

The Ohio State University Faculty Work Environment and Work/Life Quality Report Executive Summary

Background

In the pursuit of its mission to be one of the greatest public research and teaching universities, The Ohio State University (OSU) has set a goal of being an employer of choice that attracts and retains a talented faculty and staff. In its pursuit of this goal, the University has recognized that understanding and addressing faculty work/life issues is critical. Both the Academic Plan and Diversity Plan identify the need to address work/life issues as an integral part of competing for top-quality faculty and building a world-class, diverse faculty and the Office of Human Resources has identified work/life issues as one of its strategic priorities. The SRI study and subsequent creation of the work group on OSU's work/life environment further underscored the need to understand work/life concerns and chart a course of action. This effort comes at a time when a changing workforce, technological innovations, and fiscal challenges exert influences on the University and its faculty.

Given this recognized need to focus on work/life issues in an organizational context as well as the current environment of budget cuts and resource constraints, it was deemed important to develop a factual base for strategic decision-making and for targeting the actions that will have the greatest positive impact on organizational goals. Realizing the need for assessment data to guide shorter- and longer-term work/life policy development, organizational interventions, and investments, the Office of Academic Affairs and Office of Human Resources engaged WFD Consulting to conduct an assessment to investigate faculty experiences and perceptions of the OSU work environment, the work/life issues of importance to them, and faculty satisfaction with integration of personal and professional life. The objective of the assessment is to provide guidance for action planning and implementation by (1) investigating the relationship of both work environment factors and work/life issues to recruitment, retention, faculty commitment, and other organizational objectives and (2) based on those findings, to identify priority areas for action.¹

Methodology

In preparation for the development of the faculty survey, WFD Consulting met with a planning group comprised of faculty and administration chaired by Deans Joe Alutto and Karen Bell. The planning group provided guidance on the research design, survey content, and process. To inform the research questions and survey content, four focus groups were conducted with faculty and thirteen interviews were conducted with deans, Faculty Senate leadership and senior administrators.

¹ In 2001, in collaboration with OSU's Commission on Staff Development and Work/Life, WFD Consulting assessed The Ohio State University staff work/life environment as well as the career advancement and professional development opportunities for employees. Areas of concern that directly impact the University's ability to attract, retain, and inspire the best staff workforce were identified. See WFD Consulting, Inc. (2001), *Staff Professional Development and Work/Life Survey Report*.

The survey questions and data analysis were designed to address the following research questions:

- *What factors influence faculty's decisions to come to OSU and to stay at OSU?*
- *What factors influence faculty members' commitment and connection to the University?*
- *What is the relationship of "excellence" to work/life integration?*
- *What factors in the OSU environment enhance or inhibit full and effective participation of all faculty in their scholarly/professional and personal roles?*
- *What actions would improve the quality of life at OSU and what are the priorities among them?²*

The survey instrument was based on validated measures of work environment and, with the assistance of the planning group, was customized for the OSU faculty audience; items from the 2001 staff survey which were applicable to the faculty were included in the faculty survey as well. The on-line faculty survey was fielded in February 2003; all 3199 regular faculty at the Columbus and regional campuses were invited to participate in the survey. There were 1282 respondents which yielded a response rate of 40%.³

The findings reported here describe current strengths and areas for improvement in the OSU environment. Based on statistical analyses, the findings show what impact work/life and professional development issues have on the University's employer of choice goals. Finally, based on these quantitative findings, the report identifies areas where University action is likely to have greatest impact and makes recommendations in those areas.

Findings

The major findings of the study are:

- ❖ For faculty, important contributors to quality of work/life integration – as well as to attraction and retention – are the supportiveness of their department chair/director and immediate colleagues. Therefore, it is encouraging that over half of faculty say their chair/director and colleagues are supportive of family responsibilities.
- ❖ Whether they see their strength as teaching, scholarly research or service, a majority of faculty feel valued by their academic unit for what they do best.
- ❖ While all categories and cohorts of OSU's faculty report work/life issues and concerns, high levels of stress, burnout and difficulty in integrating work and

² A secondary goal of this assessment is to provide a means of comparing staff and faculty attitudes concerning work/life and career to determine which University actions need to be targeted to each group and which would have common impact and value.

³ Response rates were calculated by college, gender and rank. Survey results were then weighted by college, gender and rank so that the overall findings accurately represent the OSU faculty population as a whole.

personal life are more prevalent among women faculty and those with dependent care responsibilities.

- ❖ The ability to integrate work and personal life correlates with higher levels of satisfaction, engagement and intention to stay, as well as with lower levels of stress and burnout. Therefore, efforts to improve the ability of faculty to successfully integrate work and personal life could have a positive effect on faculty satisfaction and engagement as well as on health, well being and retention, especially of women and minority faculty.
- ❖ Though work/life integration and high productivity are sometimes viewed as incompatible, in practice, these goals do not appear to be in conflict. Highly productive faculty have very similar work/life profiles and concerns as other faculty.
- ❖ The areas for high-leverage organizational impact are in (1) affirming and strengthening the role of deans and department heads in fostering work/life integration, (2) providing resources, technology and flexibility to alleviate stress and dissatisfaction associated with workload, and (3) developing programs and policies to address commonly experienced dependent care and life cycle issues.

More specific findings are as follows:

The OSU faculty population is comprised of several distinct groups; while some findings are true for the faculty as a whole, most findings are specific to rank and gender. Six subgroups emerge with differing demographics, attitudes, experiences, and needs.

The influences of rank and gender play out in a number of ways. Male full professors are the most satisfied with their faculty positions and with their ability to integrate their academic, personal, and family roles. Associate professors, regardless of gender, are the most dissatisfied with their faculty positions. Women faculty, especially associate and full professors, are more dissatisfied than male faculty with their ability to integrate their academic and personal and family roles.

Significant differences in personal and family demographics by gender and rank contribute to distinct work/life needs and experiences. A significant proportion of the faculty is comprised of male full professors who have worked at OSU for many years. Almost all of the male faculty are married/partnered and they are 2.5 times more likely than female faculty to have a spouse/partner who is available full-time or part-time to assist with family and household-related responsibilities. On the other hand, one-fourth of the female faculty are single. More than 6 in 10 assistant rank faculty already have children at home or are planning to have or adopt a child soon compared to 3 in 10 at the full professor rank. Six in 10 minority faculty also have children at home or are planning to have or adopt a child soon.

Somewhat less than two-thirds of faculty are satisfied with their faculty positions and feel engaged at OSU, two dimensions of commitment to the organization. Commitment, which is a measure of satisfaction and engagement, is associated with having a manageable workload, supportive chair or director, value and respect, and quality of work/life integration.

Across a cluster of commitment indicators – including satisfaction with their faculty position, recommending OSU to other faculty, belief that they would accept a position at OSU again, and loyalty, 6 in 10 faculty members give favorable ratings. These ratings of satisfaction and commitment are strongly related to feeling valued and respected, having a supportive department chair or director, feeling that work expectations are manageable, and being aligned with the direction of the University as outlined in the Academic Plan.

The results of the study show that satisfaction with one's position is closely related to one's perception of success in integrating academic, personal, and family roles. Similarly, family considerations are a top factor in many faculty members' decision to continue to work at OSU. About half of faculty feel their chair/director is supportive of personal and family responsibilities, but one in three feels the organization and its policies are supportive of personal life.

The majority of faculty perceive that what is expected of them in terms of their teaching and service responsibilities is reasonable. However, when combined with increased administrative responsibilities and expectations for obtaining funding for scholarship and creative activities, many feel that too much time is required overall and resources are too scarce to meet the intense demands of faculty positions. Half the faculty show signs of stress and burnout and many commented about work overload. Symptoms of stress and burnout are greatest among women faculty and faculty with dependent care responsibilities.

Two-thirds or more of the faculty perceive that the teaching, service, and advising requirements of their positions are “about right”; one-third feel that the expectations are too high for administrative responsibilities and for securing outside funding for scholarship and creative activities. Half or more of faculty report a lack of resources and internal funding for scholarship and creative activities as well as a lack of networking time to develop professional relationships with other faculty.

Faculty responses to the majority of Stress and Burnout Index items indicate that half or more of the faculty experience stress. Possible costs to OSU are evidenced in reports of impacts on health; about half the faculty report that they feel emotionally or physically drained at the end of the day and that the stress of meeting work and personal obligations affects their health. Stress and burnout are also related to faculty dissatisfaction and intent to leave OSU in the next two years. There are significant differences for stress and burnout among faculty groups, according to gender, rank and parenting status:

- Consistent with the quality of work/life integration finding, male full professors exhibit lower stress and burnout than other faculty.
- Female faculty score higher on stress and burnout than male faculty at the same rank.

- Consistent with the finding for satisfaction with their faculty position, associate professors have the highest stress and burnout scores.
- Faculty with neither dependent children nor adult dependents report less stress and burnout than faculty who have dependent care responsibilities.

Findings show productive faculty are similar to peers on many dimensions, including work/life support, commitment, and quality of work/life integration. This suggests that productivity and quality of work/life integration are not a “zero sum game.”

Overall, faculty who rate themselves as more productive than their colleagues on teaching, scholarship, or service are no more likely to report dissatisfaction with their ability to integrate their work with personal and family responsibilities. Like other faculty, they have made work/life tradeoffs and they experience similar levels or lack of work/life support at OSU. They experience similar levels of strain and resemble other faculty in their intent to stay or leave OSU. (While a large number of statistical analyses were conducted, only a small number of specific subgroup differences exist between highly productive faculty and their peers on satisfaction, work/life support, and stress and burnout.)

More than three-fourths of the faculty feel respected by University constituencies and half feel connected to their departments, schools, or programs, but fewer feel valued for their contributions to the University and connected to it. Only two-fifths of the faculty feel positive about the direction of the University as defined in the Academic Plan.

More than three-fourths of the faculty feel respected by their faculty colleagues, staff, and students. More than half the faculty have a strong connection to their department, school, or program; one-fourth have a strong connection to their college; and one-sixth have a strong connection to the University at large. The academic reputation of the unit or program and faculty colleagues are consistently mentioned as the top two reasons to come to OSU, and faculty colleagues are also the top consideration in the decision to stay at OSU.

When asked if they feel valued for their teaching, scholarly, and service contributions, about half of the faculty agree to feeling valued for these work products by their academic units and more than one-third agree to feeling valued by OSU overall for these work products. Male associate professors are the least likely to feel valued for their contributions by the University and their academic units, which correlates to lower scores for job satisfaction. Male full professors are more likely than others to feel valued for their contributions. Comments suggest that feelings of value and respect are also influenced by how the discipline, department, or college is perceived and treated by the administration.

Two fifths of the faculty feel positive about the direction of the University as outlined in the Academic Plan and one-third disagree with the direction. Agreement or disagreement with the direction of the University does not appear to be influenced by rank or tenure status or ratings of productivity.

The two professional development programs or resources faculty most highly value are: (1) one academic quarter with a research focus and no teaching responsibilities, and (2) resources and technology to work from home. These results do not vary by gender or rank.

When asked about the potential value of various policies and programs, faculty most often identified one academic quarter with a research focus and no teaching responsibilities as well as resources and technology for their home office. Faculty report that additional technical and administrative staff support would be greatly valued – to handle increased demands for grant writing and managing class rosters, for example. Female faculty and those who rate themselves as performing above average service say more administrative staff support would be of great value.

Faculty who rate their productivity as above average are more likely than their peers to assign great value to more opportunities to influence key decisions and more opportunities for professional interaction among faculty members.

Three-fifths of associate and full professors have not taken professional leaves for which they have been eligible. Those professors not taking these leaves cite financial and family reasons, as well as department workload.

Just over one-third of associate and full professors have used the professional leaves for which they have been eligible. Those who have not taken advantage of these opportunities cite loss of income, dependent care considerations, and spouse/partner employment issues as reasons. In written comments, many say that they have too many responsibilities at OSU to take a leave and that there would be either no one to fill the void or they did not want to be responsible for increasing the workload of already overworked colleagues.

Faculty seek greater assistance from department chairs/directors: two-fifths would greatly value greater assistance to ensure success of their work and more than one-fourth would greatly value support from chair/director when personal and/or family needs arise.

Although over half of faculty say their chair/director and colleagues are supportive of family responsibilities, faculty report they would value greater assistance from their chair/director in ensuring the success of their work and greater support from their chair/director when personal or family needs arise. The need for more help and support for faculty careers is also evident in the great value that women as well as men at the assistant rank assign to having an effective mentoring program.

Survey results demonstrate the pivotal role that the department chair plays: faculty rate greater assistance from the chair/director in ensuring the success of their work as the program or resource most important to their continuing at OSU. Faculty who are satisfied with their quality of work/life integration are twice as likely as other faculty to have a department chair or director who they see as supportive of their personal/family responsibilities.

Fewer associate women expect to retire from OSU than other associates and full professor faculty and fewer minority faculty expect to retire than faculty overall.

The faculty pipeline is comprised of people who are markedly different in life stage, family composition, attitudes and experiences from the current senior faculty. Overall, one in five faculty members plans to leave OSU in the next three to four years, but higher proportions of turnover intention for assistant and associate women and minorities pose a threat to diversity representation. Survey results show that women faculty report more stress and burnout and more dissatisfaction with their work/life integration, and that faculty who are more dissatisfied with their faculty positions and/or with work/life integration will be much more likely to leave the University soon.

Among those who are planning to leave OSU in the next two years, several programs and supports are of more value than to the faculty at large: more support from the department chair or director to ensure success of their work; support when personal or family responsibilities arise; and one quarter with a research focus and no teaching responsibilities. In general, assistant rank women highly value extension of the tenure clock, and among women who expect to leave OSU soon, interest in the extension of the tenure clock is even greater.

Some faculty have difficulty integrating faculty responsibilities with their parenting roles.

About one-third of women have delayed starting a family due to the progress of their academic careers, twice as many as their male counterparts. Those who delay starting families are less satisfied with their positions at OSU and their ability to integrate their work and personal roles.

Very few faculty members take unpaid time off for a child's birth or adoption. A significant proportion of female assistant professors as well as faculty planning their first child identified paid maternity/parental leave as a greatly valued benefit.

For faculty members who have children, many have difficulty with some child care arrangements, especially back-up care and temporary care when schools are closed. More women than men report child care difficulties, which is to be expected given that male faculty are more likely to have a spouse/partner who does not work full-time outside the home.

Adult dependent care is a current or future concern for two-fifths of faculty.

Two-fifths of faculty are or will soon be facing the challenges of caring for an adult dependent. Female associate professors are more likely than others to report this additional caregiver role. The majority of faculty caregivers provide "hands-on" care or manage financial and legal matters for their adult or elderly dependents. Many faculty who are currently caring for adult dependents are challenged when addressing long-distance caregiving issues. As with child care, women faculty are more likely than men to report difficulty with adult dependent care issues.

Overall faculty would most value work/life benefits or programs that assist with employment opportunities for spouses/partners or allow for phased-in retirement. Interest in many work/life programs varies by gender, rank, and family demographics. Faculty who rate themselves as highly productive value the same work/life programs as their colleagues.

Regarding benefits to assist in managing work and personal life, faculty report that assistance with opportunities for spouse/partner employment and phased-in retirement would be highly valued; these priorities reflect the age and life stages of the faculty and the prevalence of dual-earner households. Domestic partner benefits are also highly valued by all faculty groups, except full professor men.

Assistant professors value several programs that support work/life integration, especially paid maternity/parental leave. Faculty members planning their first child greatly value paid maternity/parental leave and a formal program of teaching relief for family care. In addition, faculty with children under age 18 value emergency back-up care and child/elder care referral services. One-third of assistant and associate women faculty would reduce hours and salary in order to have more personal time.

Summary of Faculty Findings for Gender and Rank Groups

There is variation among faculty groups with regard to careers, family responsibilities, work/life integration issues, and satisfaction with working at OSU. These summaries highlight some of the distinctions by gender and rank. (Note: An additional paragraph further describes differences found in the associate faculty rank that may be attributed to length of service.)

Male Assistant Professors

- Youngest of the faculty groups and have been at OSU the shortest amount of time
- Most likely to currently have children under age 18 or to be planning children
- Opportunities for career development as well as salary and compensation package are important factors in deciding whether to remain at OSU. The ability to balance work with personal and family responsibilities is also important
- Would greatly value assistance with spouse/partner employment
- Would highly value one academic quarter devoted to research, resources and technology to work from home, as well as effective mentoring

Female Assistant Professors

- One of the youngest faculty groups and more likely to be planning or to have children under age 18 already
- Family considerations, faculty colleagues, and the ability to balance work with personal and family roles are important factors in deciding whether they remain at OSU
- Feel valued by their department or school for scholarship and teaching but less likely to report feeling respected by staff and students
- One of the groups most dissatisfied with their ability to integrate work and personal/family roles
- Rate several professional development resources of great value including more support from chair/director with regard to work and personal responsibilities, resources and technology to work from home, and effective mentoring
- Rate several of the work/life programs and resources of great value such as paid maternity/parental leave, assistance with spouse/partner employment, and formal program of teaching relief for family care among others
- High scores on stress and burnout

Male Associate Professors*

- Least satisfied with their faculty positions (similar to female associate professors)
- Salary and compensation package and faculty colleagues are important factors in deciding whether to remain at OSU
- More likely to feel teaching loads and expectations for securing outside funding are too high
- Least likely to feel valued by OSU and their departments or schools for scholarship, teaching, and service contributions
- Least likely (similar to female associate faculty) to feel respected by faculty colleagues
- Highest scores among male faculty for stress and burnout
- Value one quarter devoted to research and resources and technology to work from home

Female Associate Professors*

- Most likely to have or expect adult dependent care responsibilities
- Least satisfied with their faculty positions (similar to male associate professors) and also least likely to report they would recommend OSU
- More likely to feel teaching loads and administrative responsibilities are too high and time with faculty colleagues is too scarce
- More likely to rate themselves above average in teaching
- Least likely (similar to male associate professors) to feel respected by faculty colleagues
- Would greatly value one academic quarter devoted to research and resources and technology to work from home, as well as more support from chair/director with regard to work and personal responsibilities and part-time post tenure appointments
- One of the groups most dissatisfied with their ability to integrate work and personal/family responsibilities
- High scores on stress and burnout and low scores for work/life support

Male Full Professors

- Oldest of the faculty groups and less likely to have children under age 18 at home
- Have the highest job satisfaction and are the most loyal to OSU and most likely to retire from OSU
- Rate themselves average for scholarship and service
- Most likely to feel valued by OSU for teaching, scholarship, and service
- Report the strongest connections to their academic disciplines, departments, and the University
- Most satisfied with their ability to integrate work with personal and family roles
- Lowest scores for stress and burnout
- Value phased-in retirement, one academic quarter devoted to research, resources and technology to work from home, and increased technical staff support

Female Full Professors

- One of the oldest groups and less likely to have children under age 18 at home
- Faculty colleagues and opportunities for career development are important factors in their decision to stay at OSU
- Feel administrative responsibilities are too great while time with faculty colleagues is too scarce
- Least likely to feel above average in teaching, but likely to rate themselves above average for scholarship and service
- Feel valued by OSU and their department or school for scholarly contributions
- Would greatly value one academic quarter devoted to research and more opportunity to influence key academic decisions

*** Associate Rank Faculty Findings by Length of Service**

Higher levels of dissatisfaction and lower favorable ratings on many items prompted further investigation within the associate rank faculty to determine whether associates with longer service at OSU could account for these findings. These analyses revealed that only some of the less favorable ratings were related to 15 or more years of service at OSU. Associate faculty with 15 or more years of service to OSU are more dissatisfied with their positions and feel less valued and respected than associate faculty with fewer years of service. Associate faculty with fewer than 15 years of service report more stress and burnout and less satisfaction with the ability to integrate work and personal roles. Other less favorable ratings are not due to the length of service at OSU but are true of associate faculty overall.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The findings suggest a number of avenues by which OSU can increase faculty job satisfaction and commitment. Because faculty vitality and engagement are central to a successful university, increasing satisfaction and commitment will contribute to the organizational goal of achieving world class excellence. The survey results clearly show that satisfaction and commitment with one's faculty role and intention to stay are strongly associated with feeling respected and valued, having positive collegial relationships and developmental opportunities, and being able to integrate personal roles with one's professional position. It appears, moreover, that productivity and quality of work/life integration can co-exist; high-performing faculty enjoy an overall quality of work/life integration that is no less personally fulfilling than that of their lower-performing colleagues.

The data make a strong organizational case for taking action. Though a significant cadre of faculty are satisfied with their personal and professional lives, the levels of dissatisfaction and lack of alignment with organizational goals as well as persistent evidence of concern about workload and stress pose a threat to faculty well-being and, thereby, to the organizational environment and culture. Without organizational change and increased career and personal support, it appears that assistant and associate professors, who have more diverse needs, either will not be as successful or satisfied as current senior faculty and/or will leave OSU in greater numbers. The findings lead to the conclusion that achieving organizational success and sustainable diversity in OSU's faculty depends on making intentional changes in the career and personal supports for faculty.

Because this is a time of resource constraints, it is reassuring that many of the actions suggested by the findings are related to changes in the work environment, behaviors and culture, that require focus and persistence but not large financial investments. The direction of recommended actions is in line with principles and objectives articulated in the Academic Plan and are consistent in many respects to findings from the Commission on Faculty Development and Careers as well as to the Staff Professional Development and Work/Life Report findings. The recommendations are in four areas: (1) establishing leadership for a coordinated response and follow-through on the findings; (2) affirming and strengthening the role of deans and department heads for career development and fostering a positive work environment; (3) alleviating sources of work overload and stress, including greater flexibility in leaves and career paths; and (4) providing supports for common concerns and difficulties in personal and family life.

Priorities for Action

I. Designate leadership and roles, at both the University and college level, for (1) communicating these findings and their implications for organizational excellence, and (2) defining and implementing a coordinated and consistent response.

Leadership and coordination is required to assure an integrated and comprehensive response to these findings and to effectively engage deans and department heads in understanding the findings, responding consistently, and maintaining focus on the issues defined in the study.

- ❖ Develop and implement a communication plan for sharing information about these findings and recommendations, and fostering constructive dialogue among leadership at the University as well as college and department levels.
 - Create a “road show” and schedule for sharing information and action plans at the unit and department level.
 - Make available to deans the unit level survey information for purposes of benchmarking and comparison with the University as a whole.
- ❖ Clearly define responsibilities and expectations for follow-up, i.e., what the University will do and what colleges will be responsible for doing.
 - The University provides direction, resources, guidelines for practice, and definition of organization-wide policies and programs.
 - Colleges and departments focus on fostering a positive work environment, creating innovative approaches and models to getting work done, supporting individuals in career development and communicating support for their personal lives.
- ❖ Wherever synergies are possible, coordinate actions and activities that address faculty issues with those that address staff issues. The greatest opportunity for synergy appears to be in creation and expansion of work/life programs and services.
- ❖ Establish a monitoring process to assess progress and to assure continued focus on critical issues.

II. Affirm and support the pivotal role of deans and chairs for faculty career development, satisfaction and work/life integration.

The study findings are clear that deans and chairs/directors are the most powerful influences in creating a work environment that is conducive not only to teaching and scholarship, but also to maintaining personal roles and a sense of work/life integration. Therefore the University must both hold deans and chairs/directors accountable for fostering faculty well-being and productivity, and also provide resources and support to fulfill that responsibility.

- ❖ Define expectations and create accountability for faculty support and development.
 - Establish an expectation that goals and philosophy for faculty development be included in a department’s Mission and Pattern of Administration. Annual reports from deans and chairs/directors should include an account of activities and resources focused on supporting faculty development and building a supportive and collegial work environment.
 - Promote consistent practice in terms of career and performance discussion and goal setting on an annual basis for all faculty at all levels. It is important that these discussions be positioned as developmental and positive, not just corrective or remedial.
 - Deans should play an important role in assisting chairs and directors and holding them accountable for providing a developmental and supportive work environment.

- Provide opportunities for faculty to provide ongoing feedback to chairs and deans regarding chair support for faculty development and well being. Suggested process: Ensure that the annual review process for all faculty provides opportunity for discussions about individual faculty development needs. Deans should monitor those processes to ensure that such issues are considered and chairs should reflect such concerns in annual reports to their deans. The provost should include discussion of such issues in the annual reports from each college and regional campus.
- ❖ Augment training and resources for deans and chairs on coaching and mentoring and ways of fostering faculty development.
 - Develop and share guidelines and models for mentoring and for fostering environments of collegial interactions and supportive development.
 - Enhance people development skills as part of training, selection, performance review and reward criteria for deans and department chairs.
- ❖ Provide university support for fostering collegial interactions and developmental activities at the college and department levels.
 - Highlight and celebrate best practices and creative approaches; recognize departments and colleges that are creative or exemplary in creating a supportive and developmental environment.
- ❖ Establish a career resource to proactively enhance support for collegiality and mentoring and for faculty to consult when they feel department support is lacking or they are experiencing difficulties they are reluctant to discuss with their department chair.
 - Coordinate with The Women's Place program to track and maintain support for female faculty.
 - Provide mentoring opportunities, to enhance what may be offered at the department level.
 - Provide networking and opportunities for collegial support and peer conversations, especially for, but not limited to, minority faculty.
 - Facilitate conversations with department chairs who are identified as possibly providing inadequate support and development.

III. Address sources of work overload and stress, through re-assessing how work is done and enhancing flexibility in career paths and professional leaves.

The long-term effectiveness, commitment and satisfaction of faculty are jeopardized by a high level of stress and concern about workload and resources. Recognizing that this is a time of resource constraints and cost containment, there are nevertheless several possibilities for shifting or re-organizing work demands. This would not only relieve some stress, but, just as important, it would convey the University's concern for faculty well-being and respect for their time—a concern which many faculty now believe is missing. In addition to relieving faculty workload, work delegation supports the developmental interests of administrative staff who, according to the staff survey, have lower levels of stress and may have the capacity to assume some of the administrative and service-related tasks currently required of faculty.

- ❖ Expand the availability of the option for one academic quarter annually that has a focus on research and no teaching responsibilities.
 - Facilitate implementation by gathering and sharing information on how this option has worked thus far.
 - Track and monitor usage and outcomes for scholarship and satisfaction.
- ❖ Evaluate and modify the professional leave program in light of the survey data on the causes for its under-utilization. Assure consistent implementation and availability including guidelines on how to effectively operationalize professional leaves in a resource constrained environment.
- ❖ Improve resources and technology to efficiently work from home.
 - Provide additional technical support for trouble-shooting and assistance with daily and administrative tasks (e.g., management of class rosters, grade submission).
 - Increase availability of high-speed Internet access. Partner with a local service provider to offer faculty a group rate or offer a University discount.
- ❖ Increase administrative and technical support available to faculty.
 - Before taking the costly route of increasing administrative staff support and technical staff support, investigate whether current staff are effectively utilized and whether shifting work or work process improvement could result in better support for faculty.
 - Technical support is one of the top three programs that faculty would value – faculty report a variety of technical support issues from lab equipment to animal research concerns to computer problems.
- ❖ Provide training and resources to support grant writing.
 - Create a resource (possibly through shared services with the development office or training of selected administrative staff at the department level) to assist faculty with grant writing procedures, templates, production, and technical requirements, thus resulting in process improvements, greater efficiency and overall time savings.
 - Investigate whether the resource might be self-funding through a share of grants obtained.

IV. Develop and implement programs and policies to address common difficulties encountered when combining faculty responsibilities with family and personal life.

A number of work/life concerns including back-up care needs and assistance with finding spouse/partner employment are prevalent, especially among junior faculty and female associate faculty. Several of the issues that emerged as concerns and difficulties were also identified as recommended actions for staff (indicated by asterisk*) and consequently have potential for broad impact and university-wide action. Each of the following could have an independent positive impact on stress and faculty appreciation. However, for maximum impact the effort needs to be bundled and communicated within a comprehensive work/life strategy.

- ❖ Establish a paid parental leave policy for the University.*

- ❖ Increase options available for back-up child care—for emergencies and school holidays.*
 - Expand the OSU Child Care Center's capabilities to provide back-up care, including for school-age children. As an educational institution, OSU should utilize its internal academic expertise and teacher preparation programs to develop innovative solutions to address the need for school holiday and vacation care. Internal expertise can contribute age-appropriate and challenging curricula, and programs can be designed to fit with the University's academic calendar.
 - Partner with Action for Children (located in Columbus) or other national back-up care specialists to develop a back-up care provider registry and to provide informational materials to help faculty prepare and use the care effectively. Educational materials and provider information can be disseminated through either electronic or printed media.

- ❖ Continue to address the child care needs of faculty by enhancing parents' familiarity and awareness of community resources and monitor demands at OSU Child Care Center.
 - As the new day care center begins operations, monitor the unmet demand for care.
 - Offer a resource and referral child care program. Use the assistance in finding child care options as part of recruiting new faculty and to increase faculty satisfaction with current offerings.
 - Enhance on-line information about dependent care by expanding the content and increasing the links among existing OSU resources. Make this information available in locations that both faculty and staff access on a regular basis.

- ❖ Establish supports for people who have elder care responsibility.*
 - Offer an eldercare resource and referral program that can help with both local and long-distance caregiving needs.
 - Promote and expand on-line information for elder caregivers by expanding the content and increasing the links among existing OSU resources. Make this information available in locations that both faculty and staff access on a regular basis.
 - Increase awareness of existing OSU-sponsored eldercare seminars and support programs. Utilize the internal expertise and resources of the Office of Geriatrics and Gerontology in the College of Medicine and Public Health and other disciplines to provide education and support services.
 - Offer geriatric case management utilizing the resources of the Office of Geriatrics and Gerontology in the College of Medicine and Public Health and/or other eldercare agencies.

- ❖ Provide resources and assistance in spouse/partner employment.
 - Make OSU's professional development resources and career counseling available to faculty spouses/partners.
 - Through Employment Services or the Office of Human Resources, establish programs to assist spouses/partners with access to internal jobs.

- As a large Columbus-area employer, partner with other Columbus-area employers to develop networks to increase employment opportunities for faculty families. In addition, OSU should work with Columbus economic development agencies, the Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce, and other area business organizations to promote Columbus and Central Ohio as a great place to live and work.
- ❖ Investigate offering domestic partner benefits and phased-in retirement.*
 - Increase awareness of current domestic partner benefits and determine what additional benefits are of interest.
 - Determine feasibility of phased-in retirement and continuation of benefits after retirement.
- ❖ Create an identity for the organization's work/life efforts and designate responsibility for development and implementation of work/life programs.*
 - Create centralized resources pertaining to work/life issues and programs.
 - Increase visibility and awareness of current and new programs; make use of the already-effective "Life Events Website."

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

September 2003

Planning Group:

Joseph Alutto, Co-chair

Karen Bell, Co-chair

Susan Fisher

Judy Fountain

Larry Lewellen

Sally Rudmann

Barbara Snyder

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?