Impact of COVID-19 on Faculty

FINAL REPORT

Faculty Pandemic Impact Response Workgroup

December 2021

Northwestern University

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WORKGROUP MEMBERS

Sumit Dhar, Co-Chair;
Associate Provost for Faculty, Provost Office; Professor, Communication Sciences and Disorders, School of Communication
assoc-prov-faculty@northwestern.edu

Karen Smilowitz, Co-Chair;
Professor, Industrial Engineering and Management Sciences, McCormick and Operations, Kellogg
ksmilowitz@northwestern.edu

Stephen Alltop,
Senior Lecturer, Conducting and Ensembles, Bienen
swa440@northwestern.edu

Lori Beaman,
Associate Professor, Economics, Weinberg
l-beaman@northwestern.edu

Mercedes Carnethon,
Professor, Preventive Medicine (Epidemiology) and Medicine (Pulmonary and Critical Care), Feinberg
carnethon@northwestern.edu

Heather Colburn,
Professor of Instruction, Spanish, Weinberg
h-colburn@northwestern.edu

Michelle Falkoff,
Clinical Professor, Law
michelle.falkoff@northwestern.edu

Mitra Hartmann,
Professor, Biomedical Engineering and Mechanical Engineering, McCormick
hartmann@northwestern.edu

Matthew Johnson,
Professor, Anthropology, Weinberg
matthew-johnson@northwestern.edu

Marty Lariviere,
Professor, Operations, Kellogg
m-lariviere@kellogg.northwestern.edu

Elizabeth Norton,
Assistant Professor, Communication Sciences and Disorders, School of Communication
enorton@northwestern.edu

Amit Prachand,
Associate Vice President, Information & Analytics, Institutional Research; Instructor, Higher Education Administration and Policy, SESP
a-prachand@northwestern.edu

Vijay Viswanathan,
Professor, Integrated Marketing Communications, Medill
vijay-viswanathan@northwestern.edu

APF Team Members:
Lorraine Cassis,
Executive Assistant, Provost Office
l-cassis@northwestern.edu

Celina Flowers,
Assistant Provost for Faculty, Provost Office
c-flowers@northwestern.edu

Joan Johnson,
Director, Faculty, Provost Office
joanmjohnson@northwestern.edu

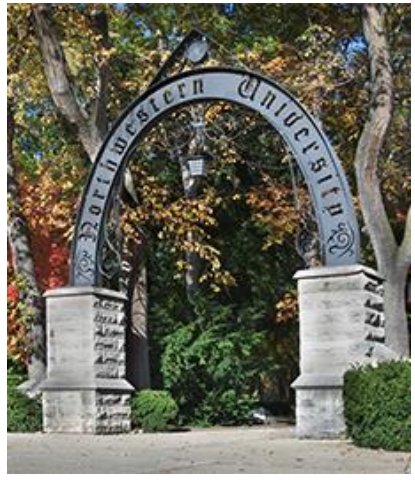
Alex Rot,
Assistant Provost, Faculty Operations, Provost Office
alex.rot@northwestern.edu

ABBREVIATIONS

BSoM – Bienen School of Music
CAPS – Counseling and Psychological Services
FPIR – Faculty Pandemic Impact Response
FSM – Feinberg School of Medicine
NTE – Non-tenure eligible
NU-Q – Northwestern University in Qatar
OWF – Organization of Women Faculty
SoC – School of Communication
TT – Tenure Track
TRT – Tactical Response Team

NOTES

Male-identified and female-identified nomenclature is used in this document to remain consistent with the classification used in the Human Resources systems from which respondents were drawn.



OVERVIEW & HISTORY

All aspects of normal life have been upended by the spread of SARS-CoV-2 and its associated disease, COVID-19. Northwestern University is no exception. What started as an abrupt and immediate stoppage of all in-person academic activities on the Evanston and Qatar campuses and disruption of many activities on the Chicago campus in the Winter/Spring of 2020 continues into the academic year 2021-22 with stuttering steps towards normalcy under a constant cloud of uncertainty. Although in-person activities have restarted on our campuses, the pandemic and its effects remain present in remarkable ways at Northwestern. It is also clear that the disruptions caused by COVID-19 will leave their imprint on faculty scholarship and productivity for some time.

The Faculty Pandemic Impact Response Workgroup was charged by Provost Kathleen Hagerty in the Spring Quarter of 2021 first to understand the impact of COVID-19 on faculty life and work and then to propose a set of recommendations to mitigate the immediate and long-term effects of the pandemic. This group's work followed that of other faculty groups and organizations, one of which was a Tactical Response Team (TRT) appointed by Provost Hagerty in the late fall of 2020. The TRT deliberated on and delivered recommendations in February 2021 designed to help mitigate the immediate burdens of the pandemic. One of the recommendations of the TRT was the formation of this workgroup … "to consider in a broader and more systematic way the pandemic's long-term impact and possible responses."

The work of the TRT, in turn, was motivated by the general awareness of the altered landscape at the University and specific requests from faculty groups such as the Faculty Senate and the Organization of Women Faculty (OWF). The OWF sought the first round of feedback from faculty in July of 2020. This initial general query was followed by a formal survey distributed to 725 full-time female faculty from all schools except for Feinberg School of Medicine. In the Fall of 2020, the OWF made 11 specific recommendations to University leadership to protect gender equity in the face of COVID-19. Finally, in February of 2021, the OWF, with full endorsement of the Faculty Senate, wrote to Provost Hagerty drawing attention to various aspects of pandemic-related disruptions. In this letter, the OWF … "strongly support[ed] the creation of a Covid-19 Task Force to consider in a broader and more systematic way the pandemic's long-term impact and possible responses." The effective advocacy of the OWF and Faculty Senate as well as other faculty groups on campus led to the formation of the Faculty Pandemic Impact Response (FPIR) Workgroup.

BACKDROP

The FPIR Workgroup was formed in the Spring of 2021. The 13-member workgroup included faculty members representing every school on the Evanston and Chicago campuses. Tenured, tenure-track (i.e., pre-tenure) and non-tenure-track faculty were represented in the group including Amit Prachand, Associate Vice President, Institutional Research, who was instrumental in leading all data-related efforts of the workgroup. The workgroup was ably supported by Lorraine Cassis, Joan Johnson, Alex Rot, and Celina Flowers from the Provost's Office.

The workgroup conducted its work against a backdrop of two significant employment and benefits-related events at Northwestern. The University had reduced its workforce and instituted furloughs in 2020 in anticipation of revenue losses and a general financial downturn. The University also suspended retirement contributions for all staff and faculty between May and December of 2020. However, the University ended up realizing a surplus at the end of the 2019-2020 fiscal year. Faculty expressed frustration about these events and clearly articulated a loss of trust in the Board of Trustees as well as University leadership. Faculty responses to all queries from this workgroup were heavily colored by this backdrop.

The other significant backdrop, external to the University, was the move to online learning for preK-12 education in communities surrounding the University and the closure of many childcare facilities. As noted in our analysis, these factors have, in fact, been larger than the two university-related factors mentioned above in terms of the impact on working conditions for faculty.

METHODS

Faculty Survey

- The workgroup conducted a survey of Northwestern's faculty seeking to collect both qualitative and quantitative data describing faculty experiences during the pandemic. Survey design and administration was led jointly by the Office of the Provost (Joan Johnson, Director for Faculty; Alex Rot, Assistant Provost for Faculty Operations) and the Office of Institutional Research (Amit Prachand, Associate Vice President for Information and Analytics; Paul Schatz, Director of Institutional Research).
- The survey opened on Thursday, May 6th, 2021, and closed on Sunday, May 16th, 2021.
- Across Northwestern, 4,071 faculty were invited to participate in the survey. The survey was distributed to all tenure-track faculty (including tenured and tenure-eligible), as well as full-time, non-visiting, non-tenure-eligible faculty (including research faculty and librarian faculty). Faculty with primary roles as staff were not included. Post-docs were not included.
- Overall, 1,174 faculty responded to the survey, a 29% response rate (43% excluding the Feinberg School of Medicine). A greater proportion of female-identified faculty responded to the survey (33% response rate overall, 51% excluding FSM) than male-identified faculty (26% response rate overall, 37% excluding FSM). The table in the right column shows survey invitees and response rates by school.
- The survey (Appendix A) contained both quantitative and qualitative prompts. The committee received a combined total of 192 pages of responses to the survey's qualitative/open-ended questions. Four teams of two committee members read and summarized these responses.

TABLE: Number of faculty queried and response rate by school.

	Total Faculty Surveyed	Responses (N)	Response Rate (%)
Bienen	53	26	49%
Centers/Institutes	31	10	32%
Feinberg	2,348	437	19%
Kellogg	184	54	29%
McCormick	267	108	40%
Medill	64	26	41%
NU-Qatar	36	14	39%
Pritzker	100	35	35%
SESP	48	19	40%
SoC	178	90	51%
University Library	82	34	41%
WCAS	680	321	47%
All Schools/Units	**4,071**	**1,174**	**29%**
All but Feinberg	**1,723**	**737**	**43%**

Focus Groups

- The workgroup was charged with guiding and conducting targeted outreach to gather perspectives and input from the faculty and identifying nuanced strategies to address a variety of pandemic-related impacts upon the faculty. To do this work, in addition to the faculty survey, we conducted four focus groups to learn more about the experiences and needs of faculty in particular career trajectories and disciplinary fields.
- The four groups were pre-tenure faculty in Evanston, non-tenure-eligible faculty in Evanston, Feinberg School of Medicine faculty, and NU-Q faculty.
- Members of the FPIR Workgroup, Associate Deans for Faculty from the schools, and the leadership of the Faculty Senate suggested potential focus group participants. Some invitees who were unable to participate also recommended potential participants. The invitations to participate in the focus groups were sent from the FPIR workgroup co-chairs, Sumit Dhar and Karen Smilowitz.
- We attempted to cover as many schools as possible for the pre-tenure and non-tenure-eligible groups. We invited 51 (38 female-identified and 13 male-identified) faculty members to participate. All but two of the 22 faculty who agreed to participate in the focus groups of 5-6 faculty members each were women.
- All focus group meetings took place between May 26-28, 2021. The four focus groups lasted 60 minutes each with structured interview questions, asked by Joan Johnson with Sumit Dhar and Karen Smilowitz in attendance.

Benchmarking of Peer Institutions

- We conducted benchmarking of responses to COVID-19 impact on faculty at 15 peer universities through publicly available information on websites as well as correspondence with colleagues in their administration.
- While all 15 institutions offered tenure clock extensions, other actions varied widely and include research recovery grant programs primarily for pre-tenure faculty (5 institutions), formal teaching relief programs for pre-tenure faculty (4 institutions), informal encouraged flexibility in course assignments at the local level (4 institutions), and caregiving grants from $500 to $2,000 (5 institutions) or expanded existing childcare assistance programs (3 institutions).

FINDINGS

Framework

We begin by presenting a framework for understanding and appreciating the immediate, ongoing, and long-term impact of the pandemic. The framework emerged as the workgroup contextualized the quantitative data from the faculty survey against the broad and recurrent themes that surfaced in the focus groups. The focus groups drew the workgroup's attention to pre-pandemic conditions that were amplified by the disruptions during the pandemic. Upon deliberation, it was clear that the systems in place at our, and perhaps other, universities influenced who was impacted by the pandemic as well as how much they were impacted. Thus, the workgroup devised the "During-After-Before" framework to use the knowledge gained by our work to inform not only what could be done to mitigate the immediate effects of the pandemic, but also to initiate systemic changes that would significantly improve the ability of *all* our faculty to generate and disseminate knowledge. The table on Page 10 outlines the main findings under the *During, After,* and *Before* categories. Each of these items is elaborated upon with supporting data in later sections of this report.

TABLE: Broad framework for understanding immediate and predictable long-term disruptions in faculty productivity with their connection to pre-existing conditions and systems.

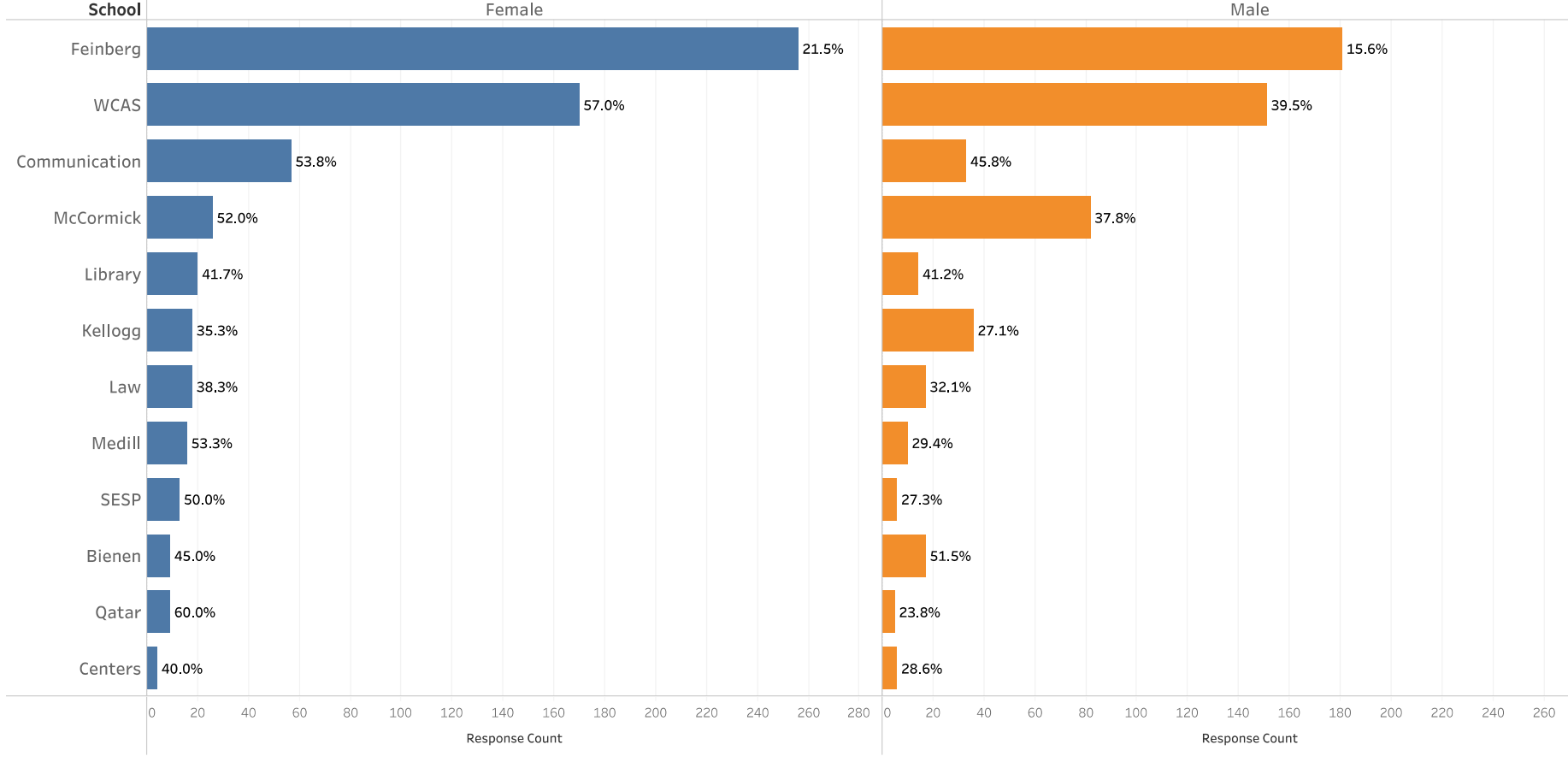
During	After	Before
• Increased time burdens for caregivers	• Amplified disparities in productivity • Uncertainties related to caregiving	• Lack of on-campus childcare • Female/caregiving faculty disadvantaged against comparison cohorts
• Decreased research/performance/ creative work • Continued expenses (staff and student support; animal housing)	• Prolonged time in rank (delayed raises in pay) • Slow ramp up due to student uncertainty, supply problems, venue openings • Lack of funds for no-cost extensions	• Global gender gaps in time in rank, pay, and representation of women faculty amongst the top earners at universities.[1]
• Increased teaching challenges and demands for student support for all faculty	• Uncertainty for TT faculty	• Suboptimal support for student mental health and well-being • Extra unaccounted demands on faculty
	• NTE contract uncertainty • Lack of recognition	• NTE contract uncertainty • Lack of recognition

[1]A recent study published by the Eos Foundation including salary data from 93 public, and 37 private universities (including Northwestern), reported that women accounted for 60% of employees included in the study but only for 24% of those with the highest earnings. Silbert, A. & Mach Dubé, C. *The Power Gap Among Top Earners At America's Elite Universities* (Eos Foundation, 2021).

Participants

While the basic statistics of invitees along with respondents and participants in the faculty survey and focus groups have been presented previously, here we highlight some trends that may be indicative of the magnitude of the pandemic's impact on different groups of faculty.

FIGURE 1: Proportion of male-identified and female-identified faculty who responded to the survey in each school.



While response rates differed across schools and tenure status, a greater proportion of female-identified faculty responded to the faculty survey in almost every category. The Bienen School of Music (Bienen in Figure 1, BSoM) was the only exception in which a greater proportion of male-identified faculty responded to the survey. Response rates were approximately equal from Library faculty (F – 42%; M – 41%). At the other extreme, the proportion of female-identified faculty who responded to the survey was double that of male-identified faculty from SESP, NU-Q, and Medill. The gender distribution was even more imbalanced among the participants of the focus groups. The NU-Q focus group was the exception with approximately equal numbers of male- and female-identified faculty participating. We highlight these statistics related to participation as likely indicators of who may have disproportionately experienced disruptions related to the pandemic. We connect the observations about respondents and participants to the types of responsibilities and activities that may have consumed, and may continue to consume, greater amounts of time and effort.

Changes in Activities/Responsibilities

The changes in teaching modalities as well as closures of schools and daycares had a significant impact on how faculty distributed their time and effort. Faculty indicated that teaching, service, and advising within Northwestern and caregiving in their personal lives consumed more time and effort compared with the pre-pandemic period of 2019-2020. For example, 75% of female-identified respondents to the faculty survey indicated that they spent “somewhat more” or “much more” time on caregiving. Sixty-two percent (62.3%) of male-identified faculty responded in these two categories to the same question. Similarly, greater proportions of female-identified faculty reported having spent more time teaching, advising, and on service assignments. Male-identified faculty also reported spending more time on these activities compared with the pre-pandemic period of 2019-2020.

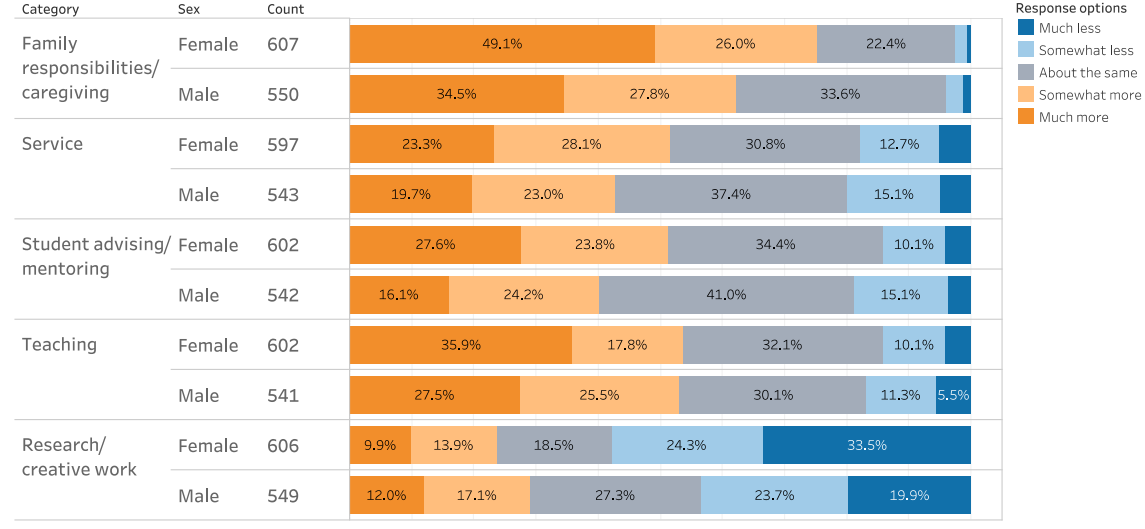


FIGURE 2: Caregiving, teaching, advising, and service consumed faculty time and disrupted research productivity. Time faculty spent on different activities during the pandemic as compared to 2019-20.

The increased demands on faculty time and effort related to teaching, service, and advising were directly linked to the abrupt and dramatic changes in the modality of all activities at the University in March of 2020. Perhaps one way of understanding the increase in these demands is to start with the change in teaching modality. With the switch to remote teaching in March of 2020 came the need to essentially redesign every course for online presentation. While the University put some resources for course design and implementation in place, these were not sufficient. With the change in course modality and the social and emotional impact of the pandemic on students came a significant spike in demand for support from faculty. To this end, several faculty reported that CAPS was not able to handle the increase in student needs. Students relied on this support from faculty.

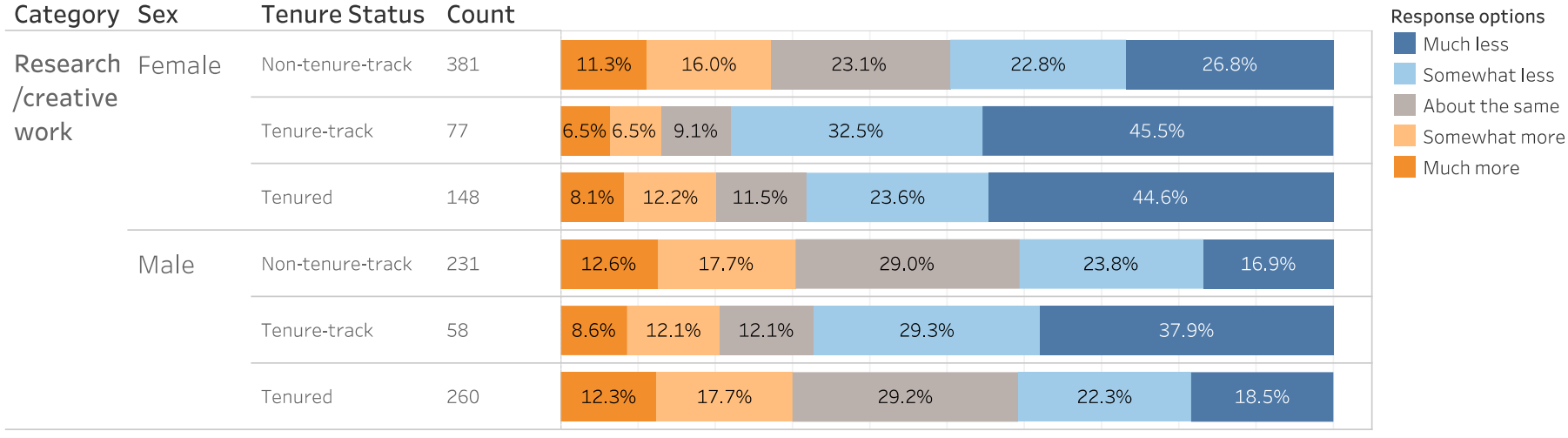
In sum, faculty experienced significant increases in caregiving, teaching, advising, and service responsibilities. The disruptive impact of this increase is addressed next.

> "Increased childcare, mentoring, and service demands resulting from the pandemic have virtually obliterated my research productivity. As a primary caregiver, childcare responsibilities have meant I have had no time or mental space to write or conceive of articles or grants. . . Over the next three years, I expect a **significant dip in my research output, which will mean a lower raise and longer time until promotion**."

Research Compromised

The impact of the pandemic on faculty research and creative work varied. Collapsed across tenure status, twenty-four percent of female-identified faculty and 29% of male-identified faculty were able to spend "somewhat more" or "much more" time on their research. However, a larger proportion of faculty reported a negative impact of the pandemic on their ability to devote time to research. Fifty-seven percent of female-identified faculty and 44% of male-identified faculty reported spending "somewhat less" or "much less" time on research. As evident in Figure 3, the reduction in time spent on research and creative activity was greatest for tenure-track faculty with female-identified faculty reported greater reduction than male-identified faculty.

FIGURE 3: The impact of the pandemic on faculty research and creative work. Difference in time faculty spent on research and creative work during the pandemic as compared to 2019-20.



The negative impact of the pandemic on faculty research and creative work was not limited to the reduction in available time. The details of the impact were articulated in the text responses to survey questions as well as during the focus groups. Faculty reported continued expenses while productivity was halted or compromised. This was particularly the case in laboratory-based disciplines. Even after laboratories could be occupied again in June 2020, productivity remained low as laboratory members worked in shifts, laboratory supplies became harder to procure, and animal colonies had to be restarted, in some cases. Laboratories conducting work on human subjects had to devise methods to conduct experiments remotely when possible. Even in the fall of 2021, human subjects continue to be hesitant to participate in research activities that involve close contact with unknown individuals. Participation of human subjects has improved with the availability of vaccination. Recruiting children who are not yet vaccinated continues to be challenging.

> "**I spent nearly a year paying staff, postdocs and students for work they could not perform**. Particularly out of my start-up which took a massive hit, but also foundation and federal grants and industry contracts for work that could not be completed. We lost half our mouse colony and are about a year, maybe even more, delayed in our research. Even now we cannot get reagents and simple supplies to perform our research and when we can, the costs are astronomical. There is no way to recoup lost salaries or reagents and no recognition that this is even an issue."

Faculty engaged in research outside of a traditional laboratory also faced enormous disruptions. Those involved in fieldwork or archival research could not travel to their research sites. The closure of archives along with travel restrictions and uncertainties made it impossible for this kind of work to continue meaningfully. Faculty who are performers faced similar disruptions through cancellations and venue closures. Many faculty in the performing fields continue to encounter a scarcity of opportunities. This is especially true for those in the earlier stages of their careers.

> "My research involves fieldwork and archives which have been closed for the last 14 months and there is no timeline for reopening. This is going to lead to a large gap in output several years down the road (right now if you were to look at my CV it would like I was unaffected, but that's largely due to the time lag in publication. A year or two from now the gaps will be evident). Honestly, I'm wondering **if I should switch to a different type of research altogether** since it's so unclear when I will be able to resume the activities I was trained to do."

> "**I'm in the theater which is in an existential crisis**. I had . . . productions of my work cancelled. It is uncertain when we are returning. The pandemic took down entire institutions. … Theaters have to see if they can rebuild their infrastructure before beginning to produce. It's a long and uncertain road back. No one knows what will happen; but the next couple of years at least will be very difficult."

Disciplinary differences were not the only source of variability in the impact of the pandemic on faculty research. We explore other factors that led to very disparate impacts of the pandemic.

Disparate Impacts

Responses to the question in the faculty survey asking what consumed more faculty time compared with previous years made clear that faculty spent substantially greater time and effort in caregiving. The responses to open-ended items in the survey as well as commentary during the focus group sessions highlighted the magnitude and depth of the impact of increased caregiving responsibilities. The closure of in-person K-12 education and daycares combined with the unavailability of childcare options led to a tremendous increase in care responsibilities. Care for elders and other family members also was mentioned as significant factors by some faculty. The child-care facility used by many faculty on the Chicago campus remained operational and was reported to be of great help to those faculty with access to it. In contrast, faculty on the Evanston campus felt the need of on-campus childcare even more acutely. It is unclear if a childcare facility on the Evanston campus would have remained operational between March and June of 2020, but several faculty members speculated that perhaps a childcare facility governed by the University could have re-opened in June of 2020 when laboratories were reopened, albeit with appropriate health precautions in place.

"Lots of faculty have found this year very difficult, **but many faculty with elementary age children have been absolutely CRUSHED by the pandemic**—the system they had in place to make their careers work got pulled out from under them when schools closed and in many cases stayed closed for nearly a full year**. The people feeling that particular, and particularly acute, burden appear to be disproportionately women or men in more gender-balanced fields**."

In contrast to the disruptions and uncertainties experienced by faculty with caregiving responsibilities, others found the circumstances of the pandemic to enable greater research productivity and scholarship. Indeed, 26% of the respondents to the faculty survey indicated an increase in the time they had available for research and creative work. Time saved by not commuting or traveling was cited as an enabling factor. The committee experienced recognition of this disparity in interactions with faculty colleagues. One faculty member suggested that the pandemic had been a very productive time for him when we sought his participation in a focus group. He offered his place in the focus group to a colleague he knew to have been negatively impacted by the pandemic. Overall, the University saw an uptick in grant proposal submissions and funding. Some of this activity was driven by special opportunities to seek funding related to understanding, diagnosing, and treating COVID-19.

"I expect that for me the most noticeable impacts of the pandemic will be indirect. **At my career and life stage (full professor with independent children) the pandemic adjustments were relatively easy and well-contained**. In contrast, the impact on students and advisees, especially graduate students and postdocs with whom I work quite closely, and on junior colleagues is far greater. I feel very concerned about the long-term impact on these early stage colleagues both in terms of the health consequences (physical and mental) and on their academic/professional trajectories. I don't yet know what precise form these impacts will take but I feel sure that we will all need to make many adjustments to the way we operate and how we define/evaluate success. I feel that people in my relatively untouched position will need to make adjustments that we haven't (and really, can't) imagine yet. I hope we can/will rise to this essential challenge."

A remarkably larger proportion of respondents (78% - F, 67.2% - M, Figure 3) who were yet to attain tenure indicated spending "somewhat less" or "much less" time on research and creative activities. These differences were also observable in the responses to the open-ended questions of the survey. A broader funding portfolio including discretionary accounts provided more flexibility to senior faculty compared with those in their pre-tenure period. Senior faculty were also able to leverage their more extensive networks to continue meaningful research and scholarship.

> **"I am NTE. I am deeply concerned about job security as a result of the pandemic**. … I am concerned that much of the pandemic recovery conversation has been focused on lost research and scholarship, issues more relevant to tenure-line faculty, with little acknowledgement of the psychological toll of teaching since spring of last year and that there needs to be some sort of thought given to how to best support NTE faculty in recovery."

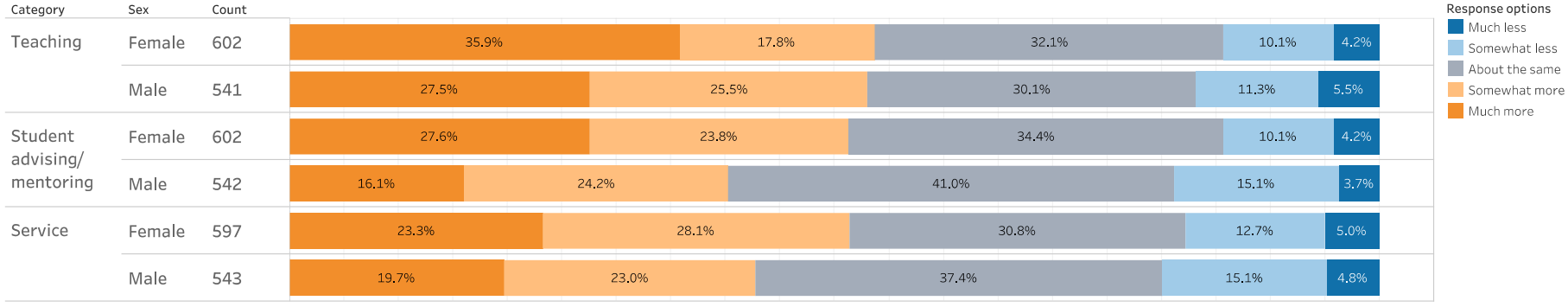
Non-tenure-track faculty experienced the pandemic differently in many cases. This group reported increases in teaching, service, advising, and caregiving responsibilities to a magnitude similar to that of tenure-track faculty. However, concerns unique to this group surfaced in their responses to open-ended questions as well as in focus groups. Many expressed increased anxiety about limited-term contracts and job security. Non-tenure-track faculty also were apprehensive that the University would respond to the needs of tenure-track faculty but ignore their needs.

An increase in advising, mentoring, and service loads during the pandemic was reported by all faculty (Figure 4). A higher proportion of female-identified faculty reported a "somewhat more" or "much more" increase in these activities. Fifty one percent of female-identified faculty, as opposed to 43% of male-identified faculty responded in these two categories for time spent on service. Similarly, 52% of female-identified faculty, as opposed to 40% of male-identified faculty, reported spending more time on student advising and mentoring as compared with the previous year. Female-identified faculty as well as faculty of color reported unusually high demand for student advising and mentoring. Tenure track faculty reported greater increases in this load as compared to tenured and non-tenure track faculty.

> "In [more than 30 yrs] of teaching, **I have never seen anything like the current levels of anxiety on the part of the undergraduate students.**"

> "The damage done to the social fabric of our scholarly community has to be repaired somehow. **My PhD students will continue to need extensive advising help that will continue to be enormously time consuming and emotionally-intellectually draining.**"

FIGURE 4: Increase in teaching, advising, and service was experienced by all faculty, but more so by female-identified faculty.



In focus groups faculty narrated increased demands for student advising and mentoring during and after social movements such as Black Lives Matter. The burden of providing support to students fell disproportionately on faculty of color. Faculty of color also reported increased service demands at the university as various efforts related to diversity, equity, and inclusion were initiated.

> "I especially hope that the department and university can find ways to **mitigate the enormous service burden that has been put on some faculty to lead new efforts in DEI and Social Justice.** The demands on my time were unexpected and proved to be very intense at times.**"**

Many of the responses to the open-ended questions on the survey raised concerns about the lingering, and perhaps growing, differences in the impact of the pandemic. Apprehensions about the compounding effect of research and productivity slowdowns for some, but not all, faculty were expressed in the context of tenure, promotion, and compensation raises. Respondents pointed out that considerations extended to all faculty, such as tenure-clock extensions, could serve to amplify the differences in productivity between faculty. Faculty whose work was facilitated during the pandemic would present tenure or promotion dossiers that could appear significantly more impressive than those produced by faculty whose work slowed down or stopped during the pandemic.

> "My issue with tenure clock extensions is that since what constitutes 'tenure' is based on comparison with peers, **if everyone gets an extension, then it does little to help those whose productivity was hurt more**. we are still going to be compared to the productivity of people without caregiving responsibilities."

Long-Term Considerations

The faculty survey did not directly ask any questions about the psychosocial impact of the pandemic on faculty. However, respondents offered a lot of information about the psychosocial impact of the pandemic in the survey as well as the focus groups. Faculty expressed concerns about raised levels of anxiety in students, staff, and faculty colleagues. Switching to a new mode for teaching and supporting students as they navigated the dramatic changes brought about by the pandemic took a heavy toll on the mental health of faculty. Non-tenure-track faculty were resigned to a continuation of these high levels of stress and exhaustion with no possibilities of teaching load reductions. The feeling of burnout was so severe in some that several comments in the survey and the focus groups indicated that faculty had given serious consideration to leaving academia.

"As teaching-track faculty I worry about burnout for myself and my colleagues. **We had no option to teach less**, and the work of teaching online (even apart from the work associated with the shift) is exhausting. This combined with the fact that female faculty like myself (and teaching-track faculty more generally) are often called upon to mentor and support struggling students."
"I am absolutely exhausted. I am so sad that I have had no time to write grants or even really think hard about my fun research. **I am just treading water**, trying to be sure all my students get through their PhD okay. I am so, so, tired."
"To be honest, I **am so burned out by teaching, mentoring, and service responsibilities that I am probably going to leave the profession as soon as I am logistically able to do so."**

In response to the open-ended questions on the survey, in the focus groups, as well as in more informal communications with members of the workgroup, faculty expressed profound disappointment in the manner in which University leadership had tackled the financial uncertainties during the winter and spring of 2020. Faculty reported feeling underappreciated and even sacrificed to keep the financial bottom line of the University secure. The loss of staff positions, the furloughs, and the suspension of retirement benefits felt like unjust measures that only heightened the anxiety and stress during the pandemic. Faculty wondered if the Board of Trustees had essentially established that suspension of retirement or other benefits was a legitimate response for any exigency from this point forward. The loss of staff positions was cited as a major source of additional administrative and logistical burden on faculty during the pandemic.

"The **departmental staff were already overwhelmed and over capacity**. Add to that the release of some staff, and it made the whole situation untenable."
"It was shocking and unethical for the University to suspend retirement benefits unilaterally when many faculty and staff were working overtime to deliver the curriculum, to train themselves in new platforms to teach, and provide extensive, round-the-clock intellectual and mental-health mentoring to Northwestern students. These benefits should be restored, and the budget surplus makes clear that they can be, without risk to the institution."

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations of the FPIR Workgroup are first presented in thematic categories with some explanation and examples in the table below. Specific recommendations are then listed in each of these categories. The recommendations include financial support in some cases, greater flexibility in operations in other cases, and deep investigation of practices critical to faculty career trajectories in yet others. Faculty need some of this help now. Other items need examination and careful deliberation. In the time horizon of Northwestern University's existence, the pandemic may seem to be an acute time-limited event, yet its effects are going to be anything but time-limited. The recommendations made by the workgroup are directed at rejuvenating faculty careers and supporting faculty well-being. At their heart they are also designed to rejuvenate Northwestern as an institution and sustain it as an inclusive and equitable cradle of knowledge creation and dissemination.

TABLE: Thematic categories with summaries of recommendations in each category.

Career Recovery			Caregiving	Health & Well-being	Institutional Response
Research	**Teaching**	**Evaluation & Promotion**			
Support to re-activate scholarship of all forms will be critical for Northwestern faculty to maintain their eminence. Faculty engaged in different types of scholarship will need different types of support.	Flexibility in teaching load and increased technical as well as pedagogical support in recognition of the added burden of teaching in multiple modes and providing unprecedented amounts of student support.	Examination and implementation of processes that acknowledge the impact of the pandemic on productivity and protect disproportionately affected faculty.	Improve caregiving supports available to faculty. Examine and change systems that disadvantage faculty with significant caregiving responsibilities and/or expectations.	Bolster faculty health and well-being programs. Improve student services (CAPS, ANU, etc.) to relieve faculty from supplementing these supports.	Investigate and implement best practices in tenure and promotion procedures to eliminate disadvantages for faculty groups. Improve contract lengths and regularize promotion practices for NTE faculty.
Communication	Develop and implement clear and effective communication strategies that inform faculty about new and existing programs. Communicate with faculty directly as well as through other channels such as through school and unit leadership.				

Career Recovery

Research:

- The University should provide research funds to allow faculty to recover their research programs from the slowdown due to the pandemic.
- Form task group to propose novel ideas to support faculty scholarship/activity in the creative fields.
- Expand funding to support research grants in the Humanities and Social Sciences.
- Provide funds for junior faculty to bring established scholars to campus for talks, seminars, etc.

Teaching:

- Provide modest discretionary accounts to cover teaching-related expenses for all faculty who do not already have access to such funds. Allow funds to cover all forms of instructional supports, including home IT needs.
- Reduce teaching load and provide teaching resources for junior and NTE faculty to aide in recovering lost research productivity and recovering from extreme stress experienced by many. Resources could include assistance in building courses and supporting course-related activities.

Evaluation & Promotion:

- Consider standardizing self-evaluation questions related to COVID impacts for all promotions across the University.
- Monitor how each school is considering COVID impact.
- Where customization is necessary, assist schools in developing promotion guidelines that reflect the disparate impact of COVID accurately.
- Determine and communicate how CTECs should or should not be used for evaluations during COVID.
- Continue the work on finding an alternate to CTECs that is free of bias to the extent possible.
- Formally define and recognize service and student support in NTE promotion criteria.
- Strengthen mentoring programs and activities to support tenure and promotion.

Caregiving

- Continue caregiving grant and consider increasing amount. Re-examine income eligibility criteria.
- Expand Dependent Care Travel Grant as travel resumes.
- Increase and enhance caregiving consultation services through HR.

Health & Wellbeing

- Increase communication to faculty about how to support students through CAPS, AccessibleNU, etc.
- Improve Employee Assistance Program and Faculty Wellness resources.
- Consider other models of delivering CAPS as the current model is unable to keep up with demand. Consider a more decentralized approach perhaps allowing schools to develop independent CAPS-like services.
- Develop program of reduced or free services for faculty such as yoga or meditation sessions, SPAC membership fees, lunchtime concerts, outdoor programs in the fall and spring, meetups for faculty with young children, etc.

Institutional Response

- Examine general faculty evaluation policies and procedures.
    - Address disparate impacts in productivity by instituting bias-mitigating practices such as the “n-best” standard for # items in dossier.
    - Investigate and institute best practice that eliminates comparison cohorts in external review letters for tenure and promotion.
- Increase multi-year appointments for NTE faculty.
- Accelerate timeline for renewal notification for NTE faculty from Spring to late Winter Quarter.
- Increase number of junior faculty awards recognized by the University.
- Address disparate impact of clock extensions on lifetime earnings.
- Address disparate impact of service, advising, and mentorship on select faculty.
- Identify ways to reduce inequitable distribution of service, advising, and mentorship across faculty.
- Examine the possibility of a paid leave allowance with job protection for NTE.
- Consider increasing University portion of retirement contributions or a larger raise pool.

Communication

- Clearly communicate the automatic and optional clock extensions available to junior faculty.
- Develop an immediate and ongoing proactive communication strategy between central, school leadership, and faculty.
- Partner with schools and units to develop PR campaign to communicate about resources and efforts underway in response to the recommendations from this committee.

Long Term Monitoring

It is critical that leaders at the University recognize that the impact of the pandemic is not going to disappear in a few weeks or months. Faculty should be surveyed in the next school year, and perhaps in years after that, to understand the lingering effects of the pandemic.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The committee would like to thank Provost Kathleen Hagerty for charging us to do this important work. We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to our colleagues in the Office of Institutional Research (Paul Schatz) and the office of the Associate Provost for Faculty (Celina Flowers, Alex Rot, Joan Johnson, Lorraine Cassis) for their able assistance and support.

Appendix A: Faculty Pandemic Impact Survey

Updated February 23, 2022

Post Pandemic Faculty Planning

Start of Block: Introduction

Q1.1
This survey is designed to assist the Post-Pandemic Faculty Planning (PPFP) group, led by co-chairs Sumit Dhar, Associate Provost for Faculty and Professor, SoC, and Karen Smilowitz, Professor, McCormick and Kellogg. The PPFP aims to understand the impact of COVID-19 on faculty, including differential impacts, and to make recommendations for the long-term mitigation of the impact of COVID-19 with special consideration of career advancement, tenure, and promotion.

The information collected will be kept strictly confidential. Institutional Research staff will report data to the PPFP and the Northwestern community in aggregate form to protect confidentiality. All data, including individual comments to open-ended questions, will be de-identified by staff before being reported to the PPFP and/or the community.

Questions or concerns should be sent to: faculty-survey@northwestern.edu.

The survey asks questions about changes in your time/effort, and how the pandemic has impacted your research/creative work, teaching, service, and family responsibilities, as well as questions about measures to mitigate the long-term impact on your career. It should take approximately ten to twenty minutes to complete.

End of Block: Introduction

Start of Block: Family Responsibilities, Personal Circumstances, and Work

Q2.1 General Pandemic Impact

Q2.2 How much, if at all, did the time you spent on the following domains change during the last 12 months as compared to the pre-pandemic period of 2019-20? (**Clarification**Did you spend

more time, less time, or the same amount of time on the following domains during the last 12 months as compared to the pre-pandemic period of 2019-20?)

	Much more (1)	Somewhat more (2)	About the same (3)	Somewhat less (4)	Much less (5)
Research/creative work (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Teaching (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Service (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Student advising/mentoring (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Family responsibilities/caregiving (5)	○	○	○	○	○

Page Break

Q2.3 Family Responsibilities, Personal Circumstances, and Work

Q2.4 How much, if at all, did the time you spent on the following domains change as a results of **challenges with childcare, assistance with remote schooling, or eldercare** during the last 12 months? (**Clarification**Did you spend more time, less time, or the same amount of time on the following domains as a result of challenges with childcare, assistance with remote schooling, or eldercare during the last 12 months as compared to the pre-pandemic period?)

	Much more (1)	Somewhat more (2)	About the same (3)	Somewhat less (4)	Much less (5)
Research (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Teaching (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Service (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Advising/mentoring students (4)	○	○	○	○	○

Q2.5 How much, if at all, did the time you spent on the following domains change as a results of **challenges due to changes in physical or mental health, or other personal circumstances** during the last 12 months? (**Clarification**Did you spend more time, less time, or the same amount of time on the following domains as a result of challenges due to changes in physical or

mental health, or other personal circumstances during the last 12 months as compared to the pre-pandemic period?)

	Much more (1)	Somewhat more (2)	About the same (3)	Somewhat less (4)	Much less (5)
Research (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Teaching (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Service (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Advising/mentoring students (4)	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Family Responsibilities, Personal Circumstances, and Work

Start of Block: Research/Creative Work

Q3.1 Research/Creative Work

Q3.2 How much, if at all, did you experience **a change in research/creative work outcomes** (such as exhibitions, invited presentations, seminars, or performances, publications, conference papers, grants) during the last 12 months due to the pandemic?

- ○ Large increase (13)
- ○ Small increase (14)
- ○ Unchanged (15)
- ○ Small decrease (16)
- ○ Large decrease (17)

Display This Question:

If How much, if at all, did you experience a change in research/creative work outcomes (such as exhi... = Small decrease

Or How much, if at all, did you experience a change in research/creative work outcomes (such as exhi... = Large decrease

Q3.3 If you experienced a decrease in research/creative outcomes during the last 12 months, to what extent, if at all, did the following contribute to the decrease?

	Not at all (1)	Very little (2)	Somewhat (3)	To a great extent (4)
Restrictions, such as limited access to labs, studios, animals, clinical settings, field settings, libraries, archives, or performance venues, or limitations on travel (1)	○	○	○	○
Cancellations of exhibitions, invited presentations, seminars, conference papers, or performances (2)	○	○	○	○
Loss of access to funds or cancellation of fellowships or scholar-in-residence appointments (3)	○	○	○	○
Delays in editorial decisions or other processes related to publications (4)	○	○	○	○
Limited access to disciplinary or interdisciplinary network (5)	○	○	○	○
Additional time spent on teaching responsibilities (6)	○	○	○	○

Additional time spent on service responsibilities (7)	○	○	○	○
Additional time spent on mentoring responsibilities (8)	○	○	○	○
Lack of access to or reduction in productivity in trainees, graduate students, assistants, and/or staff (9)	○	○	○	○
Changes in caregiving responsibilities (10)	○	○	○	○
Changes in personal circumstances (11)	○	○	○	○
Other (please specify) (12)	○	○	○	○

Display This Question:

If How much, if at all, did you experience a change in research/creative work outcomes (such as exhi... = Large increase

Or How much, if at all, did you experience a change in research/creative work outcomes (such as exhi... = Small increase

Q3.4 If you experienced an increase in research/creative outcomes during the last 12 months, to what extent, if at all, did the follow contribute to the increase?

	Not at all (1)	Very little (2)	Somewhat (3)	To a great extent (4)
Less time spent commuting (1)	○	○	○	○
Less time spent traveling or attending conferences/meetings (2)	○	○	○	○
Increase in funding for COVID-related research (3)	○	○	○	○
Fewer requests from students for advising (4)	○	○	○	○
Other (please specify) (5)	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Research/Creative Work

Start of Block: Teaching

Q4.1 Teaching

Q4.2 To what extent, if at all, did the **following impact the time you spent on aspects of teaching** during the last 12 months as compared to before the pandemic?

	Not at all (1)	Very little (2)	Somewhat (3)	To a great extent (4)
Obtaining professional development to adapt to remote instruction (1)	○	○	○	○
Reconfiguration of courses, syllabi, etc. for remote instruction (2)	○	○	○	○
Additional mentoring, advising, and interacting with students (3)	○	○	○	○
A change in time spent on research responsibilities (4)	○	○	○	○
A change in time spent on service responsibilities (5)	○	○	○	○
Change in caregiving responsibilities (6)	○	○	○	○
Change in personal circumstances (7)	○	○	○	○
Other (please specify) (8)	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Teaching

Start of Block: Service

Q5.1 Service and Mentoring

Q5.2 To what extent, if at all, did the **following impact the time you spent on aspects of service** during the last 12 months as compared to before the pandemic?

	Not at all (1)	Very little (2)	Somewhat (3)	To a great extent (4)
Service on department, school, or university committees dealing with issues caused by the pandemic (1)	○	○	○	○
Mentoring and supporting students, colleagues, and others with particular impacts from the pandemic (BIPOC individuals, first-generation students, etc.) (2)	○	○	○	○
New and unanticipated pandemic-related service requests and requirements from professional organizations, laboratories, or funding/governmental agencies (3)	○	○	○	○
Less time spent commuting to in-person meetings (4)	○	○	○	○
A change in time spent on research responsibilities (5)	○	○	○	○
A change in time spent on teaching responsibilities (6)	○	○	○	○
Change in caregiving responsibilities (7)	○	○	○	○
Change in personal circumstances (8)	○	○	○	○
Other (please specify) (9)	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Service

Start of Block: Career

Q6.1 Career

Q6.2 What challenges and/or opportunities do you anticipate in the next three years related to mitigating the impact of the pandemic on your career or professional future?

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End of Block: Career

Start of Block: Resources

Q7.1 Resources

Q7.2 Please indicate your awareness and utilization of the following resources or policies provided by Northwestern University, your school, your department in response to the pandemic?

	Unaware (1)	Aware of and no plans to use (2)	Using or have used (3)	Anticipate using in the future (4)	Not applicable (5)
Caregiving Grant (7)	○	○	○	○	○
Tenure clock extension (8)	○	○	○	○	○
Federal work study Zoom assistant or research assistant (9)	○	○	○	○	○
School or department support for remote teaching such as TA, grader, zoom assistant (10)	○	○	○	○	○
Other School-based resource (please specify) (11)	○	○	○	○	○
Assistance from department staff (12)	○	○	○	○	○
Other Department-based resource other than staff (please specify) (13)	○	○	○	○	○

Display This Question:

If Please indicate your awareness and utilization of the following resources or policies provided by... [Using or have used] (Count) > 0

Q7.3 Resources

Display This Question:

If Please indicate your awareness and utilization of the following resources or policies provided by... [Using or have used] (Count) > 0

Carry Forward Selected Choices from "Please indicate your awareness and utilization of the following resources or policies provided by Northwestern University, your school, your department in response to the pandemic?"

Q7.4 Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the following resources or policies provided by Northwestern University, your school, your department:

	Extremely dissatisfied (1)	Somewhat dissatisfied (2)	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3)	Somewhat satisfied (4)	Extremely satisfied (5)
Caregiving Grant (x7)	○	○	○	○	○
Tenure clock extension (x8)	○	○	○	○	○
Federal work study Zoom assistant or research assistant (x9)	○	○	○	○	○
School or department support for remote teaching such as TA, grader, zoom assistant (x10)	○	○	○	○	○
Other School-based resource (please specify) (x11)	○	○	○	○	○
Assistance from department staff (x12)	○	○	○	○	○
Other Department-based resource other than staff (please specify) (x13)	○	○	○	○	○

Q7.5 Resources

Q7.6 If you did not use or were not satisfied with any of these resources or policies, please provide any suggestions you have for changing or ending them.

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Page Break

Q7.7 Resources

Q7.8 Is your field changing due to the pandemic?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Display This Question:

If Is your field changing due to the pandemic? = Yes

Q7.9 Are there are any measures that Northwestern can take to assist you with these changes?

_____

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Page Break

Q7.10 Resources

Q7.11 What resources or policies can Northwestern University provide that would help to mitigate long-term COVID impact on your career over the next three years?

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End of Block: Resources

Start of Block: Final

Q8.1 Closing

Q8.2 Please feel free to add any other comments you have here.

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End of Block: Final