

1998-99 HERI Faculty Survey

I. Background

During the 1998-99 academic year, Potsdam College participated in the nationwide Faculty Survey conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at the University of California-Los Angeles. Surveys were distributed to 227 members of the Potsdam College faculty. A total of 120 surveys were returned for an overall response rate of 53%. Of the 120 survey respondents, 102 were classified as full-time undergraduate faculty based on criteria established by HERI.

II. Summary of Survey Results

The responses of Potsdam faculty to various survey items are summarized in the accompanying tables. The results are for those respondents classified as full-time undergraduate faculty. For purposes of comparison, the Potsdam faculty responses to each item are provided for both the 1995-96 and 1998-99 versions of the survey. Additional comparative data are also provided in each table for peers at four year public colleges and all four year institutions.

Comparative profiles of the Potsdam College survey respondents in 1995-96 and 1998-99 are provided in Table 1.

In terms of faculty work activities, it appears that the 1998-99 Potsdam faculty devoted more time to committee work/meetings and community/public service, but less time to advising/counseling students than reported by 1995-96 survey respondents (Table 2). The time committed to most other activities appears to be similar when comparing the 1995-96 and 1998-99 survey respondents.

Overall job satisfaction of the 1998-99 respondents was considerably higher (70.6% vs. 48.4%) than reported by those responding to the 1995-96 survey (Table 3). Satisfaction with job security, opportunities for scholarly pursuits, and relationships with administration also increased somewhat since the previous survey. On the other hand, the level of satisfaction with teaching loads has declined considerably during the same period.

Tables 4 and 5 summarize responses to items related to personal goals of faculty and reasons for pursuing an academic career. Generally, the responses of Potsdam faculty are similar to their peers at other institutions.

As shown in Table 6, the review/promotion process, research or publishing demands, teaching loads, and committee work are among the

principal sources of stress for faculty. In each of these areas, more faculty in 1998-99 regarded these as sources of stress than observed in 1995-96. Given that a much larger proportion of 1998-99 survey respondents were non-tenured faculty (Table 1), it is probably not surprising that the review/promotion process and research/publishing demands were greater sources of stress than observed in 1995-96.

With respect to undergraduate educational goals (Table 7), the teaching of classics of Western Civilization, developing students' moral character, and helping students develop personal values were deemed somewhat less important in 1998-99 than in the previous survey. Conversely, the importance of enhancing students' self-understanding appears to have increased in importance over the last three years.

Table 8 provides a summary of the teaching activities of faculty members over the past two years.

The instructional methods used by Potsdam faculty suggest there has been some increase in the use of active learning techniques over the last three years (Table 9). Potsdam faculty are also less likely to rely on extensive lecturing as a mode of course delivery compared to peers at other institutions.

The evaluation methods used by faculty in undergraduate courses are summarized in Table 10. Multiple choice exams and term or research papers appear to be used less often by Potsdam faculty as means of evaluating students compared to peers at other institutions.

As shown in Table 11, Potsdam faculty remain concerned about the level of academic preparation of students. This is particularly evident when Potsdam faculty are compared to faculty at other institutions.

Among the issues of highest, or high, priority for Potsdam faculty is the development of a sense of community on campus (Table 12). The importance of this item has increased considerably over the past three years. As also evident from Table 12, developing a sense of community on campus is also a higher priority for Potsdam faculty compared to peers at other institutions.

Faculty opinions on a number of general issues related to higher education are presented in Table 13.

For additional information on the data from the above survey, please contact Mark Winston, Director of Assessment and Institutional Research (X2881; e-mail: winstojm).

Table 1

**Demographic Profile
HERI Faculty Survey Respondents
Full-Time Undergraduate Faculty**

	1998-99 Survey		1995-96 Survey	
	Number	%	Number	%
Total Respondents	102		67	
Gender				
Female	35	34.3	23	34.3
Male	67	65.7	44	65.7
Age				
Under 30	7	6.9	0	0.0
30-39	18	17.7	8	12.1
40-49	32	31.3	26	39.4
50-59	33	32.3	20	30.3
60 or over	12	11.7	12	18.2
Rank				
Professor	31	30.4	30	45.4
Associate Professor	26	25.5	19	28.8
Assistant Professor	34	33.3	12	18.2
Instructor/Lecturer	11	10.7	5	7.5
Year Appointed to Current Position				
Prior to 1961	4	3.9	--	--
1961-1970	17	16.7	--	--
1971-1980	14	13.8	--	--
1981-1990	17	16.6	--	--
1991-1995	23	22.5	--	--
1996-1998	10	9.8	--	--
Tenure Status				
Tenured	51	53.1	47	70.7
Non-Tenured	45	46.9	19	29.3

Table 2
Weekly Faculty Activity Profile

Activity (Hours Per Week Spent On:)	% of Potsdam Faculty		% of Faculty (4 Year Public Colleges)		% of Faculty (All 4 Year Institutions)	
	1998-99	1995-96	1998-99	1995-96	1998-99	1995-96
Scheduled Teaching						
0-4 hours	3.0	0.0	4.7	3.6	9.3	8.8
5-8 hours	8.0	8.2	22.9	18.5	35.0	34.1
9-12 hours	52.0	50.8	49.0	50.0	37.1	36.9
13-16 hours	20.0	24.6	15.4	12.7	12.1	18.3
More than 16 hours	17.0	16.4	7.9	9.5	6.4	7.4
Preparing for Teaching						
0-4 hours	11.0	8.2	8.3	6.9	8.9	8.5
5-8 hours	15.0	19.7	21.0	19.4	22.7	22.0
9-12 hours	27.0	23.0	26.1	24.7	25.9	25.2
13-16 hours	16.0	9.8	16.9	18.4	17.2	17.6
17-20 hours	14.0	18.0	15.5	15.7	13.9	14.3
21-34 hours	15.0	16.4	9.5	11.5	9.0	9.8
More than 34 hours	2.0	4.9	2.7	3.2	2.3	2.5
Advising/Counseling Students						
None	0.0	0.0	3.1	2.4	2.8	2.3
1-4 hours	63.3	47.5	60.8	56.5	61.1	57.9
5-8 hours	28.6	41.0	29.3	30.2	29.2	29.5
More than 8 hours	8.2	11.4	9.9	9.8	9.6	10.3
Committee Work and Meetings						
None	2.0	0.0	3.8	3.3	4.4	3.8
1-4 hours	66.3	80.3	64.6	67.0	66.1	67.6
5-8 hours	26.7	16.4	24.5	23.0	22.9	22.4
More than 8 hours	5.0	3.2	7.0	6.5	6.6	6.1

Table 2 (Con't)
Weekly Faculty Activity Profile

Activity (Hours Per Week Spent On:	% of Potsdam Faculty		% of Faculty (4 Year Public Colleges)		% of Faculty (All 4 Year Institutions)	
	1998-99	1995-96	1998-99	1995-96	1998-99	1995-96
Research & Scholarly Writing						
None	17.5	36.2	16.6	18.8	15.1	15.6
1-4 hours	52.6	34.5	37.2	39.1	31.0	30.6
5-8 hours	17.5	10.3	20.5	20.3	20.1	19.2
9-12 hours	7.2	13.8	12.2	10.5	13.5	13.2
More than 12 hours	5.1	5.1	13.4	11.2	20.3	21.3
Creative Products/Performances						
None	41.4	48.1	54.0	55.7	58.1	58.5
1-4 hours	26.4	30.8	30.0	30.1	27.1	27.1
5-8 hours	19.5	9.6	8.9	7.8	8.1	7.9
9-12 hours	5.7	7.7	3.6	3.0	3.4	3.1
More than 12 hours	6.8	3.8	3.5	3.3	3.2	3.2
Community or Public Service						
None	31.2	44.6	27.5	27.5	32.8	33.4
1-4 hours	53.1	48.2	58.4	59.9	54.3	55.6
5-8 hours	9.4	5.4	10.5	9.7	9.7	8.4
More than 8 hours	6.2	1.8	3.6	2.9	3.1	2.6
Outside Consulting or Freelance Work						
None	63.6	66.0	65.9	64.9	65.3	62.5
1-4 hours	26.1	32.0	25.4	28.3	25.6	29.6
5-8 hours	6.8	2.0	5.5	4.7	6.0	5.5
More than 8 hours	3.4	0.0	3.1	2.1	3.1	2.3

Table 3
Aspects of Job Noted as Very Satisfactory or Satisfactory

Aspects of Job	Year	% of Potsdam Faculty	% of Faculty (4 Year Public Colleges)	% of Faculty (All 4 Year Institutions)
Salary and fringe benefits	1998-99	31.4	42.9	47.8
	1995-96	32.8	46.2	47.7
Opportunity for scholarly pursuits	1998-99	43.6	54.0	61.6
	1995-96	36.5	46.2	54.7
Teaching load	1998-99	26.7	50.0	57.3
	1995-96	40.6	56.2	63.9
Quality of students	1998-99	26.5	35.2	44.9
	1995-96	26.6	42.2	51.3
Working conditions	1998-99	64.7	68.2	72.1
	1995-96	60.9	68.8	72.8
Autonomy and independence	1998-99	88.2	84.8	87.6
	1995-96	85.9	82.9	87.1
Professional relationships with other faculty	1998-99	67.6	72.0	71.9
	1995-96	73.4	76.6	75.4
Competency of colleagues	1998-99	67.6	71.1	73.4
	1995-96	59.4	72.7	76.0
Job security	1998-99	58.4	75.8	76.5
	1995-96	38.7	70.1	73.8
Relationships with administration	1998-99	62.0	56.1	56.9
	1995-96	50.0	54.4	56.3
Overall job satisfaction	1998-99	70.6	71.9	74.5
	1995-96	48.4	71.8	74.9

Table 4
Personal Goals Noted as Very Important or Essential

Personal Goal	Year	% of Potsdam Faculty	% of Faculty (4 Year Public Colleges)	% of Faculty (All 4 Year Institutions)
Becoming an authority in my field	1998-99	44.1	50.4	56.6
	1995-96	45.5	52.8	58.9
Influencing the political structure	1998-99	16.7	14.2	14.3
	1995-96	15.2	15.2	15.8
Influencing social values	1998-99	39.2	35.8	37.0
	1995-96	42.4	38.8	39.0
Raising a family	1998-99	71.7	70.8	72.3
	1995-96	63.6	72.4	73.1
Being well off financially	1998-99	33.3	38.0	35.3
	1995-96	30.3	36.8	34.2
Helping others who are in difficulty	1998-99	60.8	62.2	62.7
	1995-96	68.2	63.8	62.5
Becoming involved in programs to clean up the environment	1998-99	24.8	31.7	29.3
	1995-96	36.4	35.2	32.8
Developing a meaningful philosophy of life	1998-99	76.5	76.4	76.9
	1995-96	72.3	77.8	78.1
Helping to promote racial understanding	1998-99	61.4	58.1	58.3
	1995-96	68.2	60.3	59.7
Obtaining recognition from my colleagues for contribution to my special field	1998-99	34.7	42.0	47.3
	1995-96	43.9	43.0	49.4
Being a good colleague	1998-99	89.2	89.4	89.8
	1995-96	79.4	87.2	85.9
Being a good teacher	1998-99	100.0	98.1	97.6
	1995-96	100.0	99.4	99.1

Table 5
Reasons Noted as Very Important for Pursuing an Academic Career

Reason	Year	% of Potsdam Faculty	% of Faculty (4 Year Public Colleges)	% of Faculty (All 4 Year Institutions)
Autonomy	1998-99	74.3	71.0	71.0
	1995-96	65.6	68.9	72.0
Flexible schedule	1998-99	65.7	66.3	64.4
	1995-96	57.8	65.4	65.1
Intellectual challenge	1998-99	91.2	83.9	86.9
	1995-96	84.4	83.6	86.8
Intellectual freedom	1998-99	85.3	79.3	79.6
	1995-96	84.4	78.5	80.7
Freedom to pursue scholarly/teaching interests	1998-99	82.4	76.4	78.4
	1995-96	78.1	74.8	78.7
Opportunities for teaching	1998-99	79.4	71.8	68.0
	1995-96	71.9	75.5	69.8
Opportunities for research	1998-99	44.1	39.8	48.1
	1995-96	39.1	37.0	47.9
Occupational prestige/professional status	1998-99	16.7	18.0	17.6
	1995-96	15.6	18.2	18.3
Opportunity to influence social change	1998-99	28.4	22.6	21.8
	1995-96	15.6	21.0	19.9

Table 6
Faculty Sources of Stress During the Last Two Years ^a

Source of Stress	Year	% of Potsdam Faculty	% of Faculty (4 Year Public Colleges)	% of Faculty (All 4 Year Institutions)
My physical health	1998-99	53.9	48.5	47.1
	1995-96	50.0	42.5	42.1
Review/promotion process	1998-99	52.9	51.0	48.4
	1995-96	39.7	51.5	47.2
Subtle discrimination (e.g., prejudice, racism, sexism)	1998-99	33.7	27.1	24.3
	1995-96	40.6	26.7	24.2
Personal finances	1998-99	77.2	61.4	57.6
	1995-96	65.6	60.4	58.3
Committee work	1998-99	68.8	63.2	61.3
	1995-96	57.1	57.0	56.4
Faculty meetings	1995-99	61.8	54.0	52.3
	1995-96	56.2	51.4	50.0
Colleagues	1998-99	67.6	58.7	58.7
	1995-95	65.1	56.3	56.9
Students	1998-99	63.4	57.7	56.3
	1995-96	58.7	58.8	58.3
Research or publishing demands	1998-99	45.5	57.7	61.0
	1995-96	29.0	54.3	60.7
Institutional procedures and "red tape"	1998-99	69.3	75.8	70.5
	1995-96	73.4	72.9	68.3
Teaching load	1998-99	82.2	67.2	63.0
	1995-96	71.4	64.7	61.8
Time pressures	1998-99	88.1	85.0	86.7
	1995-96	89.1	84.7	86.8
Lack of personal time	1998-99	84.2	79.1	80.4
	1995-96	82.8	80.3	81.4

^a % rating stress as extensive or somewhat stressful

Table 7
Educational Goals for Undergraduates ^a

Educational Goal	Year	% of Potsdam Faculty	% of Faculty (4 Year Public Colleges)	% of Faculty (All 4 Year Institutions)
Develop ability to think clearly	1998-99	100.0	99.3	99.5
	1995-96	98.4	99.3	99.4
Prepare students for employment after college	1998-99	65.7	73.5	67.2
	1995-96	66.7	72.9	65.9
Prepare students for graduate or advanced education	1998-99	60.8	56.9	58.3
	1995-96	57.8	54.2	54.9
Develop moral character	1998-99	50.0	53.7	55.5
	1995-96	56.2	57.0	55.1
Provide for students' emotional development	1998-99	33.3	35.1	35.3
	1995-96	32.8	36.4	34.6
Prepare students for family living	1998-99	15.7	15.0	15.0
	1995-96	14.5	16.3	15.2
Teach students the classic works of Western civilization	1998-99	36.6	28.9	30.2
	1995-96	46.0	30.1	30.2
Help students develop personal values	1998-99	49.0	56.4	57.7
	1995-96	59.4	59.4	57.5
Enhance the out-of-class experience of students	1998-99	42.2	42.3	39.3
	1995-96	41.9	44.1	39.6
Enhance students' self-understanding	1998-99	64.4	60.6	60.2
	1995-96	48.4	61.6	59.6
Instill in students a commitment to community service	1998-99	35.3	36.4	35.1
	1995-96	29.0	35.9	33.6
Prepare students for responsible citizenship	1998-99	60.4	60.8	59.0
	1995-96	57.1	64.7	60.1

^a % rating as essential or very important

Table 8
Teaching Activities in the Last Two Years

Activity	Year	% of Potsdam Faculty	% of Faculty (4 Year Public Colleges)	% of Faculty (All 4 Year Institutions)
Taught interdisciplinary course	1998-99	37.8	33.5	41.7
	1995-96	35.7	32.5	41.1
Taught ethnic studies course	1998-99	12.9	8.4	9.3
	1995-96	16.4	8.5	9.3
Taught a women's studies course	1998-99	18.4	7.3	8.4
	1995-96	19.6	6.4	7.4
Team-taught a course	1998-99	28.1	33.6	39.8
	1995-96	31.6	33.7	39.9
Worked with students on research project	1998-99	56.7	72.5	76.5
	1995-96	61.7	70.8	76.1
Participated in teaching enhancement workshop	1998-99	66.3	60.2	56.6
	1995-96	71.7	60.6	54.4

Table 9
Instructional Techniques/Methods Used in All or Most
Undergraduate Courses

Technique/Method	Year	% of Potsda m Faculty	% of Faculty (4 Year Public Colleges)	% of Faculty (All 4 Year Institutions)
Class discussions	1998-99	70.6	68.0	67.7
	1995-96	63.1	68.3	67.2
Computer/machine-aided instruction	1998-99	14.7	22.2	19.9
	1995-96	15.4	18.0	15.9
Cooperative learning	1998-99	39.2	36.9	35.5
	1995-96	36.9	36.6	33.2
Group projects	1998-99	24.5	24.4	23.6
	1995-96	21.9	24.8	22.6
Independent projects	1998-99	44.1	33.5	34.1
	1995-96	36.9	34.1	33.7
Extensive lecturing	1998-99	35.3	48.0	48.5
	1995-96	35.4	46.4	49.4
Multiple drafts of written work	1998-99	26.5	16.9	17.3
	1995-96	18.5	16.6	16.0

Table 10
Evaluation Methods Used in All or Most Undergraduate Courses

Method	Year	% of Potsdam Faculty	% of Faculty (4 Year Public Colleges)	% of Faculty (All 4 Year Institutions)
Multiple choice mid-terms and/or final exams	1998-99	16.8	33.1	26.6
	1995-96	16.9	30.4	25.4
Essay mid-terms and/or final exams	1998-99	45.1	40.7	43.6
	1995-96	39.1	40.9	42.9
Short-answer mid-terms and/or final exams	1998-99	32.7	34.4	35.2
	1995-96	24.2	33.8	33.8
Student presentations	1998-99	35.6	33.3	34.1
	1995-96	40.0	33.8	33.8
Term/research papers	1998-99	24.0	33.7	37.4
	1995-96	27.7	34.6	35.9
Grading on a curve	1998-99	11.8	17.0	20.0
	1995-96	13.8	16.3	21.0
Competency-based grading	1998-99	35.0	46.8	46.8
	1995-96	44.6	46.6	46.9

Table 11
Faculty Opinions About Current College ^a

Issue	Year	% of Potsdam Faculty	% of Faculty (4 Year Public Colleges)	% of Faculty (All 4 Year Institutions)
Faculty are interested in students' personal problems	1998-99	71.3	74.4	72.9
	1995-96	82.8	78.2	74.9
People here don't treat each other with enough respect	1998-99	32.7	36.9	33.4
	1995-96	30.2	35.2	33.0
Faculty feel that most students are well-prepared academically	1998-99	12.7	21.9	30.7
	1995-96	7.8	20.7	27.9
Student Affairs staff have the support and respect of faculty	1998-99	66.3	58.4	61.0
	1995-96	54.0	56.7	58.4
Faculty here are strongly interested in the academic problems of undergraduates	1998-99	78.2	81.3	80.4
	1995-96	82.8	81.2	80.0
Many courses involve students in community service	1998-99	19.0	24.9	29.1
	1995-96	14.8	22.8	26.0
Most students are strongly committed to community service	1998-99	11.1	18.3	27.7
	1995-96	7.8	18.2	24.4

^a % agreeing strongly or somewhat

Table 12
Issues Noted as Being of High or Highest Priority

Issue	Year	% of Potsdam faculty	% of Faculty (4 Year Public Colleges)	% of Faculty (All 4 Year Institutions)
Promote intellectual development of students	1998-99	79.4	79.8	82.8
	1995-96	67.2	72.8	76.7
Hire more minority faculty and administrators	1998-99	49.0	45.0	42.9
	1995-96	45.3	48.9	47.0
Develop sense of community among students and faculty	1998-99	58.8	44.8	46.5
	1995-96	39.1	41.6	44.1
Hire more women faculty and administrators	1998-99	50.0	38.8	39.2
	1995-96	45.3	43.1	44.0
Facilitate student involvement in community service	1998-99	27.5	30.5	36.9
	1995-96	15.6	30.2	34.5
Increase or maintain institutional prestige	1998-99	52.5	63.8	71.2
	1995-96	48.4	63.3	71.3
Recruit more minority students	1998-99	57.8	50.6	50.4
	1995-96	46.9	52.6	52.6
Enhance institution's national image	1998-99	40.2	56.6	69.3
	1995-96	34.4	53.1	67.8

Table 13
Faculty Opinions on General Issues ^a

Issue	Year	% of Potsdam faculty	% of Faculty (4 Year Public Colleges)	% of Faculty (All 4 Year Institutions)
Western civilization and culture should be the foundation of the undergraduate curriculum	1998-99	53.9 ^a	58.6 ^a	58.6 ^a
	1995-96	64.6	54.3	53.7
College officials have the right to ban persons with extreme views from speaking on campus	1998-99	19.6	21.7	24.5
	1995-96	28.8	31.0	30.7
The chief benefit of a college education is that it increases one's earning power	1998-99	26.5	27.1	22.7
	1995-96	15.2	26.1	21.8
Promoting diversity leads to the admission of too many underprepared students	1998-99	26.7	30.7	28.5
	1995-96	39.4	33.7	31.1
Colleges should be actively involved in solving social problems	1998-99	60.6	62.1	63.8
	1995-96	59.1	63.4	64.0
Tenure is an outmoded concept	1998-99	23.8	29.2	30.4
	1995-96	27.3	37.4	36.6
Colleges should encourage students to be involved in community service activities	1998-99	77.5	79.4	81.2
	1995-96	77.3	79.7	80.0
Community service should be given weight in college admissions decisions	1998-99	58.8	50.7	53.7
	1995-96	44.6	44.6	48.0
Tenure is essential to attract the best minds to academe	1998-99	65.0	66.0	65.7
	1995-96	65.2	55.9	57.6

^a % agreeing strongly or somewhat