

TRANSFORMATIONS

DECEMBER 2007

EVENT CALENDAR : WINTER & SPRING
2007-2008

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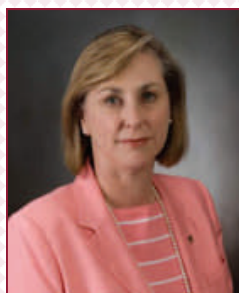
Faculty Leadership Development Lunches

January 22, 2008

AdvanceVT welcomes faculty and university administrators to participate in our Leadership Development luncheon on January 22, 2007, noon to 1:30 pm in the Old Guard Room at The Inn. The luncheon will include a panel discussion with associate deans Anne McNabb, Mary Marchant, and Bevelee Watford covering topics such as career paths, leadership skills, and other issues women faculty often face. Please register at www.advance.vt.edu.



Anne McNabb



Mary Marchant



Bevelee Watford

More *AdvanceVT* Events Coming Soon!

AdvanceVT will be offering an additional leadership luncheon opportunity with department heads in the Spring of 2008. Beate Schmittmann, department chair of Physics, Beth Grabau, department head of Plant Pathology, Physiology, & Weed Science, and Rachel Holloway, department head of Communications, will present from the perspectives of female department chairs on their career progressions and leadership styles. Please stay tuned for more information on this event and others at www.advance.vt.edu.

ADVANCEVT IS MOVING!

As of January 2008, the *AdvanceVT* offices will be relocating to 134 Burruss Hall. The move allows for a dedicated home for the initiative and demonstrates the continued interest by Virginia Tech in institutional transformation.

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“Full-time faculty members at four-year colleges are happier with their jobs than are most American workers, a survey by the pension giant TIAA-CREF has found. The company polled 300 full-time faculty members who had been employed for three or more years at a single four-year institution, about their views on their careers, work-life balance, and retirement expectations.

According to a report on the survey, ‘Do Great Minds Think Alike: Faculty Perspectives on Career and Retirement,’ 53 percent of the respondents said they were very satisfied with their jobs, and 43 percent were somewhat satisfied.

A relatively large proportion of faculty members, however, faulted their colleges for not providing enough support to help them achieve career goals like conducting more research, publishing, getting tenure, and becoming full professors. Only 28 percent said they were very satisfied with the help they received from their institutions in achieving those goals, while 47 percent said they were somewhat satisfied.”
 - **The Chronicle of Higher Education**, November 16, 2007

MORE COACHE SURVEY RESULTS

The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) Survey is conducted by the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The survey measures the institutional experiences and job satisfaction of full-time, pre-tenure faculty. During the academic year of 2006-07, the COACHE survey was distributed to 211 tenure track faculty at Virginia Tech, hired before January of 2006. 79% of these faculty members responded to the survey.

About VT’s 157 respondents:
 -90% hold their first tenure track appointment;
 -29 are Asian, 10 are Black, 10 Hispanic, 1 multi-racial, 1 Native American, and 106 White;
 -28% are non-US citizens;
 -82% have spouses or partners
 -48% have one or more children living at home

The first graph ranks Virginia Tech’s institutional profile, by theme, in comparison to the five selected peer institutions: Iowa State University, Michigan State University, North Carolina State University, Ohio State University, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

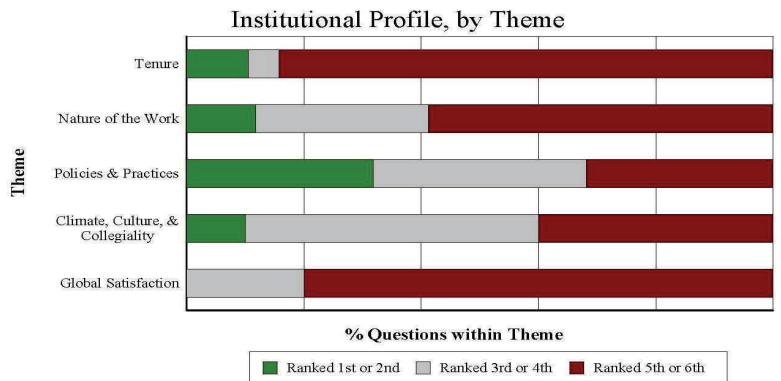
This chart summarizes Vir-

ginia Tech’s mean scores *relative to our peer group* for each theme taken as a whole. Green, grey, and red bars indicate the percentage of survey items within each theme whose scores at Virginia Tech rank in the top two, middle two, or bottom two of the peer group.

As the first graph demonstrates, Virginia Tech ranked 5 or 6th the majority of the time within each of the 5 categories, indicating that junior faculty at Virginia Tech are less satisfied than their peers at the 5 selected institutions. It should be noted that of all the universities

surveyed by COACHE, Virginia Tech’s 5 selected peer institutions ranked among the highest in the 5 themes.

The next table shows that while the majority of pre-tenure faculty at Virginia Tech are satisfied, they are less so than their peers at other institutions, with one notable difference— a 3rd in rank among our peers in departmental satisfaction. For more information on the COACHE survey results, please visit www.advance.vt.edu or www.gseacademic.harvard.edu/~coache/index.html.



| Global Satisfaction | % Satisfied | % Unsatisfied* | Peer Rank | National Rank |
|--|-------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| How satisfied are you with your department as a place to work | 78 | 15 | 3 rd | 46% |
| How satisfied are you with the institution as a place to work | 59 | 23 | 6 th | 22% |
| | Great/Good | Bad/Awful | | |
| How do you rate your institution as a place for junior faculty to work | 64 | 8 | 6 th | 33% |

*Percentage does not equal 100% due to respondents who selected neither satisfied nor unsatisfied; selected So-so for institution as a place for junior faculty to work

A COMPARISON OF 1998 AND 2005 UNIVERSITY CLIMATE DATA

In 1998 and 2005, Virginia Tech surveyed faculty members to assess their perspectives on institutional climate issues. Climate refers to the environment of the workplace. These surveys revealed interesting findings that have been instrumental in policy development and overall institutional change. This article discusses both surveys and highlights comparison data collected in 1998 and 2005 on survey items that assessed overall departmental and university climate.

Comparison of University Climate data

It is possible to get some sense of shifts in campus climate by comparing similar questions on the 2005 *AdvanceVT Faculty Work-Life Survey* and the 1998 *Faculty Assessment of Campus Climate Survey*. The comparisons are only approximations, however, as in most cases the questions are not identical and there is no way to determine what overlap there is among the respondents to the 1998 and 2005 questionnaires. Differences in findings from the two questionnaires seem to be that minority faculty members perceive departmental and university climate differently from white faculty members. Findings also indicate that ethnic minorities still experience their work differently than other groups, but that views about racism are slightly more positive than in 1998.

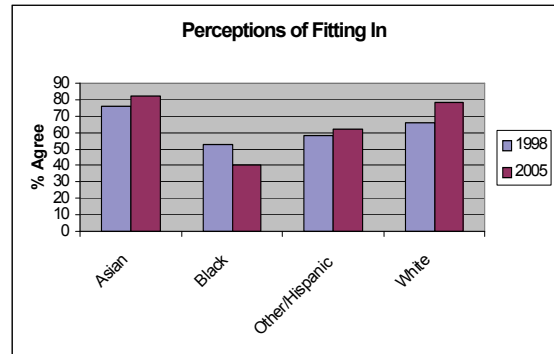
Key Findings:

-With the exception of Black faculty members, faculty members perceive that they “fit in.” Views were more positive about this in 2005 than 1998.

-The gap in perceptions of university climate between White/Asians and Black/Hispanics/Other widened between 1998 and 2005.

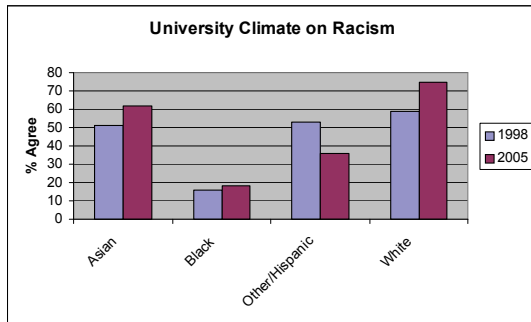
Survey items elicited information on departmental climate, university climate and attitudes, and personal experience with discrimination. Figure 1 shows that, with the exception of Blacks, members of other ethnic groups responded more positively in 2005 than 1998 to similar questions about “fitting in.” Only 40% of Black faculty respondents reported that they “fit in” in 2005, a decline from 1998 survey findings.

Figure 1. Comparison of Perceptions of Fitting In



Note: 1998 item: “I often feel that I don’t “fit in” very well socially with other faculty members in my department or unit. 2005 item: “I feel I “fit in” at Virginia Tech.” “Other” represents other minorities. This category was used in the 1998 survey only. Percent agree includes “somewhat” and “strongly agree.”

Figure 2. Comparison of Perceptions of Racism



Note: Responses from the '98 survey represent the percent of positive rating of university climate concerning overall perceptions of the university as being non-racist. Figures retrieved from *The Campus Climate for Diversity: Faculty Perceptions* 1998 report. Responses from the '05 survey represent percentage of agreement with various statements dealing with racism.

Figure 2 displays the percentage of respondents who agree that Virginia Tech, overall is non-racist. There also appear to be an increasing gap in the perceptions of the racial climate from 1998 to 2005 for all ethnic groups but Hispanics (Figure 2). White (75%) and Asian (51%) faculty members had the most positive response in 2005, while Black (18%) faculty members showed minor improvement in perceptions of racism.

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Summary

Results from the 2005 *AdvanceVT Work-Life Survey* are consistent, in many cases, with national trends on faculty satisfaction and perceptions of university climate issues. A comparison of findings from the *Faculty Assessment of Campus Climate* survey administered in 1998

suggests that there has been progress in communicating expectations for promotion and tenure and in improving the racial climate on campus. With the exception of Asians, ethnic minority faculty, particularly Blacks, have

more negative views than whites, particularly about the university climate.

More attention to the concerns of ethnic minority faculty members is needed to enhance perceptions of university climate. Complete findings were distributed to the campus community from the provost and are available at www.advance.vt.edu.

CLARE BOOTHE LUCE FELLOWSHIP

AdvanceVT and the Virginia Tech Graduate School are pleased to announce a call for nominations for the Clare Boothe Luce Fellowship Program for the 2008-09 academic year. Funded by the Henry Luce Foundation, fellowships are available to females pursuing a PhD in the physical sciences, mathematics, or engineering fields. **Virginia Tech is offering two (2), four (4) year fellowships for incoming female Ph.D. students, with US citizenship, in the physical sciences, mathematics, and engineering.**

The Clare Boothe Luce Program is the single most significant source of private support for women in science, engineering and mathematics. Clare Boothe Luce, the widow of Henry R. Luce, was a playwright, journalist, U.S. Ambassador to Italy, and the first woman elected to Congress from Connecticut. She appreciated, however, that many women face obstacles in their chosen professions. In her magnificent bequest establishing this program, she sought "to encourage women to enter, study, graduate, and teach" in the sciences (including mathematics) and engineering.

The Clare Boothe Luce Fellowships will provide funding (including a 1:1 match by Virginia Tech) in the amount of \$30,000 per recipient, per year, for four years of study and research at the doctoral level. In addition, tuition, academic fees and health insurance will be covered, and a \$3,000 research allowance will be provided.

Fellowship applications will be reviewed by a faculty panel reflecting diverse disciplines, and selection will be based on the following criteria:

1. quality of career plan and applicant's potential for success,
2. mentoring plan,
3. letters of recommendation, and
4. nomination form from department.

Preference will be given to candidates who are new to Virginia Tech. Instructions, further information and the nomination form may be found at www.grads.vt.edu.



These items are due to the Graduate School by January 18, 2008. Applications should be sent to:

Dean Karen DePauw
Graduate School, Virginia Tech
Graduate Life Center at Donaldson
Brown (0325)
Blacksburg, VA 24061

or delivered to the dean's office at
235 Graduate Life Center.

AdvanceVT is a comprehensive program to promote and enhance the careers of women in academic science and engineering at Virginia Tech through institutional transformation. Elements of *AdvanceVT* include:

Pipeline: Advancing Women into Faculty Careers

Recruitment: Increasing the Representation of Women

Leadership: Empowering Women as Leaders and Scholars

Institutional Change: Updating Policies and Changing Culture

Go to www.advance.vt.edu to learn more about the initiative.