



collaborative on academic
careers in higher education

COACHE Faculty Retention & Exit Survey

Executive Summary

Introductory text

This executive summary serves as an introduction to your comprehensive COACHE Faculty Retention & Exit Survey Reports. The data presented below is a brief but impactful sampling of the robust quantitative and qualitative data designed to assist you in understanding the experiences of faculty who have left your institution (departures), faculty who received an offer from another organization who were successfully retained (retentions), and those faculty who were offered a pre-emptive retention gesture to retain them (pre-emptive retentions).

The summary will cover a broad range of issues from the characteristics of the eligible survey population to the costs of faculty departure, the factors weighed by faculty in their decision to leave or remain at the institution, and faculty perceptions of how they were treated during negotiations.

Faculty Characteristics

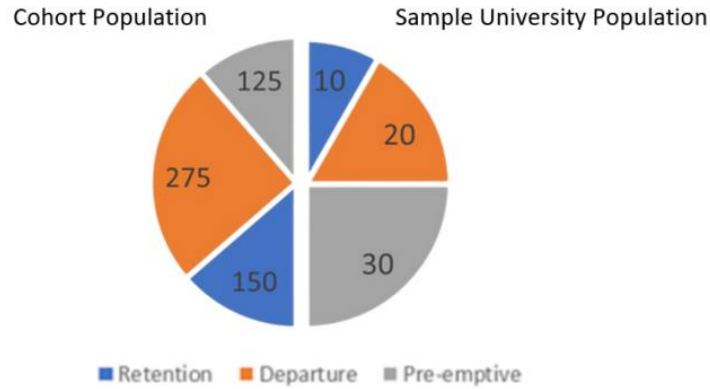
For the prior three years, [INSTITUTION NAME] has provided COACHE with a population file of faculty who meet one of three categories:

Faculty who received an outside offer who chose to leave your institution (Departures),

Faculty who received an outside offer but chose to remain at your institution (Retentions), and

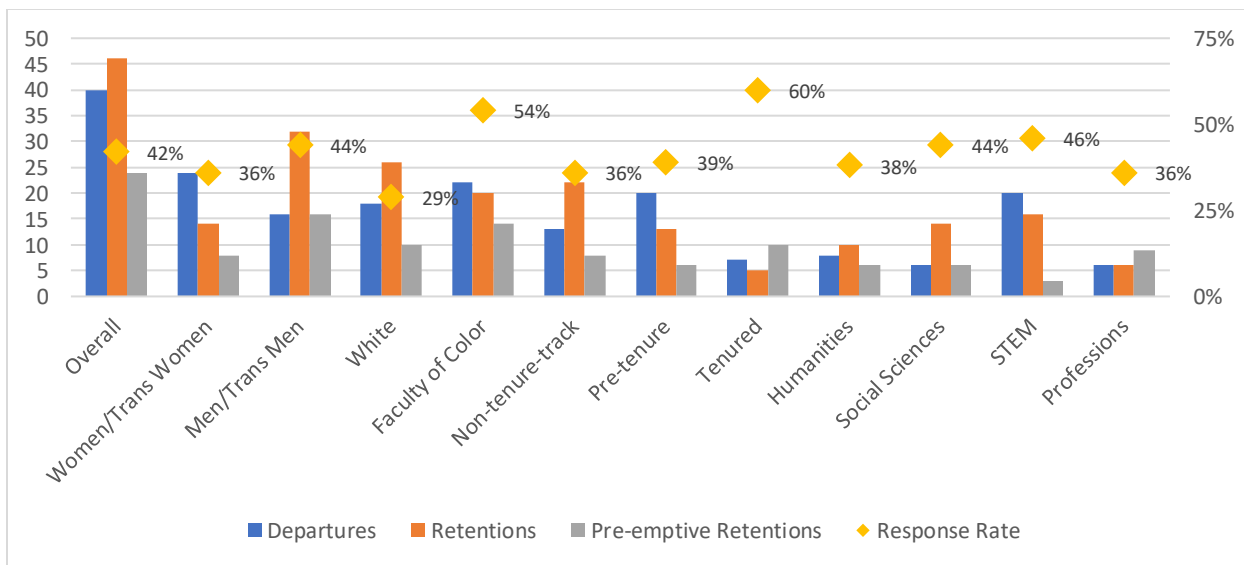
Faculty who did not receive an outside offer but received some pre-emptive retention gesture (Pre-emptive Retentions).

Each of these groups of faculty has a different perspective on [INSTITUTION NAME] and they all have the capacity to inform your understanding of the aspects of your institution that make it an attractive place to work and the factors that encourage your faculty to look for opportunities elsewhere. But there is also a great deal to learn from reviewing the characteristics of the faculty in the population file. The table below disaggregates the population file into core demographic groups. The chart below highlights the distinctions between faculty who were eligible to participate in the study. The two half-moon charts below present the proportion of eligible faculty who were coded as departures, retentions, and pre-emptive retentions for your institution and the institutions in the comparative cohort. The right side represents your institution's faculty population while the left half shows the comparative cohort.



The next chart breaks down the results by gender, race, tenure status, and discipline. The columns show the proportions of departures (blue), retentions (orange), and pre-emptive retentions (grey). The yellow diamond shows the overall response rate for each of those groups. By comparing the blue and orange bars, you will begin to understand which subgroups of faculty were on the market. A taller blue bar suggests a lower retention rate. The grey bars highlight which groups of faculty are receiving pre-emptive retention offers. This can help inform your understanding of when resources are being deployed to prevent faculty from being on the market in the first place.

One of the most commonly asked questions with regard to our study is *How successful is my institution at retaining faculty compared to other universities?* The table below summarizes the proportion of faculty that you lost to outside offers, retained, and the percentage of your population file who received pre-emptive retention offers.





collaborative on academic
careers in higher education

Dual Career Hires

In our pilot study, we learned that faculty often cite employment opportunities for a spouse or partner among the compelling factors both to stay and to leave. A partner's career needs and aspirations complicate the cultivation of an outside offer. Therefore, routinely addressing this "problem" of current faculty, not just prospects, could be a very successful long-term retention strategy. Under such care, the couple will be hard-pressed to find an equally satisfying alternative in the dual-career marketplace.

Of those faculty who completed the survey at [INSTITUTION NAME], 70% of faculty reported that they were married or with a partner. The comparative cohort reported 62% of faculty were married or with a partner. Among married/partnered faculty, 40% of [INSTITUTION NAME] faculty and 50% of departures were married and 60% of retentions were married. The survey also asked about the employment status of the faculty's spouse or partner. Approximately 60% of respondents reported that their spouse or partner was employed and 30% were employed at the same or another college or university.

The importance of spousal partner careers is further reflected in the question *What could your institution have changed to convince you to stay?* Asked only of departures, 9% of respondents indicate that assistance in finding employment for spouse/partner was the most important factor.

Counteroffer Culture

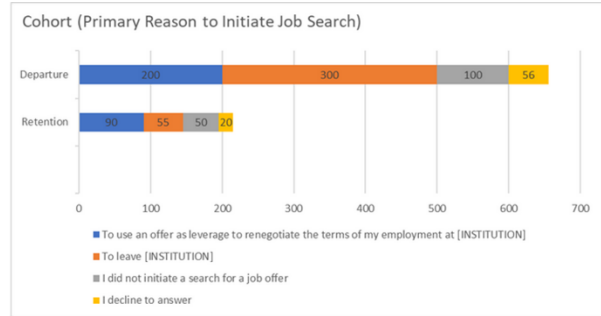
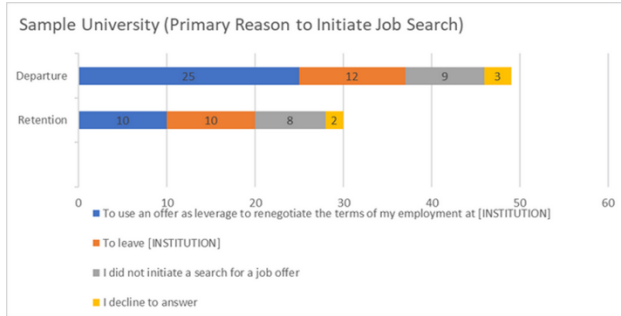
In the most recent administration of the COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Study, we asked faculty whether an outside offer is necessary as leverage in renegotiating the terms of their employment. Just this year, 61.3% of respondents to that survey agreed that having an outside offer in hand is necessary. When faculty seek an outside offer, even when they have no intention of leaving, it is often the result of a counteroffer culture at the institution.

Counteroffer culture is problematic for a host of reasons. First, forcing faculty to pursue an outside offer in order to renegotiate sends a tacit signal to faculty. It suggests that faculty can only use their agency to advocate for themselves if they have taken months, if not years, to attract an outside offer. The inherent message is that faculty cannot come to the table until the circumstances of their employment have become so deleterious that they are willing to walk away from the institution. When the nuclear option of leaving the institution is the opening salvo into negotiations, both the faculty and the institution are painted into a corner.

Within the survey, we ask respondents to tell us about their initial motivation for seeking an outside offer. The table below highlights the proportion of your faculty who sought an outside offer as leverage to renegotiate their terms of employment. Note the number of faculty who ended up leaving the institution even though they had no intent to do so. These are preventable losses.



collaborative on academic careers in higher education



Weighing the Factors

While the majority of the survey focuses on the reasons to leave and the reasons to stay, COACHE asks that question in a variety of ways throughout the survey. The qualitative section of your report provides excellent insight into how your faculty thought through their decision. However, we also ask that question in a quantitative format.

The table below highlights the five most commonly selected factors marked as the top one reason to stay at [INSTITUTION NAME] or to leave. We also asked your faculty to rank them from 1 (most important) to 5 (least important). The numbers in the heat map show the relative importance of each factor in the decision. Together the table explains which factors were selected most often and their relative importance compared to other factors.

	Departures	Retention/ Pre-emptive
STAY		
Quality of Colleagues	4	5
Salary	5	3
Proximity to family	3	4
Alignment of institutional values with my personal values	0	3
Security of funding for my appointment	0	4
LEAVE		
Salary	4	5
Department or Institution reputation	4	3
Proximity to family	5	2
Employment opportunity for my spouse/partner in the region	1	2
Potential for professional growth and intellectual stimulation	1	1

Within your full report, you will find disaggregated versions of this table by race, gender, tenure status, and discipline. Looking at these subgroups of faculty to see which issues are elevated. For example, one response option *Campus environment for faculty of color* may not rise to the top of the list overall but if you see it as a driving factor for faculty of color, that should raise some concerns.



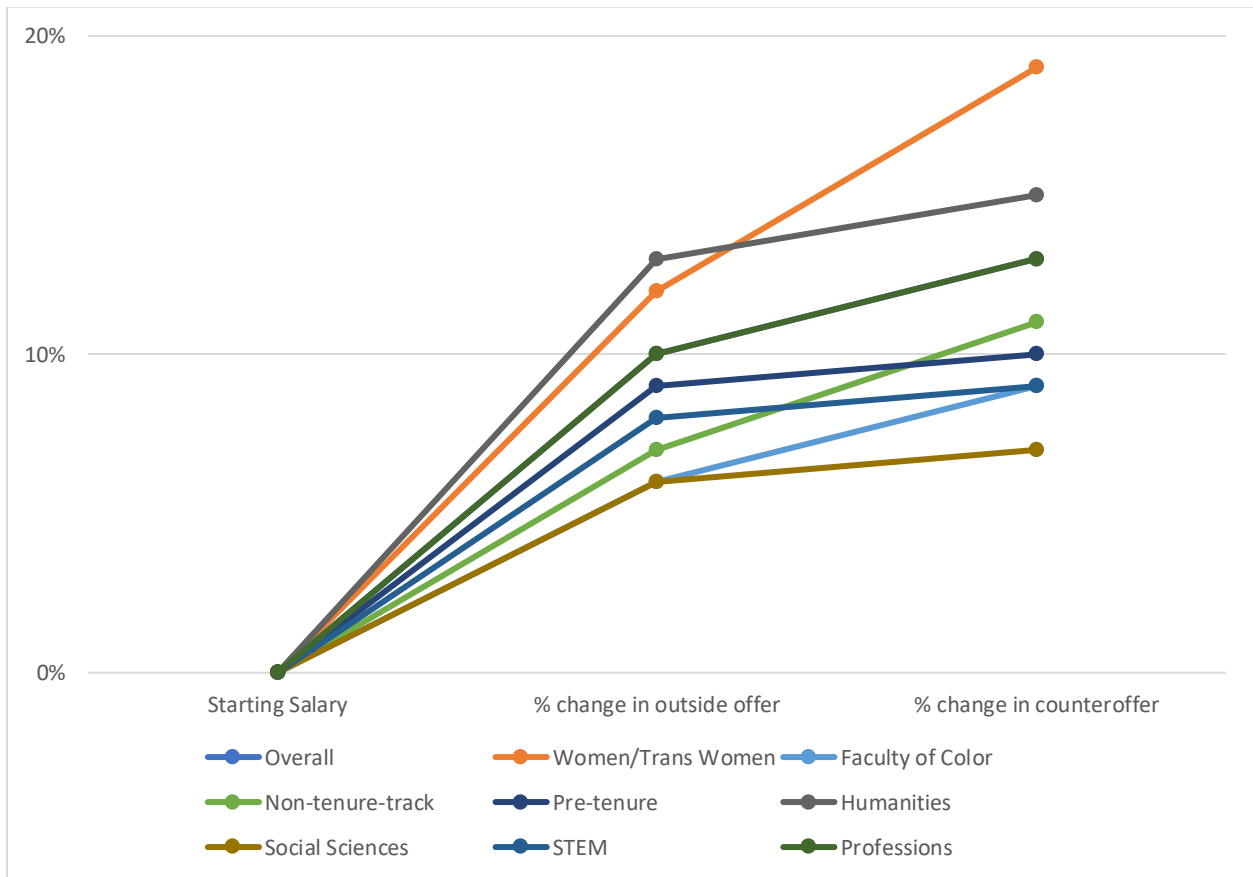
collaborative on academic careers in higher education

The survey also asks faculty who left your institution *What could your institution have changed to convince you to stay?* 15% answered higher base/supplemental salary; 14% answered department climate; and 24% said that they could not have been convinced to stay. The data challenge academic leaders, who wish to retain their faculty, to look beyond salary levers and to interrogate the nuances in faculty’s feelings about their institutions, their colleagues, and their careers.

Net cost of negotiation

The survey also asks faculty to compare their salary at your institution prior to negotiations with their outside offer and the counteroffer (if made). While salary is not the only factor in decision-making, it is important. Academic leaders are working within budgetary constraints. In the three years it took to complete this study, [INSTITUTION NAME] spent \$355,230 on salary increases alone from the renegotiation process. That does not account for investments in equipment, start-up funds, or other forms of compensation.

The line chart below shows the percent change compared to the starting salary.

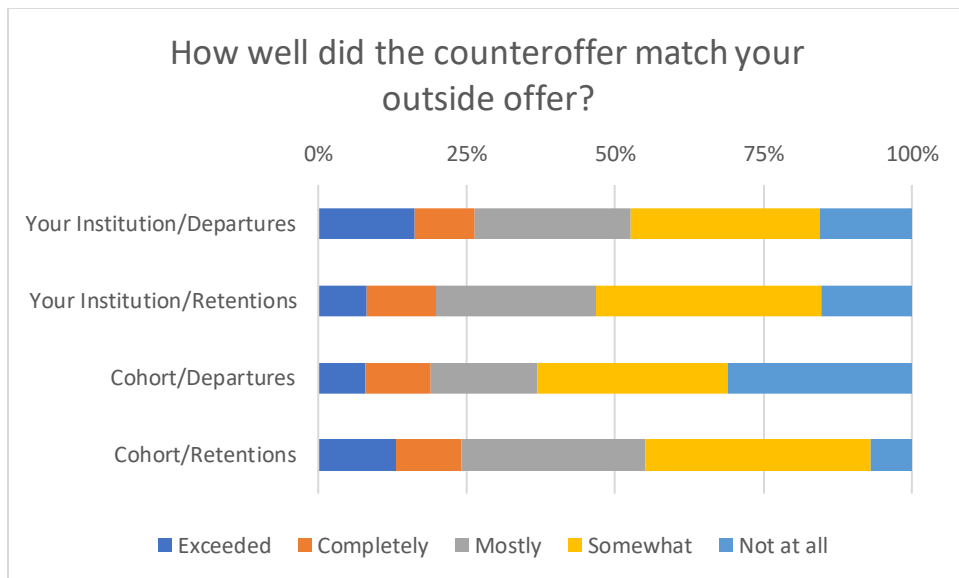




collaborative on academic careers in higher education

Both the percent change and the real dollars highlight the real cost of negotiating with faculty. It also offers the opportunity to identify points of inequity in the negotiation process. Are women receiving counteroffers of equal value to men? Which disciplines seem to be spending the most to retain their faculty?

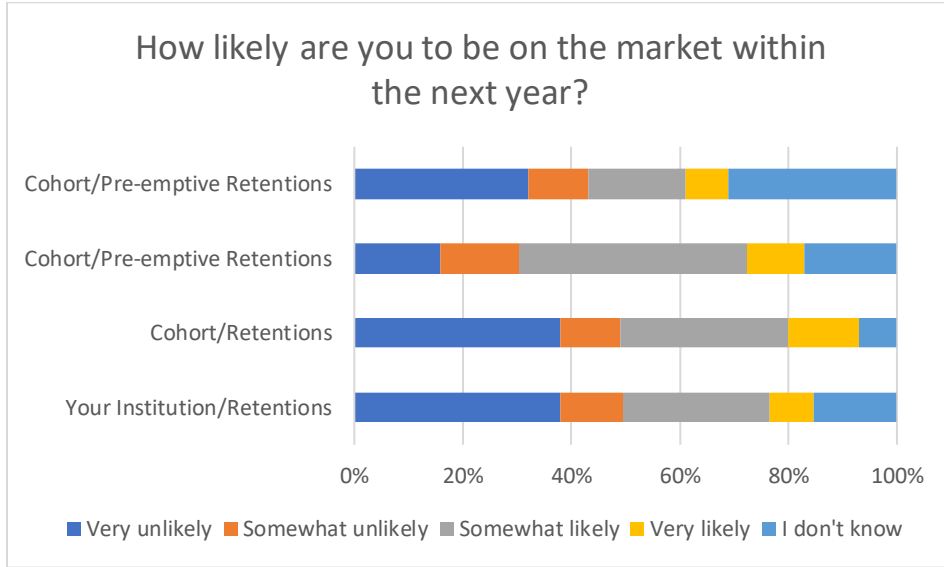
The survey also asked faculty how well the counteroffer matched their outside offer. The stacked chart below compares your faculty to the cohort.



Global items

In the final section of the survey, we asked faculty for their broad views on the entire process from receiving an outside offer (or pre-emptive offers) to the negotiation process, and, for departures, the transition away from your institution.

Earlier in this summary, we shared details about your institution’s success rate for retaining faculty who received an outside offer but that is only part of the story. For the faculty you successfully retained, how likely are they to be on the market in the next twelve months? The table below highlights whether your retentions and pre-emptive retentions were satisfied enough to stay or would entertain other opportunities in the future. The negotiation process is laborious and, oftentimes, expensive. This question helps you understand the long-term success of those efforts.



If a faculty member goes on the market after less than a year, it suggests that a counteroffer was better than the outside offer, but it did not address the larger issues that may have encouraged faculty to leave in the first place. The chart above explains the success of your retention efforts from this perspective.

Departments and disciplines are small communities. Faculty rely on each other for recommendations for their own employment and graduate students. The final question in the survey seeks to understand your faculty's perceptions. The survey asked whether they would recommend their department to a colleague.

