

Wake Forest University HERI Faculty Survey Results 2014

While Wake Forest faculty compared favorably nationally to institutions administering the 2014 Faculty Survey (particularly in areas of increasing the prestige of the university, scholarly productivity, and satisfaction with compensation) they trailed very highly selective peers and 2010 Wake respondents in a number of areas. Still, positive, longitudinal trends within Wake Forest included overall job satisfaction, satisfaction with opportunity for scholarly pursuits, and satisfaction with teaching load.

The Faculty Survey is a national survey directed at UCLA by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) and is useful for determining from faculty their satisfaction in a number of areas across the university, their focus and goals at the university, and how they spend their time. Wake Forest first administered the Faculty Survey in 1998 and has administered the instrument regularly since.

All of Wake's full-time faculty, librarians with faculty status, and teaching administrators on the Reynolda Campus received invitations to participate in the electronic survey in March 2014. A total of 243 faculty members submitted responses, representing a 41% response rate. The respondents appear to be representative of Wake Forest faculty, with full professors slightly overrepresented at 37% compared to 31% of Wake Forest faculty.

[Survey Construct Scores \(p. 3\)](#)

Due to the large quantity of individual questions asked and the complexity of assessing specific areas of potential concern, HERI developed eleven constructs which group information gathered from numerous items into a more reliable, cumulative measure. These construct scores, which provide a way of looking at overall trends among survey responses, have a population mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10.

Constructs in Which Wake Forest Scored Above National Average (Average Score)

- Institutional Priority: Increase Prestige (55.3)
- Scholarly Productivity (53.4)
- Job Satisfaction: Compensation (53.2)

Wake Forest scored notably below the national average only on the "Civic Minded Practice" construct (46.7).

Although "Increase Prestige" as an institutional priority exceeded the national mean of 50, it trailed the average for the seven very highly selective private universities (55.3 vs 60.3). Wake faculty lagged these peer institution faculty in three other constructs, while rating higher on two constructs.

The most notable difference in Wake's construct scores was a drop from 55.3 in 2010 to 51.2 in 2014 for the "Institutional Priority: Commitment to Diversity" construct. In addition, 2014 faculty scored lower than 2010 faculty on four other constructs.

[Individual Items of Note \(p. 8\)](#)

Although less reliable than constructs, additional analysis of survey items included examination by year, internal sub-groups, and peers.

[Rising Wake Forest Faculty Survey Longitudinal Trends \(p. 41\)](#)

- Consider preparing students for employment a very important or essential educational goal
- Overall job satisfaction

- Satisfaction with opportunity for scholarly pursuits
- Satisfaction with teaching load
- Faculty are rewarded for good teaching
- Report a lot of racial conflict here

[Falling Wake Forest Faculty Survey Longitudinal Trends \(p. 41\)](#)

- Spending nine or more hours per week
 - Preparing for teaching
 - Scheduled teaching
 - Other administration
- Satisfaction with quality of students
- Listing personal finances as an extensive source of stress in last two years

[Items of Positive Movement at Wake \(2010 vs 2014\) \(p. 8\)](#)

- Used real-life problems in all courses taught (26% vs 50%)
- Agreed strongly that most students are well-prepared academically (27% vs 44%)
- Agreed strongly that student affairs staff have the support and respect of faculty (20% vs 39%)
- Changes in work responsibilities have not been a source of stress (47% vs 29%)

[Items of Negative Movement at Wake \(2010 vs 2014\) \(p. 8\)](#)

- While at WFU, have been on paid sabbatical leave (43% vs 17%)
- Rated helping students evaluate the quality/reliability of information as essential (67% vs 35%)
- Reported that “the administration is open about its policies” is “not descriptive” (15% vs 35%)

[2014 Wake Faculty by Race \(p. 26\)](#)

- A greater percentage of white faculty reported considering “leaving this institution for another” within the past two years than non-white faculty (58% vs 42%)
- 30% of white faculty vs 5% of non-white faculty reported lack of personal time has not been a source of stress during the last two years.

[2014 Wake Faculty by Sex \(p. 27\)](#)

- A greater percentage of females than males:
 - Conducted research or writing focused on racial or ethnic minorities (40% vs 19%)
 - Participated in organized activities around enhancing pedagogy and student learning (70% vs 49%)
 - Rated “encourage students to become agents of social change” as a very important or essential education goal for undergraduates (65% vs 45%)
 - Characterized their political views as “Liberal” or “Far Left” (82% vs 60%)
 - Provided no supplemental instruction outside of class and office hours (41% vs 19%)
- A greater percentage of males than females:
 - Published 21 or more articles in academic or professional journals (38% vs 11%)
 - Incorporated “simulations/animations” into courses occasionally or frequently (59% vs 31%)
 - Taught a graduate course (53% vs 34%)
 - Reported no stress during the last two years from subtle discrimination (prejudice, racism, sexism) (73% vs 53%)

2014 Wake Faculty by Tenure Status (p. 33)

- More tenured / on tenure track than not on tenure track:
 - In past year have occasionally or frequently given at least one assignment that required students to:
 - Analyze and interpret data (87% vs 63%)
 - Apply mathematical concepts and computational techniques (55% vs 30%)
 - Agreed somewhat or strongly that “the criteria for advancement and promotion decisions are clear” (80% vs 52%)
 - Reported being satisfied or very satisfied with:
 - Salary (69% vs 44%)
 - Prospects for career advancement (68% vs 37%)
 - Received an award for outstanding teaching (44% vs 19%)
- More not on tenure track than tenured / on tenure track:
 - Reported spending 9+ hours each week preparing for teaching (50% vs 26%)
 - Used the following in most or all courses that they teach:
 - “Student-selected topics for course content” (42% vs 22%)
 - “Reflective writing/journaling” (47% vs 19%)

Higher % 2014 Wake Faculty Than Very Highly Selective Private Universities Reported: (p. 19)

- Faculty are interested in students’ personal problems (85% vs 63%)
- Strong agreement that faculty are strongly interested in the academic problems of undergraduates (64% vs 36%)
- There is a lot of campus racial conflict here (31% vs 11%)
- Faculty are rewarded for being good teachers (42% vs 21%)
- Have had travel funds paid by the institution (90% vs 67%)
- Not being satisfied with availability of child care at this institution (86% vs 43%)

Lower % 2014 Wake Faculty Than Very Highly Selective Private Universities Reported: (p. 19)

- Their principal activity is research (10% vs 39%)
- Teaching an interdisciplinary course (33% vs 54%)
- Teaching a graduate course in the past two years (45% vs 75%)
- Agreement (somewhat or strong) that graduate students must compete for research opportunities (35% vs 73%)
- Strong agreement that it is important for graduate students to spend at least one term as a TA (28% vs 65%)
- Agreement (somewhat or strong) that most graduate students move on to faculty positions (21% vs 54%)
- The hiring of faculty “stars” as a “highest priority” at their university (6% vs 52%)
- Being very satisfied with health benefits (19% vs 42%)
- Being very satisfied with retirement benefits (20% vs 42%)

Wake Forest Custom Questions (p. 50)

In addition to HERI items, Wake Forest added a number of custom items to the survey over the years. A growing percentage indicated “the amount of time that I currently spend on scholarly activities is appropriate for a faculty member at Wake Forest.” Additionally, more faculty reported Wake Forest is doing very well at preparing students for employment.