Perceptions of Climate and Connectivity Among UNL STEM Faculty

Insights from STEM faculty at UNL from 2008

Julia McQuillan and Christina Falci

DATE: February 22, 2010

TIME: 11:30 AM —1:00 PM

University of Nebraska Lincoln

Overview

Part 1: Do UNL faculty differ from faculty at peer institutions?

Peer comparisons only for *pre-tenure* faculty

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign,
University of Iowa, Iowa State University,
University of Kansas, Ohio State University

Part 2: Within UNL, do women differ from men? Are there differences by rank?

THE COACHE SURVEY

- COACHE: **C**ollaborative **o**n **A**cademic **C**areers in **H**igher **E**ducation

  - Co-PIs: Cathy Trower, Kiernan Matthews, Harvard Graduate School of Education

  - **COACHE usually surveys pre-tenure faculty in all departments. We're unique.**

  - COACHE is designed to survey academics about academic issues and life

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Peer comparison questions

Are assistant faculty in STEM departments at UNL better off, worse off, or no different from faculty at PEER institutions?

Does the answer differ by gender?

Parts of the COACHE Survey

1. Demographic

2.Tenure & Promotion Clarity & Reasonableness

3. Nature of the Work: Satisfaction with time allocation, quality of support services, teaching & research loads

4. Policies & Practices: Importance and effectiveness of work-life policies and professional development

5. Climate, Culture and Collegiality

6. Global Assessments

Caveats

Highlights – details available upon request

Small Sample sizes

UNL men	= 28	Peer men	= 188
UNL women	= 9	Peer women	= 26

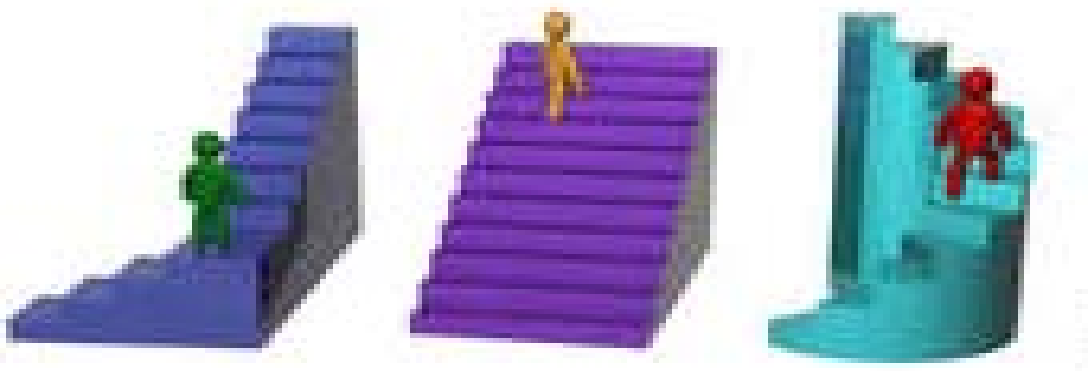
Three kinds of comparisons

1. UNL compared to PEER

2. Men at UNL compared to men at PEER institutions

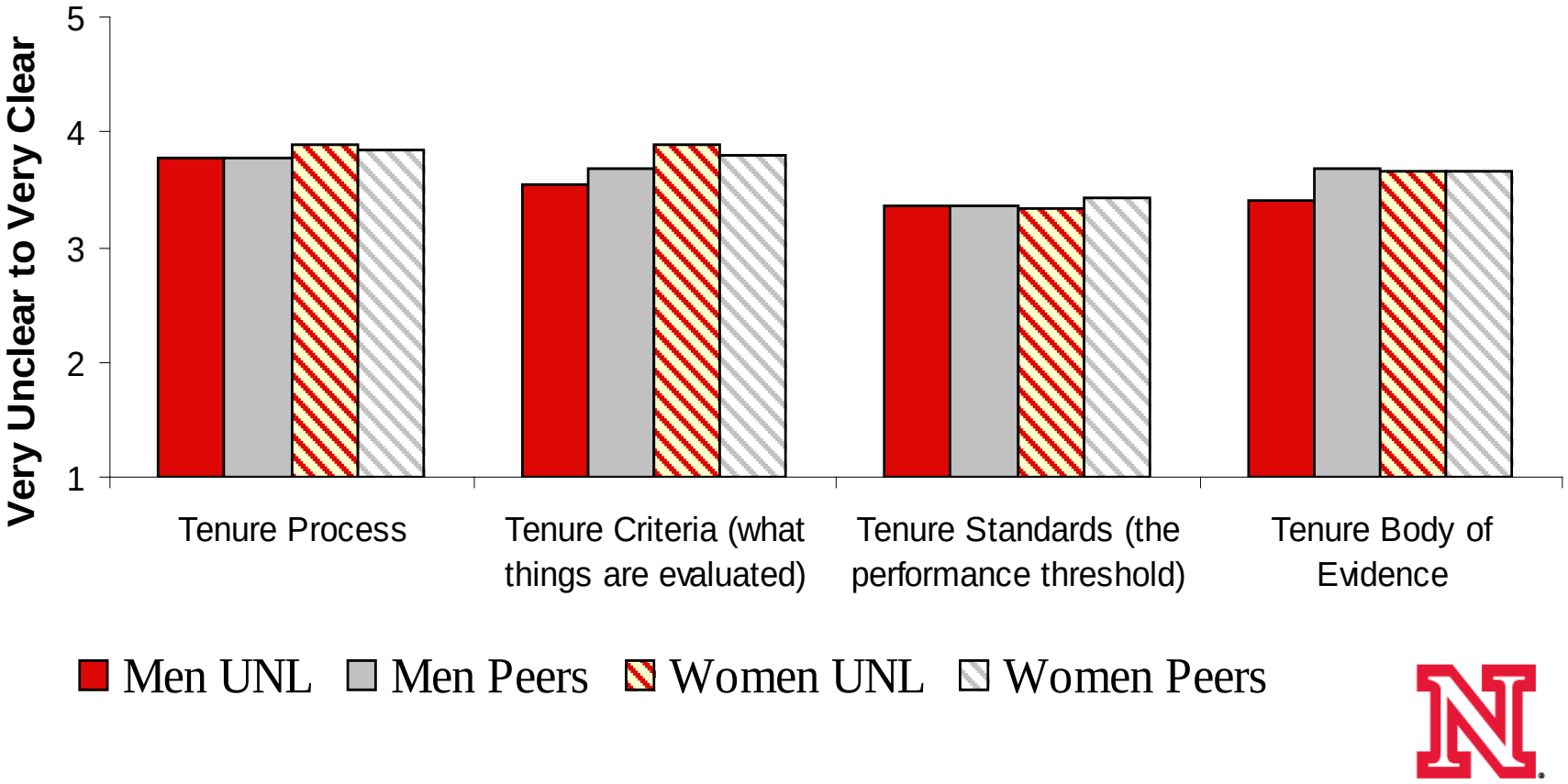
3. Women at UNL compared to women at peer institutions

First the tenure process



This set of items addresses various aspects surrounding tenure and promotion in your department.	Not Applicable	Very clear	Fairly clear	Neither	Fairly unclear	Very unclear	Decline
19. I find the tenure *process* in my department to be…	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
20. I find the tenure *criteria* (what things are evaluated) in my department to be…	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
21. I find the tenure *standards* (the performance threshold) in my department to be…	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
22. I find the *body of evidence* that will be considered in making my tenure decision to be…	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
23. My sense of whether or not I will achieve tenure is…	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Clarity of the tenure process….
No differences



Is what's expected in order to earn tenure clear to you regarding your performance as:

... a scholar (e.g., research and creative work)?

...a teacher?

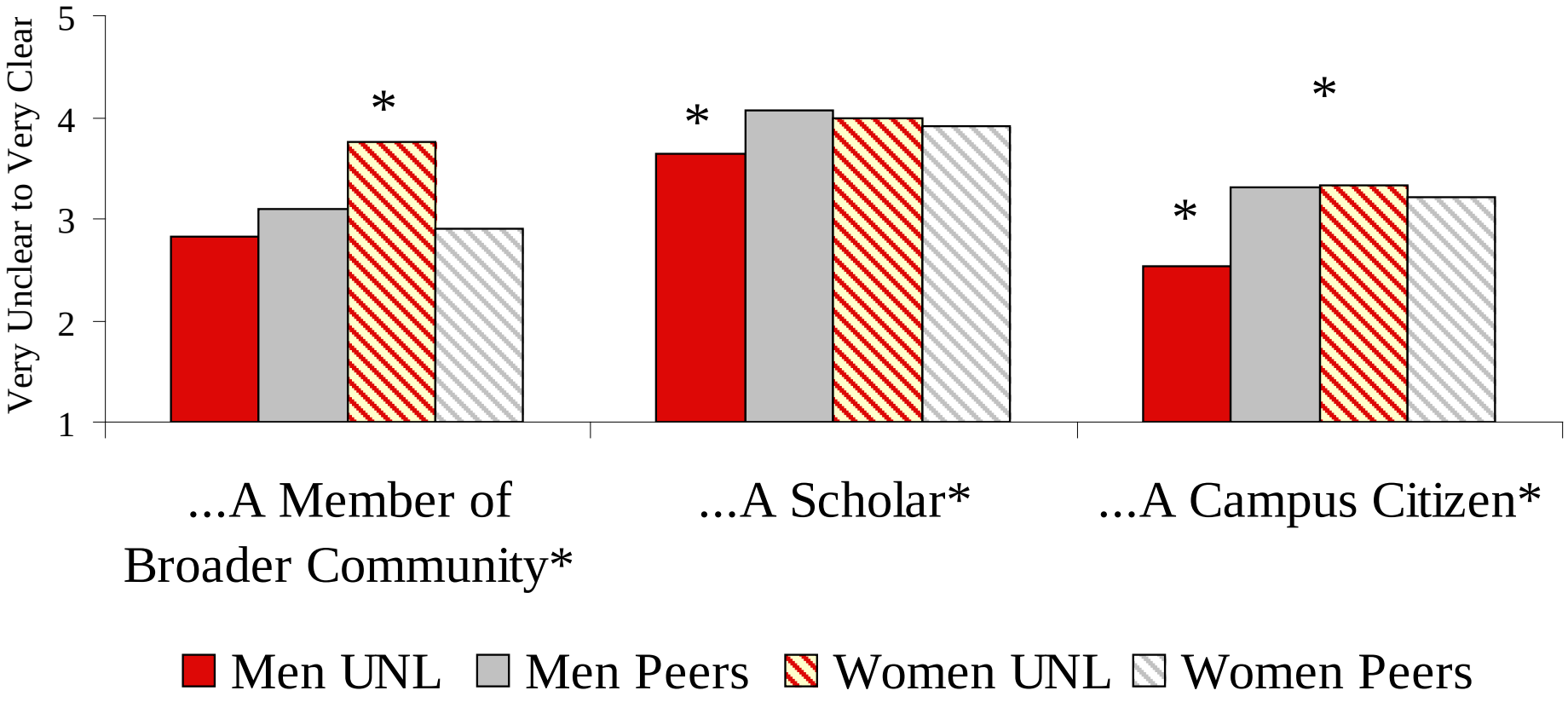
…an advisor to students?

…a colleague in your department

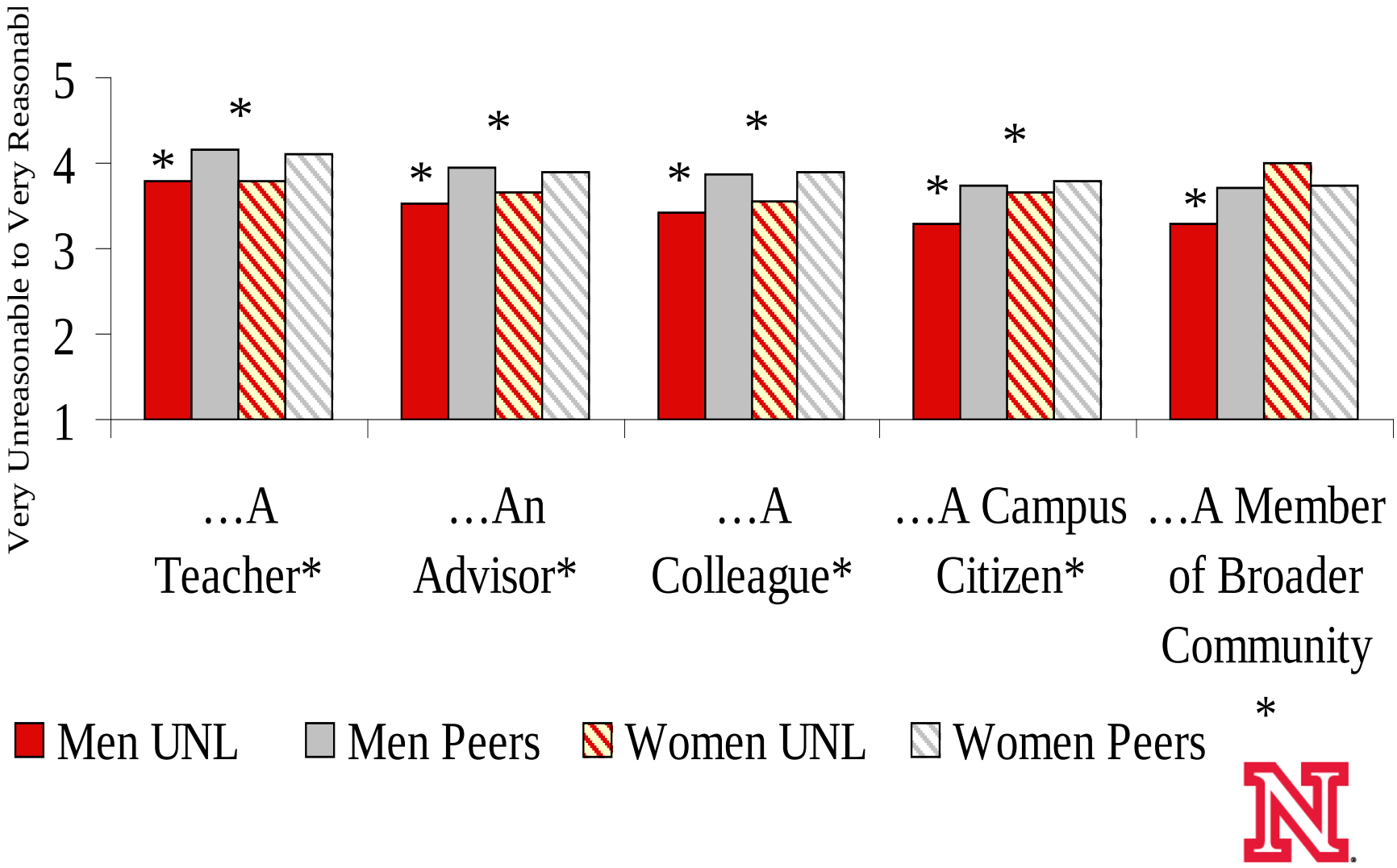
…a campus citizen?

…a member of the broader community (e.g., outreach)?

Do the clarity of particular tenure expectations differ? Some…



Do perceptions of the reasonableness of tenure differ? Yes



“I have received consistent messages from tenured faculty in my department about the requirements for tenure.”

Not significantly different

“In my opinion, tenure decisions here are made primarily on performance-based criteria rather than on non-performance-based criteria.”

UNL = 4.19 >* PEER = 3.73

Next: NATURE OF THE WORK

The survey asked:

"The next set of items explores your day-to-day activities as a faculty member. Please indicate your level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the following aspects of your work"

Are there differences with satisfaction in aspects of *teaching*?

NO

…Level of courses

…Number of courses

…Degree of influence over students

…Discretion over course content

…Number of students

Are there differences with satisfaction with aspects of *work in general*?

NO

…Way you spend your time

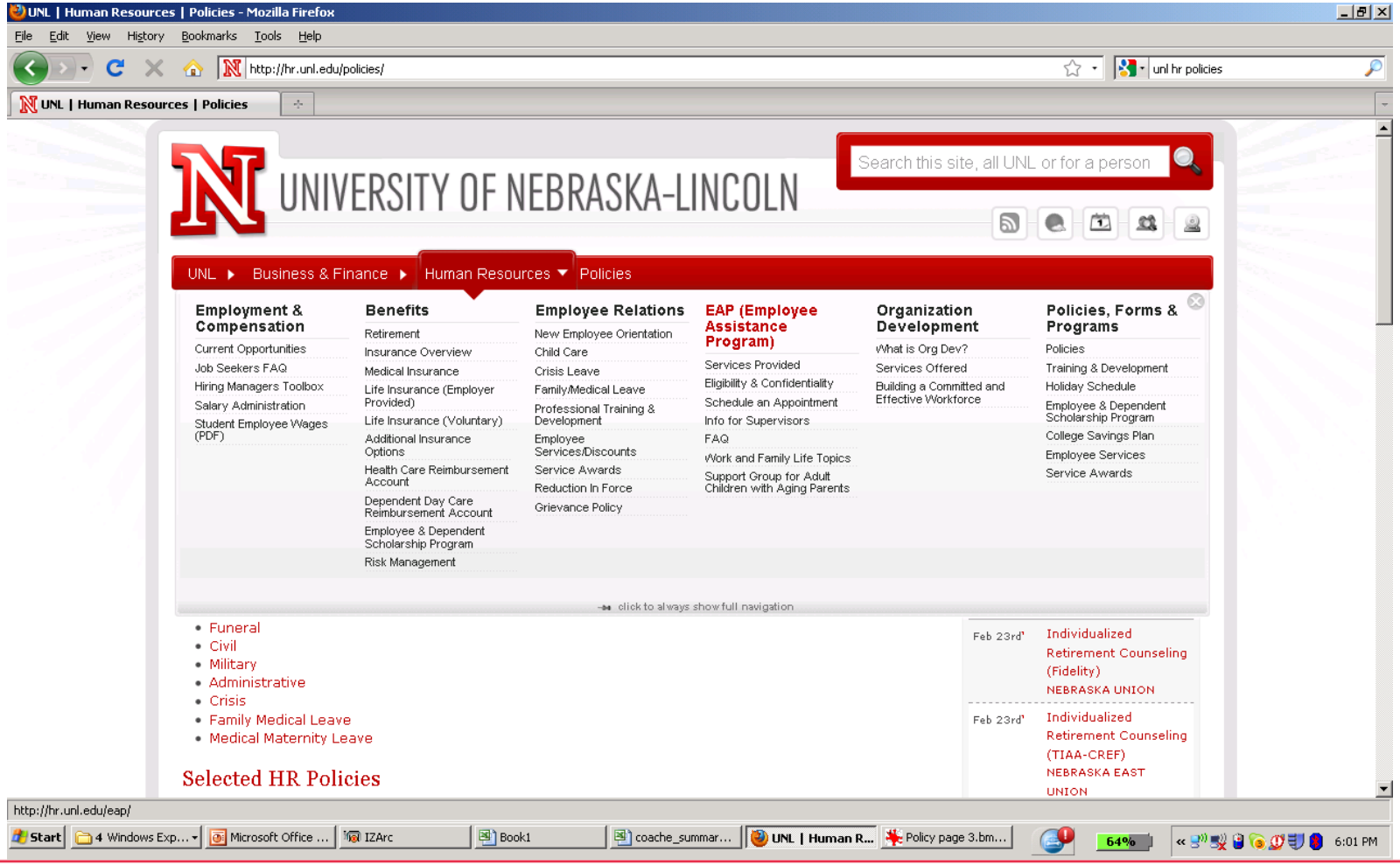
…Number of hours a week

…Amount of time on research

…The amount of external funding expected to find

…Influence over the focus of research

Next:
Importance & Effectiveness of Policies & Practices



"Regardless of whether the following policies and practices currently apply to your institution,

please rate ***how important or unimportant each would be to your success*****.**

Then rate ***how effective or ineffective each has been at your institution*****."**

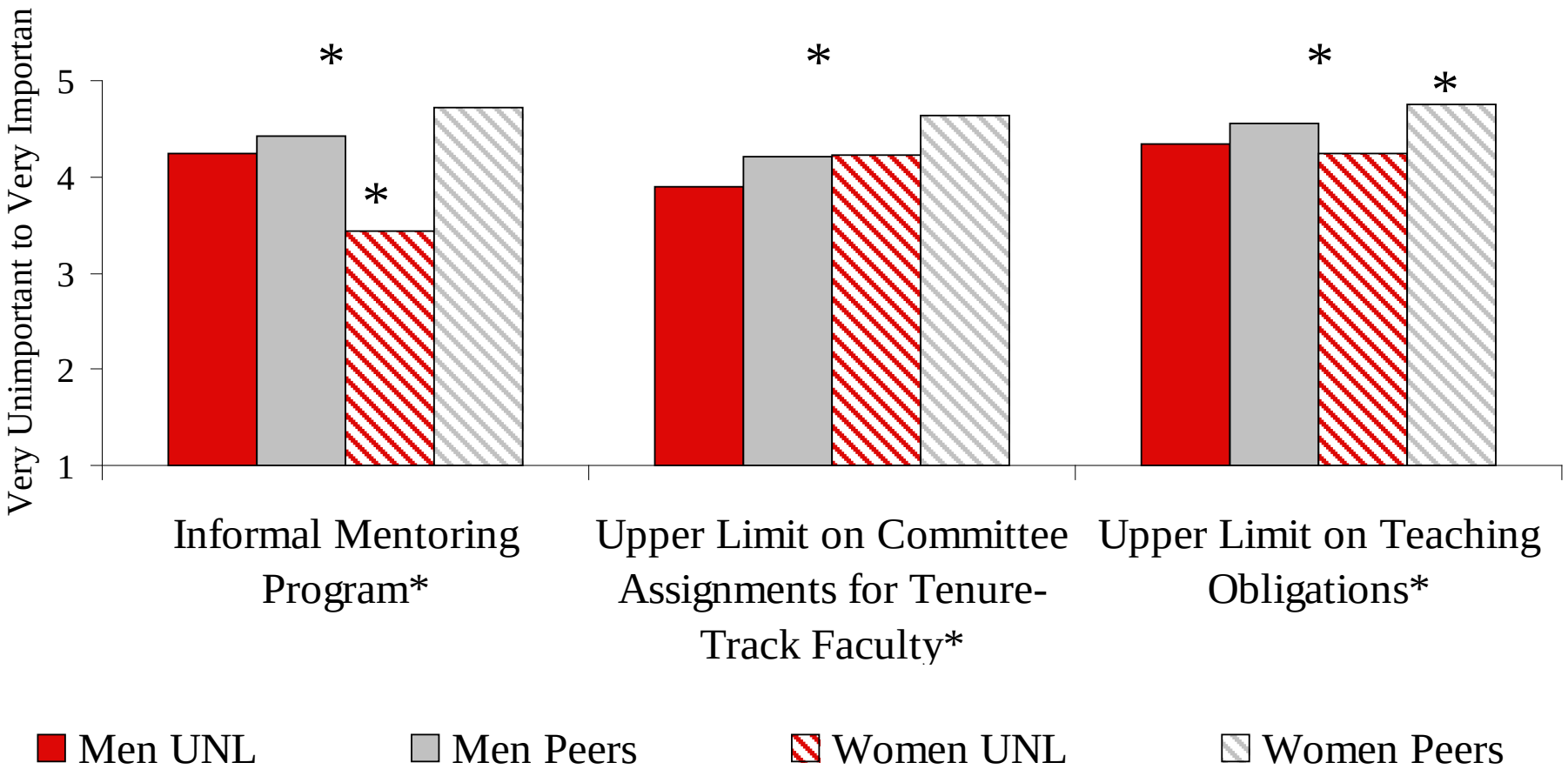
COACHE survey

Examples of Policies:

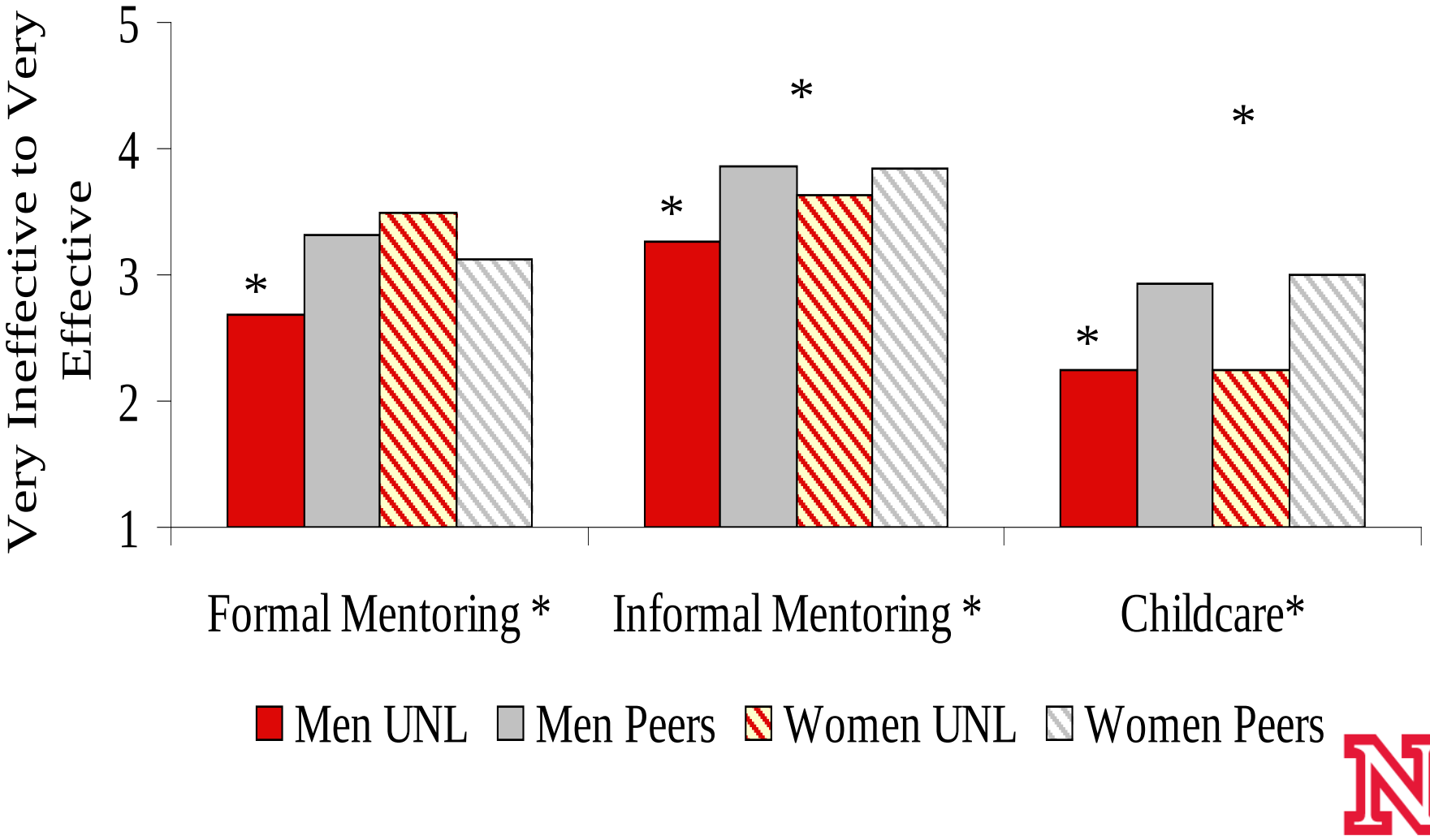
- Upper limit on committee & teaching assignments
- Formal /informal mentoring program
- Performance reviews
- Spousal/partner hiring; child care; housing assistance, stop-the-clock

- Support for externally funded grants
- Assistance with or peer review of teaching
- Paid or unpaid leave
- Travel funds

Importance of policies: which differ?



Effectiveness of policies: which differ?



Do perceptions of supports for work/life balance and tenure track (TT) differ? No

- Institutional Support for
  - having children and TT
  - raising children and TT
- Colleague Support for
  - for having children and TT
  - raising children and TT
- Colleagues' Respect for
  - personal work & responsibilities

Satisfaction with Climate, Culture and Collegiality

Differences between UNL and Peers

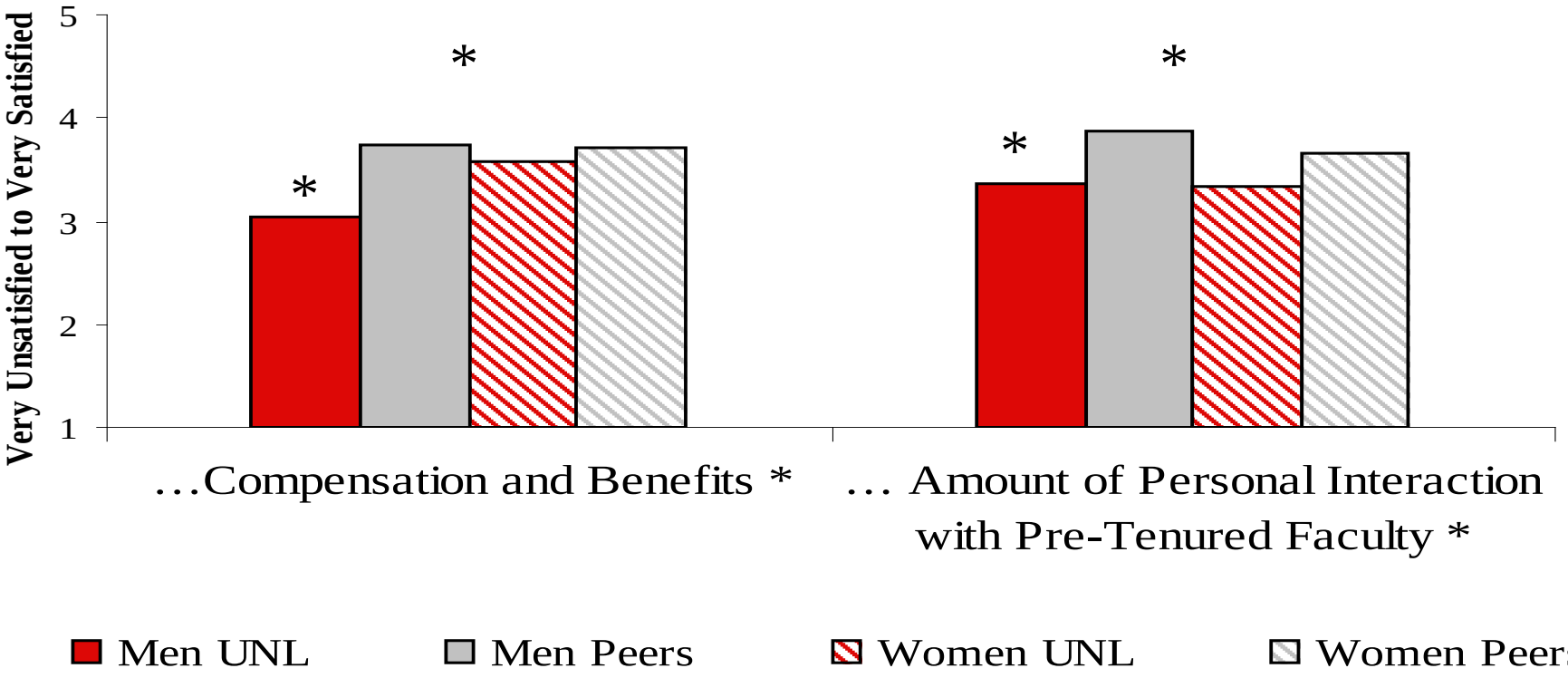
Compensation & benefits *

Amount of personal interaction with pre-tenured faculty *

No differences between UNL and Peers

- Professional interaction with *pre*-tenured faculty
- Balance professional & personal/family time
- Fairness of immediate supervisor
- Interest tenured faculty take in your career
- Opportunities to collaborate with tenured faculty
- Professional & personal interaction with *tenured* faculty

Are there differences in satisfaction on any aspects?



No differences between UNL and Peer faculty on…

… how well they "fit" (e.g., sense of belonging, comfort level) in their department.

… ...the intellectual vitality of tenured faculty in their department

GLOBAL SATISFACTION:

“Finally, we ask you to make some overall assessments about your department and your institution as a place to work.

Please check the two (and only two) *best aspects* about working at your institution.”

Academic freedom

Assistance for grant proposals

My sense of "fit" here

Support of colleagues

Spousal/partner hiring program

Quality of colleagues

Opportunities to collaborate

Cost of living

Support for professional development

Quality graduate students

Geographic location

Manageable pressure to perform

Quality undergraduates

Diversity

Promotion requirements in general

Quality of facilities

Presence of others like me.

Promotion criteria clarity

Compensation

Teaching load

Promotion process clarity

Support for teaching

Protections from service/assignments

Tenure criteria clarity

Availability/quality of childcare

Commute

Other (Please specify):

Tenure process clarity

Research requirements for *tenure*

Other (Please specify):

Childcare policies/practices

Tenure requirements in general

There are no positive aspects.

Support for research (e.g., leave)

Research requirements for *promotion*

UNL STEM Faculty compared to Peers

UNL Rank	Best Aspects	Proportion Selected - UNL	Proportion Selected - Peer	Peer Rank	
1	**Academic freedom**	**.29**	**.03**	**20**	**-19**
2	Cost of living	.26	.23	2	0
3	Quality of Colleagues	.20	.26	1	2
4	**Assistance for grant proposals**	**.20**	**.05**	**12**	**-8**
5	Support of colleagues	.14	.19	3	2
6	Opportunities to collaborate with colleagues	.14	.17	4	2

Summary: How are UNL STEM assistant professors better, worse, or no different from Peer STEM assistant professors?

Clarity and reasonableness of tenure

- UNL < PEERS clarity for community, scholar, campus citizen
- UNL < PEERS reasonableness of teacher, advisor, colleague, campus citizen, member broader community
- UNL > PEERS tenure based on performance-based criteria

Satisfaction with teaching and general work situation:

- UNL = PEERS

Policies and Procedures

- UNL < PEERS importance of informal mentoring, upper limit on committees, and upper limit on teaching obligations
- UNL < PEERS effectiveness of formal mentoring, informal mentoring, child care
- UNL = PEERS on work/life balance & tenure track

Satisfaction

- UNL < PEERS on compensation/benefits & personal interaction with pre-TT

Global satisfaction

- UNL = PEERS on sense of fit and intellectual vitality
- UNL > PEERS best aspects academic freedom and assistance for grant proposals
- UNL < PEERS best aspect “sense of fit”

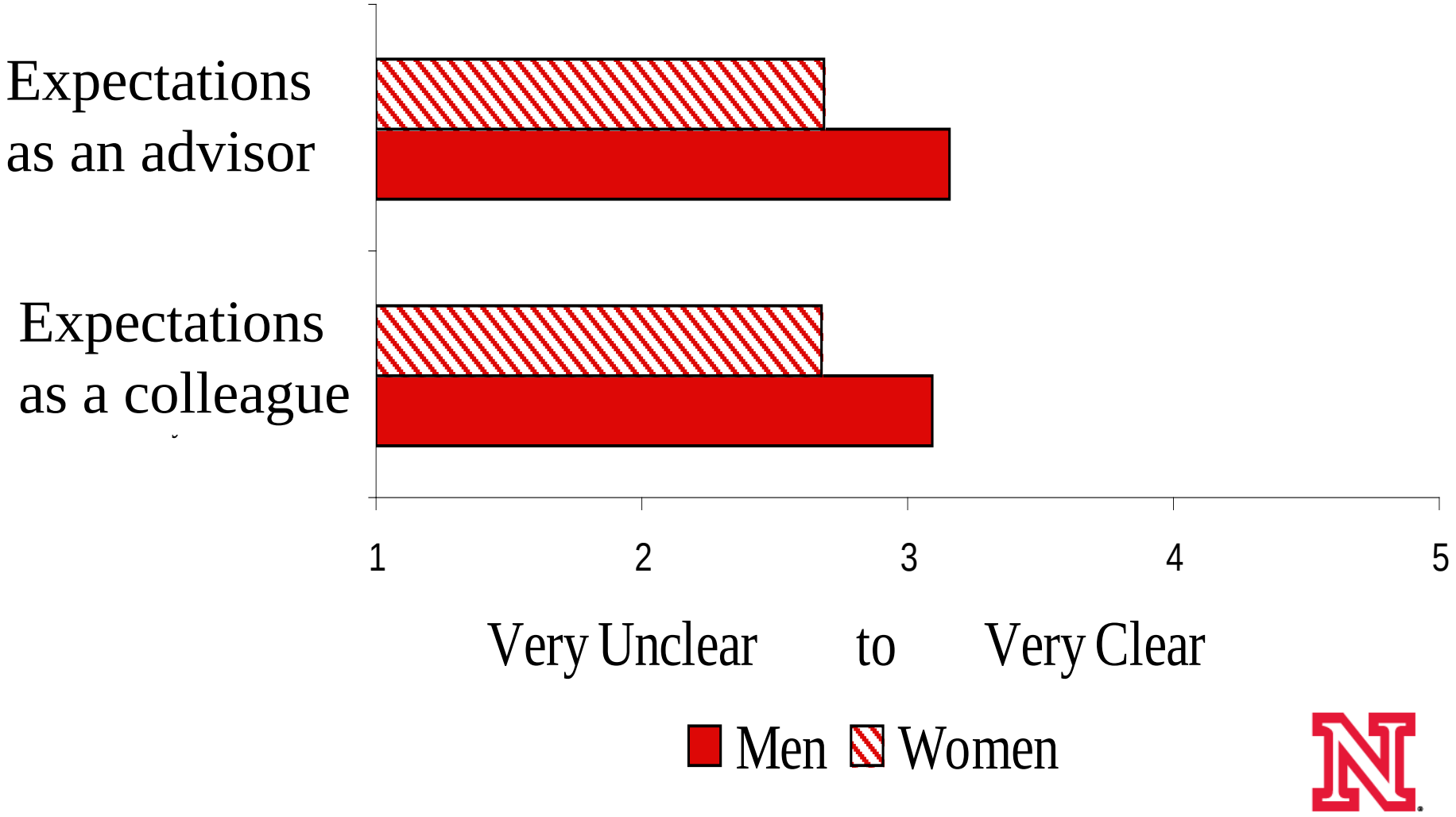
Part 2:

Focusing on Gender and Rank

All Ranks

Only UNL

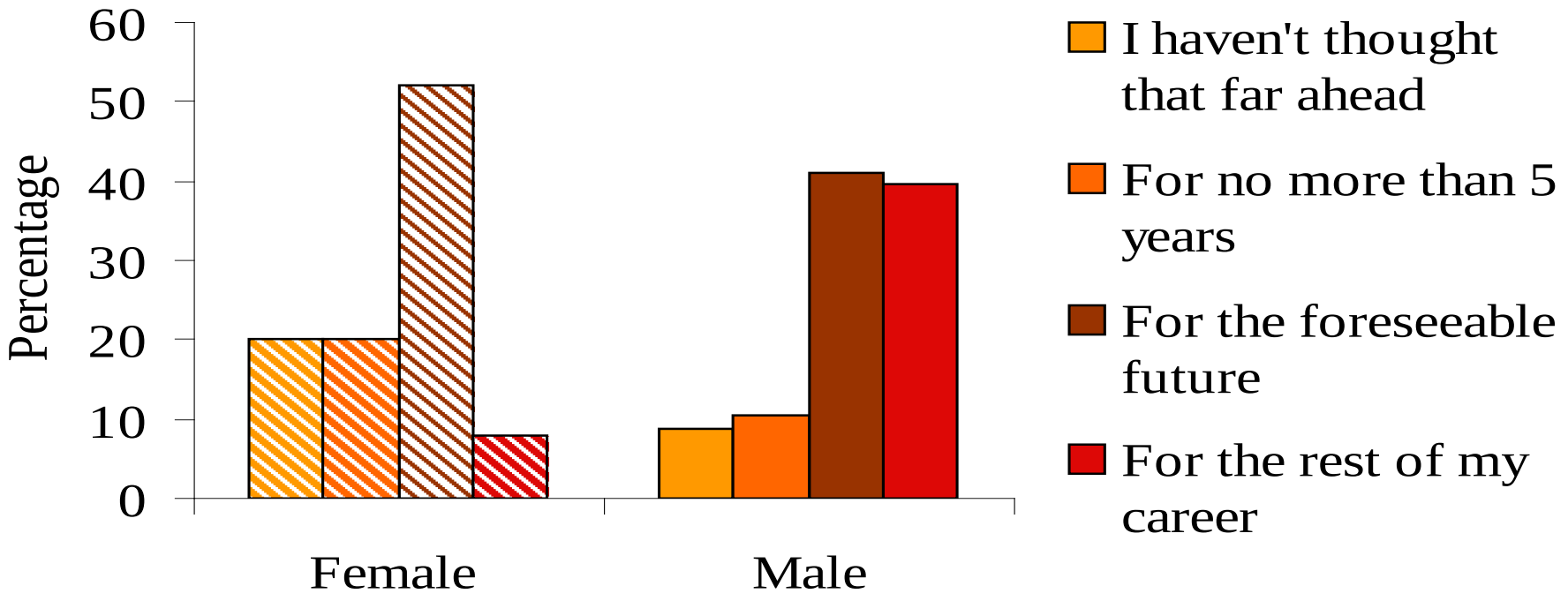
Expectations for tenure that differ by gender



Future plans

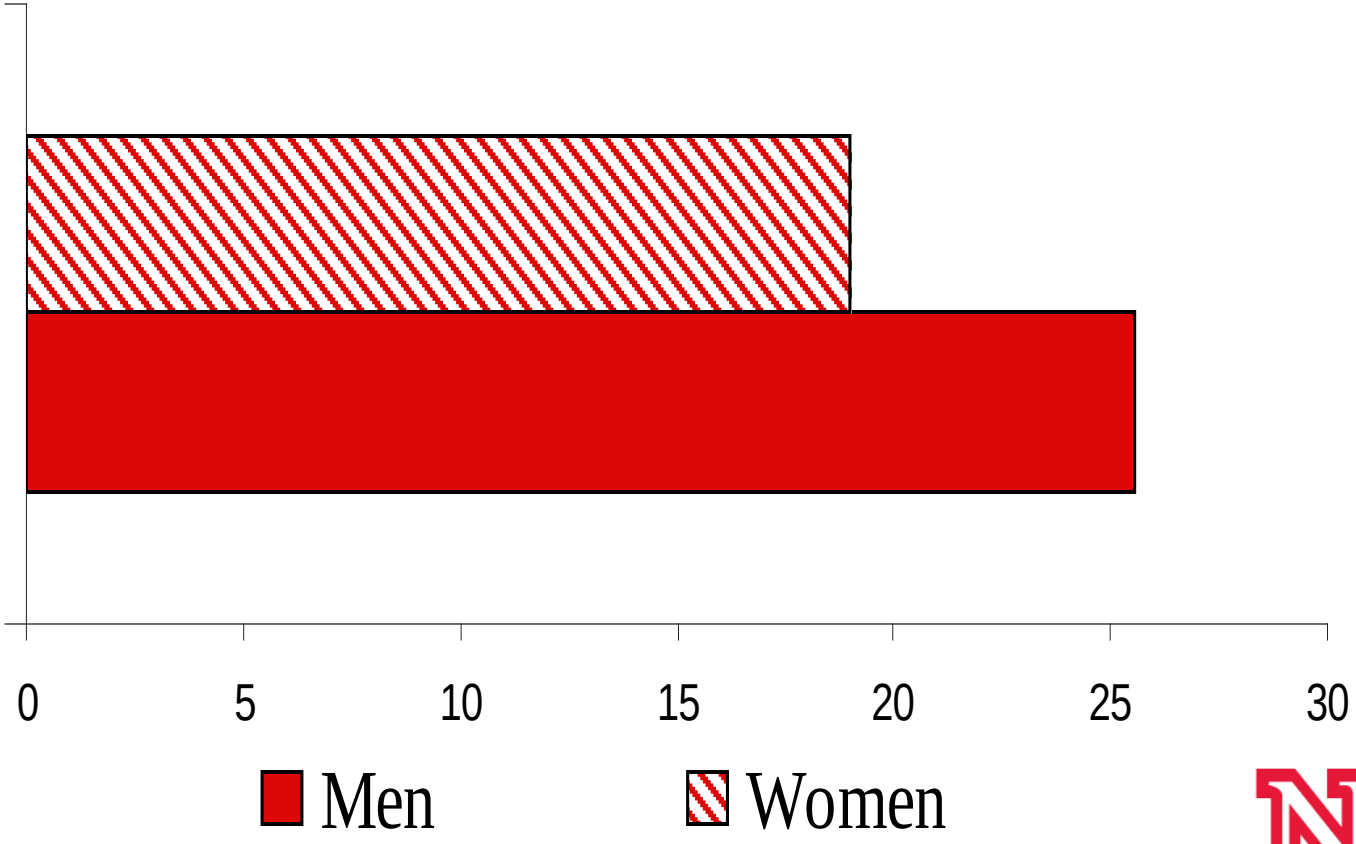
“Assuming you have or will achieve tenure, how long do you plan to remain at your institution?”

Does organizational commitment differ by gender? Yes

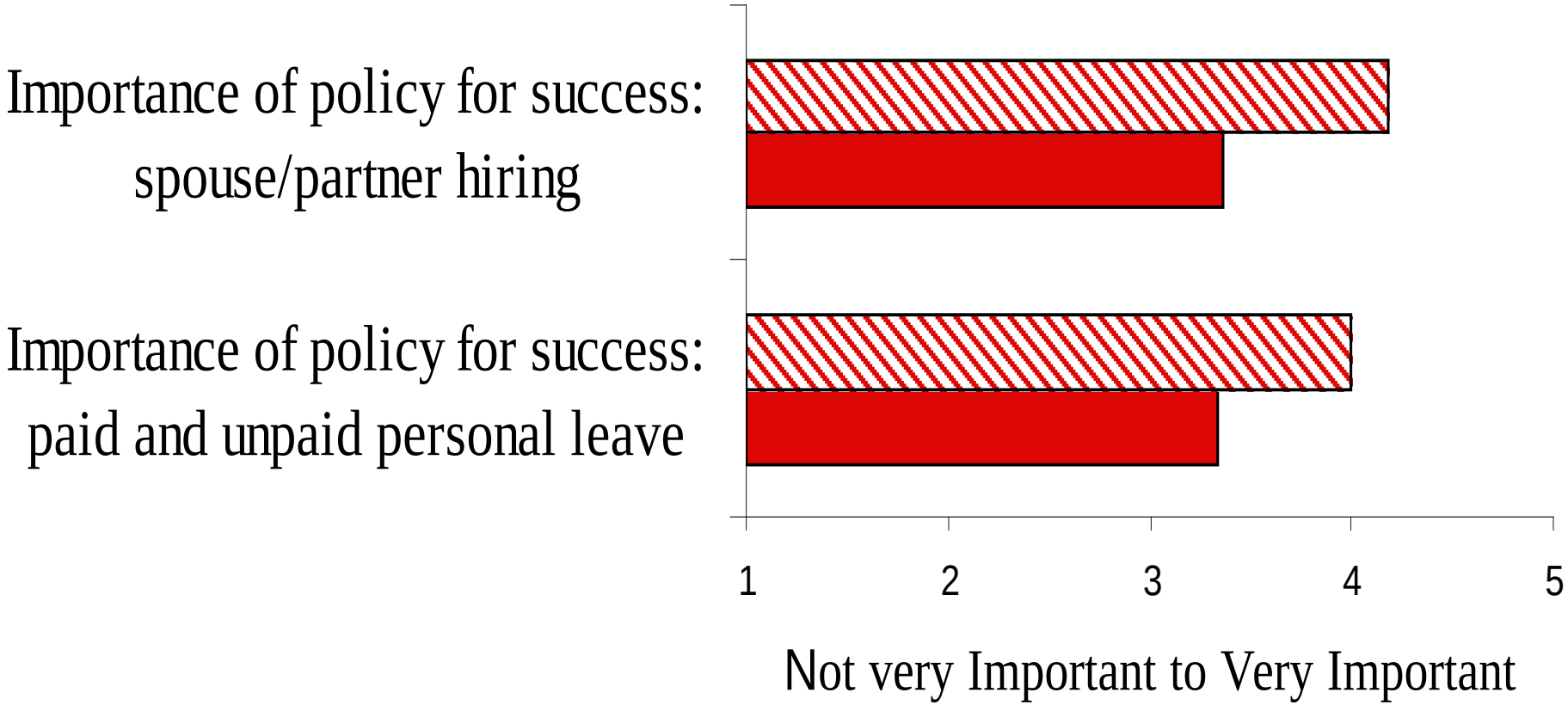


Percentage time on service differs by gender

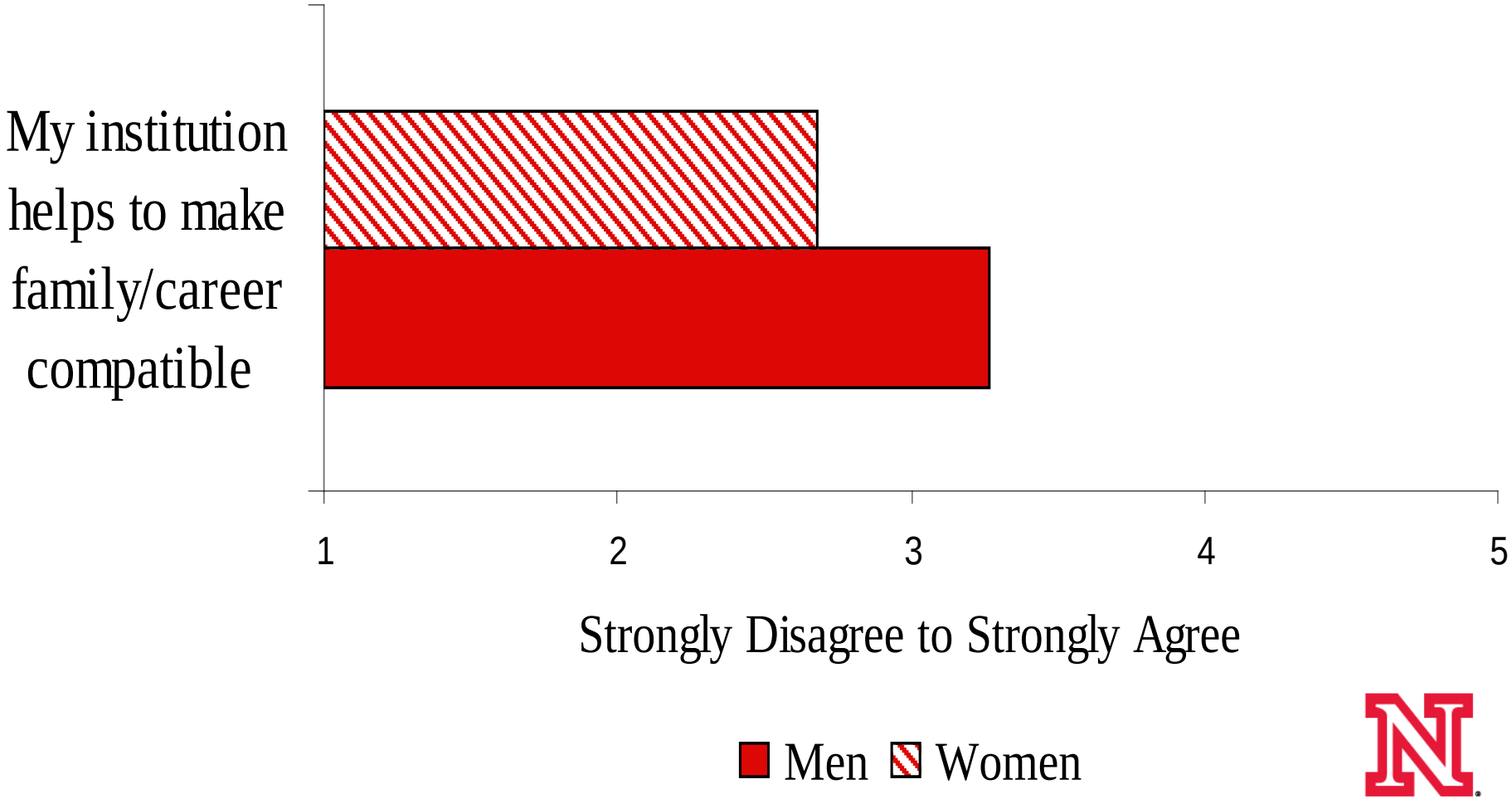
In the past month, percentage of time spent on: service



Importance of 2 policies differs for women and men



Men are more likely to see the institution as helping to make family and career compatible



Summary: How does gender matter?

Expectations of tenure (advisor/colleague)

Men > Women

Organizational commitment

Men > Women

Spousal hiring and child care policies

Women > Men

Time on service (administrators?)

Men > Women

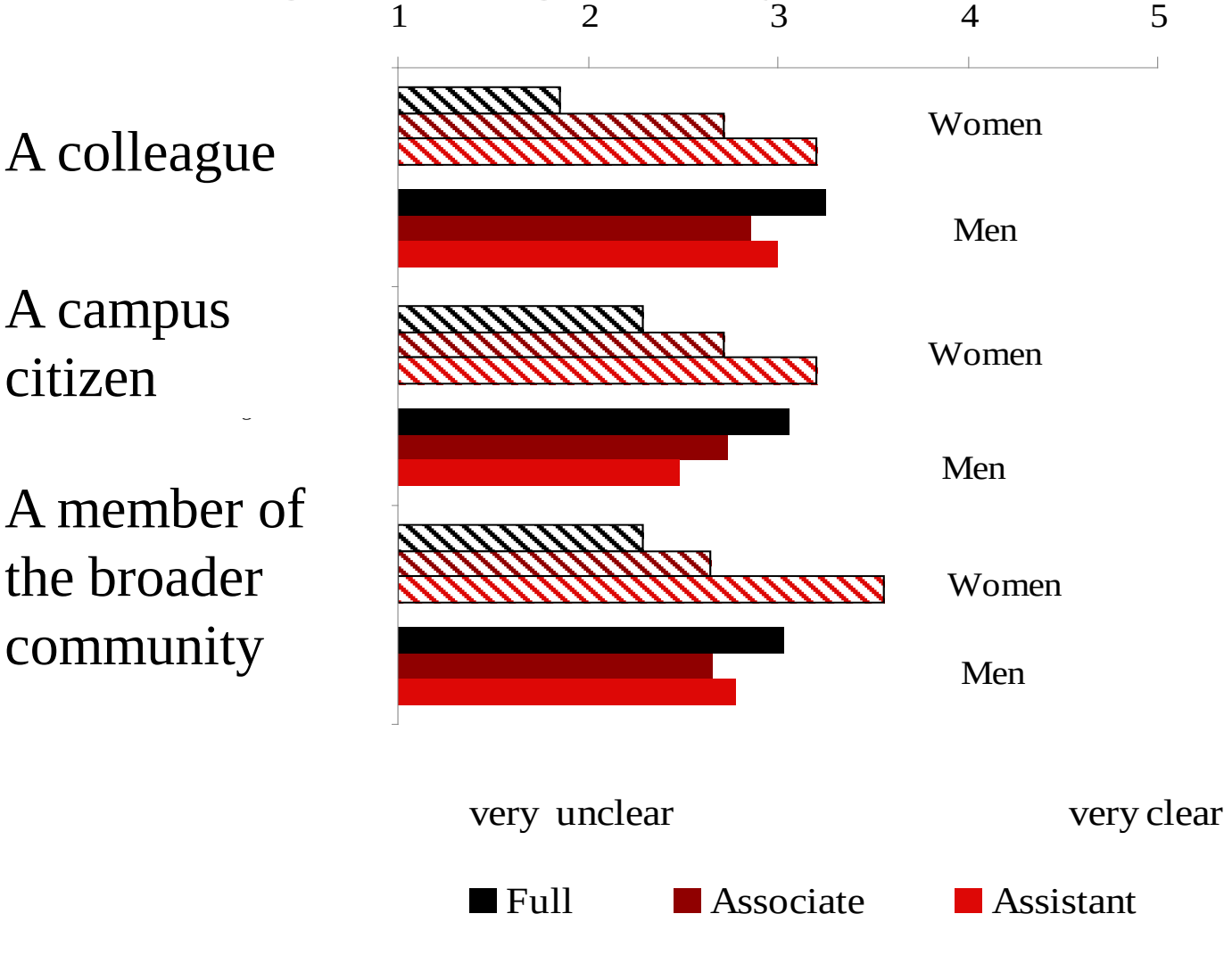
Perceptions of support for work/life

Men > Women

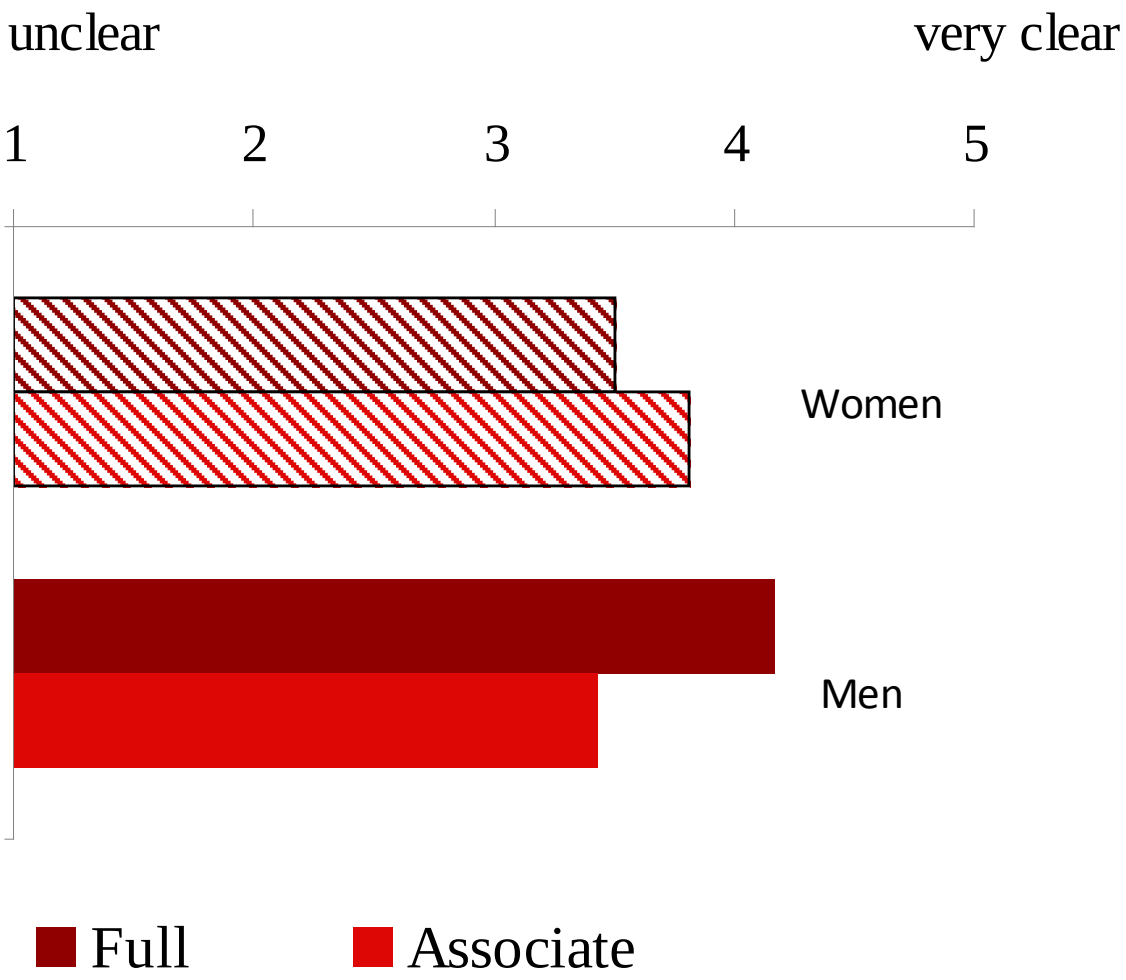
Patterns that differ by gender & rank

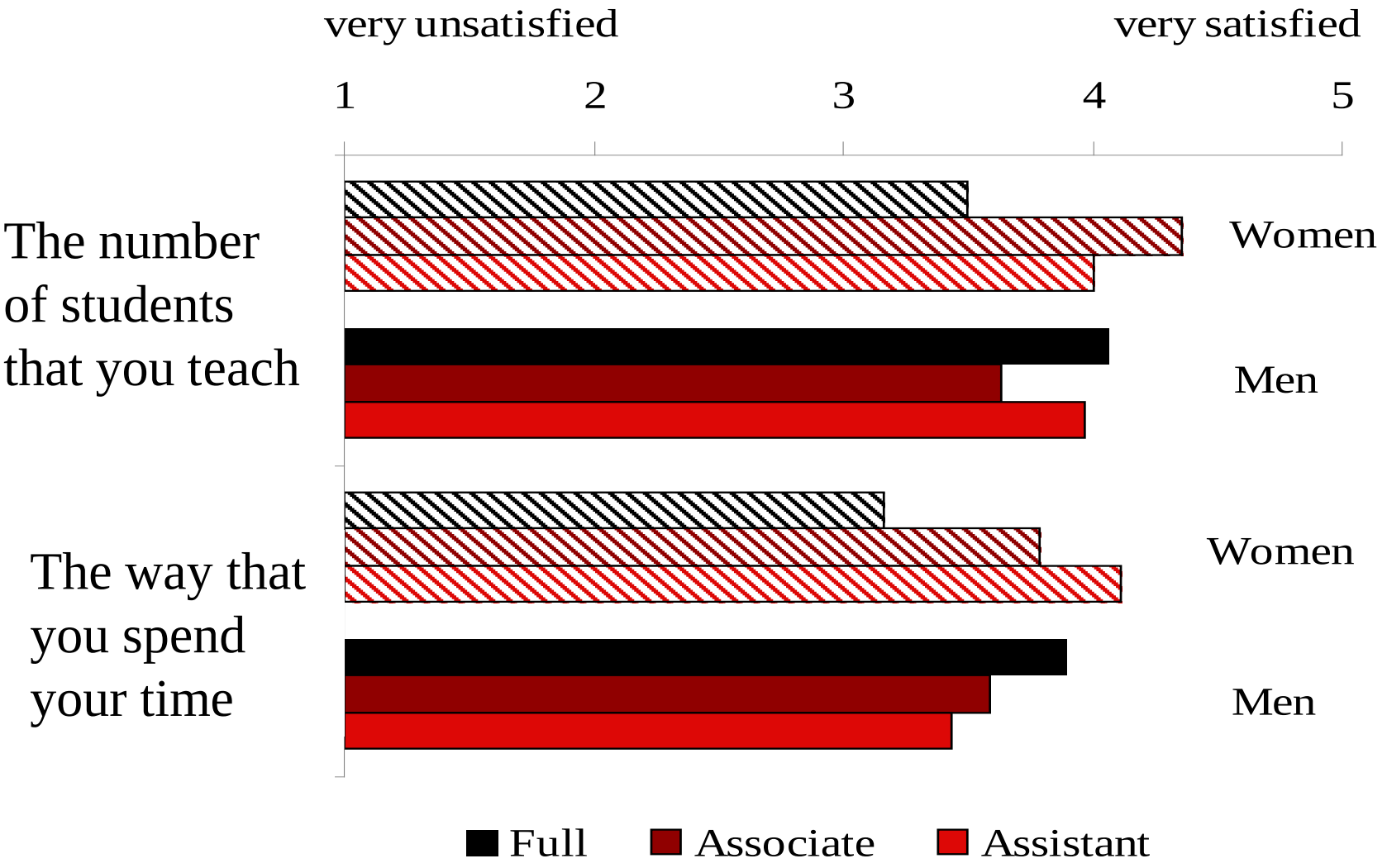
Clarity of the tenure process performance expectations:

Significant gender by rank differences

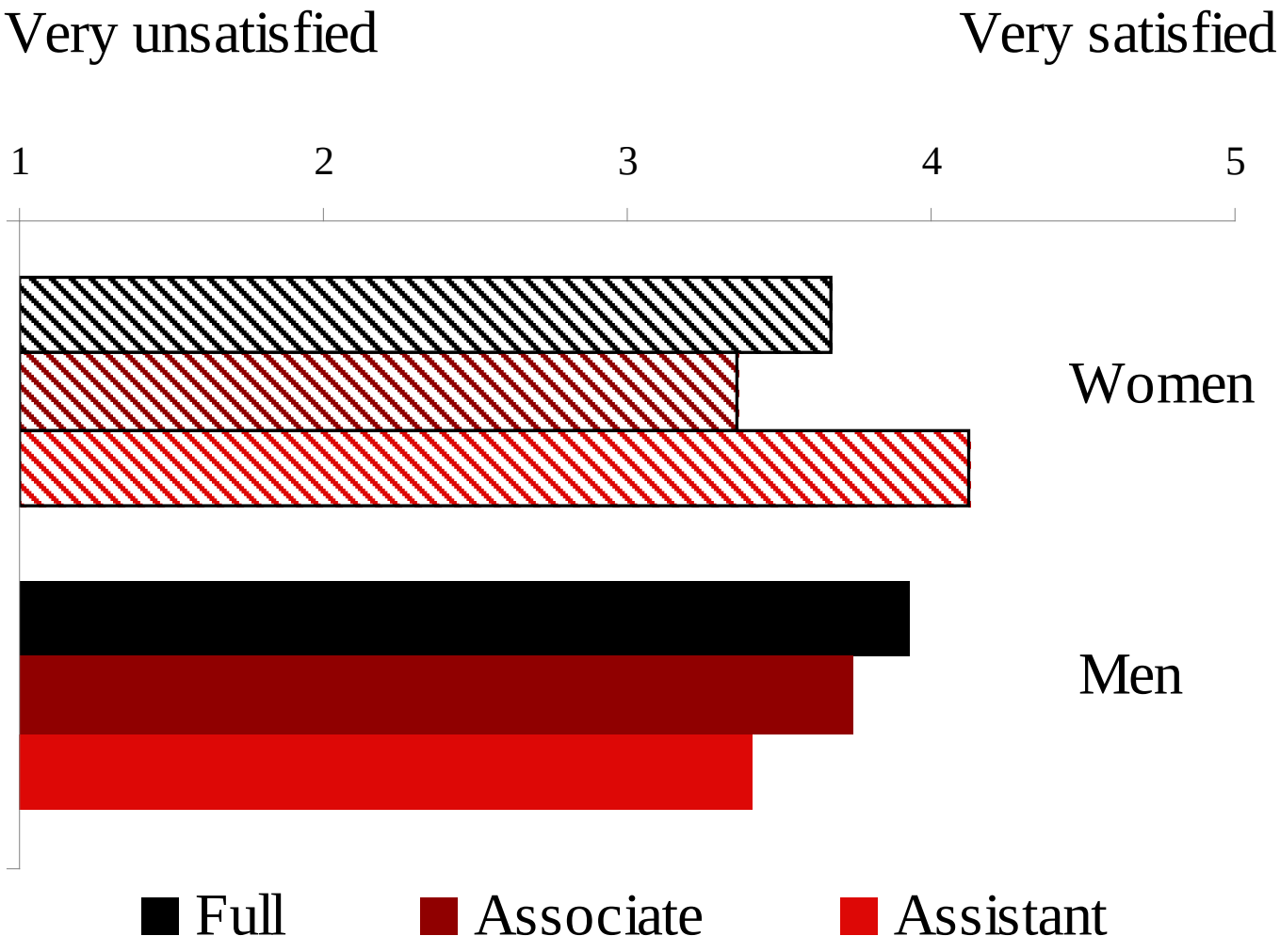


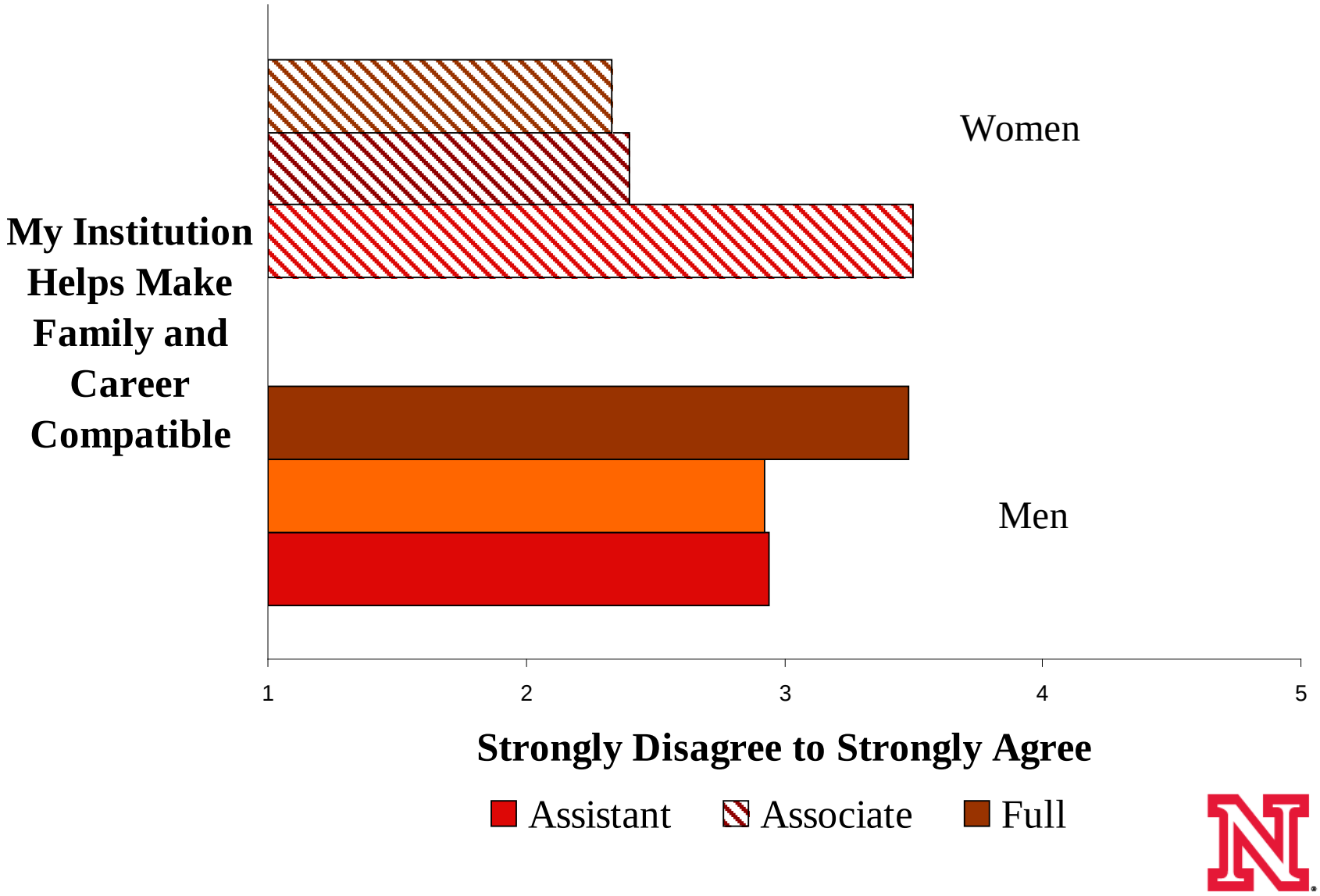
Clarity of the promotion process from associate to full

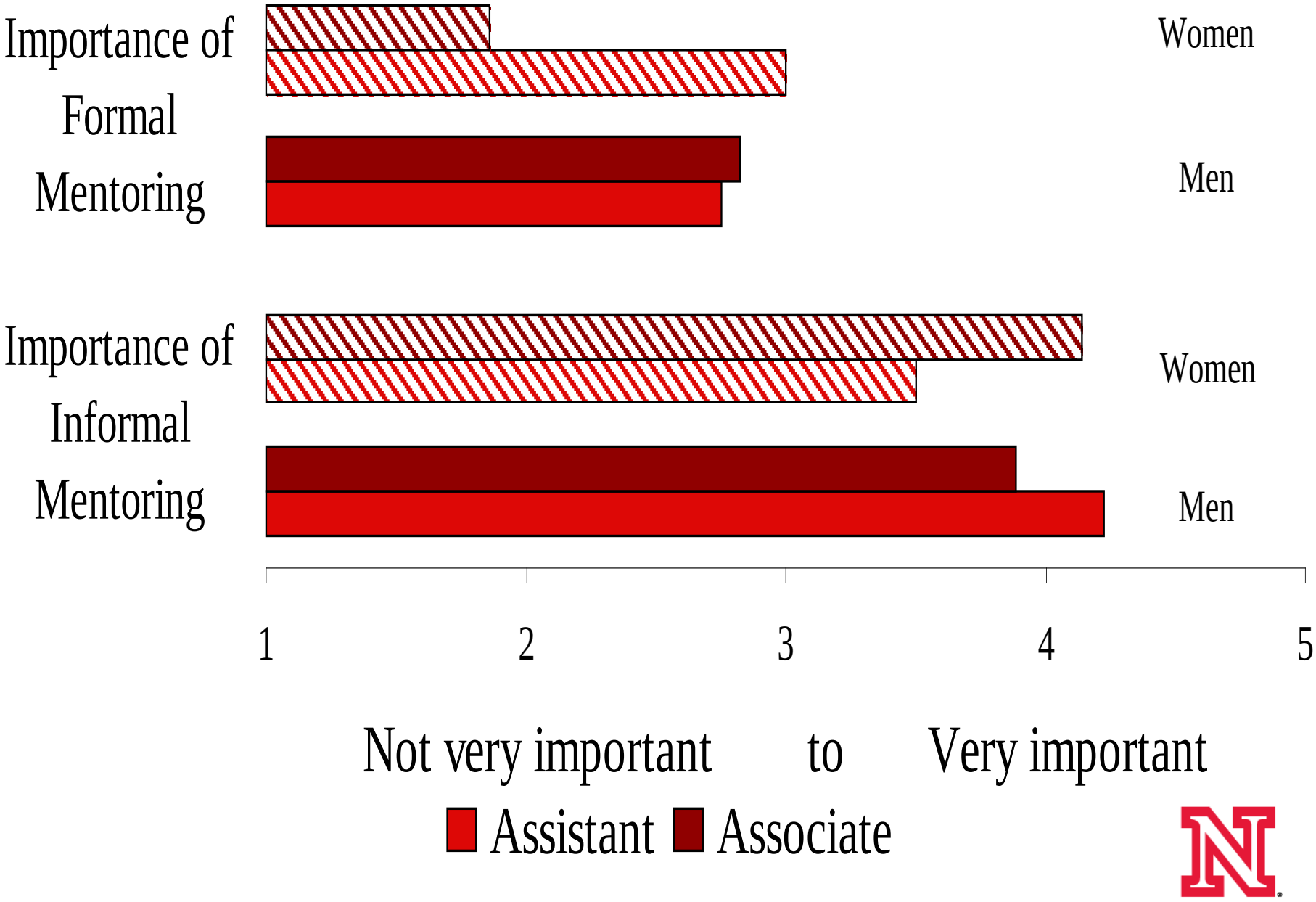



very unsatisfied
very satisfied
1
2
3
4
5
The number of students that you teach
Women
Men
The way that you spend your time
Women
Men
Full
Associate
Assistant

Opportunities to collaborate with pre – tenured faculty




My Institution Helps Make Family and Career Compatible
Women
Men
1
2
3
4
5
Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree
Assistant
Associate
Full


Importance of Formal Mentoring
Women
Men
Importance of Informal Mentoring
Women
Men
1
2
3
4
5
Not very important to Very important
Assistant
Associate

Best aspects of UNL

Top 5 selected aspects by gender and rank

*the next slide can be dizzying

Best 5 Aspects of UNL

		Men	Women
	1	*Academic Freedom*	Opportunities to collaborate with colleagues
	2	*Cost of living*	Academic Freedom
Assistant	3	*Quality of Colleagues*	Quality of Colleagues
	4	*Assistance for grant proposals*	Spousal/partner hiring program
	5	*Support of Colleagues*	Cost of living
	1	*Quality of Colleagues*	Academic Freedom
	2	*Cost of living*	Support of Colleagues
Associate	3	*Academic Freedom*	My sense of "fit" here
	4	*Quality of facilities*	Quality of facilities
	5	*My sense of "fit" here*	Assistance for grant proposals
	1	*Quality of Colleagues*	Quality of Colleagues
	2	*My sense of "fit" here*	Quality of undergraduate students
Full	**3**	*Academic Freedom*	My sense of "fit" here
	4	*Opportunities to collaborate with colleagues*	Academic Freedom
	5	*Quality of graduate students*	Geographic location

Open-Ended Responses: Best about Specific Position

- Quality of core of faculty
- Variety of work
- Freedom to teach/research
- Interaction with students
- Interactions with colleagues and students

Summary

- Gender shapes faculty experiences differently in different ranks
- Shows the need to “control” for potential confounding variables.

Open-Ended Responses: Best about UNL

- Spousal hiring possibilities (not a program, but my department makes a lot of effort)
- Research & Teaching opportunities
- Support by upper administration for growth in the area of research
- Career advancement

Summary of Gender by Rank

Clarity of the tenure process

A colleague:

- Women: Assistant > Associate > Full
- Men: Full > Assistant > Associate

A campus citizen

- Women: Assistant > Associate > Full
- Men: Full > Associate Assistant

Member of a broader community

- Women: Assistant > Associate > Full
- Men: Full > Assistant > Associate

Promotion process from associate to full

- Women: Associate > Full
- Men: Full > Associate

Satisfaction with aspects of work

The number of students you teach

- Women: Associate > Assistant > Full
- Men: Full > Assistant > Associate

The way that you spend your time

- Women: Assistant > Associate > Full
- Men: Full > Associate Assistant

Opportunities to collaborate with pre-tenured

- Women: Assistant > Full > Associate
- Men: Full > Associate > Assistant

Policies and Procedures

My Institution helps make family and career compatible

- Women: Assistant > Associate = Full
- Men: Full > Assistant = Associate

Importance of formal mentoring

- Women: Assistant > Full
- Men: Assistant = Full

Importance of informal mentoring

- Women: Associate > Assistant
- Men: Assistant > Associate

Global

•Academic Freedom:	All 6 groups
•Quality of Colleagues:	All but associate women
•Cost of living:	Assistants; Associate Men
•Assistance for grants:	Assistant men, Associate women
•Support of Colleagues:	Assistant men, associate women
•Opportunities collaborate:	Assistant women
•Spousal/partner hiring:	Assistant women
•Quality of Facilities:	Associate
•My Sense of Fit here:	Associate and Full
•Quality of students:	Full
•Geographic Location:	Full women

Thank you!
Next data collection
Spring 2011

University of Nebraska Lincoln

SLIDE DESIGN © 2007.
BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA.
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.