

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE REPORT OF THE CLUE RETENTION COMMITTEE**

- The CLUE Committee on Faculty Retention was convened by Provost Susan Philips on December 19, 2009 and was charged with:
  - Setting priorities for future investments in faculty.
  - Developing strategies and procedures to retain the faculty in whom we've already invested.
  - Learning from best practices and designing new strategies for enhancing the diversity of our faculty, with 'diversity' understood in its widest sense.
- The committee collected demographic data from departments, survey data from faculty who entered into retention "situations" (i.e., who notified the university that they were considering leaving UAlbany), and personal data from interviews.

### ***Demographic data:***

- During the past ten years, an average of at least 2.4% of professors and 5.6% of librarians have entered retention "situations" each year. These rates compare favorably to those of the peer institutions for which we have comparable data.
  - However, when viewed cumulatively over ten years, more than a quarter of our professors and half of our librarians have opportunities to leave UAlbany
- Once a faculty member enters into a retention "situation" the odds of retaining him or her are low.

### ***Survey data:***

- On average, nine factors strongly influenced faculty to leave UAlbany. These are, in descending order of importance:
  1. Career opportunities
  2. Quality of life
  3. Research resources
  4. Teaching conditions and environment
  5. Professional isolation from or engagement with colleagues
  6. Interactions with other faculty within the department
  7. Salary
  8. Infrastructure / support services for faculty work
  9. Geographic location
- On average, only one factor strongly influenced faculty to stay at UAlbany, and this factor is largely out of the control of the university.
  1. Quality of life
- Thus, on average, there are many factors influencing faculty to leave but few influencing them to stay.

- Female faculty feel more negatively than men about the university's climate of diversity, and that this is especially true for women of color. This appears to be correlated with the retention rate of these faculty.

***Interview data:***

- Faculty who did not feel valued by the university typically chose to leave UAlbany. Those who felt valued were more likely to stay.
- Some faculty reported workplace environments that were highly dysfunctional and corrosive, including inappropriate behavior from colleagues and supervisors. Faculty complaining of these issues left. Faculty who were retained, however, reported much more positive workplace climates.
- Spousal issues figured prominently in the decisions of some interviewees, and in cases where the spouse was another academic, the inability to secure suitable employment at UAlbany for the spouse often led to the faculty member leaving.
- Several individuals complained of a lack of support for junior faculty.
- The perception of having a low salary was an important factor in motivating faculty to initially start looking for employment elsewhere.
- One female, minority interviewee reported numerous instances of "micro-discrimination" and subtle harassment.

***Recommendations of the committee:***

1. Continue collecting retention and loss data.
2. Dedicate time and resources to addressing the variables that make faculty start to think about seeking employment elsewhere.
3. Institute a pre-tenure leave program for junior faculty.
4. Develop a clear university policy governing early tenure/promotion cases.
5. Implement small programs and policies to foster and encourage faculty research.
6. Hire additional research administration support staff.
7. Be proactive in retention negotiations.
8. Rethink the basis of the "Match".
9. Provide preparation for new chairs and mentors highlighting the importance of fostering intradepartmental collaboration and a healthy workplace climate.
10. Address the climate of diversity at the university.
11. Build on strength, but in a targeted fashion.
12. Think about retention when making hiring choices.