Satisfaction with Work-Family Balance among
Junior STEM and Non-STEM Faculty at Brown University:
A Comparison of 2006 and 2008 COACHE Reports

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Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education Survey (COACHE)

Based at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and supported by the Ford Foundation, COACHE is committed to gathering the peer diagnostic and comparative data academic administrators need to recruit, retain, and develop the cohort most critical to the long-term future of their institutions.

In 2006, the COACHE survey was administered to all eligible (n=82) junior level faculty at Brown University. The final response rate at Brown was 68%. The survey was repeated in 2008 with a response rate of 74%. The results from Brown tenure-track faculty were then examined in aggregate with almost 4,500 other junior faculty from universities across the United States.

The survey asked several questions on a variety of categories including: (1) tenure clarity and fairness, (2) nature of workload, including research and teaching environment as well as quality of students, (3) effectiveness of key policies, including mentoring, childcare, leaves, etc., (4) compensation, (5) work and family balance, (6) collegiality, and (7) global stratification.

As compared to other peer institutions, Brown University was named an “exemplar” institution. In order to qualify as an “exemplar” university, Brown needed scores that were notably higher than similar institutions (n=31). Five universities (Auburn, Brown, Ohio State, Stanford, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) achieved exemplary status in four of the seven categories detailed above.

Brown University ranked highest amongst its peers in the categories “nature of work” and “global satisfaction.” It ranked second in the categories “tenure clarity” and “collegiality.”

First collected in 2006, the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) Survey captured tenure-track faculty members’ understandings of tenure and promotion practices and policies, satisfaction with research and teaching opportunities, and experiences of campus culture and collegiality. The following highlight additional analyses comparing the experiences of STEM and non-STEM faculty over time (from 2006 to 2008) as well as comparing levels of satisfaction with other NSF ADVANCE institutions.
Compatibility of the Tenure-Track and Having Children

Junior faculty were asked a variety of questions regarding their satisfaction balancing work and family responsibilities. Both male and female faculty, those with children and those without children were asked how much they agreed if Brown did what it could to make having children and the tenure-track compatible. At Brown in 2006 and 2008, a higher percentage of the male STEM faculty with children agreed that Brown made having children and the tenure-track compatible when compared with their female counterparts. However, at Other NSF ADVANCE institutions, approximately half of both male and female STEM faculty agreed that their institutions did what they could to make having children and the tenure track compatible at 52% and 53% respectively. Most notably in 2006, none of the STEM female faculty at Brown University agreed with this question. While their level of agreement increased to 33% in 2008, it was nevertheless 53% below the male STEM faculty who agreed.

Compatibility of the Tenure-Track and Raising Children

Faculty were asked to what extent they felt that Brown did what it could to make raising children and the tenure-track compatible. When examining the STEM female faculty with children, it is evident that the majority (83%) disagreed with this question in 2006. In 2008, when presented the same statement, the percentage of STEM women faculty who disagreed did not change at all. Interesting, in comparison, 54% male STEM faculty with children disagreed that Brown did what it could to make raising children and the tenure-track compatible in 2006. In 2008, the level of disagreement for male STEM faculty with children decreased by 40%. Therefore, at Brown in both 2006 and 2008, the disagreement level for STEM women faculty with children
remained constant and was 25% and 69% higher than male disagreement, respectively. Conversely, the women and men STEM faculty with children at Other NSF ADVANCE institutions had a relatively similar level of disagreement for this statement, at 31% and 38% correspondingly.

The Role of Departmental Colleagues and Having Children with the Tenure-track
Faculty were asked to what extent they agreed with the statement that they departmental colleagues did what they could to make having children and the tenure-track compatible. Female STEM faculty with children agreed to this statement than their male counterparts who also had children in 2006, 2008, and at Other NSF ADVANCE Institutions. Notably, in 2006, none of the female STEM faculty agreed with this statement but two years later, 34% of them agreed. The male percentage of STEM faculty with children who agreed that their departmental colleagues did what they could to make having children and the tenure-track compatible more than doubled from 2006 to 2008, increasing from 38% to 86%. Additionally, at Other NSF ADVANCE institutions, the percent of male and female STEM with children was nearly identical at 62% and 60% respectively.

The Role of Departmental Colleagues and Raising Children with the Tenure-Track
Faculty were asked to what extent they agreed with the statement that they departmental colleagues did what they could to make raising children and the tenure-track compatible. When examining only female faculty both STEM and Non-STEM with children, it is apparent Non-STEM females from Brown agreed more with this statement that their STEM female
counterparts. Alarmingly, in 2006, none of the STEM female faculty agreed that departmental colleagues did what they could to make raising children and the tenure-track compatible while half of their Non-STEM counterparts did agree with this statement. In 2008, the STEM female faculty once again agreed less than their Non-STEM faculty on this statement. The STEM female faculty agreement did increase from 0% to 33%. Nevertheless, in 2008, the STEM female faculty was still 66% below the level of agreement of the Non-STEM female faculty.

Female faculty of both STEM and Non-STEM in Other NSF ADVANCE institutions agreed on this statement at exactly the same percentage (58%). This measurement (58%) is higher than the agreement for Brown STEM females in both 2006 and 2008.

**The Balance between Professional and Personal Time**

Faculty were asked to what extent they were satisfied with the balance between professional and personal or family time. Brown STEM female faculty with children in 2006 and 2008 as well as female faculty with children from Other NSF ADVANCE institutions were all more dissatisfied than their male counterparts. For Other NSF ADVANCE institutions, the level of dissatisfaction for both male and female STEM faculty was comparable at 41% and 54%, respectively. However, at Brown, the level of dissatisfaction of the female STEM faculty in comparison to their male colleagues was noticeably greater. In 2006, 100% of the female STEM faculty were dissatisfied while 46% of the male STEM faculty were dissatisfied. In 2008, the STEM female faculty dissatisfaction decreased to 67% while the STEM male faculty dissatisfaction decreased to 13%.