The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education

at the Harvard Graduate School of Education

Report on Shared Governance and Leadership
Borough of Manhattan Community College
2015

Introduction

In 2015, COACHE introduced two new survey modules on Faculty Leadership and Academic Governance.

Across a decade working with provosts and faculty in COACHE, our research team had been asked time and again for advice on improving the vitality of shared governance and developing the quality of faculty leadership. Eventually, we realized that COACHE surveys only indirectly reveal whether faculty and administrators **collaborate effectively to achieve institutional objectives**. Our attention to what can be done to improve faculty circumstances had missed the prior question: is there even any institutional capacity to get that work started?

In addition, our partners and National Advisory Council have observed that COACHE's tightly-coupled modules on senior, divisional, and departmental leadership were incomplete without parallel survey questions concerning faculty leadership in an institution-wide governing body, such as a senate or collective bargaining unit.

We studied the governance literature, interviewed dozens of stakeholders, drafted a questionnaire, solicited feedback on the instrument, and this year, piloted a survey module to determine whether or not academic governance is working well in the eyes of faculty. Our analysis of the scholarship and our own interview transcripts produced what we are calling five "ingredients" of effective academic governance:

- Trust
- Shared sense of purpose
- Understanding of the issue at hand
- Adaptability
- Productivity

As a disaggregation of the faculty-administration relationship beyond merely "love" or "hate," these "ingredients" could serve as a checklist for faculty and administrators. Each point should provoke a constructive dialog among stakeholders about what is necessary to overcome your institution's challenges, from the day-to-day to the existential.

Instrument

A full treatment of shared governance would probably double the length of the COACHE instrument. So, we had to choose our focus: a few, key observable behaviors that are the hallmarks of effective relationships between faculty leaders and senior administrators.

Other surveys ask faculty to rate faculty leaders' and senior administrators' governance behaviors separately. However, we have learned from ten years of observation how this ends: self-evaluations

are always more glowing than evaluations of others, so respondents "lay the blame" squarely at the other party's feet.

So, we designed most items in the COACHE shared governance module based on the shared responsibility of faculty leaders and senior administrators. For example: "Faculty leadership and senior administrators share a sense of responsibility for the welfare of the institution." If most faculty check "I don't know," or give the item a low frequency rating, then you, the senior administrator, have a data-informed basis for a conversation with faculty leadership about your common goals—without a "report card" rating of whose sense (faculty leaders' or administrators') is the "wrong" one.

We also produced a new module on faculty leadership to match related COACHE items on the pace of decision making, stated priorities, and the communication of priorities by most of the key stakeholders in governance.

The combined results, we believe, provide a more complete measure of an institution's capacity for change. In the right hands, these data can become the foundation for constructive dialog between your faculty and administrators—and among your faculty—about how decisions are made.

Report

Much like the Provost's Report, the Governance & Leadership Report strives to provide some sense of your institution's performance relative to the cohort of comparison institutions. However, it must be noted that because these items are new, **the comparison data for this report includes only the 2014-15 cohort**. This refers to new items as well as the questions used in prior administrations of the COACHE Survey (Senior Leadership, Divisional Leadership, and Departmental Leadership).

Until we accrue a critical mass of comparative data from these new survey items and confirm on a larger scale that they are measuring what they are intended to measure, your results are being presented in a broad-brush analysis separate from our standard institutional report. Comparisons to other pilot institutions in this report may be less useful due to the diverse governance cultures and expectations represented among them. What may be more meaningful are this companion report's internal comparisons (by demographic, professional, and divisional groups), which will give you a glimpse at differing perceptions of the quality of the administration-faculty relationship at your institution.

Because cultures and expectations vary widely, no institution could possibly be "ideal" on every dimension. Instead, COACHE analysts will use these results to identify which types of institutions are stronger in what Robert Birnbaum (2004) would call "hard" governance (formal structures and processes) or "soft" governance (the climate and culture around decision making). We can then match campuses with comparable models of governance whose provosts and deans can learn from one another.

At a Glance

The first two pages of your report display your institution's performance relative to the 2014-15 cohort on nine benchmarks of governance and leadership. They include:
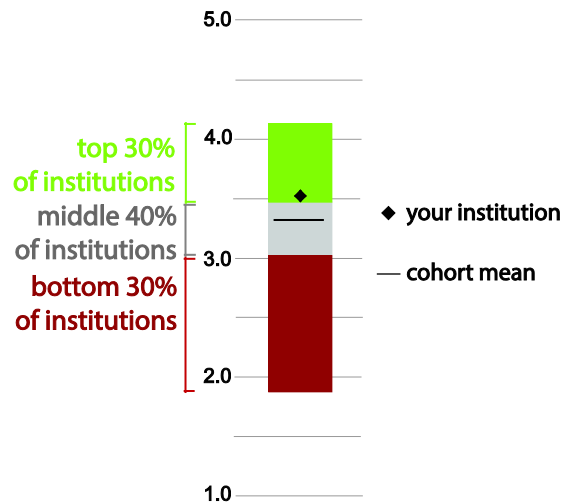
<u>Governance</u>
Productivity
Trust
Shared sense of purpose
Understanding the issue at hand
Adaptability

<u>Leadership</u>
Senior Leadership
Divisional Leadership
Departmental Leadership
Faculty Leadership

Each tri-colored box on the "At a Glance" page represents the range of institutional means (not the distribution of individual respondents) along that dimension. Within each chart, you can see your institution's mean score on the benchmark (♦) and the distribution of the responses of the pilot cohort of institutions as signified by the red, grey, and green boxes. A score in the red section of the column indicates that your institution ranked in the bottom 30 percent of institutions. A mark in the green section indicates your faculty rated a benchmark in the top 30 percent of all institutions. A mark in the grey area indicates a "middle-of-the-road" result.

Dashboard

This dashboard display provides a more detailed look—but still a summary—of your institution's results for the governance and leadership benchmarks, with your results compared to those of the cohort overall. The dashboard also allows you to explore variations within your institution, disaggregating the results by tenure status, rank, gender, race/ethnicity, and, if applicable, academic division.

Each benchmark represents the mean score of several items that share a common theme, providing a *general* sense of how faculty feel about a particular aspect of their experience. Below each benchmark are the individual items nested within that theme. The dashboard displays your institution's mean score, the cohort mean, and to provide further context for comparing your faculty's score to those of the cohort—percentile rank.

On the right side of the dashboard are your intra-institutional comparisons, which highlight the meaningful differences between subgroups on your own campus. For comparisons across professional and demographic subgroups, effect sizes are indicated as *small* (text appears in cell), *moderate* (text appears in cell with yellow highlight), and *large* (text appears in the cell with orange highlight). Trivial differences remain blank. The name of the group with the *lower* rating appears in the cell to indicate the direction of the difference. If this section of your report were blank, your results would suggest parity across subgroups.

Depending on the size and type of your institution, your dashboard also might also display comparisons across academic divisions. At the far right of your dashboard, the faculty mean scores

in academic divisions are compared to your overall institutional mean. Here, effect sizes *and* direction of effect are indicated by circles in shades of green (positive) and red (negative). The legend at the top of the dashboard explains the thresholds for the different colors. In short, a green circle indicates that the academic division's mean is higher than your institutional mean, while a red circle indicates that the division's score is lower than your institutional mean. Effect size is indicated as small (a light green or pink circle, depending on the direction of the effect), moderate (a bright red or bright green circle), or large (a dark green or dark red circle). Trivial differences remain blank. A light gray circle indicates that the sample from an academic division included fewer than five responses.

Even if your campus performs well compared to other institutions, large differences between subgroups or academic divisions can suggest an area of concern. For example, a campus may perform very well overall on a particular benchmark (or individual item), but have great disparity by rank, race, gender, or academic discipline. This is especially true when the number of faculty in a particular subgroup is small. The underrepresented group could be providing lower ratings, but because their numbers are so small, their concerns might get lost in the overall result. This report is designed to surface such differences.

Next Steps

You have this report in your hands, but the most important analysis did not occur at our desk, nor will it occur at yours. Analysis and interpretation are social acts involving the engagement of your faculty. Only in through a collective sensemaking can you begin to improve the mechanisms by which administrators and faculty work together. You might ask:

- What about these data is consistent with our perceptions of our institution? What is surprising?

- Are there practically significant differences in the perceptions of some faculty (by gender, rank, tenure status, or within divisions) that raise concerns?

- Considering the current circumstances at our institution, are some "ingredients" more important than others?

- What are the structures (hard governance) and norms (soft governance) that reinforce the decision making status quo at our institution?

Meanwhile, the staff at COACHE will also be making sense of this pilot's findings. We ask that you engage us over the next few months to help us understand how to improve this tool for measuring the effectiveness of shared governance. We hope to hear from you about:

- … *the ingredients.* How well do these five aspects capture the nature of governance at your institution? Are there any ingredients we missed?

- … *the process for turning these findings into action.* How will you and your faculty move forward on these results?

We will look forward to hearing from you.

The COACHE Governance & Leadership Report

RESULTS

Borough of Manhattan Community College

Shared Governance Benchmarks
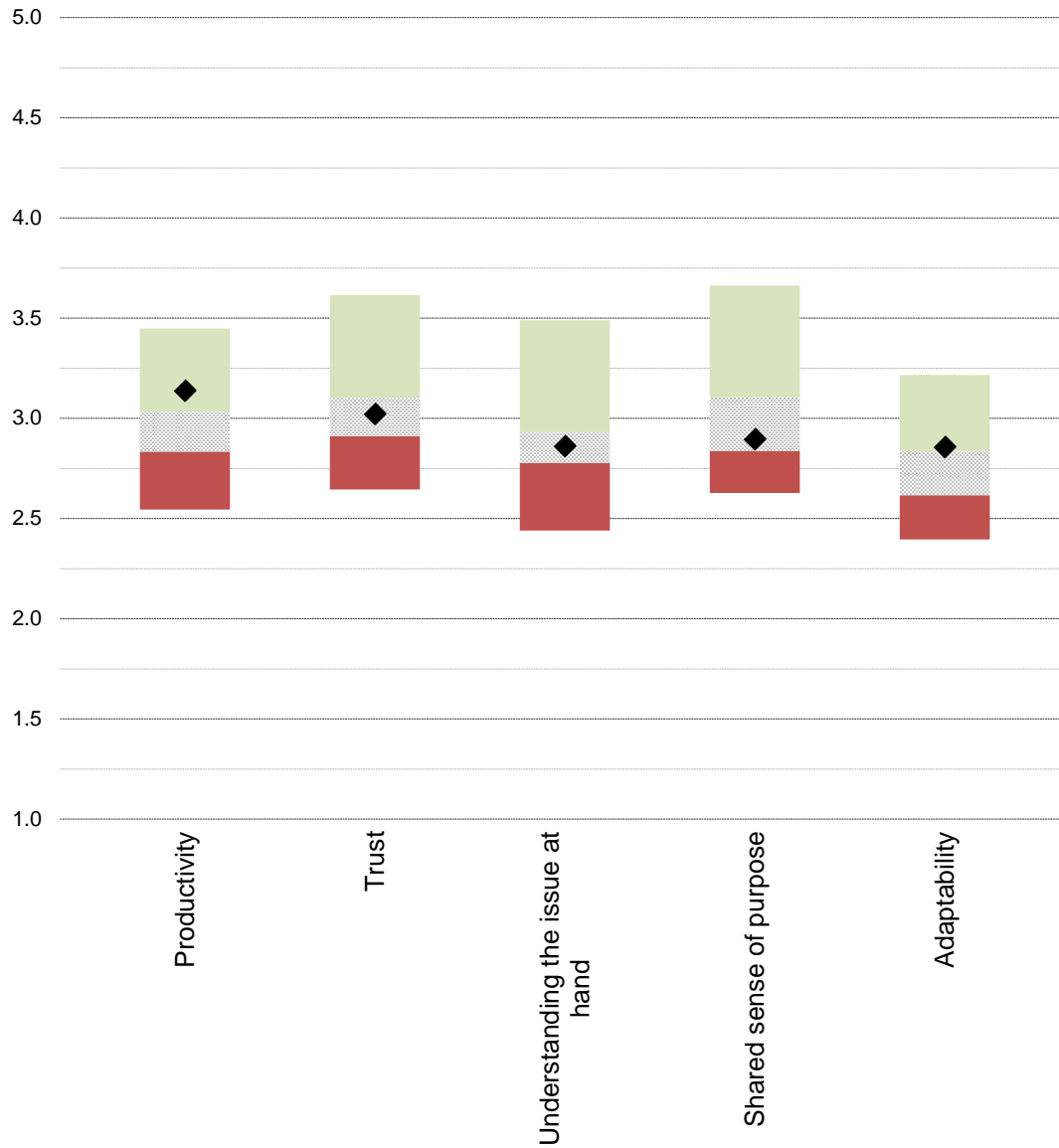
On the whole, rate the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the shared governance system at your institution.

- Very effective
- Somewhat effective
- Neither effective nor ineffective
- Somewhat ineffective
- Very ineffective
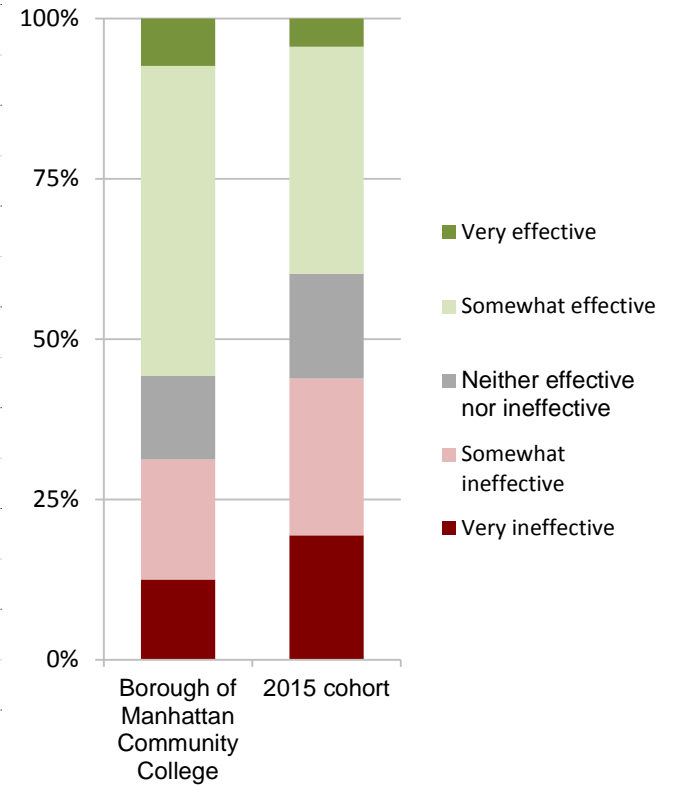
Borough of Manhattan Community College

Leadership Benchmarks
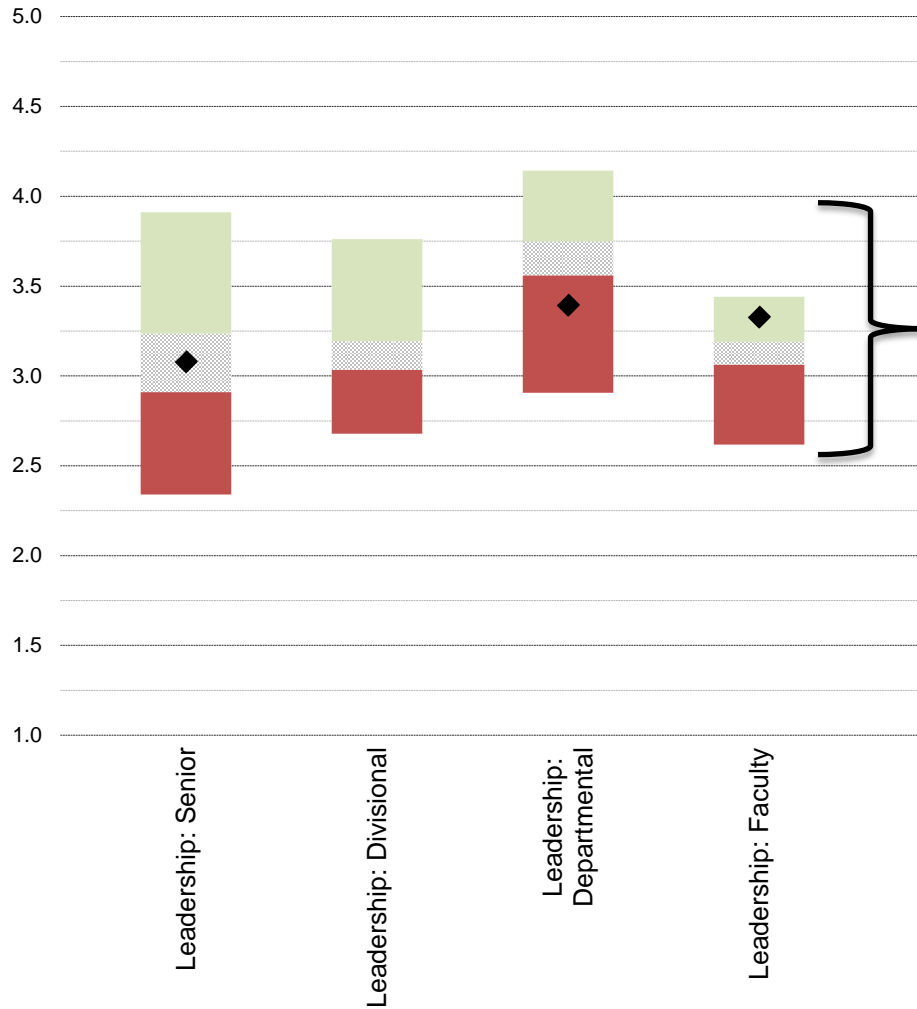
Prior to the questions about faculty leadership, respondents are asked to identify their faculty leadership. The pie chart below shows the distribution of responses.

- Faculty of the whole
- Faculty assembly
- Faculty Senate
- Faculty union or CBU

Borough of Manhattan Community College

	Effect Size Differences between Groups		
	small	moderate	large

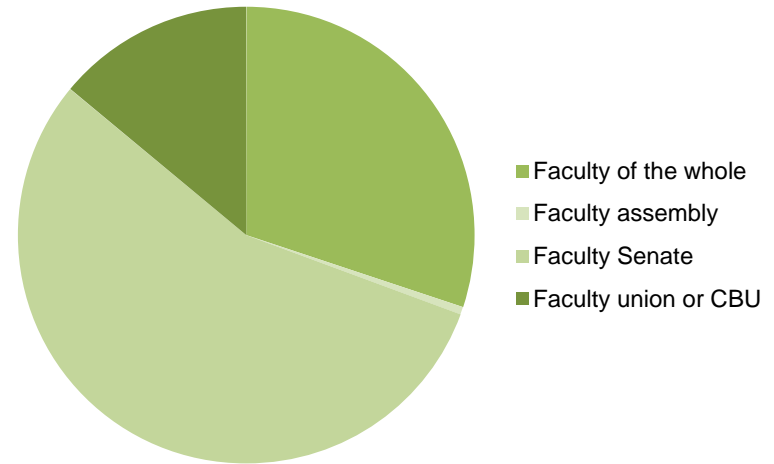|	Borough of Manhattan Community College		2015 cohort		% rank relative to all institutions	pre-tenure compared to tenured	ntt compared to tenure stream (ten-strm)	assoc compared to fulls	women compared to men	faculty of color compared to white faculty
	mean	sd	mean	sd						
Governance: Productivity	3.14	0.97	2.95	0.23	80%	tenured	N<5		men	white
Overall effectiveness of shared governance	3.19	1.20	2.83	0.30	90%	tenured	N<5	full	men	
My committees make measureable progress towards goals	3.32	1.01	3.24	0.16	69%	tenured	N<5	full		white
Public recognition of progress	2.92	1.13	2.86	0.23	65%	tenured	N<5		men	white
Governance: Trust	3.02	0.96	3.03	0.20	59%		N<5			
I understand how to voice opinions about policies	3.14	1.23	3.11	0.24	67%	pre-ten	N<5	full	women	
Cear rules about the roles of faculty and administration	3.04	1.22	2.99	0.23	61%	tenured	N<5			
Faculty and admin follow rules of engagement	3.10	1.15	3.11	0.24	49%		N<5			
Faculty and admin have an open system of communication	2.98	1.11	2.91	0.25	69%		N<5			
Faculty and admin discuss difficult issues in good faith	2.99	1.10	3.08	0.28	43%	tenured	N<5	assoc		
Governance: Shared Purpose	2.90	0.99	2.99	0.26	39%	tenured	N<5		men	
Imporant decisions are not made until there is consensus	2.43	1.12	2.57	0.28	31%	tenured	N<5	assoc		white
Admin ensures sufficient time for faculty input	2.70	1.10	2.89	0.25	22%	tenured	N<5	assoc		white
Faculty and admin respectfully consider the other's view	2.88	1.13	3.03	0.28	31%		N<5	full		
Faculty and admin have a shared sense of responsibility	3.46	1.13	3.41	0.29	63%	tenured	N<5	full	men	foc
Governance: Understanding	2.86	0.98	2.89	0.22	49%	tenured	N<5	assoc		
Faculty governance structures offer opportunities for input	3.03	1.22	2.98	0.23	65%		N<5		women	
Admin communicate rationale for important decisions	2.77	1.11	2.89	0.25	35%	tenured	N<5			white
Faculty and admin have equal say in decisions	2.68	1.20	2.61	0.30	71%		N<5	assoc	men	white
Faculty and admin define decision criteria together	2.92	1.06	2.94	0.24	51%	tenured	N<5	assoc		foc
Governance: Adaptability	2.86	0.95	2.76	0.21	71%	tenured	N<5		men	
Shared governance holds up in unusual circumstances	2.86	1.16	2.76	0.26	73%	tenured	N<5	full	men	
Institution regularly reviews effectiveness of governance	2.73	1.17	2.60	0.23	67%	tenured	N<5	assoc	men	
Institution cultivates new faculty leaders	2.98	1.04	2.91	0.26	67%		N<5			

Means and frequency tables available in the Microsoft Excel version of this report.

Borough of Manhattan Community College

							Effect Size Differences between Groups			
							small	moderate	large	
	Borough of Manhattan Community College		2015 cohort		% rank relative to all institutions	pre-tenure compared to tenured	ntt compared to tenure stream (ten-strm)	assoc compared to fulls	women compared to men	faculty of color compared to white faculty
	mean	sd	mean	sd						
Leadership: Senior	3.08	1.00	3.08	0.32	49%		N<5	assoc		
Pres/Chancellor: Pace of decision making	2.95	1.07	3.11	0.34	37%	pre-ten	N<5	assoc	women	
Pres/Chancellor: Stated priorities	2.84	1.14	3.08	0.39	27%	pre-ten	N<5	assoc		
Pres/Chancellor: Communication of priorities	2.63	1.20	3.04	0.42	14%		N<5	assoc		white
CAO: Pace of decision making	3.40	1.11	3.12	0.34	86%		N<5		men	foc
CAO: Stated priorities	3.34	1.19	3.07	0.36	76%		N<5		men	foc
CAO: Communication of priorities	3.32	1.23	3.06	0.37	75%	tenured	N<5		men	foc
CAO: Ensuring faculty input	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5
CAO: Support in adapting to change	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5
Leadership: Divisional	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5
Dean: Pace of decision making	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5
Dean: Stated priorities	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5
Dean: Communication of priorities	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5
Dean: Ensuring faculty input	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5	N<5
Dean: Support in adapting to change	2.55	1.30	2.57	0.33	45%	pre-ten	N<5	assoc	men	foc
Leadership: Departmental	3.40	1.27	3.63	0.23	10%	tenured	N<5		women	
Head/Chair: Pace of decision making	3.35	1.35	3.58	0.21	47%		N<5		women	
Head/Chair: Stated priorities	3.32	1.33	3.55	0.22	10%		N<5	full	women	
Head/Chair: Communication of priorities	3.32	1.39	3.57	0.22	12%	tenured	N<5	full	women	white
Head/Chair: Ensuring faculty input	3.34	1.46	3.66	0.27	8%	tenured	N<5			
Head/Chair: Fairness in evaluating work	3.64	1.37	3.81	0.25	16%	tenured	N<5			
Head/Chair: Support in adapting to change	3.30	1.64	3.23	0.43	55%	tenured	N<5	assoc	women	foc
Leadership: Faculty	3.33	0.94	3.14	0.21	82%		N<5			
Faculty leadership pace of decision making	3.17	1.03	2.99	0.25	82%		N<5	assoc		
Faculty leadership stated priorities	3.40	0.98	3.16	0.22	88%		N<5	full	men	
Faculty leadership communication of priorities	3.37	1.05	3.16	0.21	84%		N<5	full		
Faculty leadership ensuring faculty voices in decision making	3.38	1.07	3.24	0.21	75%		N<5	full	men	

Means and frequency tables available in the Microsoft Excel version of this report.