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INTRODUCTION

Many job satisfaction studies have been done on faculty in higher education, but very little research has focused on faculty in the arts and more specifically in theatre. Vital, successful, and happy faculty should be at the core of any theatre department or institution that has a mission to provide students with exceptional academic and experiential opportunities.

This report presents a brief overview of the findings for the Theatre Faculty Job Satisfaction and Campus Climate Survey, which was administered in February/March 2022. A total of 153 faculty responded to the survey. They were evenly split between faculty teaching in public (50%) and private schools (46%). Approximately two thirds of respondents worked in four-year institutions. While a detailed analysis of the factors influencing theatre faculty job satisfaction and the analysis of the open-ended questions will be forthcoming, the key findings are listed below.

Key Findings

- Over 60% of respondents found the tenure/promotion processes, criteria and the body of evidence used in making tenure/promotion decisions clear and reasonable to them.
- 66% of pre-tenured faculty found periodic formal performance feedback and informal mentoring to be either “Somewhat effective” or “Very effective.” In contrast, only around 45% of post-tenured faculty selected “Somewhat effective” or “Very effective” as their responses. In addition, both pre-tenured and post-tenured faculty perceived formal mentoring programs as the least effective compared with informal mentoring or periodic formal performance feedback. It is worth noting that the reason why faculty do not find formal mentoring to be effective is because they believe that in many cases it is not done well and not because the practice itself is not good.
- A low percentage of respondents indicated that the department chair frequently evaluated their work (34%) and evaluated their work objectively (37%).
- Nearly 60% of respondents indicated that diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) was important to their institutions and was supported by their leadership teams. However, only 25% stated they were comfortable with the climate of DEI at their institutions. Additionally, survey respondents tended to be more positive towards their departments than their institutions.
- Faculty rated their satisfaction with eight aspects of their jobs: compensation, campus climate, tenure policies, promotion policies, service load, institutional support for scholarship/creative activities, teaching load, and position as a faculty member. The top three highly rated aspects included position as a faculty member (51% “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied”), teaching loads (49% “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied”), and tenure policies (43% “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied”). The bottom three aspects included compensation (26% “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied”), campus climate (27% “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied”), and institutional support for scholarship/creative activities (33% “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied”).
- Over 60% of survey respondents reported that faculty morale was low in their institutions and their departments. Approximately 50% of respondents indicated that administrators did not clearly communicate institution-level decisions to them.
- Overall, the results show that theatre faculty have a low level of satisfaction with various aspects of their jobs and the campus climate. It is likely that the COVID pandemic has contributed significantly to those perceptions. We recommend administering the survey again in two years.

SURVEY BACKGROUND

The goal of this study is to examine the elements that influence job satisfaction of theatre faculty in the U.S. This study is informed by several frameworks in the literature that identify the factors that are believed to affect faculty satisfaction and productivity. Herzberg's theory (2008) identifies achievement, recognition, work itself, advancement and responsibility as intrinsic factors impacting job satisfaction. He also believes that extrinsic factors such as salary, supervision, company policy and working conditions impact job dissatisfaction. We also closely examined the work of Seashore and Taber (1975), which
concludes that job satisfaction factors can be summarized by two categories: personal and environmental.

In an attempt to better understand the elements that contribute to job satisfaction and sense of belonging among faculty working in theatre departments, this study focuses on both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Demographic factors collected by the researchers include gender identity, race, ethnicity, citizenship, rank, tenure status, and marital status. The environmental factors include departmental and campus climate, and communication.

In addition, mentorship has been shown to enhance various aspects of faculty work and perceptions and promote positive organizational climate (Corcoran & Clark, 1984), to boost scholarship productivity (Byrne & Keefe, 2002), and to enhance teaching effectiveness (Williams & Anderson, 1991). In this study, special attention is devoted to mentoring as an important factor that influences faculty satisfaction.

Overall job satisfaction is inferred by asking respondents to indicate the degree to which they are satisfied with their position as faculty member (i.e. professional satisfaction), their institution as a place to work, and whether they would recommend their institution to others as a place to work. The overall satisfaction construct includes the following nine survey items: 19.1 I feel very much part of my institution; 19.6 I am satisfied with my institution as a place to work; 20.1 Your position as a faculty member; 20.2 Your teaching load; 20.3 Institutional support for scholarship/creative activities; 20.4 Your service load; 20.7 Campus climate 20.8 Your compensation; 22.6 I would recommend working in my institution to friends and family.

Professional satisfaction is measured by including questions asking about faculty satisfaction with their teaching load, institutional support for scholarship/creative activities, service load, campus climate, and compensation.

In a separate paper, we will investigate the associations among theatre faculty's overall job satisfaction, promotion policies, support for professional development, and the campus climate on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION AND QUESTIONS

Faculty members specializing in the areas of theatre including acting, directing, costume, sound, scenic and lighting design, stage management, technical direction, theatre management, voice, movement, and musical theatre were invited to participate. An anonymous link was distributed via several theatre lists (ATHE, KCACTF, MATC, SETC, USITT) and various social media platforms (LinkedIn and Facebook).

The survey has five different sections. Section One gathered data regarding faculty demographics. Section Two gathered data on faculty members’ perceptions of tenure and promotion criteria. Section Three asked faculty to evaluate formal and informal mentoring at their departments and institutions. Section Four focused on campus climate, job satisfaction, professional networking, and professional development. The items in Section Five were designed to collect institutional and position specific data from participants. The survey also included eight open-ended questions that asked faculty to reflect on their responses as well as to recommend mentoring, professional interactions, and tenure and promotion guidelines. A total of 153 theatre faculty responded to this survey. Please note that not all participants responded to every question. The survey results are presented in the following sections. The item-by-item table results for multiple-choice questions are included in the Appendix.
PART 1: PARTICIPANTS PROFILE

In this section, we first present the demographic characteristics on survey participants. As indicated in Figure 1, over 50% of survey respondents indicated they were tenured faculty. More specifically, 34% self-identified as associate professors and 19% as full professors. In addition, 22% reported they were on the tenure track, whereas 10% self-identified as permanent non-tenure track faculty and 7% as adjunct faculty.

Figure 1. Position and Teaching Status
In terms of race/ethnicity, a vast majority of survey respondents self-identified as White (90%), followed by 5% Hispanic, 3% International, 2% Black or African American, 2% American Indian, and 1% Asian. In addition to race/ethnicity, questions about gender identity and sexual orientation were also included in the survey. As shown in Figure 2, 49% of survey respondents self-identified as women and 45% men. In regard to their sexual orientation, 61% self-identified as heterosexual, followed by 14% self-identified as gay, 7% queer, 7% bisexual, 3% pansexual, and 1% lesbian.

Figure 2. Ethnicity, Gender Identity, and Sexual Orientation

1 The sum across all the categories is more than 100%, since participants could select more than one category.
Information about marital status is displayed in Figure 3. Approximately two-thirds of survey respondents were married, followed by 18% single and 14% living with a partner. Additionally, 62% indicated they didn't have children living with them, whereas 36% stated they had children living with them.
PART 2: REQUIREMENTS FOR TENURE AND PROMOTION

In this section, we present the results on participants’ perceptions on tenure and promotion requirements. As shown in Figure 4, the majority of respondents found the tenure process, criteria and the body of evidence used in making tenure decisions clear to them. Specifically, 69% of the respondents found the tenure process in their departments to be “Fairly clear” or “Very clear.” The percentages of faculty who reported positive attitudes towards the tenure criteria and the body of evidence were 68% and 64% respectively.

Figure 4. Tenure Process

1.1 I find the tenure process in my department to be

- Very unclear: 9%
- Fairly unclear: 12%
- Neither unclear nor clear: 10%
- Fairly clear: 45%
- Very clear: 24%

1.2 I find the tenure criteria (what things are evaluated) in my department to be

- Very unclear: 8%
- Fairly unclear: 16%
- Neither unclear nor clear: 9%
- Fairly clear: 49%
- Very clear: 19%

1.3 I find the body of evidence that will be considered in making my tenure decision to be

- Very unclear: 8%
- Fairly unclear: 16%
- Neither unclear nor clear: 13%
- Fairly clear: 47%
- Very clear: 17%
Similarly, the majority of participants reported positive perceptions about the promotion process, criteria, and the body of evidence used in making the tenure decision. For instance, 67% of the respondents found the tenure processes in their departments to be “Fairly reasonable” or “Very reasonable.” In addition, 64% of faculty reported positive opinions regarding the reasonableness of the tenure criteria and the body of evidence.

Figure 5. Promotion Process

While the majority of the respondents find the tenure and promotion criteria and the body of evidence used in tenure and promotion criteria clear and reasonable to them, there is definitely room for improvement. Junior faculty would appreciate more guidance throughout the process. Finding a balance between being too prescriptive and allowing for some flexibility has been also identified as a challenge.
PART 3: MENTORSHIP

In this section, we present the results on mentorship. Slightly over half of the participants (54%) indicated that they have or have had a mentor, whereas 46% reported they do not or did not have a mentor. As shown in Figure 6, differences were observed between pre-tenured faculty and post-tenured faculty on their perceptions of mentoring. In other words, higher percentages of pre-tenured faculty considered formal, informal mentoring, and formal performance feedback as effective than post-tenured faculty. More specifically, 66% of pre-tenured faculty found periodic formal performance feedback and informal mentoring to be either “Somewhat effective” or “Very effective.” In contrast, only around 45% of post-tenured faculty selected “Somewhat effective” or “Very effective” as their responses to periodic formal performance feedback and informal mentoring. Formal evaluation and feedback are very important for junior faculty and department chairs need to evaluate performances often and provide clear and specific feedback. To be effective, mentors participating in formal mentorship must be trained.

Figure 6. Formal and Informal Mentoring
PART 4: CAMPUS CLIMATE AND JOB SATISFACTION

In this section, we present the results on participants' perceptions of their professional and personal interaction with colleagues, campus climate, and various aspects of job satisfaction. More than 50% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they had plenty of personal and professional interactions with tenured faculty. However, only 38% agreed or strongly agreed that tenured faculty took interest in their professional development. Similarly, a low percentage of respondents indicated that the department chair frequently evaluated their work (34%) and evaluated their work objectively (37%).

Figure 7. Professional and Personal Interaction with Colleagues
Survey respondents had the opportunity to rate their satisfaction with departments, institutions, and the climate of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Nearly 60% of respondents indicated that DEI was important to their institutions and was supported by their leadership teams. However, only 25% stated they were comfortable with the climate of DEI at their institutions. Additionally, survey respondents tended to be more positive towards their departments than their institutions. For instance, 64% of the respondents indicated that they felt they belonged to their departments while only 47% felt they belonged to their institutions. Similarly, 45% were satisfied with their departments as places to work, whereas only 38% stated they were satisfied with their institutions as places to work.

Figure 8. Campus Climate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel very much part of my department.</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity, equity, and inclusion are important at my institution.</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is visible leadership for support and promotion of diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus.</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel very much part of my institution.</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with my department as a place to work.</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with my institution as a place to work.</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel comfortable with the climate of diversity, equity, and inclusion at my institution.</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While DEI has become a priority for many institutions, respondents shared that not much has changed. They felt that more training, education, and resources should be devoted to DEI.
Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with eight aspects of their job: compensation, campus climate, tenure policies, promotion policies, service load, institutional support for scholarship/creative activities, teaching load, and position as a faculty member. The results are displayed in Figure 9. The top three highly rated aspects included position as a faculty member (51% “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied”), teaching loads (49% “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied”), and tenure policies (43% “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied”). The bottom three aspects included compensation (26% “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied”), campus climate (27% “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied”), and institutional support for scholarship/creative activities (33% “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied”).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Neither Dissatisfied nor Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your position as a faculty member</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your teaching load</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure policies</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion policies</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your service load</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional support for scholarship/creative activities</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus climate</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your compensation</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9. Job Satisfaction
Over 70% of survey respondents indicated they had built professional networks outside of their institutions. Building professional networks within their departments came second (55%) and within the institution was third (40%).

Figure 10. Professional Network

Outside of your institution
- Strongly disagree: 5%
- Disagree: 11%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 14%
- Agree: 37%
- Strongly agree: 34%

In your institution
- Strongly disagree: 10%
- Disagree: 25%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 25%
- Agree: 33%
- Strongly agree: 7%

In your department
- Strongly disagree: 10%
- Disagree: 18%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 16%
- Agree: 35%
- Strongly agree: 20%
Additionally, respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the support for professional development, their involvement in the decision-making process, faculty morale in their institutions, and whether they would recommend their departments/institutions to friends or family. As shown in Figure 11, the top three options included faculty participation in the departmental decision-making process (74% “Agreed” or “Strongly agreed”), supervisor’s encouragement for their professional development (51% “Agreed” or “Strongly agreed”), and colleagues’ encouragement to their professional development (52% “Agreed” or “Strongly agreed”). The bottom three options included faculty morale in their institutions (11% “Agreed” or “Strongly agreed”), faculty morale in their departments (21% “Agreed” or “Strongly agreed”), and college/institution level decisions were clearly communicated to faculty (23% “Agreed” or “Strongly agreed”).

The open-ended responses revealed that faculty truly enjoy teaching and working with students, collaborating with their colleagues, and having artistic freedom. However, many respondents indicated that faculty morale was low in their departments and institutions. The COVID pandemic probably played a big part in forming those perceptions. Better communication and more support from senior leadership are likely to improve morale.
PART 5: POSITION AND INSTITUTION CHARACTERISTICS

This survey also included questions about institution type/size and several theatre specific questions. Regarding institution type, the survey respondents were evenly split between faculty working in public (50%) and private schools (46%). Additionally, about 67% of respondents worked in four-year institutions. In terms of institution size, 36% of respondents worked in small institutions with under 3,000 students, 30% worked in medium sized institutions with a student population between 3001 and 10,000, and 33% worked in large institutions with a student population larger than 10,000.

As shown in Figure 12, more than two thirds of respondents reported that work on theatrical production on campus counted as their teaching load (68%) and 47% indicated it counted as either “Scholarship” (36%) or “Scholarship only when adjudicated by external reviewers” (11%). In addition, 16% indicated work on theatrical production counted as service.

Figure 12. Theatrical Production
Approximately 50% of survey respondents indicated their area was in performance, followed by 22% in theatre history, theory and criticism, dramaturgy, playwriting, performance studies, and 17% in design and technical theatre. In addition, 42% reported their departments had five or fewer full time faculty and 58% stated their departments had five or fewer part-time faculty.

Figure 13. Primary Area of Teaching and Theatre Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Area of Teaching and Theatre Practice</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance (Acting, Directing, Musical Theatre, Music Direction, Voice and Speech, Movement)</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre History, Theory and Criticism; Dramaturgy; Playwriting; Performance Studies</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and Technical Theatre (Scenic, Lighting, Sound, and Costume Design; Technical Direction; Production/Stage Management)</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REFERENCES


