

“A Unique University in All of the World”

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In October 1975, President Spencer W. Kimball visited campus for the centennial celebration of Brigham Young University. As part of that celebration, President Kimball delivered a landmark address entitled “The Second Century of Brigham Young University.” His charge, as he stated in the introduction, was to share “thoughts and impressions [he had] concerning Brigham Young University as it enter[ed] its second century.”¹ That was thirty-seven years ago. We are now a third of the way through the second century, and one could legitimately ask where we are in achieving President Kimball’s vision.

The university has changed rather significantly in those thirty-seven years. When President Kimball’s address was delivered, BYU had 986 full-time faculty. Today our faculty complement is 1,562, over half again the size of the faculty in 1975. In fall semester of 1975, the university enrolled just over 26,000 students. Today there are nearly 33,000 students enrolled. There were 6,565 new-student applications for fall of 1975, of which 90 percent were admitted; 4,970 of those admitted enrolled for study.

I’ve heard President Samuelson share his recollection that “in the old days” General Authorities visiting stakes around the Church

were encouraged to recruit students for attendance at BYU. What a stark contrast to today’s environment where the university must advise interested LDS high school students about all options for pursuing a university education. This year there were a record 12,400 new-student applications, of which just 56 percent could be admitted—our lowest acceptance rate ever. The credentials for entering students have also changed since President Kimball delivered his second-century address. The freshman class of 1975 had an average ACT composite score of 22.9 and high school GPA of 3.3. The freshmen admitted this year have an average ACT score of 28.3 and a high school GPA of just over 3.8.

I don’t share these statistics to boast but to illustrate the university’s evolution in this second century and to highlight the tremendous challenge we face in accommodating more and more students who are better and better prepared. Because of our enrollment ceiling, we face the prospect of denying admission to students who would likely be successful

Brent W. Webb was academic vice president when this address was delivered at the BYU annual university conference faculty session on 21 August 2012.

here. Like me, I'm sure you hear this summary of applicant credentials and feel pressure to deliver an educational experience that is worthy of our student body. BYU's yield rate—the percentage of admitted students who enroll—is over 80 percent, the highest in the nation. Students are anxious to be here, and, if fortunate enough to be admitted, they come. I will share later some specific reasons our students seek to be here.

President Kimball began his second-century address with the following declaration and charge:

*There are many ways in which BYU can tower above other universities—not simply because of the size of its student body or its beautiful campus, but because of the unique light BYU can send forth into the educational world. . . . While you will do many things in the programs of this university that are done elsewhere, these same things can and must be done better here than others do them. You will also do some special things here that are left undone by other institutions.*²

Near the conclusion of President Kimball's address, he stated:

*As previous First Presidencies have said, and we say again to you, we expect (we do not simply hope) that Brigham Young University will "become a leader among the great universities of the world." To that expectation I would add, "Become a unique university in all of the world!"*³

This final declaration of President Kimball has been selected as the theme for this year's annual university conference, and in my remarks today I wish to try to articulate some of the dimensions in which we aspire to be unique and some ways in which we *are* unique relative to others in the academy. I emphasize that we share many of the same aspirations as the finest academic institutions across the country. We are anxious to provide an extraor-

dinary academic experience for an extraordinary student body. Students who come to BYU could be educated very well at other universities, but, in the words of President Kimball, "Education on this campus deliberately and persistently concerns itself with 'education for eternity.'"⁴

Dr. George Lynn Cross was the longest-serving president of the University of Oklahoma, leading the university from 1943 to 1968 during a period of impressive growth. In describing Oklahoma's academic aspirations in relation to the university's strong athletic tradition, particularly as a football powerhouse, President Cross once told the Oklahoma state senate, "We want to build a university of which the football team can be proud."⁵ We love our athletic teams at BYU and, tongue in cheek, might articulate the same aspiration for our academic programs. This humorous quip illustrates that the motivation for what we do at Brigham Young University is, in many defining ways, different from that which drives other institutions and faculty who hold appointments there.

In discussing today the distinctive nature of BYU, I hope to draw on university statements, prophetic declarations, personal observations, and a number of selections from a significant body of survey data collected and analyzed by the Office of Planning and Assessment. The survey data will come from four sources:

1. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is conducted by an independent national organization and invites input annually from our students and other university students across the nation. The survey gives us a chance to compare the BYU student experience, from our students' own responses, with that of other students in the national sample. The 2011 survey included 412,046 first-year and senior students from public and private universities covering all disciplines, including 5,217 BYU students.

2. The BYU Senior Survey is administered annually four to six weeks before graduation to all BYU students who are registered for graduation in December, April, and August. This survey focuses on dimensions of our students' experience that are of particular importance to us. Fifty percent of the 6,900 seniors who graduated in 2010–11 responded to the survey.

3. The Alumni Questionnaire is administered by BYU three years after graduation to alumni who were granted degrees. The questionnaire gives a snapshot of our students' impressions after they have completed their time here and have entered their immediate post-graduation pursuits. The most recent questionnaire was conducted for the 2008 graduation cohort and included surveys sent to 8,258 students, of which 45 percent responded.

4. The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA surveys faculty every three years at colleges and universities that elect to participate. The 2010–11 HERI survey included responses from nearly 24,000 permanent faculty members of all ranks from 417 institutions of higher education. Data I will present today from that survey will be drawn only from our peer norm group: four-year public and private universities.

In presenting these survey results I express gratitude to Jim Gordon, Danny Olsen, and others in Planning and Assessment who collect and synthesize these data and who have provided them to me.

Mission and Aims

I begin with what is perhaps the most fundamental element in our uniqueness at BYU—our mission statement. Stated boldly on our website and in our promotional materials and declared to our accrediting body and other constituencies, “The mission of Brigham Young University—founded, supported, and guided by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day

Saints—is to assist individuals in their quest for perfection and eternal life.”⁶

This statement might be seen as quite ambitious—perhaps even preposterous—by our colleagues at academic institutions elsewhere. Despite our shared faith in the restored gospel, the mission statement causes us on the faculty to swallow hard as we think about our contribution to this vision. But the mission statement guides fundamentally all aspirational and operational aspects of Brigham Young University: faculty hiring and retention, student admissions, care of the physical facilities, educational philosophy, student interactions both inside and outside the classroom, expectations for students and faculty in their personal and professional lives, management of resources, faculty scholarship and its contribution to our disciplines, and so on. The mission statement shapes how we view our students. In a sobering way our mission articulates the university's responsibility as stewards of the some 6,500 new students who arrive on campus each year.

The published aims of a BYU education are intimately aligned with the mission, as stated in our foundation documents:

BYU seeks to develop students of faith, intellect, and character who have the skills and the desire to continue learning and to serve others throughout their lives. . . .

*. . . A BYU education should be (1) spiritually strengthening, (2) intellectually enlarging, and (3) character building, leading to (4) lifelong learning and service.*⁷

These aims are an offshoot of our doctrine. President Joseph Fielding Smith affirmed in an address to a BYU audience that “knowledge comes both by reason and by revelation.”⁸ It is to this lofty objective that we hold ourselves as faculty in our own learning, and we seek to equip and inspire our students to do the same.

Resources

The Church's significant and stable support of BYU and its programs is uncommon in the world of higher education. Not only has church support for religiously affiliated colleges and universities diminished over time, but, as a rule, public institutions are no longer resourced in a majority way from state legislatures. It is quite common for state appropriations to constitute less than half—often less than one-quarter—of the operating budget of public universities of our size. The remainder must be sought from tuition and soft revenue sources. By contrast, Church support for BYU is, by deliberate board-of-trustees decision, far above that. Isn't it interesting that in an era of increasingly tight resources we have enjoyed this stable ongoing resource support? I will mention this again later. Toward the end of an accreditation visit to campus recently, one of the site visitors, himself an administrator at a state university elsewhere, joked, "How can my university join the Church Educational System?"

In the past year it has been my responsibility to visit with teams invited from fine institutions elsewhere to review our academic programs in their areas of expertise. These reviewers are uniformly astonished to learn that we enjoy full salary support for all 1,500-plus faculty at the university. Elsewhere, university support often provides only a portion of faculty salary, and faculty are under pressure to find the remainder of their salary support from externally funded research. In addition to this faculty support, we at BYU are the beneficiaries of generous capital equipment support, regular computer replacement, travel, and needed supplies. The physical environment on campus is so extraordinarily well maintained, largely because of the Capital Needs Analysis (CNA) program, which carefully tracks and addresses facilities-related needs ranging from major power infrastructure to single light fixtures. Similar generous

provision is made for maintaining technology through the Information Technology Infrastructure (ITI), Information Technology Software (ITS), and Information Technology Development (ITD) programs, designed to respond to hardware and software infrastructure needs on campus. These programs are a unique model among institutions of higher education. I express gratitude to Brian Evans, administrative vice president and chief financial officer, and Kelly Flanagan, chief information officer, for their management of these programs that benefit the campus community and particularly our academic operations. As I believe Brian and Kelly would both attest, the resources provided by the Church in these programs are the envy of their counterparts at universities elsewhere.

Given our unique mission—as President Kimball put it, to educate for eternity⁹—it should not surprise us that classrooms used to teach sociology and art history and biology during the week are home to sacred expressions of faith on Sunday. The campus tables used to administer the sacrament on the weekend are used during the week for laboratory demonstrations in the physical sciences and for display and study of archaeological artifacts. And those students who crowd campus sidewalks with overstuffed backpacks Monday through Friday populate the sidewalks carrying scriptures on the Sabbath. The Church's support for our facilities is a seamless integration of our desire to combine the sacred and the secular.

Students

BYU's student population is also distinctive, and increasingly so, in the world of higher education in a number of important ways. We've all smiled at BYU's place atop the Princeton Review's list of stone-cold sober schools (for fifteen years running)¹⁰ and most religious students (for the seventeenth time in twenty years).¹¹ But our students are unique academi-

cally as well. I alluded earlier to differences between entering freshmen of 1975 and those admitted in 2012, and to the increasing challenge of trying to accommodate well-qualified applicants to the university. Of those admitted to the university this year, 45 percent bring a high school GPA above 3.9, 35 percent have achieved a composite ACT score of 30 or above, and 18 percent rank in the top five of their high school graduating class. Over 96 percent of those admitted to the university graduated from seminary, with roughly half attending early-morning seminary. Just over five in six received advanced placement credit for AP exams taken as part of high school coursework. There were 167 high school student body presidents in the freshman admits of 2012. Nine percent are first-generation college students in their family.

While the credentials of admitted students are impressive, the question we might ask is whether we are adding value to their superb pre-BYU preparation. The 2011 NSSE survey of university students reveals, not surprisingly, that a significantly higher number of BYU seniors have enrolled in foreign language coursework, and, in what can only be described as “off the charts” relative to university students on other campuses, our students have participated in activities to enhance their spirituality.¹² Ninety-three percent of freshmen felt BYU places substantial emphasis on academics, and 56 percent of them worked harder than they thought they could to meet faculty expectations. Both freshmen and seniors felt that exams strongly challenged them to do their best work at a rate somewhat above the report of the national sample. Interestingly, the survey also shows that while our freshmen and seniors report having written more papers of length shorter than five pages than the national cohort, fewer reported writing papers of twenty pages or longer. Further, somewhat fewer BYU students than their national counterparts report having worked on a paper that

required integrating ideas or information from various sources. More BYU students indicate they have come to class without having completed readings or assignments. With their academic preparation prior to arriving on campus, one might ask whether BYU students would be below average in any of these categories, and this information is food for thought as we prepare our syllabi. By their senior year, half of our students report having participated in experiential learning—a practicum, internship, field experience, co-op, or clinical assignment. This is nearly identical to the national sample. Eighty-four percent of our seniors indicate that they have at least occasionally discussed career plans with faculty, and 30 percent have done research with a faculty member. This engagement with faculty in the classroom, in faculty offices, and in the studio and lab is a distinguishing feature of BYU.

With all of these curricular and extracurricular activities, our students still find time to work. Last year a record-number 14,000 BYU students were hired on campus—nearly half of the student body. This is compared to 10 percent of students nationally who are employed by the college or university they attend.¹³ We are blessed that the university provides unusually strong financial support for teaching and research assistants. And, of course, I acknowledge the army of hardworking and disciplined students who are on campus at 4:00 a.m., keeping buildings clean and clearing snow from the sidewalks.

As part of the alumni questionnaire, former students are asked about factors that affected their choosing BYU. The data shown in figure 1 are from the most recent study of 2008 graduates. Our students’ overwhelming expectation for rigorous intellectual stretching here is reflected by the fact that 85 percent of alumni rated as “extremely important” or “very important” developing intellectual skills as their reason for choosing BYU. Not far behind in importance, 73 percent give the same weight

to obtaining a spiritual, religiously based education. To our students, the combination of a spiritually strengthening and intellectually enlarging educational experience, stated explicitly in our aims, is paramount. Roughly two-thirds of BYU alumni (68 percent) also acknowledge the importance of preparing for a career as their reason for choosing BYU. Forty-four percent confessed that it was important to come to BYU for the social life and 32 percent to find a spouse. One in six (16 percent) report having chosen BYU to satisfy expectations of parents or family. The fraction who came to BYU because of the university's reputation in their area of interest was 38 percent, which is a historical increase from 26 percent back in 1998. These data confirm that the university's mission and aims are central to the objectives of students who seek a BYU education.¹⁴

The BYU 2010–11 Senior Survey provides revealing information as to activities students indicate have enhanced their spiritual development. The top ten activities enhancing their spiritual growth are shown in figure 2. It is not surprising that a significant majority of students indicate that church attendance, enrollment in religion classes, personal and individual service to others, and attendance at BYU devotionals were key in their spiritual development. However, notice that nearly half of BYU seniors indicated that “practical, applied experience related to [their] discipline” promoted spiritual growth in their lives. Further, the students suggest that courses that included community service; focused on disciplinary theoretical foundations; and focused on techniques, methods, and procedures contributed in significant ways to spiritual development.¹⁵ These data illustrate how so many BYU faculty achieve this charge from President Kimball in his second-century address:

Your double heritage and dual concerns with the secular and the spiritual require you to be “bilingual.” As LDS scholars, you must speak

with authority and excellence . . . in the language of scholarship, and you must also be literate in the language of spiritual things. We must be more bilingual, in that sense, to fulfill our promise in the second century of BYU.¹⁶

It is heartening that speaking the language of both the secular and the sacred is so important to our faculty and that students report such success in the integration of the two in their BYU experience. This is especially critical in light of the fact that students come here with an implicit trust in the faculty, expecting that they will never need to question the faculty's fundamental values with regard to faith and testimony.

Another distinguishing feature of our students is drawn from the 2008 alumni questionnaire and shown in figure 3, which summarizes the post-graduate activities of BYU students. Three years beyond graduation, 22 percent of our students are enrolled in a graduate program and 17 percent have already completed one. It is astonishing that only three years after graduation, 39 percent of our students—nearly two in five—have either completed or are enrolled in graduate study.¹⁷ There is evidence that suggests that this figure may be roughly one-third higher than for students at other universities.¹⁸ Beyond those who have already completed or are enrolled in a graduate program, another 30 percent are planning on graduate school but have not yet enrolled. I find it remarkable that 69 percent of our students firmly have advanced training as their objective. BYU students' deep commitment to graduate study is reflected by the number who pursue PhDs. For PhDs awarded at all U.S. research institutions in the ten years prior to 2009 (the year for which national data are most recently published), BYU ranks tenth in the nation as a university of baccalaureate origin. In other words, of all PhDs awarded from 2000 to 2009 who did their undergraduate study in the United States, BYU is tenth

on the list of supplying universities. For PhDs awarded in the five-year period prior to 2009, we are number five, and for the year 2009 alone, BYU is number four.¹⁹ This is truly remarkable—sobering—that our students are so inclined and receive this kind of preparation and encouragement from BYU faculty. The HERI survey of faculty indicates that 85 percent of our faculty give high importance to preparing students for graduate or advanced education, above that of faculty at both public (72 percent) and private (77 percent) universities elsewhere.²⁰

In an age of deteriorating ethics, our students are young men and women of integrity. The U.S. Department of Education provides information on federal student loan defaults for borrowers who have entered loan repayment status. For the 2009 academic year—the most recent data available—the national average student loan default rate was 8.8 percent for all institutions.²¹ The default rate for BYU alumni was 0.5 percent. At the site visit this spring of the Northwest Commission of Colleges and Universities accreditation team, one of the inspecting team members suggested that there must be a typographical error in the university's report of the student loan default rate. She wondered if it was perhaps more accurately 5 percent or even 15 percent. When the figure as reported was confirmed, she expressed amazement and wondered how we achieve such a low default rate. It is difficult for our colleagues elsewhere to understand such commitment among university-age students.

With such outstanding students it would seem that they would be uniformly self-confident, self-sustaining, self-motivating, and successful. Sadly, however, this is not the case. Some of our students struggle, and, gratefully, faculty are anxious to help. An astonishing 96 percent of BYU faculty indicated that they are interested in students' personal problems, compared to 74 percent and 77 percent of faculty at private and public universities,

respectively. Ninety-six percent of BYU faculty indicated they are strongly interested in the academic problems of undergraduates, relative to 82 percent of faculty at both private and public institutions.²² This strong interest in students among our colleagues is consistent with President Gordon B. Hinckley's declaration to the BYU community at the inauguration of President Cecil O. Samuelson in September 2003:

*We should not have failures on this campus. We are more than teachers. We are shepherds. And we know that the spirit of shepherding resides in the hearts of those who serve here as members of the great Brigham Young University faculty.*²³

It is in the spirit of providing an educational experience equal to our very fine students that the university undertook a significant initiative in the development of its own learning management system, the BYU Learning Suite. The Learning Suite was rolled out spring term of this year, and despite a discouraging challenge in our campus network storage in June, the rollout was considered successful. A survey of student users of the Learning Suite revealed that they were overwhelmingly satisfied with most elements of their Learning Suite experience. Faculty adoption of the Learning Suite in the rollout period was roughly double that of the use of Blackboard in identical courses in spring and summer terms last year. As of today, most of all faculty teaching fall semester have already created a Learning Suite course—2,400 new courses created in total. Refinements to the Learning Suite suggested by faculty having used the system were added in the recent release this month. The Center for Teaching and Learning has trained some fifty student implementation assistants, who have migrated all Blackboard courses archived in the past year to the Learning Suite platform and who have spent time in faculty offices helping with their adoption of the product.

These implementation assistants will be available for one-on-one visits with faculty throughout fall semester. We are deeply grateful for the collegial atmosphere that prevails at BYU that facilitated the successful OIT-CTL collaboration in the development of the Learning Suite.

Faculty

I now turn to our unique faculty at BYU. Faculty play a central role in our distinctive mission, and, consistent with that mission, extraordinary faculty bring to the university a unique combination of faith in the restored gospel and superb disciplinary credentials. Each new hire has received the review of the board of trustees, which is evidence of the board's interest in what we do here and the place Brigham Young University holds in building the kingdom. The expectation of faculty to be qualified and prepared both in their disciplines and in their faith reflects long-established and frequently reiterated prophetic vision about our work. Many of our colleagues express feeling heaven's hand in their coming to BYU. Many, perhaps most, come to the university and remain here at some sacrifice.

After a two-year hiring freeze, departments began recruiting faculty hires in January 2011. Last year I cautioned us to proceed deliberately in our recruiting efforts, ensuring that we invite faculty to join us who are excellent in their disciplines and who can fully embrace the university's distinctive mission. The university hired fifty-four CFS-track faculty for the academic year 2011–12, and this year sixty-seven new CFS-track faculty have been appointed. Departments have recruited and interviewed carefully during this time, often deciding to hire visitors when no qualified permanent hires could be identified. Some faculty postponed their retirement during the freeze to avoid leaving their departments short-handed, and, consequently, retirements have been a bit higher this year than historically.

The net result is that the university still has 11 percent of its faculty positions that are not filled with CFS-track faculty. Despite vacancies, we have benefited from the use of salary funds permitting us to hire temporary help in our teaching while we continue to search for permanent hires. I recently had the opportunity to visit with a candidate interviewing on campus who currently holds a faculty appointment at a state-sponsored university in the Midwest. He shared with me that there are 300 vacant faculty positions at his institution, and this year they have been authorized to hire twenty. I am grateful for the board's assurance that we will return to our full faculty complement, and I support and applaud you in your careful and thoughtful approach to hiring.

Because of their commitment to the mission of BYU, faculty who come here generally come to spend their careers. The average tenure at BYU for faculty who retire here is twenty-seven years. This underlines the critical importance of the hiring decisions we make. They are three-decade decisions. Available sources suggest that the median time full-time faculty members nationally spend at a single location is about eleven years.^{24, 25} Faculty elsewhere are rather mobile. Roughly nine out of ten BYU faculty reported in the HERI survey that they would definitely or probably join the faculty at BYU again if they were starting their career.

Here's a piece of data that many will find both interesting and amusing. A little over half of faculty across the nation report that faculty meetings are a source of stress in their lives. While BYU faculty report lower levels of stress due to faculty meetings, it is not significantly lower. These meetings are where the difficult work of curriculum, hiring, rank and status, and graduate admissions is done. I am thankful that despite the passion we have for progress and improvement, these discussions are largely undertaken collegially here.

Stress comes in other ways to the professoriate as well. The difficult economic environment

of the past few years has challenged higher education across the United States. However, BYU faculty cite institutional budget cuts as a source of stress with half the frequency as their colleagues at public universities elsewhere.²⁶ *The Chronicle of Higher Education* recently reported a reduction in state support for public universities, concluding that “adjusted for inflation, the drop in state funds for the top 101 public research universities in the United States from 2002 to 2010 was 10 percent, with nearly three-quarters of the universities losing some state support.”²⁷ The stable, ongoing support of our sponsoring church creates the atmosphere of confidence in budgetary support we enjoy here.

Faculty at BYU are bound by a common vision for the university and its students that fosters loyalty to the institution and its purposes. That vision guides their teaching, their scholarship, and their committee work. While that vision includes personal commitment to excellence in the classroom and superb scholarship, I believe it goes well beyond personal professional aspirations. Generally well above their colleagues elsewhere, faculty at BYU respond nearly unanimously that they are committed to the welfare of the institution and that their values are congruent with the dominant institutional values.²⁸ My evidence is only anecdotal, but, despite often dealing with very difficult and potentially divisive issues, it seems that relative to faculties elsewhere, BYU colleagues are generally more anxious to achieve unity in council settings, more accommodating of differing viewpoints, more respectful in a variety of settings, more unselfish in the shared use of resources, and more focused on student and program needs than their own. This, I believe, is the byproduct of a communal commitment to the university’s ambitious mission.

Faculty at BYU are very similar to their counterparts in the national sample of the 2010–11 HERI survey with regard to faculty

commitment to student growth and development, as illustrated in figure 4. Faculty here and elsewhere report themselves to be unanimously committed to helping students learn to think critically and by overwhelming majority seek to help students master knowledge in their discipline, evaluate the quality and reliability of information, and promote their ability to write effectively. BYU faculty are somewhat more committed to helping students develop creative capacities than elsewhere. Despite these commonalities, figure 5 shows features of our faculty’s commitment to the student experience that distinguish us from others. Eighty-five percent of you report having worked with an undergraduate on a research project—higher than reported by either public or private universities. Significantly more of you (81 percent) have engaged undergraduates on your own research. And your commitment to fine teaching is reflected in the fact that more of you have participated in a teaching enhancement workshop. Further, you are much more interested in developing leadership abilities among our students than your colleagues elsewhere—nearly double that of public universities.²⁹

It is unfortunate that only one in seven faculty at public and private universities nationally have the feeling that good teaching is rewarded. Still troublingly low, only about one-fourth of BYU faculty feel that their being good teachers is rewarded. While perceptions are difficult to manage and change, I wish to emphasize here our unflinching and unqualified support for outstanding teaching at BYU. I am pleased to state that teaching is carefully considered and heavily weighted at the university level in all rank and status decisions. The University Rank and Status Council carefully reviews all student evaluations of faculty in retention and promotion deliberations, including both numerical ratings and student comments. Further, we continue to explore ways to effectively and efficiently provide quality,

in-depth peer reviews of teaching. The Student Ratings Task Force has been working for over two years to produce an evaluation instrument that will provide more meaningful numerical data, that will provide more student narrative feedback, and that will be more closely focused on evaluating success at achieving our learning outcomes. I would hope that superior teaching would be the norm at BYU. May it never be said of us what has been said of the stereotypical university professor, that he or she is someone who talks in someone else's sleep.

In ways that I believe are unique to BYU, faculty across campus combine their commitment to superb teaching with strong emphasis on scholarship. When asked about their publication efforts in the past two years in the HERI survey, faculty across the country declared their scholarly productivity as illustrated in figure 6. Shown in the figure is the number of publications reported by faculty for the prior two-year period in the numerical categories: None, one to two, and so on. I emphasize that the comparison made here is with what I believe is our peer group—four-year public and private universities that presumably have both teaching and research expectations. Compared to the national sample, fewer BYU faculty report having no publications in the past two years. The number of those who report having published one to two papers in the last two years at BYU is slightly above their peers at public universities and slightly below those at private universities. Combining the remaining categories, the data show that more BYU faculty (62 percent) reported three or more publications in the last two years than did faculty at private institutions (61 percent) and public institutions (48 percent) nationally.³⁰ For those in disciplines where juried exhibitions or performances are the tradition (not shown in the figure), about the same number of BYU faculty reported one or more exhibitions or performances as did faculty at both public and private universities in the national

sample.³¹ The historical changes in these data for BYU are also revealing. As I mentioned earlier, the HERI survey of faculty is conducted every three years. The trend in the last six administrations of this survey—a 20-year period—is shown in figure 7.³² Faculty at BYU who report having published no papers in the previous two-year period have declined in the last two decades. The fraction who report having published one to four papers has remained nearly constant, and those publishing five or more papers has increased appreciably. While these data do not address the issue of quality of scholarly contributions, they do suggest that faculty can give energetic attention to excellent teaching *and* contribute to their disciplines through scholarly efforts.

We would like to provide a BYU experience to as many LDS young single adults as possible. The population of college-age students in the Church reached a minimum in 2012 after two decades of decline and is now on a rather steep rate of increase. One might then wonder why the board of trustees is so supportive and encouraging of scholarly activity among the faculty. It might be argued that time devoted to scholarship could profitably be directed to accommodating more students at the university. Anticipating this increase in college-age Latter-day Saints who will seek a BYU experience, eighteen months ago we empaneled what we have called the Academic Innovation Task Force to explore broadly ways to be more efficient in our educational delivery. Implicit in that initiative is our recognition that the board of trustees understands the importance of faculty engagement in scholarship and that the fundamental course we are on has been set. At President Samuelson's inauguration, President Hinckley made the following statement confirming that course:

We must continue to strengthen our scholarship in every discipline that is followed here. But with that we must never let down on our determination

*to teach faith in the Living God; to build testimony of His Beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ; to teach the validity of the Holy Bible and of its companion scripture, the Book of Mormon; and to build conviction concerning the restoration of the gospel in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times.*³³

With such competing demands on our most valuable university resource—you, the faculty—one might ask why scholarship is so important to BYU's unique mission. Excellence in our own research activity, in the way it is so often pursued at BYU, clearly enhances the student experience. Our students are better prepared for post-graduate opportunities as they engage with scholarly faculty. We simply cannot expect more of our students as learners than we do of ourselves. Further, we contribute to our disciplines in distinctive ways, we engage in the pursuit of answers to difficult questions, and we bring faith to our disciplines. Finally, we cannot understate the importance of students learning from faculty who themselves are engaged to “seek learning, even by study and also by faith” (D&C 88:118). With that in mind, we continue to move higher, to hold ourselves to higher expectations in our scholarly efforts, and to give attention to scholarly productivity and quality. We will continue to pursue scholarly efforts that engage students and shape our disciplines.

As a reflection perhaps both of the strong resource support we enjoy at the university and the faculty's loyalty and commitment to the mission of the university, there is considerable satisfaction among faculty with the academic environment here compared to our colleagues at public and private universities elsewhere. The 2010–11 HERI survey compares how faculty rate as “satisfactory” or “very satisfactory” several aspects of their academic appointment, summarized in figure 8.³⁴ Note the contrast in how BYU faculty report their satisfaction with the quality of students relative to both public and private universities

elsewhere. Ninety-one percent of BYU faculty are satisfied with the quality of the students. (A related statistic, not shown here, is that while 89 percent of BYU faculty believe students are well prepared academically, only 67 percent of faculty at private universities make the same observation, and 31 percent of faculty at public institutions nationally feel their students are well prepared.) BYU faculty also express greater overall job satisfaction, enjoy professional relationships with their colleagues much more, and are more satisfied with office and lab space. BYU faculty express satisfaction with opportunities for scholarly pursuits at a rate considerably higher than those at both public and private universities. With our fundamental emphasis on undergraduate teaching and despite the competing demands for faculty time, BYU faculty satisfaction with teaching loads is slightly above that of faculty at private universities and significantly higher than our counterparts at public universities.

Despite what most view as quite a lean staff organization here, BYU faculty express significantly greater satisfaction with the clerical/administrative support than elsewhere. It is also encouraging that BYU faculty are more content with departmental leadership, significant in the context of BYU's model of rotating academic leadership. I heard someone once joke relative to academic leaders: “What do you call an administrator with half a brain? Gifted.” The survey data seems to suggest that this attitude is not held here, that faculty support and appreciate the sacrifice and difficult work of the department chair. Finally, BYU faculty express substantially higher satisfaction relative to job security, health benefits, retirement benefits, and salary than elsewhere. I view this as a reflection of faculty contentment with the generous support from the Church and deep commitment to the mission of the university.

The HERI survey reveals that BYU faculty express strong support for their professional

development. Ninety-three percent of BYU faculty agree that there is adequate support for faculty development—roughly half again higher than our colleagues elsewhere. Ninety-five percent of BYU faculty have received travel funds paid by the university, compared to roughly 70 percent elsewhere. Eighty-one percent of BYU faculty report having received internal grants for research, compared to 50 percent at public and private universities. We are uniquely well resourced in our scholarly activity.³⁵

Conclusion

Brigham Young University is a very different institution than its peers across the country. Our mission is to educate students both academically and spiritually. We look to the prophetic guidance of the board of trustees in charting the course for achievement of this mission. But the board trusts us to see that the university's prophetic destiny is reached. Our relationship with the Church is unusual in so many ways—ways that are central to who we are.

In the accreditation site visit to one of our very fine programs on campus, the visiting team leaders—both deans at other prestigious universities—were complimentary of BYU and its unique faculty, students, and programs. Quite interestingly, the positive observations of both of these deans came despite each having lost in the last year outstanding young faculty who left their positions to join the faculty at BYU. The written report by the accrediting team characterized the program's relationship with the Church this way:

The . . . bond with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is an enormous and unique advantage. In fact, without that bond [the program] could never have reached the quality it has achieved.

These esteemed colleagues recognized the resources, networking, qualified student pipe-

line, faculty commitment, and other advantages that accrue to this program because of the Church's sponsorship of BYU, but they don't understand the half of it. Our mission is core to who we are and is the motivation for resource allocation and management, curriculum development, faculty hiring and retention, evaluation, and so on. Our students are outstanding, and they come to the university with this same mission orientation in that they seek and expect to find dimensions of their education well beyond what they will learn in traditional disciplines. Faculty are strong, loyal, unselfish, and committed to this distinctive mission. In remarkable ways they combine the sacred and the secular, and their influence on development of the "whole student" is evident. One senior student wrote in the 2010–11 senior survey:

Seeing the examples of my professors and what they valued had a large impact on me. I realized that school and careers are important, but there are things that come before careers.³⁶

Another student noted:

I learned how to think about important issues in the world around me and how those things can affect me. I learned them through wonderful teachers who had a strong background in the subject matter and really cared about their students and how they learned.³⁷

We value much of what our colleagues elsewhere value in providing a strong education, but beyond that we place high priority on dimensions of student growth that others care little about. We concern ourselves energetically with what students know and how they think, but we are also determined to influence what they become. We are anxious to contribute influentially to our disciplines, and we invite students to be partners in that enterprise. What we do here at BYU is really more difficult than

the education our colleagues elsewhere seek to provide. It demands a level of consecration—in the broadest sense of the word—that BYU faculty are anxious to give.

I find such commendation of this faculty and their work in President Hinckley's remarks at President Samuelson's inauguration:

*Here we are doing what is not done in any other major university of which I am aware. We are demonstrating that faith in the Almighty can accompany and enrich scholarship in the secular. It is more than an experiment. It is an accomplishment.*³⁸

I am grateful to be here among colleagues who share this vision for Brigham Young University. BYU has indeed become "a unique university in all of the world," and it will be more unique in the years ahead. I wish you a year of rigor and success, of energy and influence. May the thirty-eighth year of BYU's second century be one of distinction.

Notes

1. Spencer W. Kimball, "The Second Century of Brigham Young University," BYU devotional, 10 October 1975, excerpted in "Climbing the Hills Just Ahead: Three Addresses" in John W. Welch and Don E. Norton, eds., *Educating Zion* (Provo: BYU Studies, 1996), 63.

2. Kimball, "Second Century"; see *Educating Zion*, 64.

3. Kimball, "Second Century"; see *Educating Zion*, 75.

4. Kimball, "Second Century"; see *Educating Zion*, 64.

5. Quoted in "Universities: The Creation of Quality," *Education, Time* (2 June 1967): 44 (56 online).

6. *The Mission of Brigham Young University and The Aims of a BYU Education* (Provo: Brigham Young University, 1996), 1.

7. *The Aims of a BYU Education*, 3.

8. Joseph Fielding Smith, "Educating for a Golden Era of Continuing Righteousness," in

A Golden Era of Continuing Education (Provo: Brigham Young University Department of Continuing Education, 1971), 2.

9. See Spencer W. Kimball, "Education for Eternity," pre-school address to faculty and staff, Brigham Young University, 12 September 1967; excerpted in "Climbing the Hills Just Ahead: Three Addresses" in *Educating Zion*, 43–63.

10. See Katie Harmer, "BYU Celebrates 15th Year as Stone-Cold Sober Campus Champion," *Deseret News*, 20 August 2012; <http://www.deseretnews.com/article/865560962/BYU-celebrates-15th-year-as-stone-cold-sober-champion.html>.

11. See Hal Boyd, "BYU Again No. 1 for Most Religious Students," *Deseret News*, 29 August 2012; <http://www.deseretnews.com/article/700174662/BYU-again-No-1-for-most-religious-students.html>.

12. See *National Survey of Student Engagement* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research, 2011).

13. See Sara Israelsen-Hartley, "Y. Sets Record with Number of Student Employees; Most Colleges Face High Job Demand," *Deseret News*, 8 January 2011; <http://www.deseretnews.com/article/700098777/Y-sets-record-with-number-of-student-employees-most-colleges-face-high-job-demand.html>.

14. See BYU 2011 Alumni Questionnaire, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

15. See BYU 2010–11 Senior Survey, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

16. Kimball, "Second Century"; see *Educating Zion*, 64.

17. See BYU 2011 Alumni Questionnaire.

18. See Stephanie C. Nevill, Xianglei Chen, and C. Dennis Carroll, *The Path Through Graduate School: A Longitudinal Examination 10 Years After Bachelor's Degree: Postsecondary Education Descriptive Analysis Report*, NCES 2007-162 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 2007); <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007162.pdf>.

19. See *2009 Survey of Earned Doctorates*, NSF/NIH/USED/USDA/NEH/NASA; <https://webcaspar.nsf.gov/EmailedTable?table=0822121745478931032>.

20. See *Brigham Young University—Institutional Report, 2010–11* (Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA, 2011) (hereafter HERI 2010–11 survey).

21. See “Default Rates Rise for Federal Student Loans,” 12 September 2011, United States Department of Education; <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/default-rates-rise-federal-student-loans>.

22. See HERI 2010–11 survey.

23. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Remarks at the Inauguration of President Cecil O. Samuelson,” BYU devotional address, 9 September 2003.

24. See Deborah Kaminski and Cheryl Geisler, “Survival Analysis of Faculty Retention in Science and Engineering by Gender,” *Reports, Science* 335, no. 6070 (17 February 2012): 864–66.

25. See “The Status of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty,” American Associate of University Professors; <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/comm/rep/nontenuretrack.htm>.

26. See HERI 2010–11 survey.

27. Emma Roller, “State Budget Cuts for Research Universities Imperil Competitiveness, Report Says,” *Government, The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 17 January 2012; <http://chronicle.com/article/State-Budget-Cuts-for-Research/130369>.

28. See HERI 2010–11 survey.

29. See HERI 2010–11 survey.

30. See HERI 2010–11 survey.

31. See HERI 2010–11 survey.

32. See HERI 2010–11 survey.

33. Hinckley, “Remarks at Inauguration.”

34. See HERI 2010–11 survey.

35. See HERI 2010–11 survey.

36. BYU 2010–11 Senior Survey.

37. BYU 2010–11 Senior Survey.

38. Hinckley, “Remarks at Inauguration.”

Figures

| Factors in Choosing BYU – Undergraduate | |
|--|-----|
| Percentage of alumni who reported "very important" or "extremely important" on the following factors in their decision to attend BYU | |
| Develop intellectual skills | 85% |
| Obtain spiritual, religiously based education | 73% |
| Prepare for a career | 68% |
| Participate in social life | 44% |
| BYU's reputation in area of interest | 38% |
| To find a spouse | 32% |
| Satisfy parents/family expectations | 16% |

Figure 1. Factors in BYU alumni choosing BYU for their undergraduate study. (2008 BYU Alumni Questionnaire)

| Top Ten Impacts on Spiritual Development | |
|--|-----|
| Percent who said the experience “enhanced” or “strongly enhanced” their spiritual development | |
| LDS sacrament meetings (or worship services of another faith) | 86% |
| Religion courses | 79% |
| Being of service to others on an individual basis | 76% |
| BYU devotionals | 71% |
| Organized community service | 58% |
| Informal social events with roommates or other students | 50% |
| Practical, applied experience related to your discipline | 46% |
| Courses which included community-based service as part of the course | 43% |
| Courses which focused on the theoretical foundations of your discipline | 41% |
| Courses in your major which focused on learning the techniques, methods, procedures, etc., used in your discipline | 41% |

Figure 2. Top ten dimensions of the BYU experience that enhance students’ spiritual development. (2010–2011 BYU Senior Survey)

| Post-Graduation Activity | |
|---|-----|
| Currently enrolled in a graduate program | 22% |
| Have completed a graduate degree | 17% |
| Planning on graduate school, but not yet enrolled | 30% |
| No plans for a graduate degree | 31% |

} 39%
 } 69%

Figure 3. Summary of BYU students’ post-graduate activity three years after graduation. (2008 BYU Alumni Questionnaire)

Goals for Undergraduates Noted as “Very Important” or “Essential” by Faculty

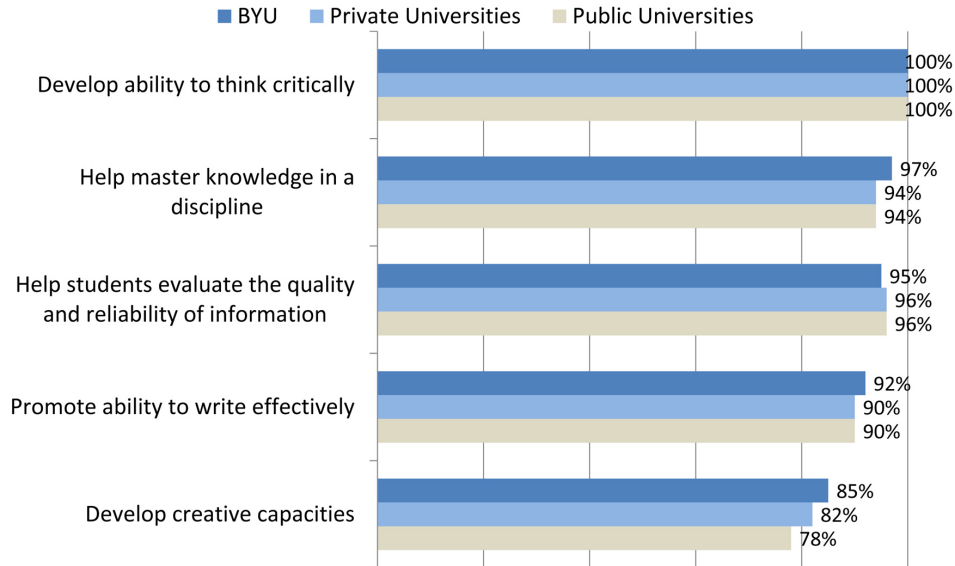
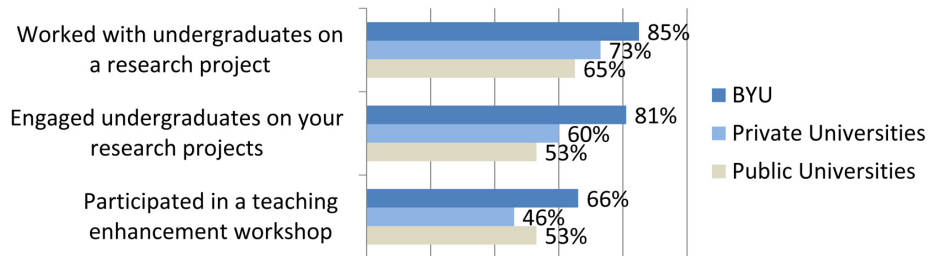


Figure 4. Goals for undergraduates rated by faculty as “very important” or “essential.” (2010–2011 HERI survey)

Faculty Activities, Plans

Have engaged in the following in the past two years



Campus Issues

Issues believed to be of “high or highest” priority at your institution

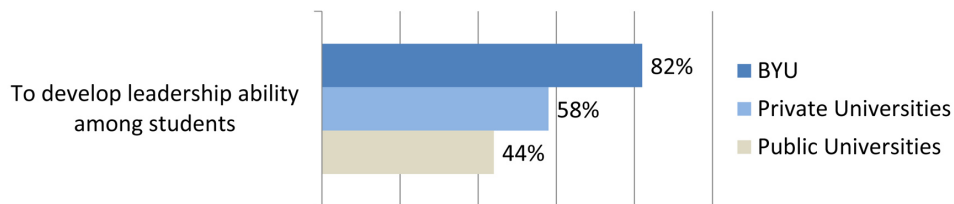


Figure 5. Faculty activities and priorities in working with students. (2010–2011 HERI survey)

Publications in the last two years

How many ...

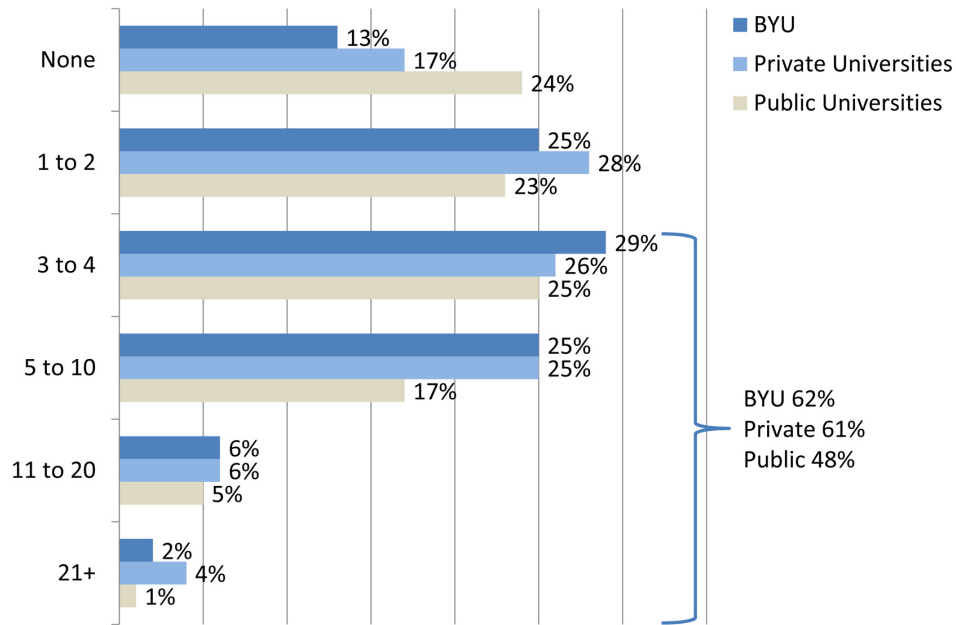


Figure 6. Comparison of BYU faculty publication productivity with private and public university peers. (2010–2011 HERI survey)

Publications

How many professional writings have been published or accepted for publication in the last two years

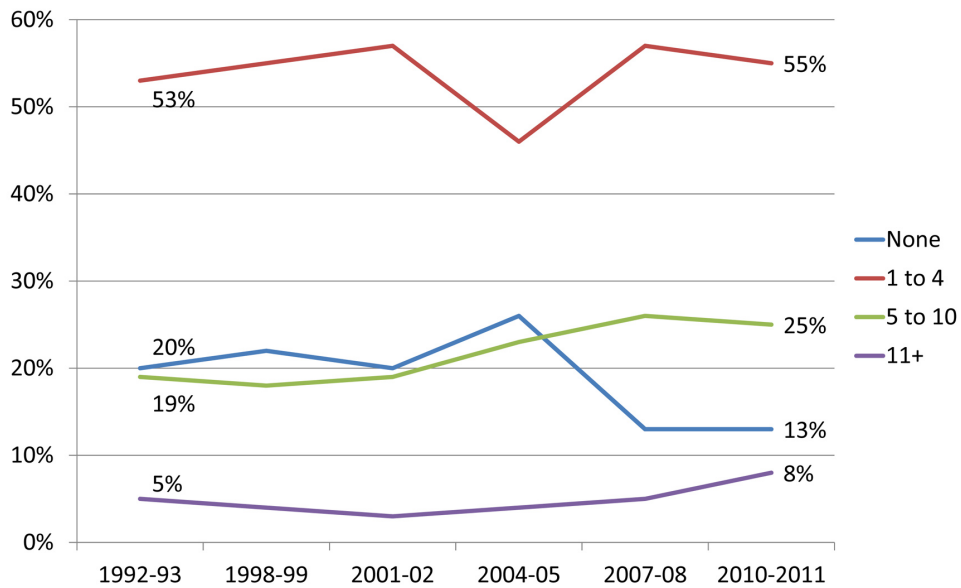


Figure 7. Historical trends in BYU faculty scholarly productivity. (2010–2011 HERI survey)

Faculty Job Aspects Rated as Very Satisfactory/Satisfactory

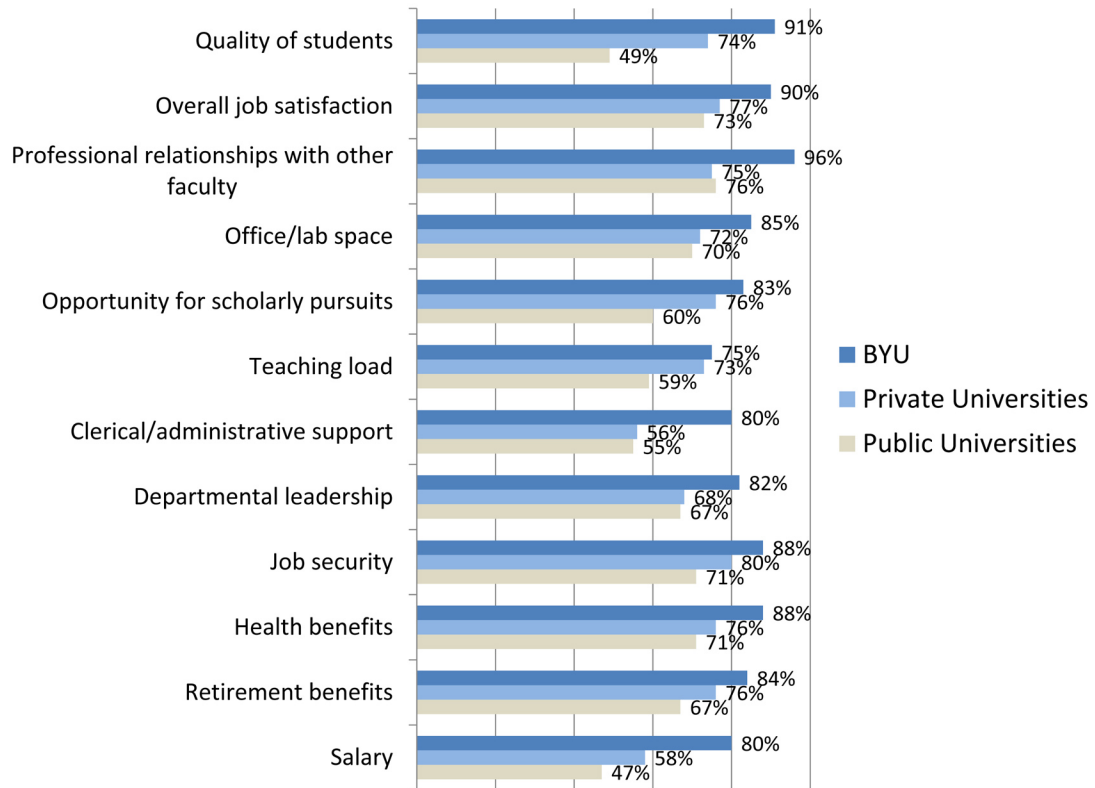


Figure 8. Aspects of academic appointment rated by BYU faculty as “very satisfactory” or “satisfactory.” (2010–2011 HERI survey)