

## Executive Summary: COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey

Penn State University participated in the COACHE survey for the first time during the 2024-25 academic year along with a cohort of 107 other universities. This report summarizes the COACHE survey results, which compare Penn State Harrisburg (Harrisburg) faculty responses and degree of satisfaction alongside five peer institutions and the national cohort of other institutions. Forty-three percent of our eligible faculty responded to the survey. The data identifies strengths, particularly in governance and P&T process clarity. The findings also reveal concerns regarding mentorship and workload equity, issues that disproportionately affect Non-Tenure Track (NTT) and Underrepresented Minority (URM) faculty.

- I. **Areas of Strength:** Harrisburg outperforms peers in structural clarity and cultural collegiality.
  - **Promotion & Tenure (P&T) Decisions:** P&T fairness is a primary asset. Belief that tenure decisions are performance-based is exceptionally high, ranking 1st among peers and in the 98th Cohort Percentile (P98).
  - **Senior Leadership:** Harrisburg ranks 1st among peers (P86) for the President/Chancellor's pace of decision-making and communication of priorities.
  - **Shared Governance:** Harrisburg ranks 2nd among peers. Faculty reported high adherence to "Rules of Engagement" (P78).
  - **Collegiality:** Harrisburg has strong departmental collegiality, ranking 1<sup>st</sup> among peers (P76), driven largely by White (P93) and Asian/Asian American (P92) faculty satisfaction.
  
- II. **Areas for Improvement:** Significant gaps exist between Harrisburg and its peers in Mentorship, Research Support, and Service Equity.
  1. **Mentorship Deficit.** Mentorship is a significant area of concern, with Harrisburg ranking 6th among peers and in the 6<sup>th</sup> percentile (P6) among national cohort.
    - **NTT Gap:** Mentoring for non-tenure track faculty is deficient (lowest mean: 2.06), ranking 6th among peers (P1).
    - **Institutional Support:** 55% of faculty negatively view institutional support for mentor development, ranking 6<sup>th</sup> among peers (P29). This rate is highest for URM faculty (75%) and NTT faculty (67.65%).
  2. **Nature of Work: Research & Service.** Faculty report structural support for research and equitable service compensation are insufficient.
    - **Course Releases:** Harrisburg ranks 6th among peers (P10). 0% of NTT faculty viewed course release availability positively (mean: 1.83), with 58.8% reporting a negative view. Pre-Tenure faculty are the exception, ranking 1st among peers (mean: 2.87).
    - **Service Compensation:** The equitability of service compensation ranks 5th among peers (mean: 2.28; P7).
    - **URM Workload:** URM faculty report a perceived distinct burden in advising (mean: 2.60) and funding expectations, trailing peer averages by a full point.
  3. **Promotion Culture (Beyond the Process).** While the P&T mechanics are strong, the culture surrounding promotion is discouraging for specific groups.
    - **Discouragement:** 71.4% of URM faculty (mean: 2.00) feel their departmental culture does not encourage promotion, suggesting a differing perception of the promotion environment compared to other groups.
    - **NTT Clarity:** There is a perceived lack of transparency for NTT advancement, with 52.94% of faculty viewing promotion standards negatively (mean: 2.76).

*Note: The mean scale is 1 to 5. In the COACHE report, NTT corresponds to NTL at Penn State.*

**Our Cohort and Peers**

Based on the size of the Penn State Harrisburg faculty and other organizational characteristics, our comparison was collected from the COACHE “cohort”, which includes 107 universities.

Penn State Harrisburg strategically selected the following five comparison institutions—referred to as “peers” in the report—to represent those most similar to us in the faculty labor market and institutional profile. We were asked to choose up to five peers from the list of COACHE universities. Two of them were already IPEDS peers. In choosing peers, we balanced a unique problem; that our student make-up and faculty make-up do not fit into standard categories. Our peers are based on a combination of faculty metrics and enrollment metrics; including the one aspirational school from the list. Incredibly, we match well with Lehigh from a variety of metrics (except not endowment), so it is a good aspirational school.

For our baseline, Penn State Harrisburg used suggestions from COACHE and the University of Washington approach to peer benchmarking, where we examined enrollment, faculty, Carnegie status, research spending, teaching load, international and URM enrollment. Working with OPAIR, we developed a model to analyze the COACHE list with the data above to generate a report. Radford and U of Tennessee Chattanooga (UTC) are already peers in IPEDS as well as COACHE. Using our onliness statement as a baseline, we compared our mission of being a small-to-mid-sized public research campus with a strong citation culture (from Academic Insights) and community engagement footprint. This made comparisons more difficult, but it helped eliminate some outliers in terms of peers

Our closest peers from the COACHE list are **Clarkson University and Rutgers-Camden**—similar in size, R2 status, strong STEM budget, and robust citation impact with Rutgers mirroring our public mission and over 50% URM. **Radford University** aligns well on demographics but has more modest research and a heavier teaching load. **Lehigh University** is an aspirational R1 benchmark with similar international enrollment, research spending and strong citation rates, and **UT Chattanooga** offers a broader R2 comparison with moderate research and a higher teaching load. All comparisons are based on faculty and student FTEs from IPEDS Institution Data Feedback Report (IPEDS DFR 2024).

1. CLOSEST FACULTY AND RESEARCH: Clarkson University AND Rutgers–Camden (Harrisburg share 4 peers on IPEDS with these universities)
2. MOST ALIKE DEMOGRAPHICS: Radford University (it is a Harrisburg IPEDS peer)
3. ASPIRATIONAL: Lehigh University (faculty make up and similar enrollment diversity)
4. UT Chattanooga (it is a Harrisburg IPEDS peer) provides a broader comparison, with larger enrollment and faculty size.

Institution	COACHE Survey Year
Clarkson University	2024
Lehigh University	2025
Radford University	2025
Rutgers University-Camden	2023
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga	2025

**Response Rates**

The table below summarizes response rates by tenure status, rank, gender, and race.

Faculty Groups	Harrisburg	Peers	Cohorts
All Faculty	43%	43%	40%

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Tenured	45%	45%	43%
Pre-Tenure	45%	37%	41%
Non-tenure Track	40%	44%	36%
Full Professor	49%	48%	44%
Associate Professor	44%	46%	42%
Men	40%	39%	36%
Women	47%	48%	46%
White	47%	48%	43%
Faculty of Color	37%	38%	37%
Asian/Asian-American	31%	36%	32%
Underrepresented Minorities	48%	41%	42%