The only area in which there was a difference between CMNS respondents and faculty throughout the rest of the university was in collaborative research and grant work – 58.3% of CMNS respondents agreed that it is encouraged in their unit's reward system, compared to 53.6% of UMD respondents.

DIFFERENCES BY RANK

Associate Professors were more likely to agree that in their unit faculty are rewarded for taking risks and trying to be cutting edge in their research.

Management of Teaching, Research and Service Responsibilities

There was only one significant difference between CMNS and UMD respondents in perception of evaluation and support of teaching, research and service: 45% of CMNS respondents felt that there was support in their department for effective teaching (vs. 53.2% for UMD).

Recognition

There was only one significant difference between CMNS and UMD respondents in perceptions of recognition and valuing one's commitments: CMNS respondents were less likely to believe that faculty in their unit care about their personal well-being (48.4% CMNS and 59.5% UMD).

DIFFERENCES BY GENDER AND RANK

- CMNS women were less likely to agree that faculty in their unit value their teaching contributions.
- Full Professors were more likely to indicate that they have been nominated by someone at UM for an award over the last three years.

Leadership Opportunities

About two thirds of CMNS and UMD respondents agreed that there were opportunities in their unit for faculty to become involved as leaders (58.7% for CMNS and 64.3% for UMD).

Faculty Learning

The only areas in which there was a statistical significance between CMNS respondents and faculty throughout the rest of the university were the learning that contributed to their research and/or scholarly agenda (79.9% CMNS and 77% UMD), and unit financial support of their learning (33.8% CMNS and 52.2% UMD).

DIFFERENCES BY RANK

CMNS Associate Professors were least likely to agree that their unit has helped them to make room among their responsibilities for immersing themselves in their academic learning.

Professional Networks and Collegiality

The only area in which there was a difference between CMNS and UMD respondents is that CMNS respondents were less likely than other faculty at UMD to be satisfied with their professional network in terms of the awareness of professional opportunities (61.2% for CMNS and 74.4% for UMD).

DIFFERENCES BY GENDER AND RACE

- CMNS women were more likely to indicate that they feel isolated in their department.
- Faculty of Color were more likely to indicate that they are satisfied with the collegiality in their unit.

Perceptions of Productivity

There were no significant differences in perceived productivity between CMNS and UMD respondents.

When asked what UM, the CMNS or home unit could do to contribute to faculty productivity, a majority noted better administrative support, physical space and resources, financial and sabbatical support, teaching relief, focus on quality of the graduate students and competitiveness of the graduate programs, reduction of teaching load, support for grant writing, improvement of research culture, hiring research focused and collaborative faculty.

REFERENCES

O'Meara, K., Garvey, J., Niehaus, E., Corrigan, K. (2013). *The Work Environment for Tenure-Track/Tenured Faculty at the University of Maryland: Results from the 2013 UMD Work Environment Survey*. College Park, MD: Univ. of Maryland ADVANCE Program.

O'Meara, K., Kuvaeva, A., Haider, G. (2013). *The UM Work Environment Survey for Tenure-Track/Tenured Faculty: 2013 Results for the College of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences (CMNS)*. College Park, MD: Univ. of Maryland ADVANCE Program.

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