

Report for the University of North Carolina Faculty Assembly

Issues Impacting Faculty Recruitment and Retention

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At the September 29th Faculty Assembly Meeting, President Bowles Requested empirically based feedback on the issues impacting faculty recruitment and retention. Given the limited time frame within which he requested the information, a web-survey of knowledgeable respondents was developed. The questions were taken from the task force request and re-formatted to clarify specific issues and to facilitate easy response.

Faculty Senators were recruited to identify knowledgeable respondents in their home units and to encourage them to complete the survey within a week. Fifty-seven faculty senators representing 33 academic units received the following information in both electronic (email) and paper formats.

Faculty Senators are being asked to participate in a survey on the UNC Faculty Assembly's Faculty Recruitment and Retention Taskforce. The questions on the survey will require that the respondent have some experience or expertise in faculty searches. To further assist with gathering information for this survey, Faculty Assembly delegates are asking that you communicate (in person or via e-mail) with at least 2 persons in your unit who have experience in conducting faculty searches.

You would need to have them go to

<http://survey.ecu.edu/perseus/se.ashx?s=401718A531AD798B>

to complete the survey. It is imperative that we have **at least 3 respondents from each unit** and that all survey responses are completed by no later than **Friday, October 13, 2006**. Thanks for your help in responding to an important request for information from President Bowles.

The survey was left open until Monday October 16 to catch anyone who noticed the request and complied over the weekend. In all, 136 faculty members completed the questionnaire. Of the respondents, 47.8% reported that they had recently served on as a search committee chair and another 27.9% had served as a search committee member. At ECU, the search committee reports to a personnel committee that decides whether or not to recommend a candidate. Of the respondents, 21.3% reported that they had recently served on as a Personnel Committee chair and another 25.0% had served as a Personnel Committee member. Another 20.6% reported that they had some other type of involvement in a recent unit search. About 5% were Department Chairs and 6% were newly hired faculty members.

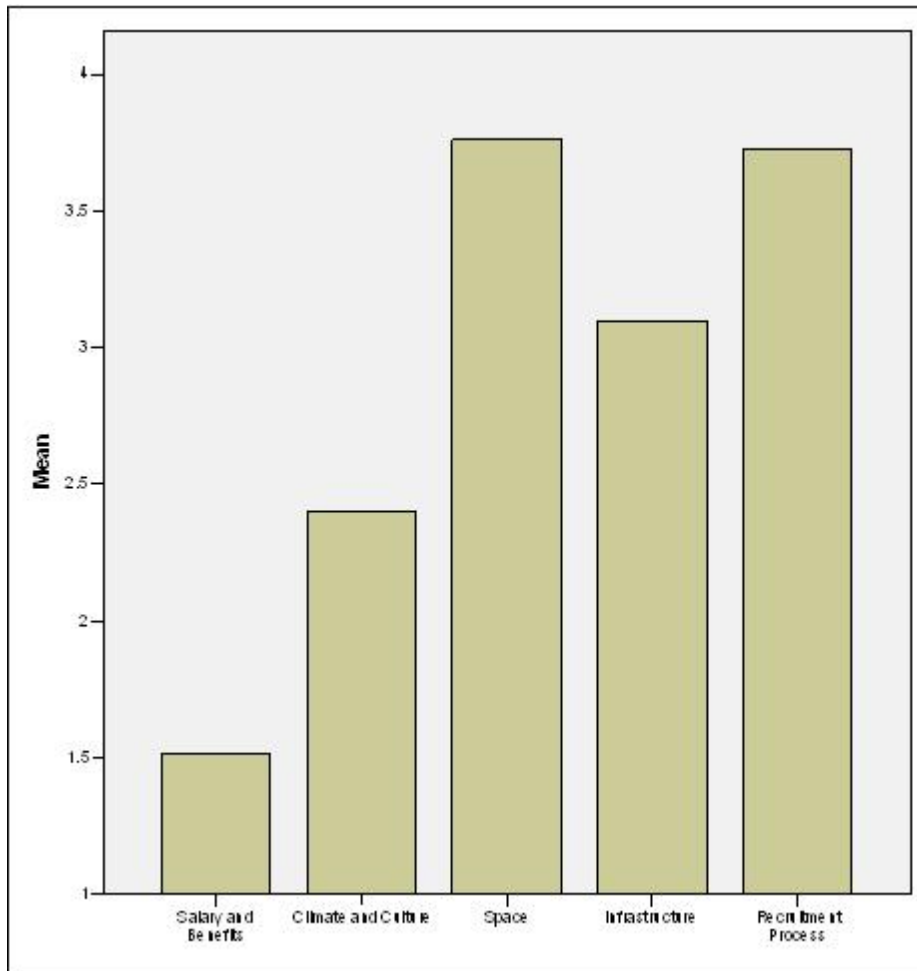
The questionnaire began by asking each respondent to read a list of 45 possible issues that could arise during a search. They were asked to identify ALL of the specific items that significantly affect your ability to recruit and retain faculty. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Issues That Knowledgeable Respondents Reported Influenced Their Ability To Recruit And Retain Good Faculty

Issue	N	Mean
Salary compared to relevant peer group	136	93.4%
Quality of benefits in general	136	71.3%
Lack of a structured sabbatical program	133	69.2%
Types of benefits in general	136	68.4%
Lost top choices because our offers were not competitive	132	67.4%
Faculty workload	133	66.9%
Too little time during the regular semester for research	133	60.2%
Quality schools	136	58.1%
Concern about morale of existing faculty	136	55.9%
Childcare	136	55.9%
Contributions to retirement programs	136	50.0%
Lack of infrastructure to support requirements in the tenure criteria	133	48.9%
Space allocation	133	48.1%
Tuition benefits for family members	136	47.8%
Tenure and promotion evaluation that assume unpaid research activities	133	44.4%
Quality of facility - space, furniture, outlets, size, layout	133	44.4%
Administrative support (clerical - secretaries, copy centers, student workers)	132	43.9%
Heavy on campus service load - advisement, committees, student organizations	133	42.9%
Administrative support (non-clerical - lab assistants, teaching assistants)	132	42.4%
Technical support (professional technical staff)	132	42.4%
Expectation that unpaid time will be used for research	133	41.4%
Failed searches due to timeliness of search	132	40.9%
Summer grants for entering faculty	136	39.0%
Summer grants for research	136	38.2%
Concern about incoming faculty making higher salaries	136	35.3%
Pay compression and conversion issues	136	35.3%
Logistical resources	133	34.6%
Concern about inequities internal to ECU	136	30.9%
Faculty recognition and awards (financial) and non-financial rewards	136	29.4%
Existence of faculty mentoring relationships	132	27.3%
Poor quality of faculty mentoring relationships	132	24.2%
Summer grants for returning faculty	136	18.4%
Summer grants for course development	136	17.6%
Failed searches due to timeliness funding approval	132	17.4%
Proportion of courses taught by non-tenured or non-tenure track faculty	132	16.7%
Telephone, computer and other equipment, software access and availability	133	16.5%
Heavy off-campus service load -- community outreach, search committees, etc.	133	16.5%
Faculty recognition and awards (non-financial)	136	15.4%
Failed searches due to timeliness marketing	132	15.2%
Absence of Structured orientation programs	132	12.9%
Lost top choices because of paperwork requirements for non-U.S. born/naturalized faculty	132	12.9%
Amount of life insurance	136	12.5%
Failed searches due to timeliness scheduling interviews	132	11.4%
Long-term care	136	10.3%
Eldercare	136	6.6%

Next respondents were asked to rank the five general factors the Faculty Assembly Taskforce had identified as significantly affecting the ability to recruit and retain faculty. The rating ranged from 1 (Most Important) to 5 (Least Important). The results are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Mean Rating of 5 General Factors (1 = Most Important and 5 = Least Important)



Respondents were asked to identify any other general items or specific factors that we need to add to our list of faculty recruitment problems. The answers (some were cut off

by the lack of computer space reserved for answers) as they were written by the respondents are reproduced below:

- ✓ -Dated facilities need remodeling (research laboratories). Faculty being recruited may assume that an out-dated facility has out-dated equipment and resources. -Availability of non-academic employment for spouse in Greenville
- ✓ a lack of respect by administrators
- ✓ ability to have a graduate student. Our dept funds have been cut drastically, reducing the number of graduate students. This is the number one concern for faculty with science laboratories
- ✓ Administrative quality (dean, Chair, etc)
- ✓ After getting tenure, the teaching load increases which is likely to reduce research productivity and slow down progress to the next level.
- ✓ Although President Erskine Bowles and Chancellor Ballard have placed "Preparation of Quality Teachers" as a high priority for the UNC system, our unit has not been given permission to search for a candidate to fill a tenure track position vacated last year
- ✓ Besides dealing with starting salary, the university also needs to deal with wage compression. To bring a new faculty member into the department at a higher salary, the university will need to address the salary of the 'longer term' faculty members.
- ✓ Campus-wide smoke free environment is important to most applicants
- ✓ Community resources
- ✓ Competitive start up packages, opportunities for spouses who are also academics, ability to recruit quality graduate students
- ✓ concerns for future plans, salaries, expansions, etc
- ✓ confidentiality of the search and trustworthiness in terms of what we promise new faculty (rank, tenure-track or not, etc).
- ✓ Diversity among faculty
- ✓ During a recent round of searches some troubling facts came to light. While there are numerous policies and procedures in place at the school, college, and university level to ensure the selection of the best and most diverse candidates. There are no enforcement
- ✓ Employment for spouse or significant other. Assistance with relocation expenses.
- ✓ employment opportunities for spouses moving expenses
- ✓ Failure to deliver promised, albeit not contractual, terms of employment (i.e., support for technicians, salary (supplemental income), space, start-up dollars, etc.)
- ✓ Financial stability of the school of medicine
- ✓ Graduate education recognition is needed. All levels of education is not alike and support and development of quality education specific to masters & doctoral differences is needed.
- ✓ Greenville's cultural atmosphere. College has to urge the community to get a decent movie theater, etc.
- ✓ Health insurance
- ✓ Health Insurance --- 20 year vesting will be a big negative on recruiting senior faculty
- ✓ Help find jobs for spouses -- many job decisions these days are family decisions and the alternatives in Greenville are very limited.
- ✓ I think you have left out the MOST significant--we do nothing to help recruit's spouses find jobs either on or off campus. Most departments are prejudiced to the point of absurdity against offering couple jobs in the same department much less to consider it
- ✓
- ✓ I work in the Humanities. Lack of sabbatical, teaching load, and likelihood of ECU \$\$\$ support for research are the major issues in attracting new faculty.

- ✓ Institutional reputation.
- ✓ It's the culture that makes recruitment work. Bad culture, no recruit. Other factors can be handled if the culture is good.
- ✓ Lack of clear goals of the university Conflicting expectations
- ✓ Lack of diversity among current faculty affects recruitment of faculty who represent minority groups.
- ✓ Leadership - availability of prominent and eminent faculty "stars" who serve as role models and facilitators. Career problem solving cannot be a supervisory role - rather that of collegiality.
- ✓ More flexible patient care times, on site child care
- ✓ Need a better mechanism for generating applications -- a better way to find excellent candidates who are happy where they are, for example, and may not even be looking at ads.
- ✓ new 20 year vestment requirement for health VERY adversely affects hires, especially in Chair or higher positions.
- ✓ New PhDs are trained to do research and teach and they look for jobs that have research and teaching qualities they prefer. Also, faculty are under ever increasing pressure to obtain external support, which is more difficult to obtain than in the past. De
- ✓ One position has gone unfilled over three years because of ECU's unattractive salary/benefits package and significant in-fighting in the section that would be doing the hiring.
- ✓ Opinion about quality of life in Greenville: orientation to/ explanation of this area as a good place to live and thrive.
- ✓ Our capacity to attract high quality graduate students is a major concern of many interviewing and new faculty.
- ✓ Our department chair needs lessons on how to interview faculty candidates. I think he runs off the ones he does not like by making the workload appear unappealing.
- ✓ our human resource/eo procedures are antiquated, duplicative and not supportive of faculty
- ✓ Our teaching load of 9/12 plus our research requirements cause us to loose candidates. They can go somewhere else, even within the NC system and have reduced teaching and research requirements and make more money.
- ✓ Our unit has extremely high teaching workload expectations. These are not in line with comparable institutions in the state or nation. This detracts from our ability to attract the very top candidates.
- ✓ Perception in North Carolina that low cost education means cheap education. GA not serious about retaining quality faculty. Just any old part time person will do.
- ✓ Recruiting generally negatively impacted by candidates' meetings with upper administration who send messages which conflict with hiring unit's message; most often with contradictory statements about the value of our unit, or w/contradictory statements abo
- ✓ Restricted budget for interviews.
- ✓ Salary compression and inversion are very bad problems that plague recruitment efforts because new faculty do not want to see themselves as having these problems shortly after their arrival. The benefits package could also be better. More specifically,
- ✓ Slow communication between Unit and Academic Affairs; failure of the university to expedite the paperwork required to get new faculty in the system; Lack of infrastructure which would support grants; Resources such as parking stickers and use of recreation
- ✓ Some portion of moving costs should be offered in initial packages.

- ✓ spouse; many recruits want job opportunity (either within the university or out); use of fixed term for one year appointment.
- ✓ Spouses can't get jobs in Greenville
- ✓ Start-up funds and salary support for first few summers until grants can be funded
- ✓ Start-up has to be competitive in certain disciplines.
- ✓ Start-up support must be competitive with other universities.
- ✓ starting salary too low; repeated unsuccessful searches that give ECU a bad reputation and cause fewer applicants to apply
- ✓ Sufficeint set-up monies. Departmental/unit operating budget that has remained "flat" for a decade, despite nearly exponential growth in departmental size and productivity. Timing of hires relative to major infrastructural changes, including personnel an
- ✓ teaching loads are high, lack of graduate programs, library resources not sufficient for aggressive research, but most important are salary and high cost of health benefits
- ✓ the candidate's first impression of the city. Who are they introduced to...and do they receive a tour... Where they go to eat is important...atmosphere...we need to be consistent in our recruitment efforts. We need to take that extra step to make peo
- ✓ The current administrative system is set up to impede not help. Anyone we recruit will here endless stories of start up funds, orders, GA salaries, invoices to granting agencies delayed and/or lost.
- ✓ The general "liveability" of Greenville, including low housing costs.
- ✓ The image of the school overall and the image of Eastern NC are big hurdles I believe. Also the campus area in particular the downtown area is a drawback and if it was an attractive area it would be a big +.
- ✓ The lack of programming for faculty social life, orientation to the area, etc. There is nothing to support or welcome new faculty or get them involved besides our own initiative.
- ✓ The long-term historical underfunding of both teaching and research at ECU has created an enormous barrier to advancement. This underfunding is reflected in both the lack of appropriate infrastructure and the prospect that the needed infrastructure will,
- ✓ The problem with hiring foreign-national senior faculty who want to accept our offers is not the paperwork. The problem is that we can only offer the H1 visa, which is limited to a 5-yr stay, then application for naturalized citizenship (green card) for
- ✓ The specific cost of health care insurance for individuals with dependents
- ✓ The terms of fixed-term contracts are vague at best.
- ✓ Time it takes to get a job offer approved by higher admin. Time it takes to get a contract to new hire. Lack of moving expenses.
- ✓ Timeliness of administrative decisions and paperwork after the ideal candidates have been found!
- ✓ vesting period for state health plan
- ✓ We have a 3-3 teaching load. We lost candidates to schools with a 2-2 teaching load. Benefits, espeically health care, is a serious impediment to recruitment. The lack of a junior faculty leave semester and the lack of a regular sabbatical program were i
- ✓ We need to have the money to bring faculty on board. We need to have money to help them move. We need to relook at our benefits--espeacilly health insurance. People will not get lifetime benfits unless they stay for 20 years. How will we get young fa
- ✓

Respondents were also asked to identify any other general items or specific factors that we need to add to our list of problems retaining good faculty. The answers given were:

- -Heavy teaching load does not allow time for research and applying for substantial external grant funding. -Inability to replace unproductive state employees -Excessive paperwork to perform simple tasks -Inflexibility of materials management department
- Along with the above the quality of the student body I think is the primary factor actually. Faculty would like to teach at schools with a higher entrance standard and higher quality students overall. I believe this is more important than any of the sal
- Appropriate raises upon receiving tenure.
- Appropriate recognition for teaching and service, not just grantsmanship, research and publications.
- Collegiality factors - the career 'multipliers' that distinguish an institution; either toward excellence or inadequacy. A cohesive group that works toward a greater good always exceeds a similar number of individuals without common goals.
- Consistent raises based on merit as well as cost of living that keep pace with inflation rates. Clear explicit expectations for tenure and promotion. Reduced teaching loads and sabbaticals for productive faculty as well as those pursuing promotion.
- Culture of discrimination against older faculty Culture of discrimination against minority faculty Culture of gender discrimination among faculty
- Diversity among faculty
- During a recent round of searches some troubling facts came to light. While there are numerous policies and procedures in place at the school, college, and university level to ensure the selection of the best and most diverse candidates. There are no enf
- ECU lacks a plan to accommodate spouses of hired faculty. Most of the faculty that have left ECU it is because of lack of positions or even help in finding position for spouses.
- Employment for spouse or significant other. Significant raises.
- Enhance support structure in the local units to alleviate anxiety for new hires.
- Essentially same as above - eliminate the service component of faculty positions.
- Faculty dissatisfaction with unit internal dispute resolution. Junior faculty are concerned that internal disputes might affect their tenure and promotion process. Senior faculty time for research is drained by internal politics.
- Health benefits, child care, start up money for research, travel money for presenting research, travel money for faculty development.
- I also think childcare is too limited a topic--in the climate and culture, most departments do not even seem to recognize that new women faculty face a lot of obstacles to productivity if they have children and there is no flexibility allowed for women to
- In our unit we have been fortunate to have a high level of faculty retention. However, I think that while retention has been high, our general productivity has been affected negatively by the lack of infrastructure, financial and administrative support for
- Inconsistent & politicized system of evaluating & supervising faculty.
- lack of communication in terms of procedures, honesty in terms of tenure track versus fixed term
- Lack of diversity among current faculty affects retainment of faculty who represent minority groups.
- Lack of support by the administration for keeping teaching quality high. What we need is not new awards for people who use cartoons in their teaching--the administration has to present an attitude to the effect that the students have an important respon
- Most of our faculty who leave do so for personal or family reasons, not institutional ones.

- need more start-up money, better support from sponsored programs, more formal university orientation, well developed mentoring programs on the unit level
- New faculty hired at a salary which exceeds or is similar to seasoned faculty
- Once people are on campus, salary and benefits increase in importance.
- opportunities for competitive research leaves childcare
- Our repeatedly failed hiring processes have lowered faculty morale since the costs of bringing in candidates gets paid out of conference travel fund.
- Our starting salaries need to be more competitive; our heavier teaching loads are a concern in recruiting; our health care costs have been brought up as a disincentive; our lack of sabbaticals makes us less competitive; our lack of TA support for labs or
- Our work load is our biggest factor. Our faculty (tenured and nontenured) are working themselves to death trying to survive within the system. The system expects and rewards people who can work 18 hours a day. Those with families and/or other obligations
- Poor support for graduate students (out of state tuition waivers and competitive teaching assistant salaries). Opportunities for spouse who is also an academic. Ability to recruit high quality graduate students. Improving the quality of undergraduates
- Promises were made to me about future years of credit toward tenure and promotion they were not kept.
- Recruitment promises not fulfilled--equipment, resources not forthcoming.
- Research support and use of objective measurement tools for merit raises.
- Retaining teacher preparation faculty has been difficult in our unit. In general, research and creative activity of teacher preparation faculty is not valued in our unit.
- retention of minority faculty
- retention will occur when the university allows the person to teach in their field in a focused area. When there are new people teaching the same course each semester- it is difficult to improve the course and program.
- Sabbaticals for research are virtually standard nationwide; We expect teaching/research/service to earn tenure, and provide neither time nor resources to reach those expectations.
- Salary and benefits. Teaching load in contrast to competitor.
- Salary compression and inversion are very bad problems that plague recruitment efforts because new faculty do not want to see themselves as having these problems shortly after their arrival. The benefits package could also be better. More specifically,
- Salary is by far the primary issue, but the lack of infrastructure to support grants is an incredible road block, having one person to be the "point" person for an entire campus is not a viable resource, the structure/infrastructure between Colleges is very
- Salary, benefits and support for research beyond lip service. These are the big issues.
- Search committees need to be appointed by the Dean and not run all searches through one person who is partially retired but utilize various graduate faculty who are up on the times.
- Stable administrative leaders, starting at the departmental.
- Startup funds for equipment are not well represented in the survey.
- Strategic plan for the academic development of the department, college and university - MISSION
- Strong departmental governance.
- Teaching load expectations are too high for a doctoral institution.
- The operations here are not smooth. Too, often everyone feels like they are hauling water cans uphill.

- The travel and conference registration stipends need to be increased, especially for tenure track faculty who need to attend conferences for committee meetings, presentations, networking, and education. Someone in our department left for a job that had more
- too much administrative paperwork that is redundant or unnecessary. This takes so much time from faculty productivity. Many administrative staff are not helpful with paperwork and make roadblocks for faculty trying to do their job.
- We have vindictive and micromanaging administrators who make personal loyalty of paramount importance. Plus the benefits offered by this state, health care especially, are very poor.
- Workload issues
- You have these items but I'll emphasize...Lack of availability of research leaves and salary issues linked to starting pay and raises not matching national averages. And, some faculty I've known move on because they don't like Greenville (too small, rural,
-