

2023 COACHE Pre-Tenure Faculty Summary Report

Committee Members:

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ISSUE ADDRESSED AND WHY

Our working group was assigned to look at dissatisfaction within pre-tenured faculty. Compared to peer and cohort institutions, UMKC had a higher response rate amongst pre-tenured faculty at 65% (37 respondents out of 57 surveyed). There was dissatisfaction expressed amongst pre-tenured respondents across multiple domains.

When looking at pre-tenured faculty, UMKC was ranked in the bottom 30% of all institutions for the following benchmarks: governance (adaptability), interdisciplinary work, governance (understanding the issue at hand), governance (productivity), governance (trust), governance (sense of purpose), leadership (senior), nature of work (research), tenure expectations (clarity), tenure policies, nature of work (service), appreciation and recognition, facilities and work resources, health and retirement benefits, collaboration, departmental quality, and leadership (departmental). Additional working groups were assigned to assess some of these specific issues, including leadership (senior), tenure expectations, tenure policies, and facilities and work resources.

DATA USED TO INFORM DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to COACHE Steering Committee meetings, our working group met a total of eleven times with regular email correspondence. Two of these meetings included Dr. Lorie Holt, Chair of the COACHE Steering Committee, providing general oversight. One meeting included Dr. Diane Fillion, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, to provide insight on the promotion and tenure process, new faculty orientation, and annual reviews.

Initially, our working group requested additional information from Dr. Carol Sholy, Data and Visual Analytics Specialist, regarding the disciplinary breakdown of pre-tenured respondents. Due to the COACHE data confidentiality agreement, only disciplines with over 5 respondents could be identified. The conservatory accounted for 38% of pre-tenured respondents (n=14), and the School of Humanities and Social Sciences accounted for 16% (n=6).

We comprehensively reviewed and evaluated the data within the COACHE report related to pre-tenured faculty, including the benchmarks, thematic breakouts, and global views. We examined the comparisons between UMKC and our peer/cohort institutions and within campus differences between pre-tenured and tenured faculty. In addition to these meetings and email communications, the working group prepared questions to be asked during two focus groups, one for pre-tenured faculty and one for newly tenured faculty. The focus groups consisted of four faculty members, each of which were likely not representative of faculty at UMKC as a whole.

Based on these conversations, actions, and information from the focus group sessions, our group discussed a number of potential actions to improve pre-tenured faculty satisfaction. However, based on the data available and the low focus group participation, we did not feel many of these recommendations were appropriate to make at this time as it is unclear if the opinions are representative of the majority of pre-tenured faculty.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS THAT WOULD LIKELY STRENGTHEN FACULTY SATISFACITON

RECOMMENDATON	ACTION ITEMS
<p>Monitor the outcomes of the P&T benchmarking process that will be implemented in Fall 2024 to assess if it improved the clarity of P&T policies and expectations (e.g., survey deployed from CPTC in 2026 to assess satisfaction and clarity with new criteria). The implemented process may also address some of the issues noted within focus group sessions relating to the clarity of criteria for external review of the dossier.</p>	<p>In 2026 the CPTC will deploy a survey (re-occurring every five years) designed to assess pre-tenured faculty members’ satisfaction with promotion and tenure criteria. Specific attention will be paid toward assessing clarity and understanding. Consider ways that CAFE can support pre-tenured faculty—i.e. Faculty Scholars Program.</p> <p>Recommendations of the DICES Catalyst grant will be monitored to determine if improvements to the support of women STEM faculty are realized.</p>
<p>Provide scheduled office hours through the Faculty Affairs Office to discuss P&T questions with faculty individually as opposed to open office hours.</p>	<p>The Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and the Faculty Affairs Specialist will schedule, promote, and hold office/coffee hours for the purpose of answering questions relating to the Promotion and Tenure process at UMKC. This will be in addition to the mandatory informational sessions that already regularly occur for faculty seeking promotion and those approaching mandatory review, and will occur on both Volker and Health Sciences campuses. The once-per-semester scheduled office hours will be announced at the mandatory meeting, and likewise promoted via email and FAN.</p>
<p>Host a focus group with pre-tenured faculty within the conservatory to gather more information about dissatisfaction and suggestions for improvement.</p>	<p>Deans will be asked to consult Climate Survey Data in order to determine what the unique concerns of pre-tenure faculty may be. Action plans to address prevailing and/or outstanding concerns will be developed.</p>

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HOW RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD IMPROVE FACULTY LIVES/JOB SATISFACTION

We believe the suggestions related to promotion and tenure could be tremendously beneficial to pre-tenured faculty by addressing clarity of individual unit P&T policies and expectations, improving the preparedness of candidates for the review process, and decreasing faculty stress related to the review process. Additionally, we feel a better understanding of the views of faculty within the conservatory is needed to improve their satisfaction. Gathering additional information may provide a clearer picture of action items necessary to improve satisfaction that are more representative of faculty COACHE survey respondents.