

Provost's Email about the COACHE Survey – Spring Semester, 2017

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing on behalf of the Faculty Senate's Ad-hoc Committee on Mid-Career Faculty Development. The Committee has been charged to identify the challenges faced by mid-career faculty at SLU and to formulate recommendations to foster the faculty's professional development and advancement.

The details of the Committee's charge are below, and you will see that SLU is partnering with Harvard's Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE), which has been operating from the Harvard Graduate School of Education since 2003. We will partner with COACHE for a three-year period to gather information via a variety of mechanisms, including surveys, town halls, and focus groups. Working with COACHE, the information will be used to develop and implement a strategy for improving the professional life of our faculty. The initial effort in this partnership is a 25-minute, web-based survey administered by COACHE; your unique link to the survey will be emailed to you from COACHE in the coming days. COACHE will not use any name or email address for any purposes except for this research.

While there are many surveys that faculty are asked to complete, this one was designed entirely to determine job satisfaction compared to faculty at peer institutions. Your views are especially important to us as we strive to attract, develop, and retain the best and brightest scholars and teachers, and increase the satisfaction of all faculty.

We welcome this opportunity to learn from an independent, research-driven, comparative study. However, data from the COACHE study will be meaningful only if we have broad participation.

Within a week, you will receive an e-mail from COACHE (coachefaculty@opinioncast.com), directing you to the online survey. The survey is easy to complete. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Associate Provost – Faculty Affairs and Development Michael Lewis, PhD at lewism5@slu.edu or [314-977-2853](tel:314-977-2853), or COACHE

Thank you in advance by helping us through participation in this study.

Sincerely,

Nancy Brickhouse, PhD

Provost

Committee Goals:

The Committee will focus on practical, concrete recommendations for ways to improve mid-career faculty prospects. We are not evaluating the performance of individual administrators or the structure of individual academic units. Recent research conducted by the SLU Faculty Senate Gender Equity Task Force and the results of the 2016 SLU Faculty/Staff Feedback Survey raised concerns about specific problems faced by mid-career faculty that remain to be addressed.

The Role of Harvard's Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE)

An important initial part of the committee's work will be a Perspectives on Faculty Development Survey coordinated by Harvard's COACHE group. COACHE is a national project aimed at gathering data and feedback on issues of faculty concern, including mentoring, tenure and promotion, benefits, and institutional structures. COACHE has worked with a number of other AJCU schools, including Georgetown and Loyola Maryland. While the Perspectives on Faculty Development survey is related to other recent surveys of SLU faculty, it also is distinct. Through an IRB approved process, COACHE collects data confidentially, and shares data with contracting institutions only after it has been anonymized. Results are reported in the aggregate only, and only when five or more responses are present to protect respondents' anonymity. SLU will receive responses back in de-identified form. These records will be held in the SLU Office of Institutional Research, *and no one in a supervisory or evaluative capacity will have access to individual responses*. Anyone wishing to access this data will require the written permission of both the President of the Faculty Senate and the University Provost.

Other sources of Relevant Information:

In addition to analyzing the survey data, the Faculty Senate Committee will draw on other sources to make the process as inclusive as possible. Relevant information will be gathered from:

- Town hall meetings with faculty from academic units across the University
- Responses to the 2016 SLU Faculty/Staff Feedback Survey conducted in the Spring of 2016
- Research and reports of the SLU Faculty Senate Gender Equity Task Force
- Current Strategic Plan for the University (MAGIS)
- Past COACHE data, particularly from AJCU schools

This initiative is an unprecedented opportunity for SLU faculty to comment on and influence policy regarding the mid-career experience. Participation in the survey is entirely voluntary. But the success of this effort will depend on a robust and sustained level of faculty engagement from all ranks, and from across the University. It is in this spirit that we encourage our faculty colleagues to complete the Perspectives on Faculty Development Survey.