

Grinnell College

## Office of Institutional Research Newsletter

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### Faculty Survey Results

The Higher Education Research Institute, based at UCLA, administers a national faculty survey every three years. Grinnell used the survey in 1989 and again in 1998. There were 101 respondents in 1989 (unfortunately, there is no institutional record of who was asked to complete the survey that year). In 1998, the survey was sent to all tenured and tenure-track faculty members (except those serving as full-time administrators). 84 completed the survey, for a response rate of 68%, with excellent representation based on rank and sex.

The HERI survey is not identical in different years, but most questions are the same, permitting the comparisons presented in this report. The tables which conclude the report give data for most of the questions on the surveys. Most of the text below discusses ways in which faculty culture appears to have changed in the decade between the two surveys.

Two additional points. First, almost 40% of the 1989 respondents were assistant professors, while 40% of the 1998 respondents were full professors. This difference can sometimes affect the results for the faculty as a whole. Where responses varied significantly by rank in 1998, this will be noted in the text. Second, a few mentions will be made of "peer colleges." In this report that phrase refers to two of our midwestern peer institutions for whom we have 1998 data. Because of our confidentiality agreement with these institutions, they are not named in this report.

### POINTS ON WHICH MOST 1998 RESPONDENTS AGREE

87% definitely or probably still want to be a professor.

77% say their primary interest lies more with teaching than research.

100% say teaching students to think clearly is very important or essential.

80% use classroom discussion frequently.

99% say being a good teacher is a very important personal goal.

90% say intellectual challenge was a very important reason to pursue a faculty career.

83% believe that faculty members are interested in students' problems.

85% consider it a high priority to create a multicultural campus environment.

100% agree that having a diverse student body enhances education.

89% believe it is easy for students to see faculty members outside office hours.

94% are satisfied with the autonomy and independence experienced in their jobs.

80% are satisfied with their salary and benefits.

92% feel stressed by time pressures.

### WAYS IN WHICH THE FACULTY HAS CHANGED DURING THE 1990s

#### Educational Goals for Students

Fewer (than in 1989) want to educate students for personal growth. This is measured by goals including developing moral character, providing for emotional development, enhancing self-understanding, and developing leadership skills. Grinnell faculty members in 1998 are also less interested in these goals than are their counterparts at peer institutions. More (38% in 1998) think that education should prepare students for employment.

### Teaching

There is more use of interactive teaching styles, including discussion, student presentations, cooperative and experiential learning, and group projects. Fewer make use of lecturing or independent projects. More faculty members are spending more time preparing for teaching. More also agree that faculty are rewarded for good teaching (though still only 52% think this).

### Research

More (57%) are satisfied with opportunities for scholarly pursuits, though still fewer than at peer colleges. More feel stressed by research demands, but fewer report spending lots of time on research than in 1989. More (85%) did research with students in the past two years.

### Institutional Concerns

More say they want to be good colleagues, and to develop community between students and faculty. More are satisfied with their relations with the administration. More say they feel stressed by committee work (and more say this than at peer colleges) and by faculty meetings.

### Diversity Issues

More assign readings on race/ethnicity and on gender, and more agree that many courses include a feminist perspective. More say it's a priority to create a multicultural campus environment, while fewer think it's a priority to hire more women. More (though still only 20%) think there's lots of racial conflict here. More (also 20%) think it's okay for the college to ban extreme speakers.

### Personal Goals

More say they want to be very well-off financially, and fewer think tenure is an outmoded concept. Fewer consider it personally important to help others in difficulty, influence the political structure, or participate in environmental cleanup. Fewer think that the college should help to solve social problems.

### Students

More feel stressed by students (and more than at peer colleges), especially assistant professors. Fewer are satisfied with the quality of students (male full professors are the least satisfied, and female assistant professors the most). Fewer (67%) think the students are well-prepared academically. More (30%) think there is great conformity among students.

### Rank and sex differences:

In 1989, men were more likely to have fathers with graduate degrees, while more women had mothers and spouses with graduate degrees. In 1998, more men had fathers, mothers, and spouses with graduate degrees.

In attitudes and opinions, there are very few significant differences between rank/sex groups (male full professors, female assistant professors, etc). Most of these are readily predictable. Assistant professors are more likely than those with tenure to have a goal of raising a family, and to be stressed by household responsibilities, child care, and personal finances. They are less satisfied with job security and more stressed by the tenure review process. Tenured professors are more stressed by committee work and by the need to keep up with information technology, but they are also more likely to think that computers enhance learning. Male assistant professors are the most likely to see self-understanding as an important educational goal for students. Female assistant professors are more likely than others to have entered academia seeking an opportunity to change society. They are also less likely to see Western civilization as central to the curriculum.

Survey Results

	1989	1998		1989	1998
<b>Faculty Rank</b>			<b>Teaching Methods Used Often</b>		
Professor	28%	40%	Class discussion	70%	80%
Associate	28%	29%	Computer-aided instruction	3%	11%
Assistant	39%	30%	Cooperative learning	27%	51%
Instructor	3%	0%	Experiential learning	17%	21%
Lecturer	1%	0%	Group projects	13%	25%
			Independent projects	35%	23%
<b>Marital Status</b>			Extensive lecturing	34%	27%
Married	76%	82%	Multiple drafts of written work	10%	24%
Single	15%	13%	Readings on racial/ethnic issues	15%	22%
Other	9%	5%	Readings on gender issues	20%	30%
<b>Family Education Level</b>			<b>Very Important Personal Goals</b>		
Father had < college degree	42%	36%	Become authority in own field	48%	46%
Mother had < college degree	64%	56%	Influence political structure	21%	15%
Father had graduate degree	35%	44%	Influence social values	47%	41%
Mother had graduate degree	9%	17%	Raise a family	72%	76%
Spouse/partner has grad degree	56%	70%	Be very well off financially	21%	32%
			Help others in difficulty	71%	63%
<b>Recent Teaching Activities</b>			Help with environmental clean-up	48%	24%
Taught ethnic studies course	12%	7%	Develop philosophy of life	80%	73%
Taught women's studies course	21%	25%	Promote racial understanding	68%	63%
Did research with students	73%	85%	Obtain recognition from colleagues	50%	49%
Used funds for research	76%	89%	Be a good colleague	80%	92%
			Be a good teacher	99%	99%
<b>Primary Interest</b>					
Heavily teaching	21%	16%	<b>Reasons want Academic Career</b>		
Lean toward teaching	50%	61%	Autonomy		61%
Lean toward research	28%	21%	Flexible schedule		56%
Heavily research	1%	1%	Intellectual challenge		90%
			Intellectual freedom		80%
<b>Goals for Undergraduates</b>			Freedom to pursue own interests		87%
Develop ability to think clearly	100%	100%	Opportunities for teaching		76%
Prepare for employment	24%	38%	Opportunities for research		54%
Prepare for graduate study	55%	60%	Occupational prestige/status		9%
Develop moral character	47%	32%	Oppor. to influence social change		13%
Provide for emotional growth	32%	19%			
Prepare for family living	6%	5%	<b>Spend &gt; 12 hours per week</b>		
Teach western classics	38%	36%	Scheduled teaching	10%	13%
Develop personal values	59%	49%	Preparing for teaching	66%	76%
Enhance out of class experience	36%	27%	Advising students	1%	5%
Enhance self-understanding	63%	57%	Committee work	4%	0%
			Other administrative work	11%	7%
<b>Evaluation Methods Used Often</b>			Research and scholarly writing	17%	7%
Multiple choice tests	2%	1%			
Essay tests	60%	55%	<b>Agrees True of Grinnell</b>		
Short answer tests	30%	34%	Faculty interested in stus' problms	88%	83%
Weekly essays	10%	15%	Stus well-prepared academically	88%	67%
Student presentations	36%	51%	Fac committed to inst's welfare	93%	97%
Term/research papers	47%	46%	Fac supports student affairs staff	87%	91%

Stus evaluate each other's work	4%	9%		Lot of racial conflict here	5%	20%
Grade on a curve	23%	14%		Courses include feminist persp.	47%	78%
Competency-based grading	57%	57%				
				<b>Satisfied or Very Satisfied</b>		
<b>Institution's High Priorities</b>				Salary and benefits	73%	80%
Promote intellectual development	95%	95%		Opportunities for scholarship	42%	57%
Help students examine values	62%	61%		Teaching load	57%	59%
Hire more minority professors	71%	75%		Quality of students	96%	76%
Student/faculty community	50%	65%		Working conditions	76%	71%
Develop student leadership	45%	35%		Autonomy and independence	90%	94%
Hire more women professors	61%	52%		Relations with other faculty	79%	
Students do community service	57%	51%		Professional relations with faculty		77%
Teach students to change society	40%	40%		Social relations with faculty		58%
Increase institutional prestige	87%	85%		Competency of colleagues	86%	81%
Hire faculty stars	10%	9%		Visibility for other jobs	48%	43%
Recruit more minority students	84%	81%		Job security	75%	88%
Enhance college's national image	84%	86%		Relations with administration	62%	73%
Multicultural environment	72%	85%		Opportunity to develop new ideas		81%
				Overall satisfaction	85%	77%
<b>See Major Recent Changes</b>						
College's overall mission		9%		<b>Sources of Stress</b>		
General education		8%		Household responsibilities	71%	76%
Faculty role and rewards		32%		Child care	39%	37%
governance		32%		Care of elderly parent	19%	35%
				Own physical health	39%	51%
<b>Political Orientation</b>				Review/promotion process	40%	47%
Far left	10%	7%		Subtle discrimination	27%	24%
Liberal	58%	70%		Personal finances		47%
Moderate	26%	19%		Committee work	53%	76%
Conservative	6%	4%		Faculty meetings	35%	47%
Far right	0%	0%		Colleagues	58%	65%
				Students	61%	76%
<b>Opinions – Agree, Strongly Agree</b>				Research/publishing demands	65%	75%
College can ban extreme speakers	11%	20%		Institutional red tape		66%
College increases earning power	9%	15%		Teaching load	74%	71%
College should help solve social problems	76%	66%		Children's problems	39%	29%
Tenure is outmoded concept	30%	19%		Marital friction	21%	23%
Western Civ is curricular base		61%		Time pressures	91%	92%
Diverse students enhance educ.		100%		Lack of personal life	88%	89%
Diversity focus yields weak stus		14%		Keeping up with technology		59%
<b>Very Descriptive of Grinnell</b>				<b>Still Want to Be Professor</b>		
Easy for students to see profs	80%	89%		Definitely yes	44%	47%
Great conformity among students	14%	30%		Probably yes	44%	40%
Faculty at odds with admin	7%	9%		Not sure	8%	8%
Faculty respect each other	60%	60%		Probably no	4%	5%
Students treated like numbers	2%	0%		Definitely no	0%	0%
Social activities overemphasized	2%	8%				
Sports overemphasized	1%	4%				
Good teaching rewarded	34%	52%				
Advising skills rewarded	8%					
Courses theoretical not practical	35%					
Most students very bright	71%					