



## **Report of 2007 Faculty Climate Study**

Prepared by

The CWRU Resource Equity Committee

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In December 2007 an online, confidential survey on University climate and community was administered to faculty members of Case Western Reserve University (CWRU). The survey's purpose was to examine the quality of the University's academic climate and community and their impact on the experience of being a faculty member at CWRU. A secondary purpose was to assess factors that may affect the recruitment and retention of faculty members, especially women and under-represented minorities. Questionnaire items pertained to overall levels of satisfaction, faculty collegueship and support, the effectiveness of academic leadership, access to opportunities and resources, mentoring, support for work/life integration, sources of personal stress, and the quality of relationships within the campus community. The data obtained were primarily quantitative ratings, with three open-ended qualitative questions at the end of the survey.

The survey was sent to 2,592 full-time faculty members at the rank of Instructor and above. There were 602 responses from all schools within the University, including 170 responses from faculty in clinical disciplines in the School of Medicine. The response rate for all schools excluding School of Medicine faculty in clinical departments was 39%. The response rate for all schools, inclusive of faculty in the School of Medicine's clinical departments, was 23%.

### Conclusions:

1. *CWRU faculty members report a positive climate as reflected by:*
  - Moderate satisfaction with community and academic dimensions of campus life
  - Positive relationships with peers and administration
  - Moderate support for work-life integration
  - Positive quality of collegueship and support in their primary units
  - Moderately effective leadership in their primary units
  - Feelings of high value and inclusion in their primary units
  - Low sense of pressure and restrictions
  - Moderate informal mentoring within and outside the University.

CWRU faculty also:

- Perceive that recent transitions in University administration are hopeful and encouraging
- Perceive problems with leadership at all University levels involving the lack of transparency, fairness, trust and vision
- Perceive that resources, infrastructure and supports have declined in the past three years
- Perceive that academic standards and culture have declined
- Perceive that rewards are not commensurate with their overall contributions
- Feel undervalued and disconnected from university-wide initiatives
- Perceive a difficult or adversarial relationship stemming from the financial and work agreements between CWRU and University Hospitals of Cleveland.

2. *Faculty climate has declined on certain key aspects and improved on others since 2004.* Average ratings are significantly lower on the preponderance of comparable items in 2007 as compared with 2004 (including items on satisfaction with community and academic dimensions, quality of relationships within the campus community, quality of collegueship and support in the primary unit, and effectiveness of the primary unit head) except for items reflecting supports for faculty work-life integration which are significantly higher in 2007 as compared with 2004.

3. *Faculty climate is consistently influenced by the School/College.* Significant differences among Schools/College exist on most factors and items analyzed.

4. *Primary unit heads (deans and chairs) are critical agents in the development and maintenance of productive and collegial workplaces, and an engaged faculty community.*

5. *Faculty members experience the highest stress from securing funding for research and scholarship, and from scholarly productivity.* Female faculty members report higher stress from scholarly productivity and advising responsibilities than do male faculty members.

6. *Attention to the career development of longtime faculty members, particularly Associate Professors, is needed.* Assistant Professors are the most satisfied with their compensation and professional development, and receive the most mentoring from within the University. Associate Professors report feeling the least sense of value and inclusion in their primary units and the least satisfaction with administrative support for research and teaching. Professors report the least stress from teaching responsibilities and review and promotion processes, and the least sense of pressure and restrictions.

7. *Informal mentoring from within and outside the University remains moderate while formal mentoring within and outside the University remains low.*

8. *CWRU has improved certain key aspects of the climate for women faculty.* In the 2004 Faculty Climate Survey, women faculty in comparison to men faculty reported lower community and job satisfaction, lower ratings of the leadership effectiveness of their primary unit head, and lower resources and supports for academic performance from their primary unit head. These significant differences disappeared in the 2007 survey. However, similar to 2004, the current survey revealed that female faculty members, in comparison with male faculty members, continue to report lower ratings of value and inclusion in their primary unit, higher ratings that gender and race make a difference in how faculty are treated in their primary unit, and a greater sense of pressure and restrictions.

### **Recommendations:**

Based on the results of this analysis, the Resource Equity Committee recommends the following actions to continue the process of faculty community and climate development throughout the University environment.

Primary Unit (School/College or Department) Level:

1. *Leadership Development:* Create a Leadership Institute for managerial and leadership enhancement of department chairs and School/College deans, associate deans and assistant deans.
2. *Faculty Mentoring and Development:* Improve formal and informal mentoring of pre-tenure faculty (Instructors and Assistant Professors) within each primary unit. Prioritize the mentoring, support, and development of Associate Professors. Provide academic career coaching for new or transitioning faculty, and executive leadership development coaching for Professors.
3. *Climate Improvements:* Continue to improve the day-to-day academic experience of faculty within the primary unit as follows:
  - a. Enhance the quality of collegueship and the overall experience of inclusion in the primary unit.
  - b. Enforce zero-tolerance for faculty misbehavior and incivility.
  - c. Improve the fair allocation of assignments, resources, and supports to advance academic performance, and make these decision processes transparent.
  - d. Continue efforts to support and improve faculty work-life integration.

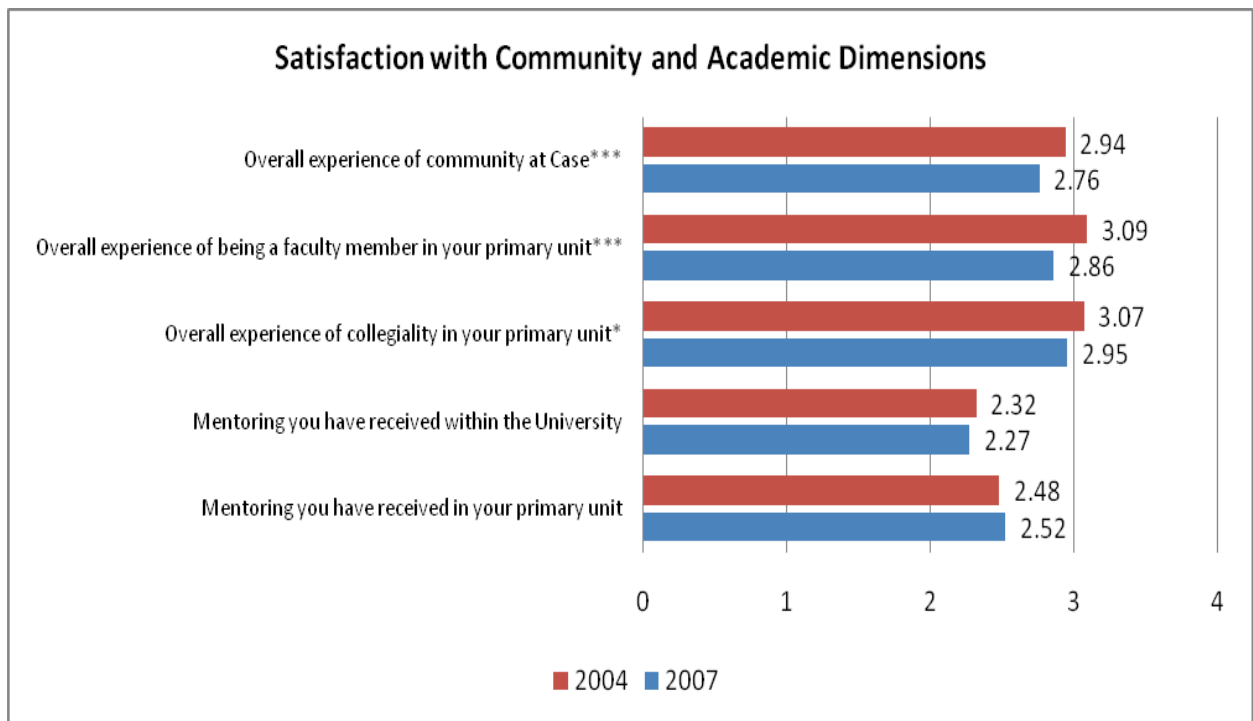
University Administration Level:

4. *Leadership Accountability:* Increase the accountability of primary unit heads (deans and chairs) for leadership of an engaged faculty community and creation of a productive and inclusive academic culture that excels in the integrity of and respect for all members. Require regular evaluations of School/College deans and department chairs by faculty.
5. *Enhancements in Campus Resources and Infrastructure to Specifically Support the Academic Enterprise:* Continue to prioritize the generation of resources to support research, scholarship and teaching activities since these are critical to faculty perceptions of University climate.
6. *Extension to Staff and Students:* Undertake efforts to survey staff and students about their experiences of campus community and climate.

## Comparisons of 2004 and 2007 Survey Items

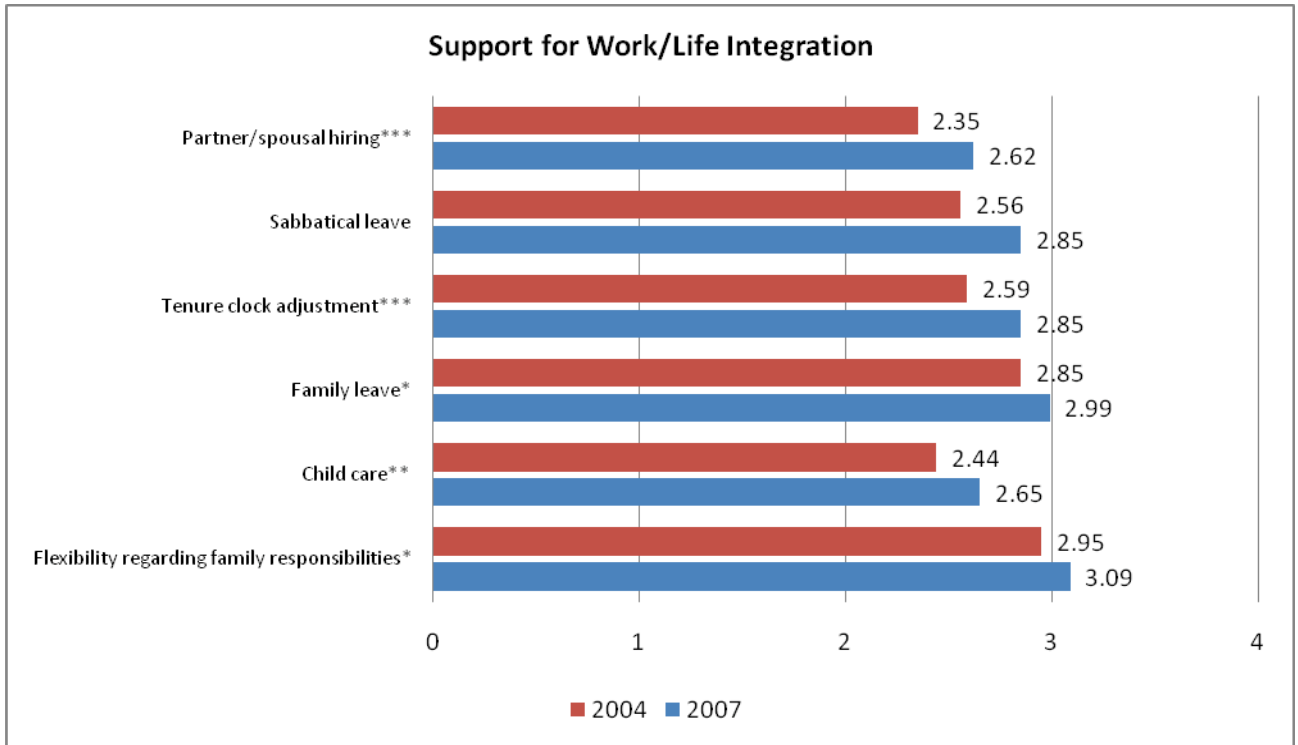
Specific items were compared between the 2004 and 2007 surveys to examine the mean reported experiences of faculty members between the two survey dates. Please note, however, that in order to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, unique identifiers were not used in the administration of either the 2004 or 2007 climate surveys. As such, changes in an individual's perception of the campus climate over time could not be measured. Instead, overall sample item means (i.e., item means for the whole samples in 2004 and 2007) were compared on matching survey items from 2004 to 2007. The following graphs were created using mean values from Appendix 1 of the 2004 climate report as well as mean values from Appendix 1 of the 2007 report. Tests of statistical significance (t-tests) were conducted to evaluate differences on comparable items between 2004 and 2007.

Since not all items were identical in both surveys, the following results report only items that were similar or could be compared. Significant differences are presented below as well.



\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001.

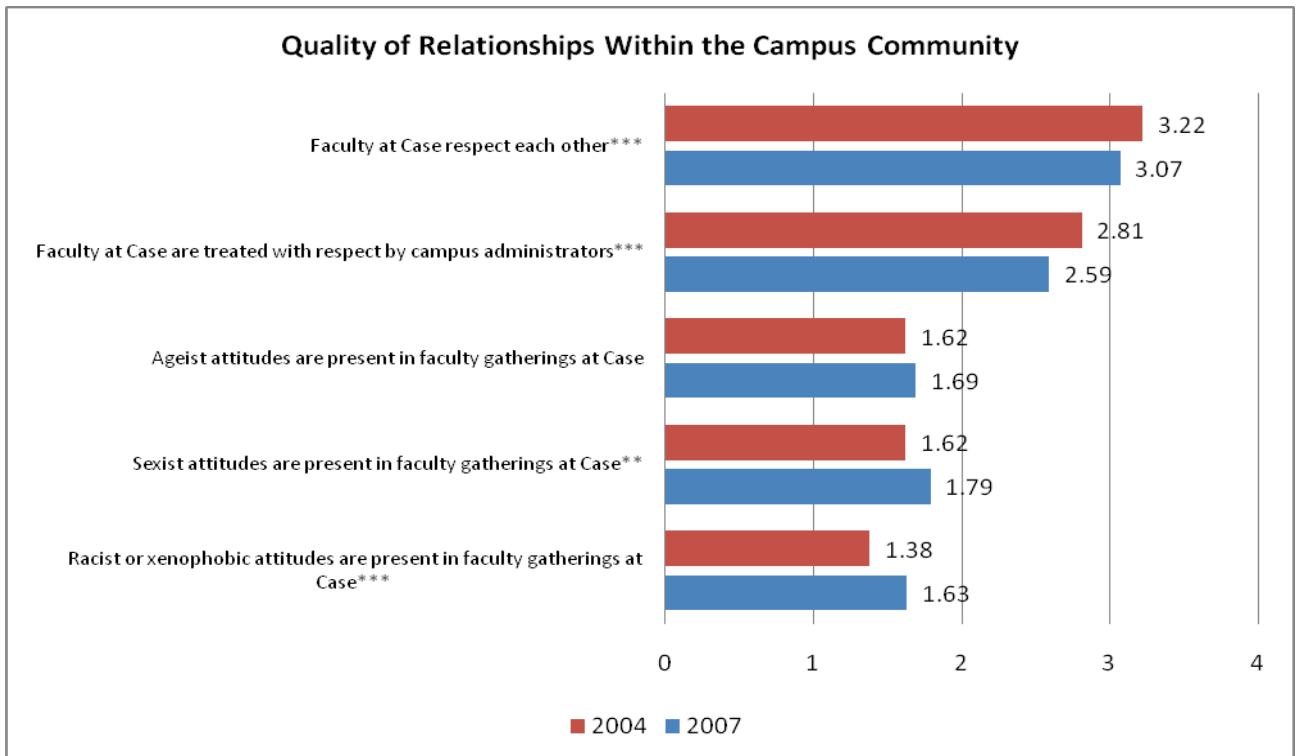
2004 scale: 1. Strongly dissatisfied, 2. Somewhat dissatisfied, 3. Somewhat satisfied, 4. Strongly Satisfied  
 2007 scale: 1. Strongly dissatisfied, 2. Somewhat dissatisfied, 3. Somewhat satisfied, 4. Strongly Satisfied



\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001.

2004 scale: 1. Not at all, 2. Very Little, 3. Adequate and 4. Very Much.

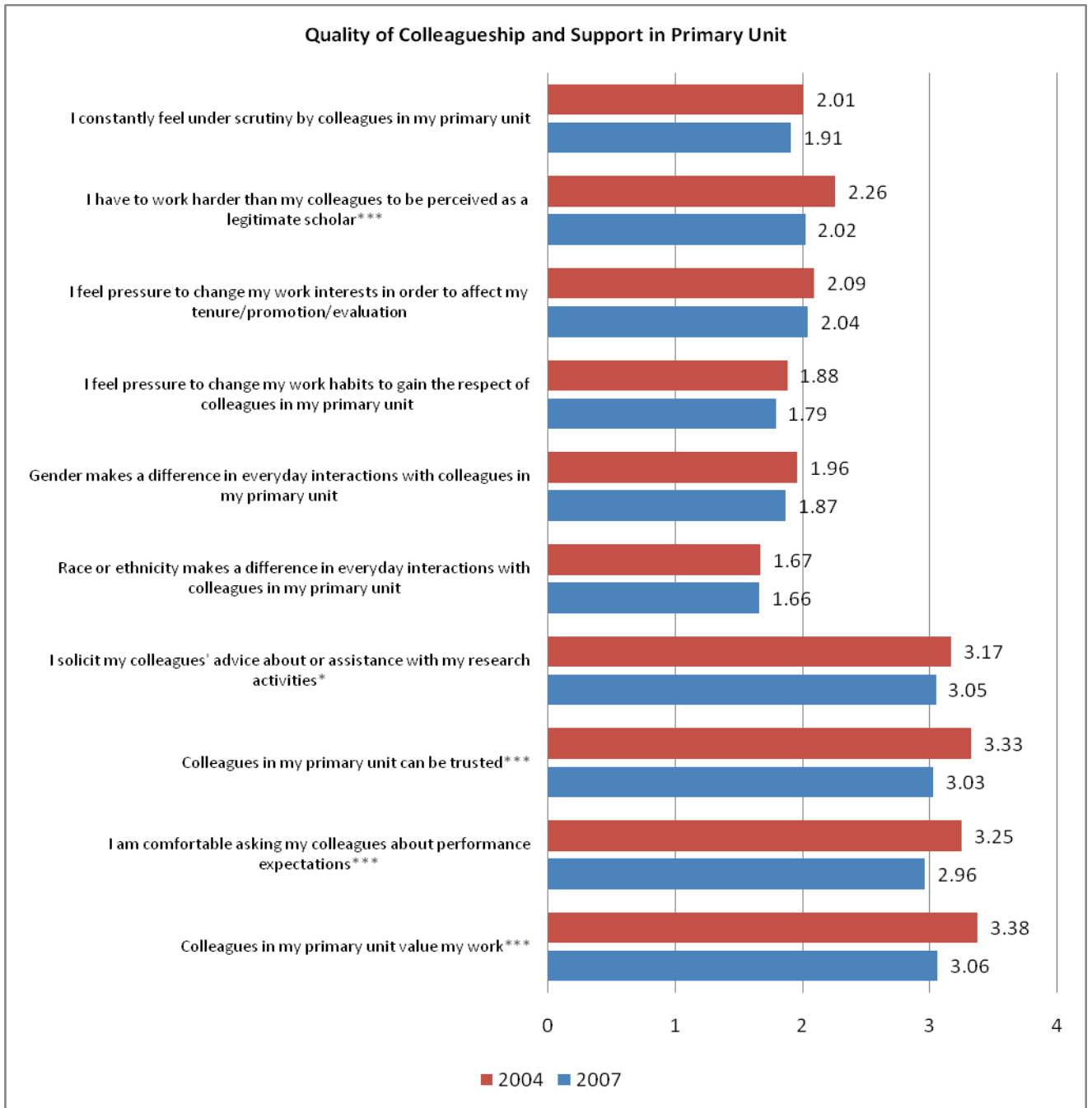
2007 scale: 1. Not at all, 2. Minimal, 3. Moderate, 4. Extensive.



\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001.

2004 scale: 1. Strongly disagree, 2. Somewhat disagree, 3. Somewhat agree, 4. Strongly agree

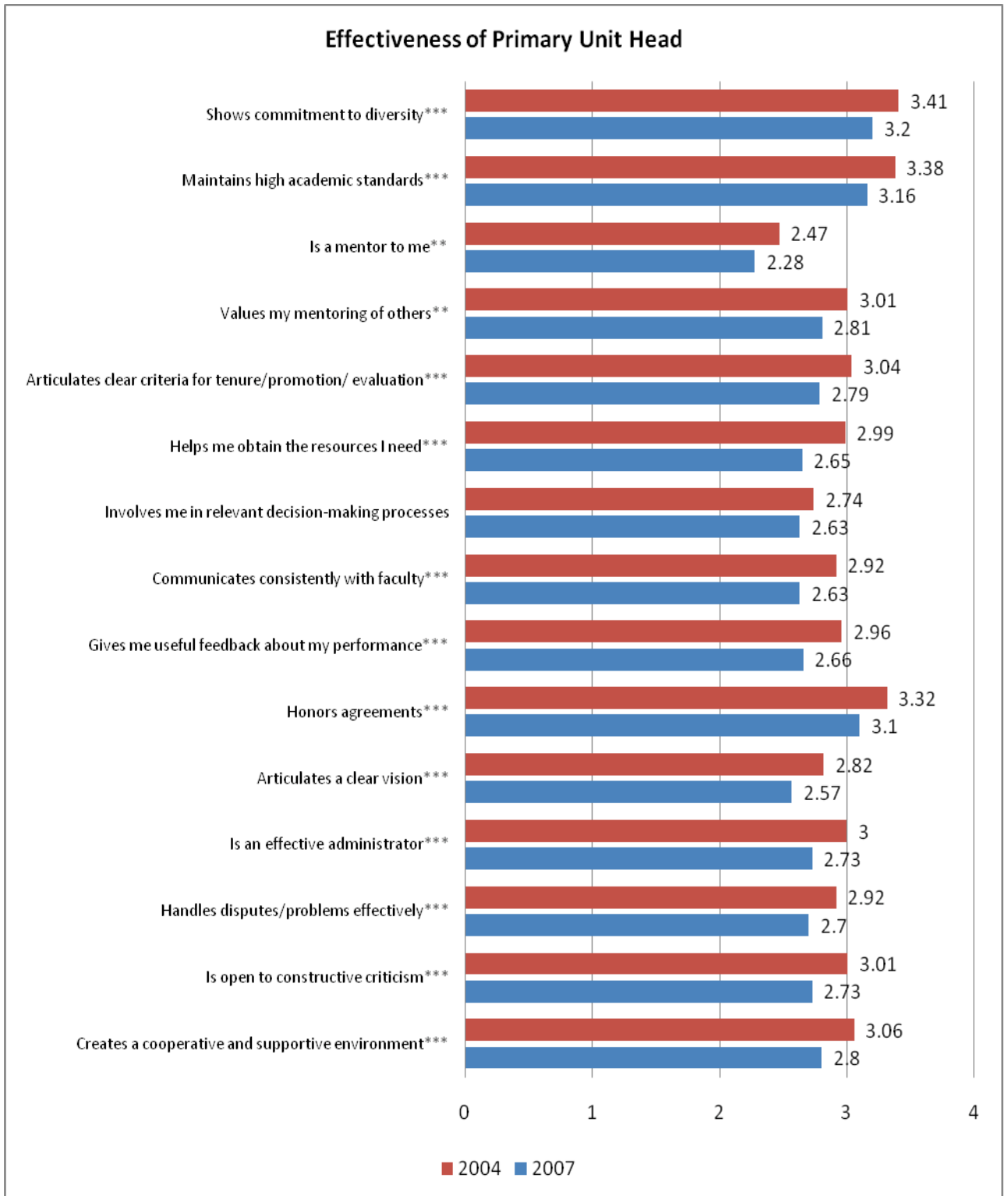
2007 scale: 1. Strongly disagree, 2. Somewhat disagree, 3. Somewhat agree, 4. Strongly agree



\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001.

2004 scale: 1. Strongly disagree, 2. Somewhat disagree, 3. Somewhat agree, 4. Strongly agree

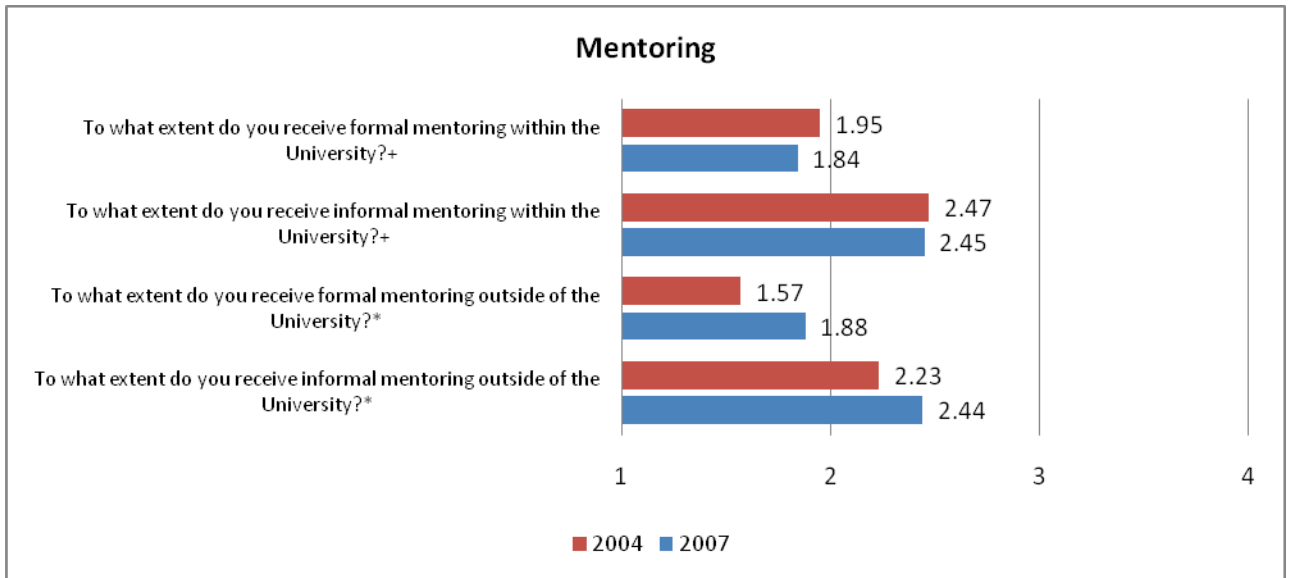
2007 scale: 1. Strongly disagree, 2. Somewhat disagree, 3. Somewhat agree, 4. Strongly agree



\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001.

2004 scale: 1. Strongly disagree, 2. Somewhat disagree, 3. Somewhat agree, 4. Strongly agree

2007 scale: 1. Strongly disagree, 2. Somewhat disagree, 3. Somewhat agree, 4. Strongly agree



\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001.

2004 scale: 1. None, 2. To some extent, 3. To a moderate extent, 4. To a great extent.

2007 scale: 1. Not at all, 2. Minimal, 3. Moderate, 4. Extensive

†In 2004 participants were asked to rate 4 types of mentoring: 1) formal mentoring in the primary unit, 2) informal mentoring in the primary unit, 3) formal mentoring at the University but not in the primary unit, 4) informal mentoring at the University but not in the primary unit. In 2007 participants were only asked to rate formal and informal mentoring within the University. This graph compares the two 2007 measures with the 2004 measures of formal/informal mentoring in the primary unit.

The comparative findings presented above indicate that faculty climate has declined on certain key aspects and improved on others since 2004. Average ratings are significantly lower on the preponderance of comparable items in 2007 as compared with 2004 (including items on satisfaction with community and academic dimensions, quality of relationships within the campus community, quality of collegueship and support in the primary unit, and effectiveness of the primary unit head) except for items reflecting supports for faculty work-life integration which are significantly higher in 2007 as compared with 2004. A possible explanation for these results may be the difficult financial situation of the University brought to light in the interim period between the two surveys.