

Moorhead State University Results from the HERI Survey of Spring 1999

This year, Moorhead State University participated in a national survey conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute. Results of the survey will be included in an upcoming national report, The American College Teacher: National Norms for 1998-99 HERI Faculty Survey. We have received the results for Moorhead State and comparisons with the national norms.

Sample Size. The survey included 33,785 faculty, of which 12,843 were women, and included 5,410 academic administrators, of which 1,886 were women. 31,477 respondents were from four-year institutions and 2,308 from 2-year institutions. 6,451 were from public universities while 8,575 were from public 4-year colleges and 12,313 were from private four-year colleges. At Moorhead State, as of April, there were 225 respondents, including 35 administrators, 156 classified as full time undergraduate faculty (FTUF), 14 “part time” undergraduate faculty, 10 graduate faculty and 24 “other”. Surveys were sent to IFO, MSUAASF, and administration. Surveys were not sent to adjuncts or fixed term faculty. Note, too, that some respondents indicated more than one category as the sum is greater than 225. At MSU, there were 128 male respondents, of which 103 were FTUF.

Demographics. Results from the FTUF faculty, as opposed to administrative, respondents when compared to the national sample of public four-year colleges showed a similar distribution of ages and principal activity (93% listed teaching). The MSU sample was 94% Caucasian compared to the national value of 91% and consisted of 39% professors, 24% associate professors, and 29% assistant professors compared to the national averages of 35% professor, 28% associate professor and 27% assistant professor. MSU faculty consisted of 60% Ph.D. and 10% Ed.D. compared to 70% Ph.D. and 7% Ed. D. nationally. MSU has 21% of the faculty reporting the master’s as the highest degree compared to the 17% national figure. MSU reported 68% tenured compared to 61% nationally. 10% of the faculty have at least one child at age four years or less; 24% (19% nationally) have at least one child from age 5 to 12 years; 21% have at least one child from 13 to 17 years old; 17% have a child from 18 to 23 years; and 27% have at least one child over 24.

The survey also received 35 responses, broken out separately, from administrators, of which 54% were Directors, 20% other, and 26% consisting of deans, vice presidents and presidents. The interesting question here is do the responses for MSU priorities and other aspects of life at MSU match when comparing this group and the faculty group. Demographically, MSU administrators are 54% women in contrast to the national value of 34% and are 94% Caucasian compared to 90%.

General Activities. In the area of general activities, MSU faculty were very close to the national norm in most areas, except that nationally 30% of the faculty indicated they planned to work beyond the age of 70, while only 22% of the MSU faculty indicated that plan. 30% compared to 33% nationally considered early retirement while 33% compared to 40% nationally have served as a paid consultant.

Perception of Significant Change. 34% of MSU faculty and 51% nationally indicated they had perceived a significant change in overall mission and purpose of their institution over the last decade. 30%, compared to 43% nationally, felt there had been a significant change in general education during the last ten years and 36%, compared to 43 % nationally, felt there had been a significant change in faculty role and rewards in their institution over this time period. Finally, 57%, compared to 42% nationally, felt there had been a significant change in governance over the last decade. Administrators, responding to the same question, resulted in 24% who thought there was a change in overall mission and purpose, 21% in general education, 12% in faculty role and reward, and 53% governance.

Technology Use. In the past year, 80 % of the MSU faculty and 94% of administrators report daily communication using email with 3% indicating they never use it, while the national figures are 77% use daily and 3% not at all. 11% report conducting research on the Internet daily, 18% for 2 to 3 times per week, 13% once a week, 5% once or twice a month and 27% never conduct research on the Internet. National norms give 13%, 23%, 19%, 27% and 19%, respectively. About two thirds of national and MSU faculty report never using on-line discussion groups, while about 14% use them once or twice a month, and 12% from one to three times a week. Only 5% use on-line discussion groups daily.

Publications and Performances. The survey questions related to publications and similar activities are given below. National norms are in parentheses.

Per Cent Reporting						
Number of	None	1-2	3-4	5-10	11-20	21-50
Articles in Professional Journals	28 (18)	23 (19)	22 (16)	14 (21)	7 (13)	6 (10)
Chapters in Edited Volumes	65 (58)	25 (25)	6 (10)	4 (5)	0 (2)	0 (.4)
Books, Manuals, Monographs	65 (57)	26 (28)	5 (9)	4 (5)	1 (1)	0 (.3)
Exhibitions or Performances	77 (81)	5 (4)	2 (2)	4 (2)	2 (2)	2 (3) 8 (6) at 51+
Professional Work Published or Accepted for Publication in last two years	52 (35)	32 (34)	11 (20)	4 (9)	.6 (1)	0 (.3)

Time Use: In questions dealing with time for various tasks, we have the following results (national percentages in parentheses):

Per Cent Reporting								
Hours	0	1-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	17-20	21-34	35-44
Scheduled Teaching	0 (.5)	4.6 (8.8)	22 (35)	46 (49)	17 (15)	6 (5)	4 (2)	0 (.3)
Preparation for Teaching	0 (.3)	9 (8)	19 (21)	26 (26)	13 (17)	17 (16)	12 (10)	3 (2)
Advising Counseling Students	3 (3)	52 (58)	27 (29)	14 (7)	3 (2)	1 (1)	0 (.4)	0 (0)
Committees Meetings	3 (4)	75 (65)	15 (25)	5 (4)	1 (1)	0 (.6)	.7 (.2)	0 (0)
Other Administration	32(36)	38 (39)	13 (12)	3 (6)	5 (3)	5 (3)	4 (2)	0 (.3)
Research, Scholarly Writing	25 (17)	43 (37)	14 (21)	11 (12)	3 (6)	3 (4)	1 (2)	0 (.5)
Creative work or Performance	45 (54)	38 (30)	9 (9)	3 (4)	0 (1.5)	1 (1)	1 (.4)	1 (.2)
Consulting with Clients	87(82)	10 (13)	3 (3)	0 (1)	0 (.4)	0 (.4)	0 (.2)	0 (.1)
Community Public service	26 (28)	62 (58)	10 (10)	2 (3)	0 (.4)	0 (.4)	.7 (.2)	0 (.1)
Outside Consulting	74(66)	22 (25)	2 (6)	2 (2)	0 (.6)	0 (.3)	.7 (.2)	0 (.1)
Household childcare	7 (10)	18 (20)	27 (25)	16 (16)	10 (10)	10 (8)	5 (5)	3 (3)

Distribution of Courses. In the section of the survey regarding courses taught for various purposes, the number of respondents varied more than in other sections. In terms of courses taught in general education, the number of faculty respondents from MSU dropped from a mode of 155 to 111. Perhaps others felt liberal studies was not general education. Of those responding, 49.5% of MSU faculty reported teaching no general education courses, compared to a 49% national response. 13% taught one (national response 23%), 20% taught two (national response 16%), 14% three (national response 7%), and 1 % four (national 3%). 3.6% reported teaching five or more compared to 1.3% nationally. Only 92 faculty responded to the question about graduate courses. Of those, 74% indicated they taught no graduate course compared to a national response of 61%. 23% taught one, compared to 31% nationally, 2% taught two, compared to 6%, and 1% taught 3, the same as the national response. Note that these responses were from “undergraduate”(FTUG) faculty.

In the section asking about **teaching activities** over the last two years, responses were as follows.

Activity	% MSU Faculty	% National
Taught an Honors Course	6	17
Taught an Interdisciplinary Course	20	34
Taught an Ethnic Studies Course	8	8
Taught a Women's Studies Course	9	7
Team-Taught a course	24	34
Taught a Service Learning Course	22	26
Worked with Students on a Research Project	60	73
Used Funds for Research	26	47
Participated in Teaching Enhancement Workshop	50	60
Put/Collected Assignments on Internet	25	36
Taught a Course Exclusively on the Internet	1	3

Teaching and Research. MSU faculty generally report a primary interest in teaching. 40% indicated their primary interest was very heavily in teaching, with 44% leaning toward teaching, 14% leaning toward research and only 1% very heavily in research. Corresponding national percentages were 31, 45, 22, and 2% for public four-year colleges. All scholarly work was conducted by the respondent alone for 13% of the MSU faculty and national sample. Another 22% reported most of their scholarly work was conducted alone with 25% reporting that some of their work was. Forty percent, compared to 32% nationally, reported that none of their scholarly work was conducted by the respondent alone.

Personal Goals. 99% of the MSU faculty believe that an essential personal goal is to be a good teacher, with 89% setting the second most important goal as to be a good colleague. The third item, with 81%, was to develop a philosophy of life, followed by 70% responding to raise a family. 70% also indicated a goal of to help others in difficulty as a very important or essential goal. To promote racial understanding was chosen by 63% and 53% selected to integrate spirituality into life. All other choices received less than 50% responses. Most of the MSU faculty responding did not feel that it is essential to become an authority in their field (although 47% selected it compared to 50% nationally), to influence political structure or social values, to obtain recognition from colleagues, to be involved in environmental clean-up, or even to be very well-off financially. The national pattern was similar, except that MSU faculty showed greater value for helping others in difficulty by 70% to 62% and also for promoting racial understanding (63% to 58%).

Reasons for Pursuing an Academic Career. In this area, again, MSU faculty responses were very similar to the national responses. The most important reason, at an 83% response, was intellectual challenge, followed closely at 75% by intellectual freedom. The third most common response, at 73%, was opportunities for teaching. The next set of three with similar responses was autonomy (66%), flexible schedule (62%), and freedom to pursue interests (70%). Only 31%

selected opportunities to pursue research (the national group was 40% here), 18% occupational status or prestige, and 25% opportunity to influence social change.

Evaluation Methods. Responses in this area show that a variety of evaluation methods is used by MSU faculty. Competency-based grading received the highest response percentage. The following are responses in decreasing order.

Methods	% MSU	% National
Competency-based Grading	48	47
Multiple choice Mid-terms/finals	39	33
Essay Mid-terms/finals	38	41
Short Answer Mid-terms/finals	34	34
Quizzes	34	37
Term papers/Research papers	33	34
Student Presentations	25	33
Grading on a Curve	16	17
Students Evaluate Each Others' Work	12	13
Weekly Essay Assignments	8	15

Instructional Methods. In this area, again, MSU faculty are similar to national peers. Sixty five percent use class discussions in most or all undergraduate classes. The response by women and men faculty differed on this question as 59% of men indicated extensive use of class discussion versus 77% of the women. The same pattern was present in the national sample with 76% women to 64% men for an overall 68% response for public four-year colleges. In contrast, 47% of MSU faculty and 48% nationally reported extensive lecturing and male faculty at MSU responded at a 54% level to female responses of 34%. The national responses were 57% male and 33% female. The data was not sufficient to indicate whether these differences were due to different disciplinary biases in instruction, since the number of women in some disciplines is much greater than in others.

Instructional Methods Used in Most/All Undergraduate Classes	% MSU Faculty	% National Faculty
Class discussion	65	68
Extensive Lecturing	47	48
Cooperative Learning	37	37
Independent Projects	31	34
Group Projects	23	24
Recitals or Demonstrations	19	17
Experiential Learning or Field Studies	17	20
Computer/Machine Aided Instruction	17	22
Multiple Drafts of Written Work	16	17
Readings on Racial/Ethnic Issues	16	17
Readings on women/gender issues	14	16

Instructional Methods Used in Most/All Undergraduate Classes	% MSU Faculty	% National Faculty
Student-developed Activities	7	14
Student-selected Topics	5	8
Teaching Assistants	3	4

Goals for Undergraduates. Once more, MSU faculty responses are very similar to the national sample. All agree overwhelmingly that the most important goal for undergraduates is to develop the ability to think clearly. The second most important goal is to prepare for employment. While 57% of the national sample feel that preparation for graduate education is very important or essential, the MSU response is 51%. The following table shows responses for both MSU faculty and administrators compared to those of the national sample.

Very Important or Essential Goals for Undergraduates	% MSU Faculty Administrators		% National Faculty
Develop ability to think clearly	99	100	99
Prepare for Employment	76	91	74
Enhance Appreciation of Race or Ethnic Groups	61	91	58
Prepare for Responsible Citizenship	58	82	61
Enhance Self-understanding	58	77	61
Help Develop Personal Values	54	63	56
Prepare for Graduate Education	51	53	57
Develop Moral Character	47	59	54
Enhance Out-of-class Experience	43	74	42
Instill Commitment to Community Service	38	62	36
Teach Classics of Western Civilization	34	29	29
Provide for Emotional development	33	54	35
Prepare for Family Living	12	27	15

In the next series of questions, faculty were asked to indicate how important they believe each item is at their college or university. The percentages given are the sum of the strongly agree and somewhat agree or strongly disagree and somewhat disagree responses. The most significant difference between MSU faculty and the national sample seems related to past criticism that MSU has not done enough to publicize its quality to the public.

Beliefs About MSU's Priorities	% MSU	
	Faculty	Administrators
Promote Intellectual Development	81	97
Increase or maintain institutional prestige	48	52
Develop a sense of community between students and faculty	46	64
Hire more women faculty and administrators	42	47
Develop leadership ability in students	41	52
Help students develop and understand their personal values	38	39
Hire more minority faculty and administrators	37	41
Create a diverse multicultural environment on campus	33	46
Recruit more minority students	33	49
Enhance the institution's national image	24	36
Teach students how to bring about change society	23	24
To facilitate student involvement in community service	21	53

General questions about opinions. 79% of the faculty, compared with 74% nationally, felt that faculty were interested in students' personal problems while 82% of both groups agreed that faculty were strongly interested in students' academic problems. 33%, compared to 37% nationally, felt that people don't treat each other with enough respect at their own institution. Only 22% at MSU, and nationally, agreed that most students are well prepared academically. 59% at MSU, and nationally, agreed that the Student Affairs staff have the support and respect of the faculty. 81%, 82% nationally, agreed that the faculty are committed to the welfare of their institution. 67% of the faculty felt that their research was valued by faculty in their departments. In areas related to diversity, only 3% felt there is a lot of racial conflict at MSU. The national response was 10%. 41% believed that many courses include a feminist perspective (34% nationally) and 92% (96% male and 85% female) agreed that women faculty are treated fairly here. 91% felt that faculty of color are treated fairly here (87% nationally), and 88% believed that gay/lesbian faculty are treated fairly here (72% nationally).

In other general opinions, results for MSU faculty are given, with national results for four year public institutions, if different, in parentheses. 92% of the faculty agree that a diverse student body enhances the educational experience of all students. 83%(80%) agree students should be encouraged to do community service, although only 47%(51%) believe community service should be given weight in admissions. 80%(89%) agree that computers enhance student learning. 57% believe that Western civilization and culture should be the foundation of the undergraduate curriculum. 18%(22%) agree that college officials have the right to ban persons with extreme views from speaking on campus. 25% agree that the chief benefit of a college education is that it increases earning power. 34%(29%) agree that tenure is an outmoded concept, while 58% (66%) feel that tenure is essential to attract the best minds to academe. Only 18%(31%) believe that promoting diversity leads to admission of too many under-prepared students.

Faculty were asked in a series of two questions to indicate **attributes they felt to be very descriptive** of their institution and **attributes that were NOT descriptive** of their institution. The attribute that most felt descriptive of MSU, with a response of 37% (24%) was *“there is a great deal of conformity among students”*. In the following question, where respondents were to pick descriptors that were not appropriate, 12% selected this statement as not a good descriptor of MSU. The second choice at 34% (43%) was that *“it is easy for students to see faculty outside of office hours”* (in the following question 7% thought it was not descriptive of MSU). The third most popular, at 33% (29%) was that *“faculty respect each other”*, but again, 7% selected this statement as not descriptive. The first two descriptors selected by the faculty as most appropriate were selected by administrators as first, and third, respectively. It is interesting that they chose, *“faculty is rewarded for good teaching”* as the second most common choice, especially when compared with the faculty results for the local questions at the end of this summary.

In items that were **not descriptive of the institution**, 83% (70%) felt that *“social activities overemphasized”* was not an apt description of MSU, nor was *“intercollegiate sports is overemphasized”* according to 79% (61%). 72% indicated *“most students are treated like numbers”* was an inappropriate descriptor and only 2% picked this as appropriate. Administrators agreed with this order. 59% felt that *“students don’t socialize regularly”* did not fit and 36% (34%) picked *“faculty are rewarded for good teaching”* as an inappropriate descriptor of MSU as did 25% of the administrators. 32% (30%) of the faculty felt the statement that *“faculty are at odds with the administration”* was not a good descriptor, but 17% (21%) did feel the statement was descriptive of MSU. Of administrators, 13% thought it was a descriptor and 34% thought it was not a descriptor.

In the area related to **service learning**, only 22% of the faculty agreed that many courses involve students in community service and 13% felt that many students were strongly committed to serving their community. The national figures for four year public colleges were slightly higher at 25% and 18%. The overall national response data in this area was 29% and 28% for all four-year institutions, implying that the percentages were higher for private schools.

Politics. 7% of MSU faculty report they are far left and 40% say they are liberal. 38% are middle of the road, while 14% indicate they are conservative with 2% on the far right. Nationally, results indicated 5% far left, 39% liberal, 39% middle of the road, 17% conservative with .3% on the far right. Administrators indicated 36% liberal, 55% middle of the road and 9% conservative.

Job Satisfiers. The following responses were received.

Aspects Noted as Very Satisfactory or Satisfactory	% MSU		% National
	Faculty	Administrators	
Autonomy and independence	87	79	85
Job security	74	61	76
Overall job satisfaction	72	74	72
Professional Relations with other faculty	69	82	72
Competency of Colleagues	68	67	71
Opportunity to Develop new ideas	67	70	73
Working conditions	67	82	68
Relationships with administration	64	58	56
Salary and fringe benefits	55	85	43
Social relations with other faculty	54	66	60
Opportunity for scholarly pursuits	47	61	54
Visibility for jobs	44	60	41
Teaching load	43		50
Quality of students	32	75	35

When asked if you would still choose to be a college professor, 39% said definitely, 37% said probably, 18% were not sure and 5% indicated probably not while 1% indicated definitely not.

The final area related to job satisfaction, was a section on the survey asking for sources of stress.

Source of Stress	% MSU		% National
	Faculty	Administrators	
Time Pressures	87	74	85
Lack of Personal Life	80	88	79
Institutional procedures and red tape	78	85	76
Household responsibilities	70	74	70
Keeping up with Information technology	70	71	68
Teaching load	69		67
Personal finances	60	56	61
Colleagues	58	74	59
Students	57	32	58
Committee Work	54	62	63
Faculty meetings	51		54

Locally generated Questions. Finally, there was a series of twenty questions that MSU provided. These questions were developed by AAC after several weeks of discussion and thought. The following are the responses. The number responding was 140 ± 2.

MSU Strategic Goals. The first three questions were devoted to the MSU Strategic Goals. In response to a question asking for the most important strategic planning goal at MSU, 49% responded “Quality improvement initiatives”, while 19% selected “building a comprehensive community,” 12% selected “Transitions that orient students into the University community”, 10%, “incorporation of new technology in program delivery”, and 9% chose, “ career sensitive education.”

The next question asked responders to indicate what they felt was the second most important strategic planning goal. 27% selected quality. One supposes that this group did not select that choice in the previous question. If so, then a total of 76% of the responders placed quality as either the most important and second most important strategic planning goal. On the second question 25% selected community as the second most important goal, so, using the same reasoning, 44% believe that building community is one of the two most important planning goals.

Question 42 asked for the third most important goal, and 29% responded career sensitive education. In this position, another 10% selected quality and another 22% selected community. If we sum responses to the three questions, we can get the total per cent of respondents who feel that each goal is one of the top three. Given there are five goals, this may not be earth shaking information. Those totals are:

Quality improvement initiatives	86.4%
Transitions that orient students	51.7
Career sensitive education	53.3
Incorporation of new technology	42.1
Build Comprehensive Community	66.4

Responses to the other questions are given in the following table. There is potential here for fruitful discussion. It is interesting that a very strong positive response to really liking one’s job contrasts with some of the other responses regarding faculty morale and recognition and rewards for advising and teaching.

Statement	% Strongly Agree or Agree	% Neutral	% Disagree/ Strongly Disagree
MSU has a strong sense of community	26.7	31.7	41.6
MSU should spend more money on instructional technology	43.0	30.3	26.7
MSU's budget process is well understood	10.0	15.7	74.3
The MnSCU System is an effective advocate for State Universities	2.8	12.8	84.4
Service learning is an important delivery system	38.4	37.0	24.6
The MSU mission is appropriate	63.9	24.8	11.3
Faculty morale improved in the past year.	18.7	26.6	54.7
MnSCU has improved the quality of education in the State Universities.	2.9	17.3	79.9
Faculty are rewarded for being good advisors.	3.5	19.6	77.0
Faculty development opportunities at MSU are adequate.	28.1	31.7	40.2
Faculty are rewarded for exceptional performance in the classroom.	22.5	26.8	50.7
Most of the time, I like my job.	83.3	10.5	6.3
Assessment is a waste of time.	34.7	18.4	46.8
Liberal Studies requirements are appropriate.	63.9	18.4	17.7
Faculty should be responsible to help students prepare for employment.	46.1	24.8	29.1
MSU should have more programs that recognize and reward faculty.	65.5	28.2	6.3
MSU should extend outreach efforts by increasing the number of evening and weekend classes.	47.9	39.4	12.6

Compiled and summarized by Judy Strong, Academic Affairs.