

# Needs Assessment 2009 Results <sup>[1]</sup>

[Needs Assessment Survey Results](#) | [Sample Surveys](#) | [Sample Invitation to Participate](#)

Executive Summary  
June 2009

## PURPOSE

During spring 2009, the Office of Faculty and Organizational Development (F&OD) conducted three comprehensive Needs Assessment surveys as part of ongoing efforts to provide relevant, timely, and cutting-edge programs that reflect the needs and priorities in a rapidly changing environment. One survey focused on the leadership interests and needs of chairs, directors, deans, and executive managers; the other two surveys focused on the instructional interests and needs of faculty and academic specialists respectively. The surveys consisted of four categories: (1) Professional Development Topics (2) Preferences for Program Delivery, (3) Engagement in F&OD Programs, and (4) Demographic Information.

## RESPONDENTS

Invitations to participate in online surveys were emailed to 350 academic leaders, 3,000 faculty (both tenure system and fixed term) and 595 academic specialists. A total of 414 responses were received (84 academic leaders, 239 faculty, and 96 academic specialists), which indicates a high level of interest in training and development efforts at MSU.

Academic leaders, representing roles within 17 colleges and additional units, participated in this assessment. Sixty-six percent of the respondents have been employed with MSU for more than ten years. Respondents indicate they are primarily White/Caucasian (94%) and male (65%).

Faculty respondents represent 17 colleges, with more than 70% of respondents holding tenure-system appointments. Among tenure system respondents, 31% are assistant professors, 26% associate professors and 17% are professors. Additional participants have appointments as fixed-term faculty, librarians, Health Programs faculty, College of Law faculty, instructors, or academic administrators. More than half of faculty respondents (54%), representing combined tenure system and fixed-term faculty, have been employed at MSU for more than six years. Fifty percent of respondents are female, 45% are male, and 5% indicated "no response."

The academic specialists who responded represent 12 different colleges, as well as programs, centers, institutes and other campus offices. More than 65% of academic specialist respondents have been employed with MSU six years or more. The primary positions held by academic specialists include advisors (36%), outreach staff (35%), or instructors (33%). Seventy-four percent of academic specialist participants are female. The primary racial/ethnic background for both faculty (80%) and academic specialists is White/Caucasian (90%).

## KEY FINDINGS: SURVEY OF CHAIRS, DIRECTORS, DEANS, AND EXECUTIVE MANAGERS

**Preferred topics:** Making and communicating difficult decisions, strategic goal setting and action planning, initiating and implementing change, dealing with difficult people, and managing change.

**Preferred program delivery:** A combination of presentation, interactive work, and discussion, as well as problem-based professional development program formats.

**Preferred day and times:** More than 55% report no preference. For those who indicate a preference, morning sessions, 8 a.m. or 9 a.m., are preferred. Leaders prefer to receive information via e-mail (98%).

**Levels of attendance by academic leaders:** Leaders participated in F&OD programs “occasionally” (56%) or “frequently” (26%). Over ninety percent (92%) of the leaders report attending a LEadership and ADministrator (LEAD) Seminar.

**Reasons for limited attendance:** Sixty-seven percent of leaders report a lack of time as a reason they were not able to engage in F&OD programs and services.

**Additional findings on preferred professional development topics by position** (chair, director, dean, assistant/associate dean, executive manager):

### Topics preferred by all academic leaders in ALL positions:

- Strategic goal setting and action planning
- Initiating and implementing change
- Making and communicating difficult decisions

### Unique preferences by position:

<p><b>Chair:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dealing with difficult people</li> <li>2. Supporting faculty across career stages</li> <li>3. Promoting collegiality within your unit</li> <li>4. Fundraising and development</li> </ol> <p>(Items 3, 4 had the same number of responses)</p>	<p><b>Dean:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dealing with difficult people</li> <li>2. Assessing your leadership style</li> <li>3. Supporting faculty across career stages</li> </ol>
<p><b>Director:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dealing with difficult people</li> <li>2. Building collaboration across your unit</li> <li>3. Chairs/directors as mentors</li> <li>4. Change management</li> <li>5. Providing constructive feedback</li> </ol> <p>(Items 3 - 5 had the same number of responses)</p>	<p><b>Executive Manager:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Building collaboration across units</li> <li>2. Establishing an accountability system</li> <li>3. Change management</li> <li>4. Visionary leadership</li> <li>5. Conflict resolution</li> </ol> <p>(Items 3 - 5 had the same number of responses)</p>

**Assistant/Associate Dean:**

1. Dealing with difficult people
2. Conducting performance reviews
3. Promoting and supporting a diverse workforce
4. Recruiting a diverse workforce and student body
5. Change management
6. Promoting collegiality within your unit
7. Promoting and supporting quality graduate education  
(Items 4 - 7 had the same number of responses)

**Additional findings of preferred professional development topics by length of service at MSU:****Topics preferred by all academic leaders in ALL length of service categories:**

- Building collaboration across units

**Unique academic leader preferences by length of service at MSU:****Less than One Year:**

1. Conflict resolution
2. Designing mentoring programs
3. Fundraising and development
4. Initiating and implementing change
5. Making and communicating difficult decisions
6. Promoting ethical practices
7. Providing developmental feedback and coaching
8. Supporting faculty across career stages
9. Visionary leadership  
(Items 2 - 9 had the same number of responses)

**Six to Nine Years:**

1. Strategic goal setting and action planning
2. Making and communicating difficult decisions
3. Assessing your leadership style
4. Conflict resolution
5. Succession planning
6. Supporting and assessing instructional effectiveness  
(Items 3 - 6 had the same number of responses)

**Two to Five Years:**

1. Assessing your leadership style
2. Initiating and implementing change
3. Strategic goal setting and action planning  
(Items 2, 3 had the same number of responses)

**More than 10 Years:**

1. Making and communicating difficult decisions
2. Initiating and implementing change
3. Strategic goal setting and action planning
4. Dealing with difficult people

**Additional findings of preferred professional development topics by gender:****Topics preferred by both genders:**

- Making and communicating difficult decisions
- Strategic goal setting and action planning
- Initiating and implementing change
- Dealing with difficult people

**Topics preferred by females:**

1. Promoting collegiality within your unit
2. Providing development feedback and coaching

**Topics preferred by males:**

1. Building collaboration across units
2. Supporting faculty across career stages

# KEY FINDINGS: SURVEY OF FACULTY

**Preferred topics:** Critical thinking, syllabus design, the use of technology, designing effective writing assignments, and teaching students how to learn.

**Preferred program delivery:** Formal or interactive workshops.

**Preferred day and times:** Forty-three percent report no preference. Thirty-four percent prefer Friday. Participants prefer 9 a.m. or 1 p.m. start times.

**Preferred method of communication:** Ninety-five percent prefer E-mail.

**Levels of attendance by faculty:** Fifty-four percent of faculty attended a Lilly Seminar, 52% attended an Orientation, and 43% attended Survive and Thrive in the Tenure System. Thirty-two percent “occasionally” attended and 42% “rarely” attended F&OD programs.

**Reasons for limited attendance:** A lack of time to attend the workshops (62%) or the dates and times were inconvenient (46%).

**Additional findings on professional development topics by position** (assistant professor, associate professor, professor, fixed-term faculty, Health Programs faculty, and librarians):

**Topic preferred by faculty in ALL positions:**

- Critical thinking

**Unique faculty preferences by position:**

<p><b>Assistant Professors, Tenure System:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preparing for tenure and promotion review</li> <li>2. Designing effective writing assignments</li> <li>3. Mentoring doctoral students</li> <li>4. Motivating students</li> <li>5. Teaching students how to learn</li> </ol> <p>(Items 3 - 5 had the same number of responses)</p>	<p><b>Fixed-Term Faculty:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New approaches to syllabus design</li> <li>2. Active learning</li> <li>3. Using technology to enhance teaching effectiveness</li> </ol>
<p><b>Associate Professors, Tenure System:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New approaches to syllabus design</li> <li>2. Grading group work</li> <li>3. Using technology to increase teaching effectiveness</li> </ol>	<p><b>Health Programs Faculty:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teaching students how to learn</li> <li>2. Case-based instruction</li> <li>3. Using technology to increase teaching effectiveness</li> <li>4. Developing rubrics</li> <li>5. Documenting teaching</li> <li>6. Evaluating teaching</li> <li>7. Writing effective multiple-choice tests</li> </ol> <p>(Items 3 - 7 had the same number of responses)</p>

<b>Professors, Tenure System:</b> 1. Integrating instructional technology into your course 2. Teaching students how to learn 3. New approaches to syllabus design 4. Grading group work 5. Active learning 6. Mentoring doctoral students (Items 3- 6 had the same number of responses)	<b>Librarians:</b> 1. Using technology to enhance teaching effectiveness 2. Information literacy 3. Intellectual property issues 4. Problem-based learning 5. Student learning styles and their implications for the classroom (Items 1 -5 had the same number of responses)
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*Note: In the Faculty Survey, both academic administrators across all units and College of Law faculty participated, but they are not reported here due to a lack of a significant number of responses.*

## Additional findings on professional development topics by length of service at MSU:

### Topics preferred by all faculty in ALL length of service categories:

- Critical thinking
- New approaches to syllabus design
- Using technology to enhance teaching effectiveness
- Designing effective writing assignments

## Unique faculty preferences by length of service at MSU:

<b>Less than One Year:</b> 1. Mentoring doctoral students 2. Teaching students how to learn 3. Grading group work (Items 1, 2 had the same number of responses)	<b>Six to Nine Years:</b> 1. Using technology to enhance teaching effectiveness 2. Challenging students' misconceptions 3. Teaching underprepared students
<b>Two to Five Years:</b> 1. Preparing for tenure and promotion 2. Using technology to enhance teaching effectiveness 3. Teaching students how to learn (Items 1, 2 had the same number of responses)	<b>More than 10 Years</b> 1. Using technology to enhance teaching effectiveness 2. Designing effective writing assignments 3. Providing feedback and grading writing assignments 4. Teaching students how to learn (Items 1 - 3 had the same number of responses)

## Additional findings on professional development topics by gender:

### Topics preferred by both genders:

- Critical thinking
- New approaches to syllabus design

<b>Topics preferred by females:</b> 1. For teaching students how to learn 2. Designing effective writing assignments	<b>Topics preferred by males:</b> 1. Using technology to enhance teaching effectiveness 2. Mentoring doctoral students
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# KEY FINDINGS: SURVEY OF ACADEMIC SPECIALISTS

**Preferred topics:** Working with international students, using technology to enhance teaching effectiveness, motivating students, encouraging academic integrity, critical thinking strategies, and teaching students how to learn.

**Preferred program delivery:** Interactive program delivery format consisting of 60-90 minutes.

**Preferred days and times:** The majority (56%) did not indicate a preference for a day, but the majority of academic specialists did report that Tuesdays or Thursdays were preferable. Start times preferred by Academic specialists included 9 a.m., 10 a.m., or 1 p.m.

**Preferred method of communication:** Ninety-six percent prefer E-mail.

**Levels of attendance by Academic specialists:** Fifty-one percent participated in Lilly Seminars, with 28% participating in Faculty Learning Communities.

**Reasons for limited attendance:** Academic specialists reported “rarely” (40%) or “never” (31%) engaging in F&OD programs due to a lack of time, lack of alignment of programs with their interests or needs, or a lack of awareness about the services and programs.

**Additional findings on professional development topics by position at MSU** (advisor, researcher, instructor, curriculum developer, or outreach staff):

**Topic preferred by all academic specialists in ALL positions:**

- Working with international students
- Unique academic specialist preferences by position:

<p><b>Advisor:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teaching students how to learn</li> <li>2. Encouraging academic integrity</li> <li>3. New approaches to syllabus design and critical thinking</li> </ol>	<p><b>Curriculum Developer:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Integrating instructional technology into your course</li> <li>2. Designing effective writing assignments</li> <li>3. Designing activities, assessments, and projects (Items 2, 3 had the same number of responses)</li> </ol>
<p><b>Researcher:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Writing training grants for graduate students</li> <li>2. Developing the course website</li> <li>3. Experiential learning</li> <li>4. Designing effective writing assignments</li> <li>5. Motivating students</li> <li>6. Written communications</li> <li>7. Multicultural competence (Items 4 - 7 had the same number of responses)</li> </ol>	<p><b>Outreach Staff:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Experiential learning</li> <li>2. Critical thinking</li> <li>3. Using technology to enhance teaching effectiveness</li> </ol>
<p><b>Instructor:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Developing rubrics</li> <li>2. Teaching students how to learn</li> <li>3. Teaching underprepared students</li> </ol>	

**Additional findings by length of service at MSU:**

**Topic preferred by academic specialists in ALL length of service categories:**

- Working with international students
- Unique preferences by length of service time at MSU:

<p><b>Less than One Year:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Building rapport with your students</li> <li>2. Encouraging academic integrity</li> <li>3. Identifying and maximizing your teaching style</li> <li>4. Integrating community service learning into your class</li> <li>5. New approaches to syllabus design</li> <li>6. Student learning styles</li> <li>7. Using technology to enhance teaching effectiveness, BR/&gt;(Items 1 - 7 had the same number of responses)</li> </ol>	<p><b>Six to Nine Years:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Developing the course website</li> <li>2. Critical thinking</li> <li>3. Working with international students</li> </ol>
<p><b>Two to Five Years:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Student learning styles</li> <li>2. Critical thinking</li> <li>3. Designing learning experiences</li> <li>4. Designing effective writing assignments</li> <li>5. Intellectual property issues</li> <li>6. Motivating students</li> <li>7. Teaching students how to learn (Items 1 - 7 had the same number of responses)</li> </ol>	<p><b>More than 10 Years:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Using technology to enhance teaching effectiveness</li> <li>2. Managing difficult discussions</li> <li>3. Conflict management with graduate students (Items 2, 3 had the same number of responses)</li> </ol>

## Additional findings on professional development topics by gender:

### Topics preferred by both genders:

- Encouraging academic integrity
- Critical thinking
- Using technology to enhance teaching effectiveness
- Developing rubrics

<p><b>Topics preferred by females:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teaching students how to learn</li> <li>2. Developing the course website</li> <li>3. Designing learning experiences</li> </ol>	<p><b>Topics preferred by males:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Motivating students</li> <li>2. Encouraging academic integrity</li> <li>3. Active learning</li> <li>4. Civility in the classroom (Items 2 - 4 had the same number of responses)</li> </ol>
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## NEXT STEPS

F&OD is in the process of analyzing and responding to these survey results to align them with our programs and services. In addition, F&OD is reviewing opportunities to enhance awareness of our activities. As in the past, F&OD programs designed in response to input from Needs Assessments will be designated in our promotional materials. Last, but not least, we invite units to collaborate with us to offer programs and services that respond to the needs and interests identified in these surveys and to continue to offer suggestions of ways to support our MSU colleagues.

## Needs Assessment Survey Results

To review the complete quantitative results, click on the links below:

- [F&OD 2009 Needs Assessment: Academic Leaders](#) [2]
- [F&OD 2009 Needs Assessment: Faculty](#) [3]
- [F&OD 2009 Needs Assessment: Academic Specialists](#) [4]

The qualitative data is available from F&OD upon request.

## Blank Sample Surveys

To review the blank surveys, follow the links below:

**1. [F&OD 2009 Needs Assessment: Academic Leaders Blank Survey](#)** [5]

**2. [F&OD 2009 Needs Assessment: Faculty Blank Survey](#)** [6]

**3. [F&OD 2009 Needs Assessment: Academic Specialists Blank Survey](#)** [7]

## Sample Invitation to Participate

To review the sample invitation to participate, follow the link below:

**1. [Sample Invitation to Participate](#)** [8]

The qualitative data is available from F&OD upon request.

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## Links

- [1] <http://fod.msu.edu/needs-assessment-2009-results>
- [2] [http://fod.msu.edu/sites/default/files/page\\_media/leaders-results\\_0.pdf](http://fod.msu.edu/sites/default/files/page_media/leaders-results_0.pdf)
- [3] [http://fod.msu.edu/sites/default/files/page\\_media/faculty-results.pdf](http://fod.msu.edu/sites/default/files/page_media/faculty-results.pdf)
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