

In Spring of 2020, the Campus Life and Facilities Committee of the Senate was tasked with creating and circulating a survey to follow up on the original COACHE survey, a faculty job satisfaction survey. This original survey was disseminated and analyzed by a committee chaired by Professors Sherry Deckman and Justine McGovern during the 2019-2020 academic year. In their analysis, survey scores indicated that faculty satisfaction with Facilities and Work Resources, specifically in the areas of Classrooms, Equipment and Clerical and Administrative support, had dropped significantly since 2015. As a result, the Campus Life and Facilities Committee was asked to “develop a plan to address areas of need identified in the COACHE survey and improve faculty satisfaction with facilities and work resources both practical and supportive.” Since results from the original COACHE survey were vague and inconclusive, the committee decided to create and disseminate a follow-up survey.

The purpose of the follow-up COACHE survey was to elicit comments and suggestions about the buildings on campus. Since the survey was conducted amidst the COVID pandemic, the Campus Life and Facilities Committee decided to include question that solicited faculty’s reflections and needs for a return to campus. As such, the follow-up COACHE survey was created during the Fall 2020 semester and disseminated to all Lehman faculty at the beginning of the Spring 2021 semester. The follow-up COACHE survey is attached. 133 survey responses were received. The overall goal of the survey was to better understand faculty’s concerns regarding classroom conditions where they have taught. Areas of concerns included classrooms’ ventilation, technology, accessibility, as well as the administrative/clerical support to address issues. As noted, there was also a question that asked faculty to share their post-pandemic needs/concerns as they return to campus for the 2021-2022 academic year.

Across the 133 responses, the following buildings were identified as having poor ventilation, accessibility, and/or technology: Carman Hall, Gillett Hall, Apex Classrooms, Speech and Theatre/Music, Davis, Old Gym Building. Most respondent’s comments were regarding the conditions of classroom located in Carman Hall and Gillett Hall. The following paragraphs synthesizes the major findings regarding ventilation of classrooms, accessibility to classrooms, technology available in the classrooms, as well as post-pandemic concerns.

ACCESSIBILITY:

Accessibility Concerns: 26% rated accessibility as poor. Small, overcrowded classrooms were a frequently mentioned concern. The complaints included the fact that sometimes students in wheelchairs must sit in aisles because there is not enough room for them to access chairs and tables. Another complaint included narrow doorways and heavy doors, both of which make it difficult for students in wheelchairs. Chairs that are attached to desks also impede access to several rooms. Some of the lab rooms seem to be a big problem. The lab in Davis 126 was specifically mentioned because it has stationary benches. Elevators were a second big concern. Respondents complained that Gillet, Carman, Speech and Theater and the Apex buildings have only one elevator each. These elevators are small and breakdown frequently. One person did mention that while the buildings meet minimum ADA requirements, they do not do more than

that and may impede student success. Under some circumstances, a respondent thought that the college is at risk of serious fire liability.

TECHNOLOGY & EQUIPMENT:

In terms of the equipment that faculty and staff would like in order to best teach course content, the most requested equipment were smartboards and updated computers and projectors. In terms of how updated and efficient classroom equipment was (such as computers and programs on computers), 67% of faculty rated this as either poor (35%) or fair (32%) suggesting that this is an area for improvement. Additional areas of need were internet access and smartboard and Bluetooth connectivity. 62% of respondents felt the internet access in their classrooms was either good (29%) or fair (33%). While 39% of respondents rated Smartboards and/or Bluetooth connectivity as not applicable, 36% rated it as poor (21%) or fair (15%). Finally, the majority (66%) of respondents rated the quality of technology equipment in their classrooms as very good (7%), good (23%) or fair (46%), while 39% rated it as poor.

VENTILATION:

A question on the survey asked respondents to rate the ventilation and air quality in the classrooms where they teach. The following percentages were reported.

- 55% say it is POOR
- 29% say FAIR
- 12% say GOOD
- 2% say VERY GOOD

Respondents are then asked to describe the ventilation and air quality problems and about 100 of the 131 respondents (3 out of 4) say air quality is poor (stale, stuffy), windows do not open, and rooms are either too hot, primarily during the summer, early fall, and late spring, or the classrooms are too cold.

POST-COVID CONCERNS:

Ventilation was by far the dominant concern that was repeated in response to Question 9's "In view of the pandemic, are there any other concerns or accommodations that you have to returning to teach in the classroom?" More than half of all responses at least mentioned ventilation as a concern with regards to COVID, acknowledging the importance of air circulation to controlling COVID's spread. Other concerns outside of Ventilation can be largely divided into the following: a) concern with the proper enforcement of safety measures against COVID, b) concern with the consequences of enforcing said measures, and c) concerns aimed at the tools and settings faculty use to teach, which ranged from internet issues to lab equipment. This reflects a general anxiety with the contradictions inherent in trying to lead effective in-person education during COVID. The range of individual issues cited in response to this question makes crystal clear the need for a nuanced policy in reflecting the differing needs of faculty in order to promote effective education, especially as we look forward to returning to Lehman in the Fall 2021 Semester.