2 What Are Your Own Campus’ Strengths and Opportunities

**Before the session gets underway, take 5 minutes (or so) and make notes in response to the following question. Then turn to someone and discuss your response.**

What does your institution do related to *sharing* and *utilizing* data about faculty departures? About retention actions? What are your institution’s blind spots, or areas in need of improvement?
As you sit at your tables, discuss:

What does your institution do to make sense of faculty departures? What about retention actions? What are your institution’s blind spots in these areas?
Exit, Voice & Equity
Collaborating to Measure the Causes & Costs of Faculty Turnover

Kiernan Mathews
Harvard University, COACHE Project

Susan Carlson
University of California

Patrick Reynolds
Hamilton College
HOW TO APPROACH THE “PROBLEM”
Why do we care about faculty turnover?

Material, reputational, psychological costs

“So many people are involved, diverting energy from scholarship and instruction when a vacancy occurs. These are real costs in terms of efficiency and productivity.”

…and setbacks for equity are disproportionate (in exits and retentions).
Collaborative research towards improving practice

Read the literature → Find out what peers do → Find out what you do → Synthesize what you’ve learned → Sensemake w/faculty + admin
What does the literature tell us about why faculty leave?

Culture of counteroffer sends faculty packing

*Half-way out (O’Meara et al., 2015)*

Gender and rank play roles in outside offers

*Who’s looking? (O’Meara et al., 2016)*

True reasons don’t match campus narratives

*To heaven to hell (O’Meara et al., 2014)*
What does the literature tell us about why faculty leave?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Admin</th>
<th>Faculty Leavers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better opportunity</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location and family</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work environment + fit</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing on the wall (failure)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What did interviews with peers and colleagues tell us?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Finding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>Departure triggers: “Counter-offer culture”; lack of appreciation for work; frustration with bureaucracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Retention triggers: Support for research; dual-career offers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>59% had been considering leaving for less than a year; 90% cited having been very happy at Michigan (44%) or neutral; 46% were potentially receptive to requests to stay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>Only 35% of departing faculty received a counteroffer when leaving… but 49% had received a counteroffer at some point during their tenure at UMN.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penn State</td>
<td>Dissatisfaction with diversity aligned with high rate of departure among faculty of color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Tech</td>
<td>Majority of faculty considering departure had begun at VT in the past five years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What gaps appear in research and practice?

**Research**
- Large-scale studies stopped at “intent”
  ... *but “intent” and “exit” are quite different.*
- Few reliable quant. studies of actual departures
  ... *none also include retentions.*

**Practice**
- No peer comparisons beyond basic #’s, if that
- No sharing of instruments, idiosyncratic designs
- Assumption that much is beyond one’s control
- Few conversations about improving practice

= Few links between research + practice.
### Questions to answer in the process of discovery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the scale of faculty flight?</td>
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<td>What are the reasons why faculty leave?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why are faculty exits so important to [institution type]?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What activities could these data inform?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What value can exit surveys provide that climate surveys cannot?</td>
</tr>
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<td>What methodological challenges might we face?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What concerns might be raised by others?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What are the proper phases of such an undertaking?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is best suited to carry out this research?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHAT ABOUT LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES?
What is the view from small liberal arts colleges?

Conversations with over twenty chief academic officers provide context.

- Steady if low faculty turnover of 1-3% per year
- Almost entirely pre-tenure or shortly post-tenure
- Little or no formal study of issues
  - Due to low numbers, episodic nature of issue
What is the view from small liberal arts colleges?

Understanding of departures based entirely on exit meetings:

• From informal conversations to formal interviews
• Occasional pre-exit conversations lead to retentions; most departing
• Usually conversations with CAO; some removed to HR
• Vary from informative exchanges to avoidance of some issues
  • Depends on personalities, relationships
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 Do We Measure All the Ways We Value Faculty?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss the following topic with at least two people at your table:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How, if at all, is your institution collecting data about institutional investment in faculty and faculty members’ contribution or value to the institution?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• For <em>investment</em>, consider start-up, teaching releases, leaves, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• For <em>contribution</em>, consider not just awards and honorifics, grants earned, and research productivity, but also teaching excellence, service leadership, and other factors describing what might be thought of as “return on investment,” or “faculty replacement value.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BENEFITS OF A SYSTEM-WIDE APPROACH
Why do a retention & exit survey at the system level?

To inform decision-making and reporting…

- **Validate anecdotes:**
  What is the role of salary, partner accommodation, institutional ranking?

- **Generate data for key stakeholders:**
  Board of Regents, state government (Governor and Legislature), system leaders (President, Chancellors, Faculty Senate)

- **Support efforts to diversify the faculty:**
  What can we show about the retention and exit data through differences by gender, race/ethnicity, and discipline?
What is the best way to do a retention & exit survey?

*Stakeholders and consultation...*

- **Consult key stakeholders:**
  Faculty Senate and their role in shared governance as well as Academic Administration

- **Work through an advisory committee:**
  We built a group to regularize and standardize data keeping, to shape scope of the survey, and to advise on available data

- **Prioritize populations that might be surveyed:**
  Should we survey those turned down for tenure? Those who retired? Those on term contracts (lecturers, health science clinical faculty)?
Building community through a Roundtable Conversation

We brought system-wide stakeholders together with representatives from external peers for a day-long roundtable in June 2016.

• **Research-based discussions:**
  Attendees responded most positively to hearing from researchers who could inform them about research on faculty mobility.

• **Data-driven conversations:**
  Wanted to understand the preliminary data and what it showed about the reasons for departure and retention.

• **Cross-institution communications:**
  Roundtable facilitated rich conversations among competitor institutions.
WHAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED?
Collaborative research towards improving practice

- Read the literature
- Find out what peers do
- Find out what you do
- Synthesize what you’ve learned

Sensemake w/faculty + admin

shared understanding of goals/value?

- Enlist advisory group(s)
- Define scope
- Test capacity
- Design tool
- Pilot
- Synthesize phases 1+2

Sensemake w/faculty + admin

worth it?

Routinize + Scale
Questions to answer in the process of discovery

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<tr>
<td>Who is best suited to carry out this research?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
What we learned without a survey: Taxonomies

To develop a shared view of faculty, check your assumptions:

What are the types of...

- **Appointments**
- **Employment status**
- **Separations**

... and poll faculty and admins about which faculty should be included in the study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPOINTMENT TYPES</th>
<th>Must be included</th>
<th>Prefer to be included</th>
<th>OK if included later</th>
<th>Must not be included</th>
<th>I don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Full-time; tenure-stream; assistant, associate, full professors</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Other full-time senate (i.e. voting) faculty (e.g., lecturers with sec. of empl.)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Clinical faculty in health sciences disciplines</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Clinical faculty in other professions (e.g., education)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Others (Please describe)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</th>
<th>Must be included</th>
<th>Prefer to be included</th>
<th>OK if included later</th>
<th>Must not be included</th>
<th>I don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Left the institution the prior academic year (July - June)</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Recently arrived at a UC campus from a competing institution (the &quot;poached&quot;)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Renegotiated terms of UC employment within past year (the &quot;retentions&quot;)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Others (Please describe)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEPARATION TYPES</th>
<th>Must be included</th>
<th>Prefer to be included</th>
<th>OK if included later</th>
<th>Must not be included</th>
<th>I don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Voluntary resignations at all ranks</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Involuntary separations</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Retirements who go on to continued full-time employment in the academy</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 &quot;Natural&quot; retirements, that is, who have left comparable employment.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Others (Please describe)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional comments (you may continue on additional pages):
What we learned without a survey: Data Capacities

Variables to be provided by campuses:

- **Required**: Name, contact information, basic demographic and professional characteristics
- **Important**: Low-effort measures of institutional *investment* in the faculty member and of the faculty member’s *contribution* to the institution.
- **Optional**: Data that have analytic value, but are not gathered or stored consistently from campus to campus (if at all).
What we learned without a survey: Mapping the Stages

27% of 2015 COACHE respondents have "actively sought" employment elsewhere in the past five years.

14% of 2015 COACHE respondents have received a formal job offer in the past five years.

To your knowledge, with which administrators was the information about your intent to leave shared at your institution? To what extent were you kept informed about the process (of devising a response) that ensued?

What factors weighed most heavily in your decision to stay or leave? (UCB)

Who was the first institutional representative you told that you were a serious candidate for a position elsewhere? (Chair, Dept. Head, Dean, Provost, Other) When did you inform him or her? (After I received an offer; After I applied for the position, but before I received an offer; etc.)

Why did you choose not to accept the counteroffer? Could you have been convinced to remain at Institution A?

Overall, how did the process of departure/retention leave you feeling about your institution as a place for faculty like you to work? [Much better/worse, somewhat better/worse, about the same]

How seriously were you considering leaving Inst. A?
What we learned from the survey

- The search
- The nature of the offer
- Weighing the factors
- Spouses and partners
- The counteroffer
- Transition
- Work environment
Key Finding #1

Salary is important, but is only one of several factors that faculty consider in their decisions to stay or leave.
Key Finding #2

Institutions should take *all* external offers seriously.
Half of those who searched for an offer just to renegotiate a better deal at home decided to accept the outside offer.

Figure 1.3
Motivations for Searching for an External Offer (n=34)

- Departures: 15
- Retentions: 7

- To leave
- To use an offer as leverage to renegotiate the terms of my employment
Most departures and retentions seriously considered accepting their external offers.

**Figure 5.1**

How seriously were you considering the external offer prior to receiving any counteroffer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Respondents (Respondent counts labeled on bars)</th>
<th>Departures (n=41)</th>
<th>Retentions (n=47)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very seriously</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite seriously</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately seriously</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly seriously</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all seriously</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Finding #3

Institutions have a *home field advantage* for retaining dual-career couples.
Importance of Factors in Overall Decision (p. 12)

Sample includes 42 departures and 49 retentions; 29 women and 62 men
“The counteroffer was handled well, though a tenure-track job for my spouse would have meant I would have stayed here for the foreseeable future. As it is, I will likely have to go back on the market as we continue to search for dual positions.”
Key Finding #4

Institutions should value faculty members with transparent processes, thoughtful and clear responses during negotiations, and a smooth transition for those who accept an outside offer.
I think the most disheartening part was the sense that [my institution] was trying to do only the minimum necessary to retain me. I have heard this from many other colleagues with their retention situations. While I decided to stay, it leaves a very bad taste, and increases the chances that I will consider other offers in the future.
About 20% of departures said their dept. chair treated them worse after they decided to leave.
Further Research

• Institutional-level comparisons

• Associating *factors* with *costs*

• Analysis:
  - of under-represented minorities and women
  - by discipline
  - of intersections thereof

• Identifying what works, where, and why
LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE THEMES
What is the view from small liberal arts colleges?

While anecdotal in nature, some interesting themes.

• Departures either:
  o change of work (admin, graduate students, etc.)
    ▪ Unavoidable, even welcomed
  o like-for-like (similar faculty position)
    ▪ Considered “failure” of institution
Departures for similar positions at other institutions reflected a failing of home work environment.

- Putative primary causes:
  - dual-career issues
  - community for minority race/ethnicities
  - dysfunction among colleagues/within home dept
What is the view from small liberal arts colleges?

*Differences among institutions segregated in expected and less expected ways.*

- Institutional experience of departures varied:
  - rural / urban
  - institutional identity
What is the view from small liberal arts colleges?

Moving to evidence-based understanding of patterns has challenges.

- Hampered by small numbers
- Aggregating with similar institutions considered to hold promise of greater understanding
What is the view from small liberal arts colleges?

Moving to evidence-based understanding of patterns has potential.

- Considered important, and of value:
  - Better understanding home institution environment
  - Learning of successful approaches of other institutions
  - Sharing best practices
## Who Cares and Why?

Consider the governance and power structures of your campus. Who needs to be involved in efforts on faculty exit and retention? Whom would you like to have involved – who are your potential allies? Who needs to lead?

What are the obstacles to new efforts in this area and how might they be managed? Who might feel threatened by what the data suggest?

Write down three venues where a dialog on improving faculty exit and retention processes might work on your campus (e.g., committee or task force, professional development program, board retreat).
QUESTIONS & FEEDBACK

slides:  coache.net/aacu2017
contact:  coache@gse.harvard.edu