

African-American Male Faculty Satisfaction at the University of Wisconsin-Madison

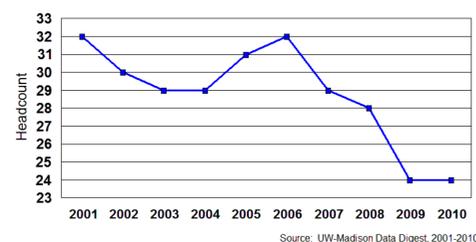
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Introduction

This study investigates the job and department climate satisfaction of African-American male tenured and tenure-track faculty members at UW-Madison, and factors contributing to their satisfaction. It uses data from the *Study of Faculty Worklife at UW-Madison*, which was undertaken as part of an effort to support the advancement of women in academic science and engineering. Envisioned as a means of quantitatively measuring the workplace experiences of faculty, the survey has been administered to all tenured and tenure-track faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison during the spring of 2003, 2006, and 2010. The survey was developed and implemented by the Women in Science and Engineering Leadership Institute (WISELI).

It is important to investigate the experiences of African American men faculty at UW-Madison, because their numbers have been declining. As shown in the graphic below, there were 60 African American

Number of Black Male Faculty at UW-Madison 2001 - 2010



Methodology

The UW-Madison Survey Center has administered the *Study of Faculty Worklife* survey in each round using paper surveys mailed to the homes of the faculty respondents. Male African-American faculty have had response rates very similar to the overall sample in each survey:

- 2003: 63.3% for Black Men, 60.2% Overall (N=15)
- 2006: 53.3% for Black Men, 55.7% Overall (N=15)
- 2010: 58.3% for Black Men, 55.5% Overall (N=14)

The 'Professional Activities' section of the 2003 and 2006 instrument utilized a four-point Likert scale asking respondents to indicate their level of agreement on a range of topics related to department climate, job, career, and overall satisfaction. The scale response choices included "agree strongly," "agree somewhat," "disagree somewhat," and "disagree strongly." The 'Satisfaction' section response choices included "very satisfied," "somewhat satisfied," "somewhat dissatisfied," and "very dissatisfied."

The 'Diversity & Climate' section of the 2010 instrument asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement with the same range of topics as above, but utilized a five-point Likert scale. The scale responses included "never," "rarely," "sometimes," "often," and "very often." The 'Satisfaction' section response choices included "very dissatisfied," "somewhat dissatisfied," "neither dissatisfied nor satisfied," "somewhat satisfied," and "very satisfied".

Although the overall study is a longitudinal design, this study does not link individual responses over time for the African American male faculty. The results reported here are cross-sectional.

Coding of open-ended survey questions was performed in order to

Summary & Future Directions

Although many measures of satisfaction with working conditions increased between 2003 and 2010 for African American male faculty at UW-Madison, a sense of belonging seemed to decrease and concern with the racial climate or lack of diversity increased. Given the alarming decline in numbers of African-American male faculty at UW-Madison in this time period, more work needs to be done to understand why those numbers are declining and what initiatives can be undertaken to increase recruitment and retention of our African American male faculty at UW-Madison.

Results

Figure 1 shows that African-American male faculty feelings of respect by colleagues, students, and staff experienced slight improvement from 2006 to 2010, while Figure 4 shows a notable improvement in faculty satisfaction with their job, and a slight improvement in satisfaction with their career progression. Figure 2 shows faculty feelings of belonging (exclusion from an informal network and 'fit' in department) in decline. Department climate for faculty of color experienced notable improvement from 2006 to 2010, as shown in Figure 3.

It should be kept in mind that the department climate and satisfaction choice scales changed between the 2006 and 2010 instruments, which makes it difficult to directly compare responses.

Figure 1: Feelings of Respect, by Year

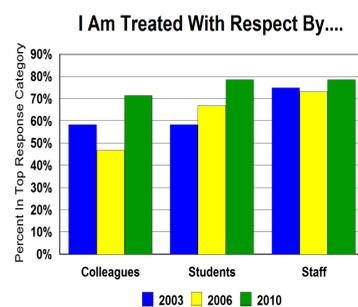


Figure 2: Feelings of Inclusion, by Year

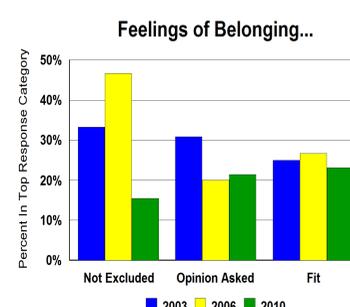


Figure 3: Satisfaction with Department Climate, by Year

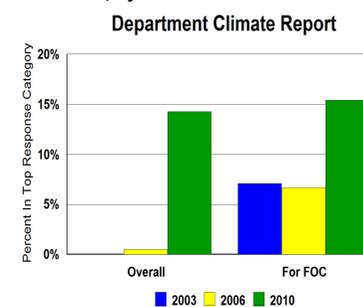


Figure 4: Satisfaction with Job and Career, by Year

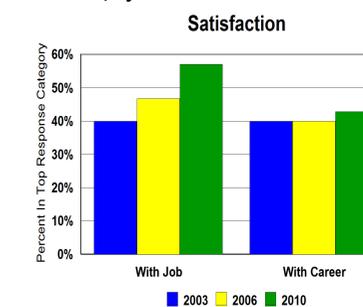
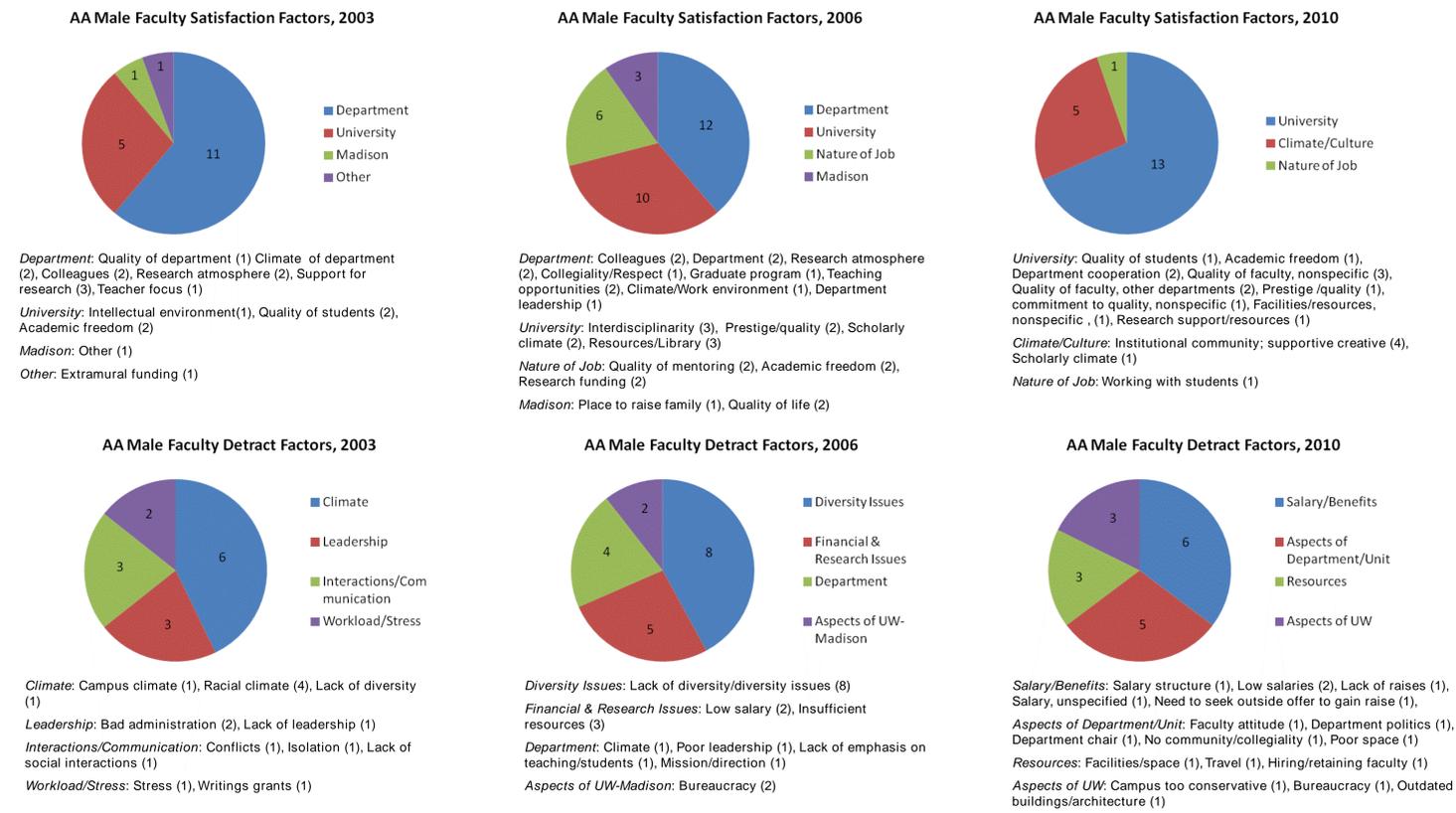


Figure 5 shows the top 4 factors that faculty members reported as contributing to and detracting the most from their satisfaction at UW-Madison, by year. Faculty detraction factors in 2006 show that diversity issues was a notable factor in African-American male faculty dissatisfaction in that survey wave.

Figure 5: Top 4 Factors Contributing to and Detracting from Faculty Satisfaction



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