



HIGHLIGHTS

Published by the Community College Survey of Student Engagement

Descriptive Results from the First Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement

by Courtney Adkins, *CCSSE* College
Liaison and Greg Peterson, Research
Assistant

This issue of *CCSSE* Highlights features results from the first national administration of the Community College Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (*CCFSSE*). The focus here is on descriptive information – what we are learning about community college faculty characteristics, teaching experience, educational preparation, tenure and rank, and so on. The *CCFSSE* was piloted in Fall 2004 and administered for the first time nationally in Spring 2005. Designed as a companion to the Community College Student Report, the *CCFSSE* elicits information from faculty about their teaching practices, the ways they spend their professional time, both in and out of class, and their perceptions regarding students' educational experiences. In addition, as illustrated below, the survey over time will contribute to our understanding of just who these faculty members are, the conditions under which they work, and the challenges they and their colleges face.

2005 *CCFSSE* Institutions and Respondents

All institutions that participated in the 2005 *CCSSE* survey administration were invited to participate in the *CCFSSE*. The survey was administered via the Web: faculty members at participating institutions were sent an invitational email and asked to respond to an online survey. The survey was administered in Spring 2005 to faculty in 39 community and technical colleges in 21 states. A total of 3,561 faculty responded to the survey, including 2,105 full-time faculty and 1,456 part-time faculty.

The *CCFSSE* faculty population generally mirrors national community college faculty population data in

terms of gender, age, race/ethnicity, and citizenship status (National Center for Education Statistics, 2004).

- The 1,930 female faculty members who responded to the *CCFSSE* account for 55% of all respondents; 45% (1,553) were men.
- Almost half (48%, or 1,666) of all *CCFSSE* respondents fall between the ages of 50 and 64; fifty-two percent are 50 or older. Twenty-five percent (889) of respondents are between 40 and 49 years of age, 23% (793) are between 25 and 39 years, and 0.3% (12) are 24 years old or younger.
- Eighty-four percent (2,927) of respondents are white, while 6%, or 214 respondents, identify themselves as African American. Hispanic faculty make up 4% (131) of all respondents. Asian, Asian American, and Pacific Islanders account for 2% (60) of faculty respondents, and Native Americans represent 1% (36) of respondents. Three percent of respondents identify themselves as "other" when responding to the question, "What is your racial identification?"
- Ninety-four percent of respondents (3,276) identify themselves as native U.S. citizens, and 4% (134) self-identify as gaining U.S. citizenship through naturalization. Only 2% of respondents (57) say they hold permanent resident status, and less than 1% (22) report being temporary residents.

Educational Attainment

Sixty-six percent of all *CCFSSE* respondents report a master's degree as the highest degree they have completed. Seventeen percent of respondents have completed a doctoral or professional degree at the time of the survey. Only 12% of respondents report the bachelor's degree as their highest degree completed, and 5% of respondents report having completed an associate degree or less. More part-time faculty report the bachelor's degree or less as their highest degree

achieved than their full-time counterparts (22% to 13%, respectively), while more full-time faculty report holding a doctoral degree than their part-time peers (18% to 12%).

Employment Status and Teaching Load

Fifty-nine percent of *CCFSSE* respondents identify themselves as full-time faculty members, while 41% of respondents indicate that they are employed on a part-time basis. These percentages are quite different from NCES national data, which indicate that only 33% of community college faculty members are employed full-time. This sampling bias is a result of participating colleges being able to provide more valid email addresses for full-time faculty members than for part-time instructors.

Fifty-three percent of part-time faculty respondents report teaching 9 credit hours or less at their institution during the academic year, and another 22% state they held teaching loads of up to 15 credit hours over the same period. Conversely, 62% of full-time faculty respondents indicate they carry teaching loads of 25 credit hours or more for the current academic year.

Teaching Experience

Fifty percent of all *CCFSSE* respondents report having five to 19 years of teaching experience in a college/university setting. Another 20% state they have taught for less than five years, and 6% are first-year teachers. Fifteen percent have been teaching 20 to 29 years, and 9% have taught for 30 years or more.

However, 68% of part-time faculty respondents have taught for less than ten years in a college setting, while 65% of full-time faculty report having taught for ten years or more. National findings show part-time faculty tend to have significantly fewer years of teaching experience than their full-time peers and are more likely to be in their first teaching position in higher education (60%) than full-time faculty (44%). Additionally, 45% of part-time *CCFSSE* respondents report having taught the course upon which their survey responses are based less than three times, while 31% of full-time faculty have taught the selected course twenty-one times or more.

Tenure

Only 27% of *CCFSSE* respondents report being tenured, 905 of whom are full-time faculty while 22 are part-time faculty. Even fewer (10%) are on a tenure track but not tenured. Most respondents report not being on a tenure track: 69% of participating part-time faculty (944) and 10% of full-time faculty (212) are not being considered for tenure although their institutions do have a tenure system. In addition, 29% of participants—989 respondents—report having no tenure system at their institutions, which is comparable to the results of national studies.

Academic Rank

CCFSSE respondents report much higher percentages—19% altogether—of professor, associate professor, and assistant professor ranks than those reported in national findings; national data show 31% of all two-year faculty hold some “other” rank than those listed, much higher than the 5% reported by *CCFSSE* respondents. There are also significant differences in the responses of part- and full-time faculty. Seventy-nine percent of part-time respondents hold the rank of instructor, as opposed to 38% of full-time faculty, and only 8% of part-time participants hold any rank of professor—assistant, associate, or full—while 59% of full-time faculty have these titles. This difference in academic rank based on employment status is mirrored in national findings as well, where the percentage of part-time faculty holding any rank of professor is also listed as 8%.



Look for more findings from the *CCFSSE* in *CCSSE*'s upcoming 2005 National Report, to be released in November. The report will highlight results regarding faculty uses of time, teaching practices of full-time and part-time faculty, and discussion of gaps between student and faculty perceptions of student experiences.