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AdvanceVT began with support from the National Science Foundation (Grant # HRD 0244916) and continues with the support of Virginia Tech. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.



COACHE SURVEY OF FACULTY JOB SATISFACTION

The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) survey asks faculty at colleges and universities nationwide to assess their experiences regarding promotion and tenure, the nature of work, institutional policies and practices, and the climate, culture, and level of collegiality on their campuses. The project aims to provide university administrators with actionable information to improve faculty recruitment and retention.

Virginia Tech participated in COACHE in 2007, 2009, 2012, and 2017. In 2007 and 2009, only pre-tenure faculty were surveyed. The 2012 survey was distributed to all instructional and research faculty, and the 2017 survey was distributed to all instructional faculty. Responses from Virginia Tech faculty are compared with faculty at five selected peer institutions and the entire population of 112 research university respondents.

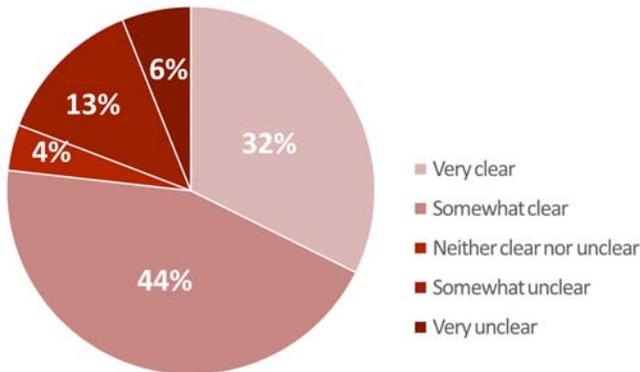
Virginia Tech’s peer institutions included North Carolina State University, Purdue, Iowa State, University of California, Davis, and the University of Missouri—Columbia. Virginia Tech’s overall survey response rate was 49%, slightly above the average for all universities. Highlights are presented here, with more information available at advance.vt.edu.

	Virginia Tech			All Universities
	Total Population	Number of Responses	Response Rate	Response Rate
Overall	1669	824	49%	47%
Men	1127	516	46%	43%
Women	542	308	57%	52%
White, non-Hispanic	1291	643	50%	49%
Faculty of Color	365	168	46%	41%

PROMOTION AND TENURE

COACHE survey questions are grouped into 25 themes addressing various aspects of faculty life. Questions around promotion and tenure address the clarity of expectations for the various aspects of faculty work as well as clarity of the tenure process, criteria, and standards.

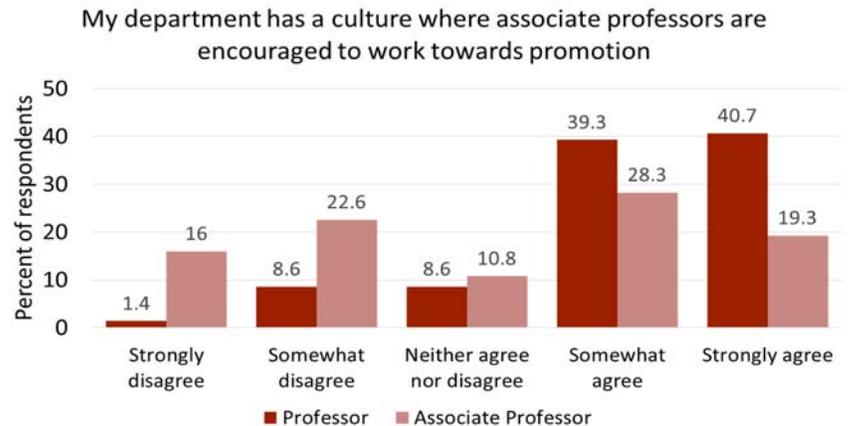
Perceived clarity of expectations regarding performance as a scholar



While most pre-tenure faculty at Virginia Tech find what's expected of them as a scholar in order to achieve tenure and promotion to be somewhat or very clear, Virginia Tech was ranked in the bottom 30% of universities in overall clarity of tenure expectations. This is a relative decline in perception from the previous COACHE survey.

Associate professors are encouraged to work towards promotion

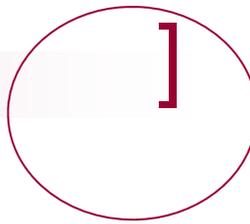
Most tenured faculty members reported that their department has a culture that encourages associate professors to work towards promotion, but fewer associate professors than full professors share that perception.



Transparency of the tenure process

	% agree		
	Us	Peers	All
I have received consistent messages from tenured faculty about the requirements for tenure.	52	49	49
In my opinion, tenure decisions here are made primarily on performance-based criteria (i.e., research/creative work, teaching, and/or service) rather than on non-performance based criteria (e.g., policies, relationships, and/or demographics).	66	59	50

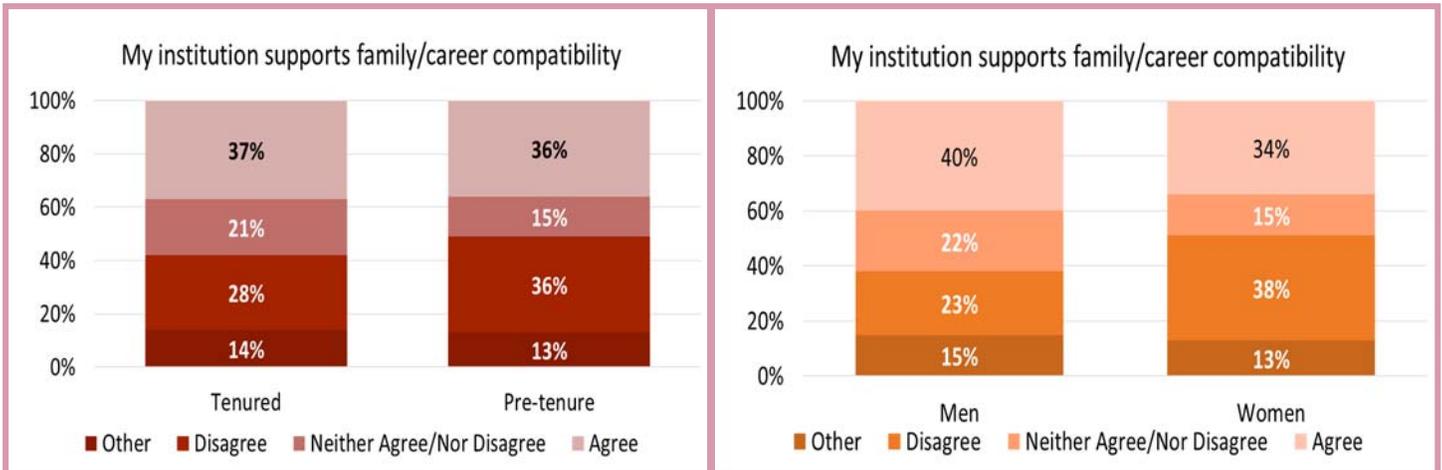
WORK-LIFE POLICIES



Satisfaction with work-life policies varies by tenure status as well as by gender. Virginia Tech ranks in the top 30% of universities in overall perception of personal and family policies. While faculty at Virginia Tech are generally dissatisfied with child care, elder care, and spousal hiring, Virginia Tech still ranks in the top 30% of participating universities on spousal hiring and elder care, and first or second among the selected peer institutions on child care and elder care.

Satisfaction with personal/family policies

Pre-tenure faculty and women are more likely than tenured faculty and men to disagree that “My institution supports family/career compatibility”. Nevertheless, Virginia Tech ranks in the top 30% of participating universities and third or fourth among peer institutions on that issue.



Women and pre-tenure faculty are less satisfied than their male and tenured colleagues with their ability to find the right balance between personal and professional responsibilities.

Perceptions of professional/personal balance

	% very satisfied or satisfied			
	Tenured	Pre-tenure	Men	Women
I have been able to find the right balance between professional life and personal/family life	55	45	58	47
Flexible with workload/modified duties for parental or family reasons	40	38	39	37

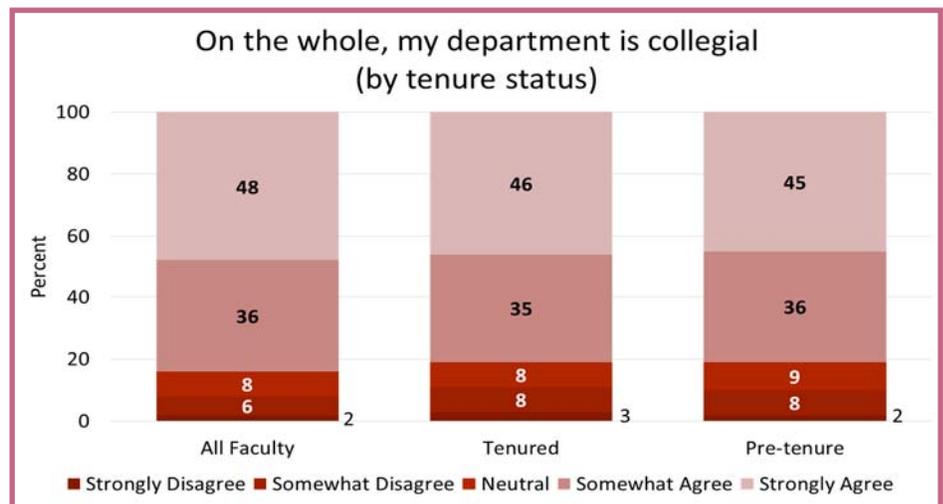
OVERALL SATISFACTION

While the COACHE survey identified many areas for improvement, overall Virginia Tech faculty are satisfied with their work experience and two-thirds of survey respondents indicated that if they had it to do over again, they would still choose Virginia Tech as a place to work.

	% Satisfied/% Dissatisfied		
	Virginia Tech	Peers	All
How satisfied are you with your department as a place to work	75	70	70
How satisfied are you with the institution as a place to work	65	63	63

Department collegiality

Overall, faculty perceive their department as collegial with slight differences by tenure status. Virginia Tech ranked first or second among its peers and in the middle 40% of all universities in perceptions of department collegiality. Questions in this theme address sense of fit, personal interactions with colleagues, commitment to diversity, and support for work/life balance.



Would you recommend your department to a colleague?

Percentage of respondents who would recommend their department as a place to work					
Overall	Men	Women	White	Asian	URM
91	93	87	92	89	88

Virginia Tech ranks second among its peers in the percentage of faculty respondents who would strongly recommend or recommend with reservations their department as a place to work.

For more information about the COACHE survey, see <https://coache.gse.harvard.edu/>. For information about Virginia Tech's participation in COACHE, see <https://advance.vt.edu/coache> or contact Peggy Layne at advancevt@vt.edu.