

Research Summary

Stress in Senior Faculty Careers

Brendan C Russell, New Directions for Higher Education, 2010

Administration

To retain senior faculty, cultivate **healthy administrator-faculty relations**. Senior faculty tend to think positively about their role, and thus more attachment to the institution when they feel that administrators **genuinely care** about their work.

Resources & Support

Ensure **enough resources** are in place (such as graduate assistants, administrative support, technology assistance, parking privileges). Ensure **equitable allocation** across faculty members and across research and teaching. Senior faculty may lose engagement if there is unequal distribution. They may change institutions to find adequate funding for the **new research paths** they wish to explore later in their careers.

Culture and Collegiality

Senior faculty tend to stay in departmental cultures with **collegial, supportive relationships** and **free, respectful intellectual exchange**. They may leave if there is intra-departmental competition, secrecy and cliques, and/or intellectual conflicts.

Salary and Benefits

Salary and benefits may influence senior faculty retention. Ensure pay is **competitive with peer institutions**. Attaching **pay incentives to research and teaching** can be motivating. Making administrative adjustments to benefits packages can encourage retention.

Autonomy and the Pursuit of Knowledge

Senior faculty tend to **prefer research** over teaching. Limiting teaching requirements can encourage retention. **Collaborative, interdisciplinary research** opportunities can engage faculty with new levels of intellectual challenge. Ensure faculty can retain **autonomy**.

Workload

Scholarly culture of rewarding research in top-tier journals is at the root of workload dissatisfaction. The time demands and stress on professional/personal life of this culture influence decisions to leave or retire. They can feel burdened and drained, and eventually, burnt out, from pressure to achieve greatness from individual contributions. Senior faculty are more likely to be satisfied with **manageable short-term goals** rather than many long-term goals.