

**EXIT INTERVIEW – DATA ANALYSIS  
VOLUNTARY RESIGNATIONS OF REGULAR-RANKS FACULTY  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE  
(Telephone Interviews Conducted under the Auspices of the UCI ADVANCE Program)**

Abstract

Thirty-two former UCI faculty members were contacted via e-mail requesting an exit interview. A total of twenty-two faculty (11 female, 11 male) completed a telephone interview. Analyses of the interview data demonstrated very few gender differences in the men's and women's ratings of their employment during their time at UCI. The only significant statistical gender difference that emerged suggested that women were more dissatisfied with the opportunities for collaboration compared to men. Both men and women reported being relatively dissatisfied with the departmental commitment to (or appreciation of) their area of research. The primary reason noted for leaving UCI was an attractive job offer from another university, with salary being the most important element of the competitive offer.

Methods

*Procedure and Measures*

Former UCI faculty members who had left the institution between 1999 and 2003 were contacted via e-mail regarding their willingness to participate in a telephone interview. Telephone interviews were scheduled with those who agreed to participate. All of the interviews were conducted April through July 2004 by the Director of the Advance Program. The length of the telephone interviews ranged between 20-60 minutes and, on average, lasted 33.56 minutes (*standard deviation* = 12.48 minutes).

Of the 37 former faculty members contacted, 22 (59.9%) agreed to participate. Of the 15 former faculty members who declined to be interviewed, 7 were women and 8 were men.

Former faculty members who declined to be interviewed, on average, had been employed at UCI

for 6.92 years; those who completed the interview, by comparison, had been employed at UCI for 10.10 years on average.

The interview protocol was developed by drawing upon items and content areas included in exit surveys that have been used successfully at other universities (e.g., University of Arizona, University of Minnesota). The telephone interview included sections that assessed: a) the participants' evaluation of their employment at UCI, b) reasons regarding the decision to leave UCI, and c) open-ended questions administered at the end that asked participants whether they had any information/advice for UCI or any feedback about the interview process. These sections of the interview are described more fully below.

*Evaluation of participants' employment at UCI.* The first section of the telephone interview asked participants to rate the extent to which they felt satisfied with their employment at UCI. Five different domains of their employment were evaluated: 1) compensation/benefits, 2) departmental/school atmosphere, 3) teaching, 4) research support, and 5) the general atmosphere at UCI and surrounding community. Ratings were made on a 3-point scale, ranging from 1 (*very satisfied*) to 3 (*very dissatisfied*). Composite scales were created by averaging the scores of the individual items within each of these domains.

*Reasons regarding the decision to leave UCI.* The second section of the interview asked participants to comment on the key factors that influenced their decision to leave (e.g., attractive job offer, change of career direction, negative aspects of departmental/school atmosphere). All of the factors stated by the participant were recorded. If the participants reported having received a faculty position at another university, follow-up questions were administered assessing elements of the competitive offer (e.g., salary, teaching load) and whether UCI responded with a counter offer.

*Open-ended questions.* Finally, participants were asked two open-ended questions at the conclusion of the interview. The first question asked participants to comment on any other factors about their experience at UCI that would be important to know and if participants had specific advice for UCI. The second question asked participants to provide feedback about the interview process.

### *Sample*

A total of 22 former faculty members completed the interview. Half of the participants were female (11) and half were male (11). The number of years employed at UCI ranged between 2-28 years (Mean = 10.11 years; *SD* = 6.31 years). At the time of departure, 4 participants had been assistant professors, 10 participants had been associate professors, and 7 participants had been full professors. Fifty-nine percent sample was Caucasian (13 participants), and approximately 27% identified themselves as members of an ethnic minority group (1 Native American, 2 Hispanic/Latino, 3 Asian).

## Results

### **I. Evaluation of Employment During Time At UCI**

In general, there were very few gender differences that emerged when examining men's and women's ratings of their employment during their time at UCI (See Table 1). The only significant gender difference that emerged suggested that women were more dissatisfied with the opportunities for collaboration compared to men (*Means* = 2.40, 1.20 respectively).

Table 1. Ratings of Employment During Time at UCI in 5 Domains

	<u>MEN</u>	<u>WOMEN</u>
<b><u>Compensation/Benefits</u></b>		
Salary	1.70 (.82)	2.09 (.54)
Benefits (health care, retirement benefits, etc.)	1.44 (.73)	1.00 (.00)
<b>Composite Measure for Compensation/Benefits</b>	<b>1.50 (.50)</b>	<b>1.50 (.25)</b>
<b><u>Departmental/School Atmosphere</u></b>		
Physical working conditions	1.10 (.32)	1.50 (.85)
Performance of your Chair	2.17 (.98)	1.50 (.85)
Performance of your Dean	2.22 (.83)	1.78 (.97)
Interactions with your co-workers	1.80 (.79)	1.82 (.87)
Opportunities for collaboration	1.20 (.42)	2.40 (.84)*
Clarity of expectations/feedback about your performance	2.00 (1.00)	1.56 (.88)
Support for promotion and tenure	2.20 (.92)	1.60 (.70)
Nature/amount of service you were asked to provide	1.73 (1.01)	2.30 (.95)
Adequacy of faculty mentoring/development	1.90 (.99)	1.89 (.78)
<b>Composite Measure for Departmental/School Atm.</b>	<b>1.77 (.45)</b>	<b>1.85 (.41)</b>
<b><u>Teaching</u></b>		
Your teaching load	1.73 (1.01)	1.73 (.90)
Quality of undergraduates	2.00 (.82)	1.90 (.57)
Quality/availability of graduate students in your research area	1.60 (.70)	1.40 (.70)
<b>Composite Measure for Teaching</b>	<b>1.67 (.56)</b>	<b>1.67 (.34)</b>
<b><u>Research Support</u></b>		
Your research space/facilities	1.40 (.84)	1.25 (.71)
Research support services (e.g., lab, computing support services)	1.27 (.47)	1.67 (.87)
Financial support for research	1.90 (.99)	1.70 (.95)
Departmental commitment to (or appreciation of) your area of research	2.18 (.87)	2.00 (.82)
<b>Composite Measure for Research Support</b>	<b>1.67 (.54)</b>	<b>1.64 (.59)</b>
<b><u>General Atmos. at UCI &amp; Surrounding Community</u></b>		
Geographic location	1.50 (.85)	2.09 (1.04)
Housing	1.64 (.92)	2.09 (.94)
Social, recreational, and cultural opportunities	1.67 (.71)	2.18 (.87)
Cultural and ethnic diversity	2.00 (.71)	1.60 (.70)
Local school system	1.00 (.00)	1.00 (.00)
Child care	NA **	1.25 (.50)

<b>Composite Measure for General Atmosphere</b>	<b>1.63 (.51)</b>	<b>1.94 (.78)</b>
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**NOTE. 1=GENERALLY SATISFIED, 2=SOMEWHAT SATISFIED, 3=GENERALLY DISSATISFIED**  
(Higher score indicate areas of dissatisfaction that might warrant institutional attention)

\*p < .05

\*\* NA = Not applicable – Ten out of eleven men claimed child care as not applicable. One man stated he was generally satisfied.

Although none of the other gender comparisons were statistically significant, it is important to note gender-related trends in the data that might have reached significance in a larger sample. For example, in terms of compensation, the women who left UCI were generally more dissatisfied with their salaries than were the men, but the women were generally more satisfied with their compensation packages. The women also appeared to be more dissatisfied with the nature/amount of service that they were asked to provide. The women also were generally more dissatisfied with the atmosphere of the UCI community (specifically the geographical location, housing, and social/cultural opportunities) than were the men.

Upon examination of respondents' comments, female faculty members also may have been more dissatisfied with their interaction with their co-workers than the male faculty members. For example, five women commented on feeling that their co-workers (including administrative staff) were a source of difficulty or tension. Women faculty members were also much more likely than their male counterparts to comment on the poor opportunities for collaboration. For example, one female faculty member said that she was "Generally dissatisfied, there will be more opportunities at the new university." This sentiment was also held by another female faculty member who felt that the "institutionalized structure prevented interdisciplinary work." Two female faculty members reported feeling "very isolated" and "not put together enough, not enough interaction."

It is also interesting to note that both male and female former faculty members reported being relatively dissatisfied with the departmental commitment to (or appreciation of) their area of research. This is reflected both in the high mean dissatisfaction scores (2.18 for men and 2.00 for women) and in the respondents' comments. Both male and female former faculty members commented on 'splits' in their departments. For example, a male respondent said that he was "generally dissatisfied, those in his department were split, and the faculty that disagreed with him were arrogant, sending someone to sit in his class to see if his methods were good enough." A female respondent expressed a similar sentiment. She reported that she was "dissatisfied because the department was split, she didn't know about the split when coming in. The Dean did not help at all."

## **II. Your Decision to Leave UCI**

As shown in Table 2, the primary reason noted for leaving UCI was an attractive job offer from another university. The most important elements of the competitive offer that participants noted included the following: salary (mentioned by 15 participants), reputation (mentioned by 4), teaching load (mentioned by 3), promotion (mentioned by 3), and research resources (mentioned by 2), and location (mentioned by 2).

Equally for men and women, another key factor that influenced their decision to leave was the negative aspects of their departmental/school atmosphere.

Table 2. Reasons noted for leaving UCI

	Noted as reason for leaving UCI	Not Mentioned
Attractive job offer	21	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty position (20)</li> <li>• Non-faculty position (1)</li> </ul>		
Change of Career Direction	0	22
Unfavorable pre-tenure personnel review/anticipated negative tenure decision	1	21
Non-competitive salary at UCI	1	21
Negative aspects of departmental/school atmosphere	12	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men (6 noted as reason for leaving, 5 not mentioned)</li> <li>• Women (6 noted as reason for leaving, 5 not mentioned)</li> </ul>		
Academic interests incompatible with UCI position	2	20
Too many clinical or service demands at UCI	0	22
Insufficient time for research at UCI	0	22
Insufficient career opportunities for spouse/partner	2	20
High cost of housing	1	21
Insufficient social/recreational/cultural opportunities	0	22
Parental or other familial responsibilities	2	20

### *Counter offer*

Of the 22 former faculty members who responded to the survey, 11 received a counter offer, 4 did not receive a counter offer, and 4 did not want a counter offer. Table 3 presents a breakdown of these findings by gender. As noted in this table, men were less likely to receive a counter offer when compared to women (although this is not a statistically significant difference).

Table 3. Gender Differences in Receipt of Counter Offer

	Men	Women
No, did not receive a counter offer	3	1
Yes, did receive a counter offer	4	7
Did not want a counter offer	2	2

Of those who did receive a counter offer, 1 woman indicated that she was generally satisfied, 1 man indicated that he was somewhat satisfied, and 2 men and 4 women indicated that they were generally dissatisfied with that offer. Data for the other 3 participants was missing.

### III. Concluding Questions

In the final section of the interview, participants were asked to comment on anything else about their experience at UCI that they felt was important and what advice they had for UCI to become a better institution. The comments from both men and women were equally focused on UCI working towards achieving equity, diversity, and respect for the individual and their scholarship.

The final question asked the participants if they had any feedback about the interview process. All of the 22 former faculty members indicated that they thought the interview process was acceptable in its current form.

Of the 37 former faculty members contacted, almost all of them (35) are currently employed in other academic, faculty positions. Seven (19%) are now faculty members at other UC schools, 10 (27%) are now faculty members at Ivy League Universities, 3 (8%) are now faculty members at Stanford, and the remaining 15 (43%) are employed at various other universities (i.e. Michigan, Duke, Georgetown, Rice, U. of Minnesota, U. of Washington, USC).