

# IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

## The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE)

### 2021 Faculty Satisfaction Survey

## Collaboration, Interdisciplinary Work, and Mentorship

### COACHE definition:

**Collaboration:** Most faculty work requires collaboration whether with students, peers, administrators, or other colleagues in the classroom or the lab, and with the broader community through service or outreach programs.

**Interdisciplinary research:** Research collaboration within and between institutions and with off-campus partners. Interdisciplinary research has become more common due to its intrinsic motivation for researchers to cross-fertilize; this type of work attracts many graduate students and early-career faculty.

**Mentorship:** Mentoring has always been important in the academic workplace. Only recently, however, has the practice evolved more widely from incidental to intentional as academic leaders have come to appreciate that mentorship is too valuable to be left to chance.

### Dissatisfaction can occur from:

- Policies, structures or cultures that do not support collaboration, interdisciplinary research, and mentorship.
- Tenure-eligible faculty or Associate Professors lack sufficient mentoring they feel is essential on their path to promotion in rank.

### Questionnaire items with the highest percentages:

**94%** satisfied with time spent on outreach.

**92%** agreed that that being a faculty mentor is fulfilling.

#1 among in our peer group!

**91%** were satisfied with effectiveness of mentoring outside the institution.

### Subpopulation differences varying by 25 percentage points or more in satisfaction or agreement:

#### Interdisciplinary Work

- Tenure-eligible faculty were more satisfied with **interdisciplinary work being rewarded in promotion** than term faculty (100% vs. 60%).
- Tenured faculty were more satisfied with how **interdisciplinary work was rewarded in tenure** than tenure-eligible faculty (100% vs. 60%).
- Asian faculty were more likely to agree that **interdisciplinary work was rewarded in reappointment** than White faculty (100% vs. 60%).

## Mentoring

- Tenure-eligible faculty were most satisfied with **support for faculty to be good mentors** than term faculty (100% vs. 42%).
- Of tenured associate professors, men were more satisfied with the **mentoring of tenured associate professors in the department** than their female counterparts (52% vs. 23%).
- Tenure-eligible faculty were more satisfied **with mentoring of term faculty** in the department than term faculty (100% vs. 36%); Asian faculty were more satisfied **with mentoring of term faculty** than White faculty (78% vs. 36%).

## Questionnaire items with the lowest agreement or satisfaction:

**60%** agreed that interdisciplinary work is rewarded in reappointment.

**54%** agreed that there is support for faculty to be good mentors.

**49%** were satisfied with mentoring of tenured associate professors by department .



## Promising action items:

- Enhance recognition and equity for collaboration, interdisciplinary research, and mentoring, especially at the time of reappointment.
- Strengthen and expand optimal mentoring, particularly for associate professors and term faculty.
- Provide rank-and diversity-responsive workshops for faculty and academic leaders that attend to disparities and illuminate equity-oriented practices.



**A mentoring program would be amazing for term faculty.**