

The CASA CARHS Spring 2014 Survey: Findings and Next Steps

The Steering Committee of CARHS administered a brief on-line survey to all CASA faculty in May 2014 asking about RSCA (research, scholarship and creative activity) practices, interests, and barriers. This report summarizes the results of the survey. There were a total of 41 respondents, including assistant, associate and full professors as well as adjunct faculty.

FINDINGS:

Faculty members want to do RSCA but lack time.

Most respondents indicated that they were motivated to do RSCA (78%), but many felt they didn't have adequate resources or support for RSCA (50%), and that their teaching workload (85%) or their service workload (85%) limited their ability to conduct RSCA activities. Although most respondents had successfully submitted grants, those who had not indicated the main reason was the lack of time. "(We need to) decrease teaching load and committee work." "Need to look at assigned time for research activities."

Faculty members want additional opportunities to collaborate with other faculty.

Many faculty members were interested in collaboration. When asked what support would be helpful in fostering collaboration, suggestions included providing time for collaboration (n=10) and providing tools like a "blog or on-line site" or a "roundtable" to help faculty connect with those with similar interests (n=10). Other ideas included ensuring opportunities for adjunct faculty to be involved in RSCA (n=2), providing seed money (n=3), providing mentoring (n=1), and providing a space for collaboration to occur (n=2).

Faculty members would appreciate some "how to" information.

When asked what topics would be good for an informal "Brown Bag" informational meeting, top choices were on finding a grant (n=13), preparing a successful RSCA proposal (n=13), Time management (n=11), and preparing a successful sabbatical proposal (n=9).

Recognition for RSCA is important.

28 of 40, or 70% of respondents indicated that university and/or college level recognition for RSCA work is important to them. The most popular suggestions were inviting RSCA active faculty members to present about their work at a CARHS seminar (n=18), posting about faculty members' RSCA work on the CASA blog (n=17), and including information about faculty members' RSCA work on the CARHS website (n=16). Other ideas were to recognize RSCA accomplishments at the Fall or Spring CASA Welcome (n=11) and on the LCD/TV displays in MacQuarrie Hall (n=11).

Appreciation of current support.

At the end of the survey faculty members were asked whether they had any other comments or suggestions regarding CARHS or doing RSCA in CASA. The majority of respondents, while frustrated by the lack of time to devote to RSCA or even to use CARHS supports, appreciated that supports were available as well as the committee's efforts to support RSCA in CASA. "Keep up the good work." "I am grateful to be a CASA faculty member because of CARHS. When speaking with colleagues outside of CASA, I realize how lucky we are to have CARHS supports and this promotion of research culture." "Looking forward to being more involved in 2014-2015."

NEXT STEPS:

The CARHS committee is planning a number of actions in AY 14-15 in response to the survey. Regarding recognition, we will be using the LCD/TV displays in MacQuarrie Hall, the CASA blog, CARHS Email Updates and the CARHS website to share news of CASA faculty RSCA accomplishments, as well as inviting CASA faculty to present their RSCA work at upcoming CARHS seminars. Regarding the need for RSCA-related information, we will be developing several Brown Bag sessions on requested topics for spring 2015. We already provided a virtual on-line "Brown Bag" set of supports for "Preparing a successful Sabbatical application" during Fall 2014. Regarding the interest in collaboration, this semester the CARHS committee will be working on developing an on-line tool to help faculty connect easily with other CASA faculty members with similar RSCA interests.

The concern about time is more difficult to address at the college level, requiring as it does resources to fund assigned or release time to devote to RSCA. There are promising signs that more resources for this purpose may become available this year and possibly ongoing. We will be doing everything we can to foster this development, and should resources become available, to devise fair and sensible strategies for how those might be used to support RSCA in CASA.

Amy D'Andrade, MSW PhD
Director, CASA CARHS
Faculty Associate Dean for Research, CASA
amy.dandrade@sjsu.edu