



What do higher ed employees value most in a job?

Findings from the 2024 *Higher Ed Workforce Survey*

Colleges and universities continue to face labor market challenges.

- 16% of full-time higher ed employees are at risk for turnover within the next two years.
- 19% of staff and professional employees pose a turnover risk.

Responding to what employees want and need in exchange for the work they do can make colleges and universities more competitive in the labor market.

This brief examines how full-time higher ed employees—faculty, staff and administration—prioritize the importance of a range of job features and employee benefits. Such knowledge enables an institution to emphasize the rewards and benefits it offers that make it an employer of choice.



Job features that matter most among higher ed employees

NO JOB FEATURE IS RATED AMONG TOP THREE BY A MAJORITY OF HIGHER ED EMPLOYEES



44%
responded
Salary



40%
responded
Benefits



33%
responded
Job security



32%
responded
Work-life balance

NEXT IN LINE

Workplace culture (**26%**)

Schedule flexibility (**24%**)

Which three job features are most important to you in a job?

- Advancement opportunities
- Benefits
- Focus on DE&I
- Job security
- Location flexibility
- Mission aligned with own values
- Professional development
- Salary
- Schedule flexibility
- Sense of community
- Work-life balance
- Workplace culture

RATED AMONG TOP THREE BY THOSE POSING A TURNOVER RISK



56%
responded
Salary



42%
responded
Benefits



39%
responded
Work-life balance



37%
responded
Workplace culture



Which three employee benefits are most important to you in a job?

- Childcare benefits
- Commuter benefits
- Education benefits
- Eldercare benefits
- Health and wellness programs
- Health insurance
- Mental health resources
- Paid time off
- Parental leave
- Personal finance resources
- Retirement savings plan

Employee benefits that matter most among higher ed employees

FIRST TIER OF BENEFITS RATED TOP THREE MOST IMPORTANT



58%
responded
Retirement savings plan



56%
responded
Health insurance



47%
responded
Paid time off

SECOND TIER

Health and wellness programs **(27%)**

Education benefits **(25%)**

RATED AMONG TOP THREE BY THOSE POSING A TURNOVER RISK



76%
responded
Health insurance



67%
responded
Retirement savings plan

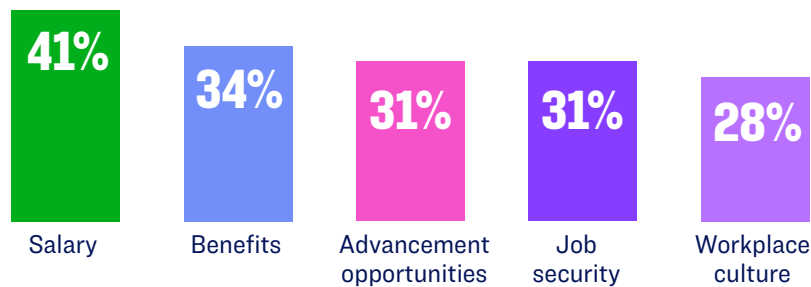
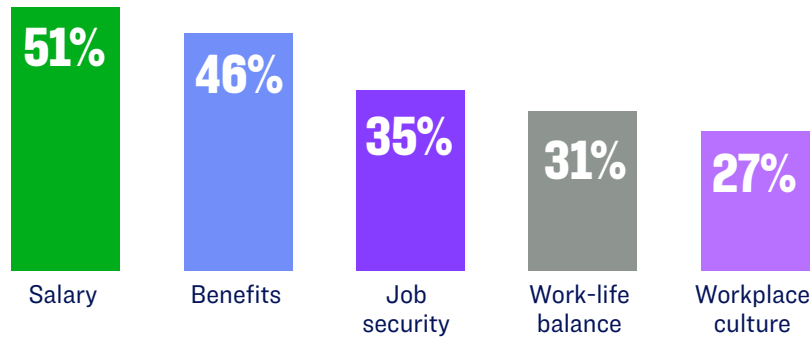


61%
responded
Paid time off

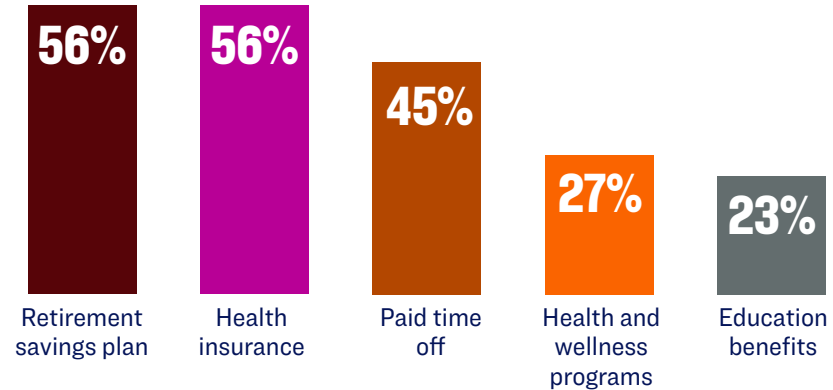
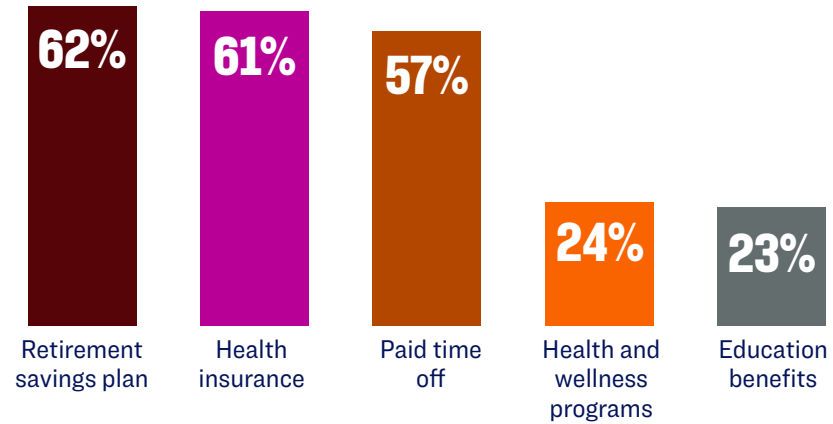
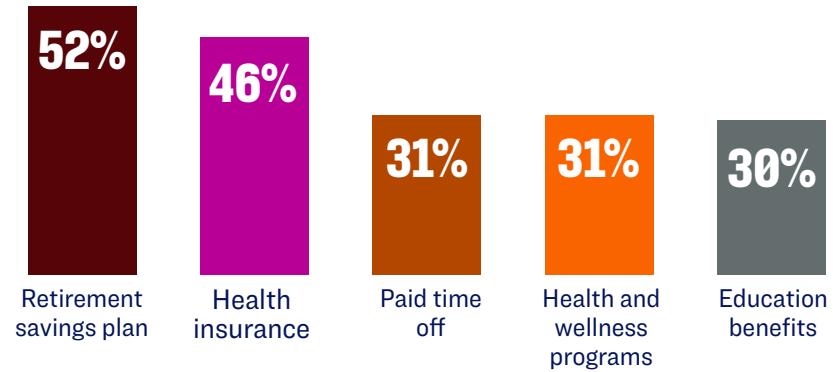
No other benefit is remotely close.

How priorities differ across faculty, staff and administration

JOB FEATURES RATED TOP THREE MOST IMPORTANT



EMPLOYEE BENEFITS RATED TOP THREE MOST IMPORTANT



To learn more about what higher ed employees value most in a job, visit the [TIAA Institute](#) website to read the full report.