
Continued Impacts of COVID-19 on Faculty at UCCS

**Presented by Faculty
Representative Assembly (FRA)
COVID-19 Task Force**

January 25, 2022



FRA COVID-19 Task Force - Mission

Identify and document short- and long-term impacts on C-19 on faculty and collaborate with FRA and campus administration to develop policies and procedures to mitigate impacts.

All faculty are affected by C-19, especially women-identified and minoritized faculty.

- Illuminate mitigation strategies that promote equity and inclusion as well as the retention and promotion

A lot of great work has been done...Thank you!

- Town halls
- Covid-19 dashboard
- Vaccines (attestation process and access)
 - Student testing
- Remote work
- Mental health resources for faculty and staff
- Expanded access to hyflex technology and remote access to software
- Operational changes
 - Enhanced air filtration
 - Masks/face shields
 - Increased cleaning and cleaning supplies
- And More...

Survey & Sample

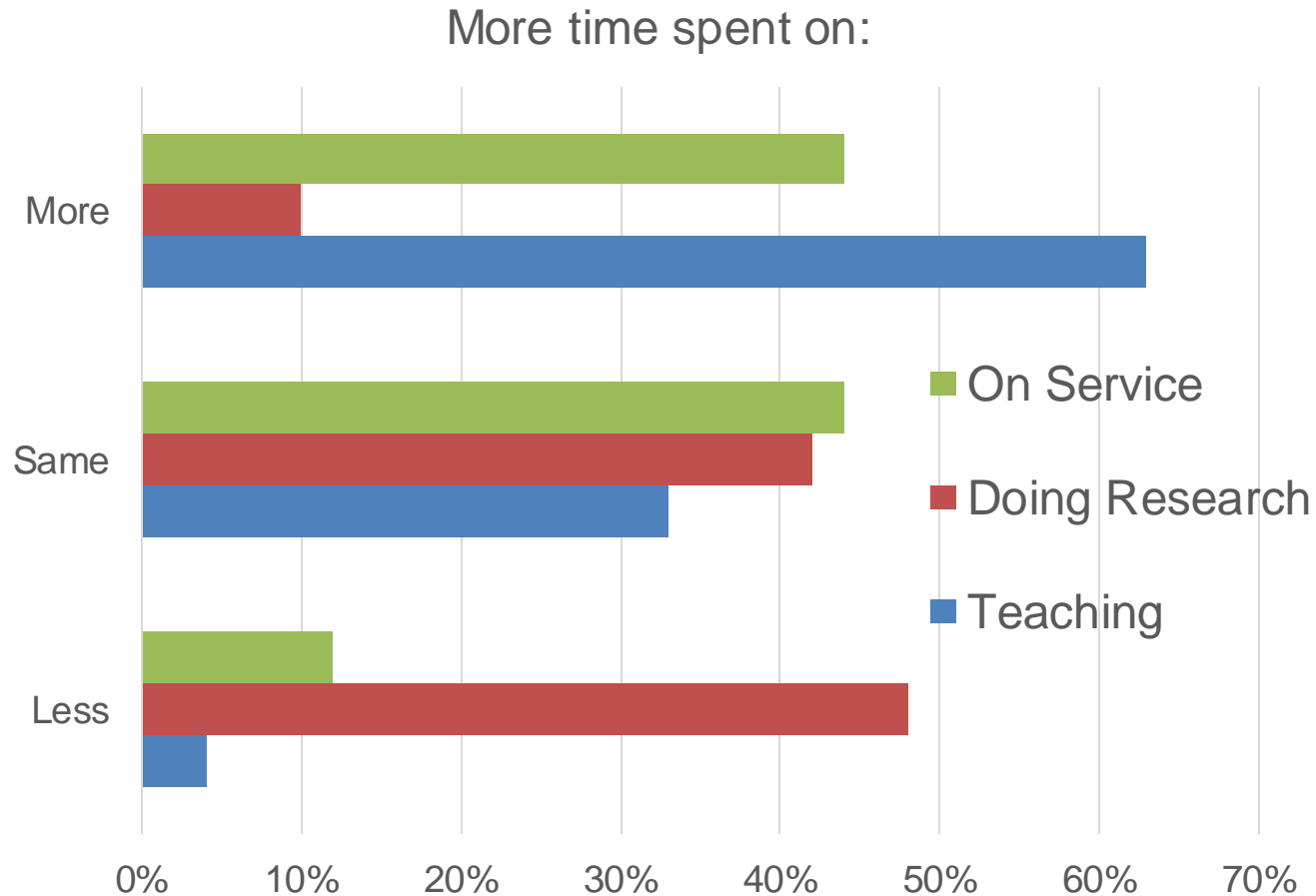
- **Survey Themes**

- Time
- Well-being
- Teaching/Research/Service impacts and need
- Caregiving

- **Demographics**

- 314 respondents (app. 57% response rate)
- 57% tenure stream; 43% IRC
- 51% women, 39% men, 0.5% transgender, 9% prefer not to respond
- 71% White/European American, 12% Person of Color, 4% Other, 13% Prefer not to report

The Significance of Time



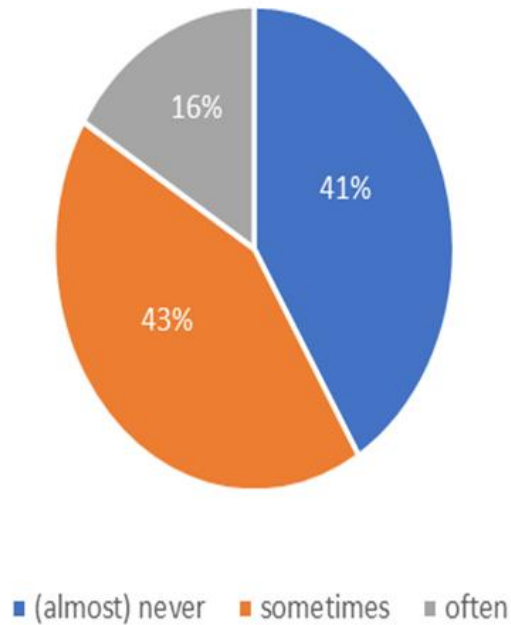
Faculty are spending more time on teaching and service than research

Group differences:

- Caregivers are spending less time on research
- Women-identified faculty are spending more time on service than men

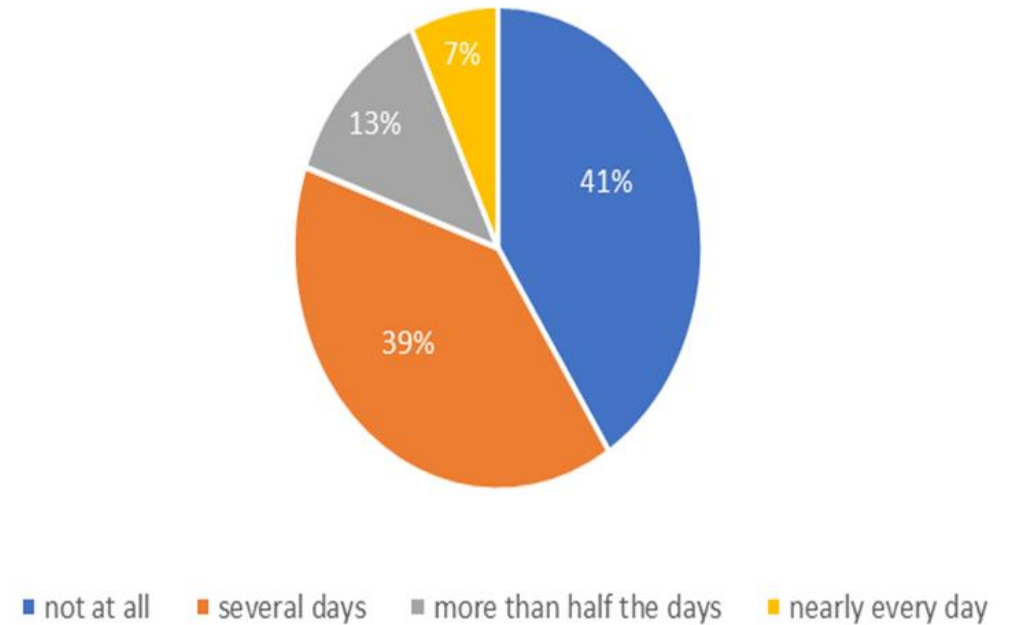
Faculty Well-being

Stress: frequency in the past month



Women faculty > Men faculty ($p = .051$)

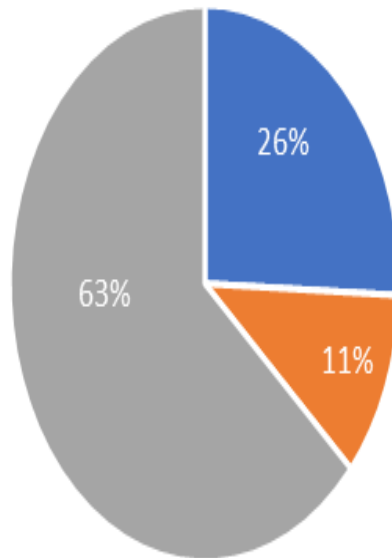
Anxiety: frequency in last 2 weeks



Women faculty > Men faculty ($p = .022$)

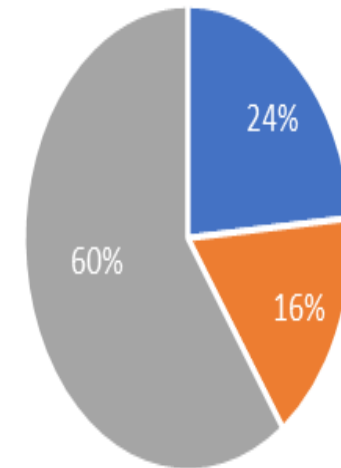
Connected and Supported

How connected do you feel to UCCS?



■ disconnected ■ neither ■ connected

How supported do you feel by the university?



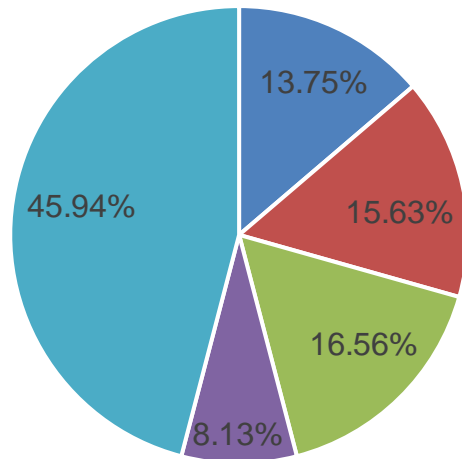
■ unsupported ■ neither ■ supported

Connected and Supported

- *“I feel connected to colleagues, but I think the university leadership (starting with Deans and above) really doesn't understand the volume of work that I have been doing nor appreciate it. I don't think they know the current struggles faculty are facing...”*
- *“Actual support so we can do our jobs (teaching and research primarily) properly. Fewer "THANK YOU" words from administration and actual help would be great. I realize this might not be possible, of course, and I recognize the administration has worked hard in a difficult situation. Still, emotionally it just seems like they expect us to go beyond what is reasonable indefinitely. That isn't appropriate.”*
- *“Reduce the stigma surrounding working from home! An assistant to the dean told my colleague that they were not giving out the Teams link for the hybrid option for attending a meeting to everyone, because “people just want to stay home in their pajamas”, and so was vetting people who wanted a link to make sure they had a legitimate “medical emergency” in order to access the hybrid option. People have children who are quarantined, family members who are in the hospital...if they need to attend virtually, and are still engaged, why is their engagement/participation minimized?”*
- *“Give a pay increase to IRC faculty. Junior IRC faculty routinely have to seek extra jobs to make ends meet, and the insecurity of IRC positions has been exacerbated by the pandemic. Increasing pay for IRC positions would increase stability and morale for roughly half of faculty on campus, which would have a positive impact on all of us.”*

Teaching

Q29 Because of the pandemic, have you been asked to take on additional teaching duties (select all that apply)



- New course or course(s)
- Overload(s)
- Additional students due to sections being collapsed
- Other
- None

Hidden Impacts

- *“Changing a course's format requires almost as much work as creating an entirely new course.”*
- *“Video Production with triples the time frame of teaching”*
- *“Independent studies due to cancelled classes” (from IRC faculty)*
- *“Additional students in courses because of a department that is chronically understaffed, an issue made worse by pandemic constraints”*
- *“Due to a class cancellation, I have been asked to create a new course”*

What do you need to facilitate your teaching?

Equipment/Facilities/Technology

- *“Support for our contractual obligations! I purchased all my own necessary home hardware & software for teaching.... This is just more than FEELING unsupported; many of us ARE unsupported.”*

TA or Grader/Smaller Classes

- *“More assistance when possible, e.g., TA for every 40-50 students or larger classes capped at 40-50”*
- *“Manageable class sizes”*

Caregiving/Health Needs

- *“More consistent childcare...”*

Time

- *“Offloads to prepare for teaching especially developing high quality online classes.”*

IT

- *“IT support, reliable internet and webcam connections in classrooms”*
- *“More frequent training opportunities to use the new technologies in the classrooms.”*

FRC/Instruction Support

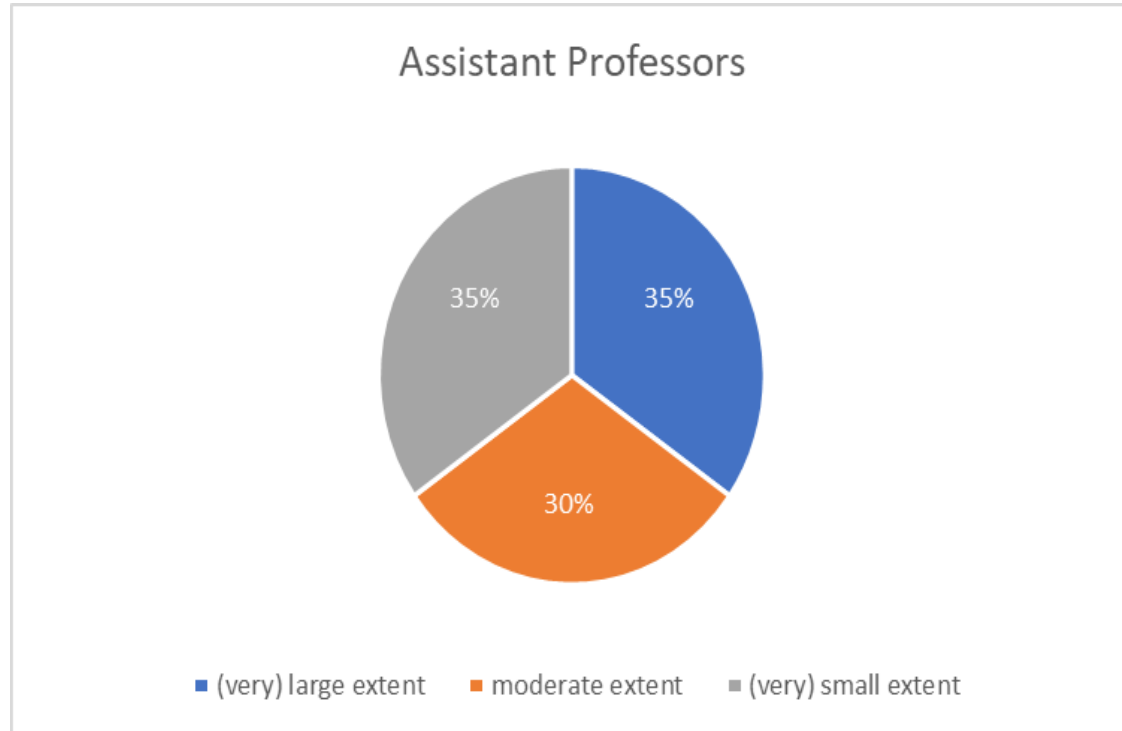
- *“More stipend opportunities to learn online pedagogy strategies. The FRC's TOP is fantastic. More of this!”*

Flexibility/Administration/College Support

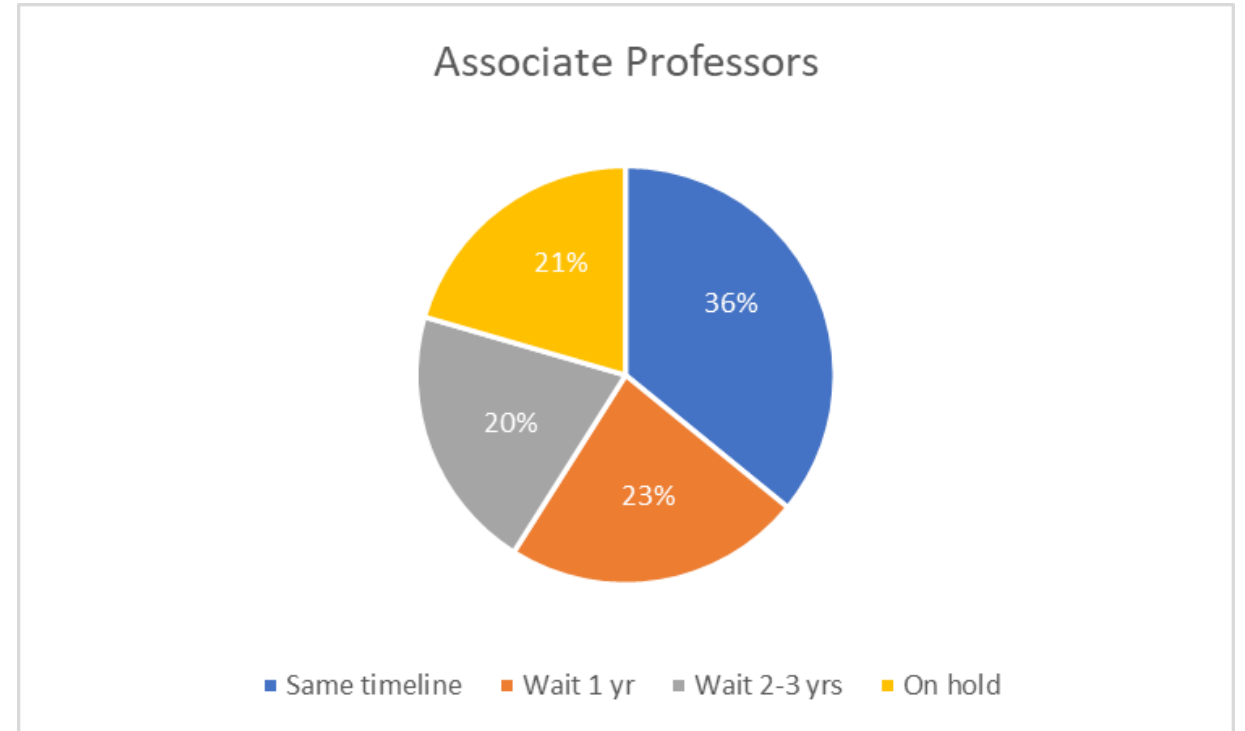
- *“An acknowledgement from the administration that there has been a huge shift in how we do things. I know they are aware of that, but it seems like they don't always take that into account over the past few semesters. ...”*
- *“I'd like us to train department chairs in fostering an equitable process for course assignments and teaching schedules...some faculty routinely have fewer preps while others routinely have too many preps a semester.”*

Research

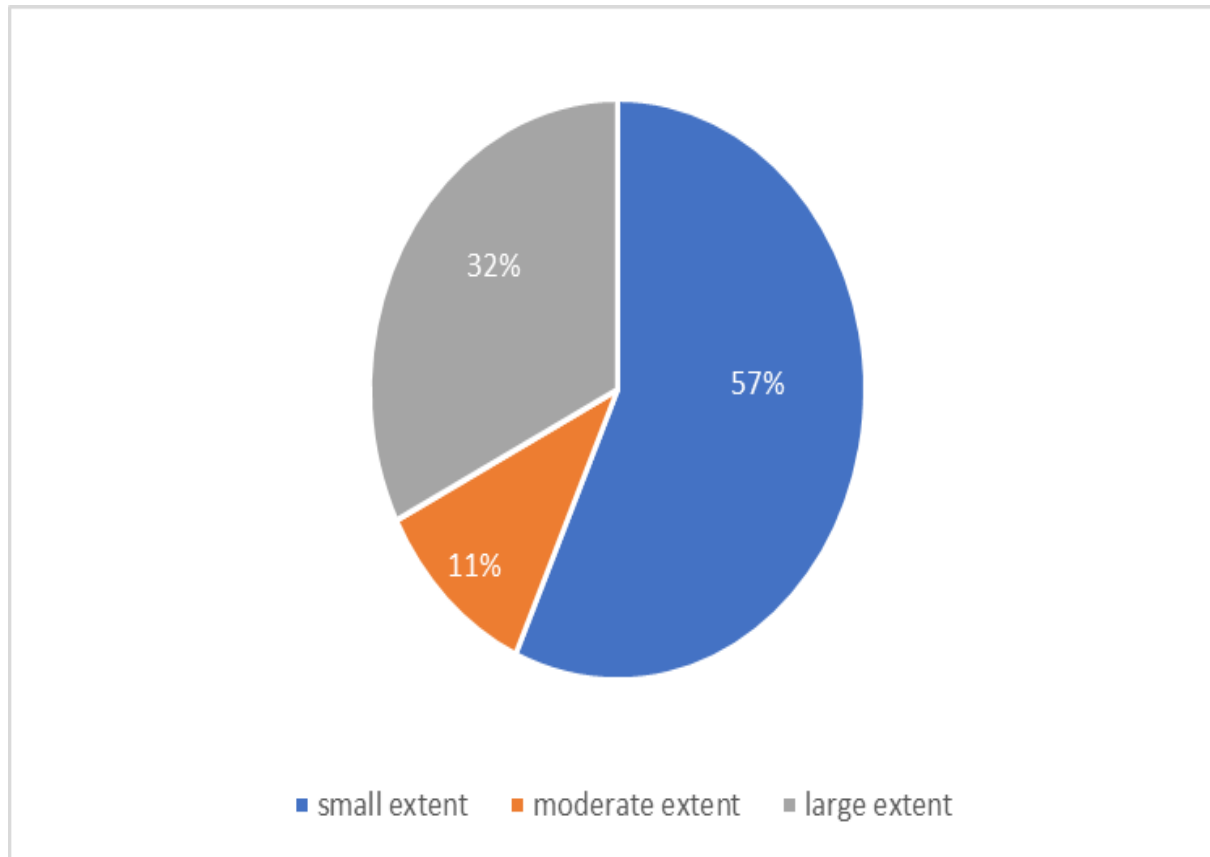
Assistant professors: To what extent did COVID-19 negatively impact your progress toward tenure in research?



Associate professors: How has COVID-19 affected your timeline for promotion to full professor?



To what extent is the availability of a tenure clock extension helpful in addressing the impacts of COVID-19 on you?



"...the effects of COVID will show up for me in 2-3 years..."

These results suggest need additional, long-term tactics to address equity in tenure process.

Research Needs

Flexibility

- “I would like the ability to have a semester where I teach in person and then a semester where I teach only online...”
- “Flexibility from the unit-head and administration trusting their faculty to do the right thing, instead of creating road-blocks”
- “My research this and next year is on track due to work started before COVID... But the work I should be engaging in now has come to an abrupt halt...I'd like to see at least a temporary liberalization of what constitutes acceptable intellectual contributions...”

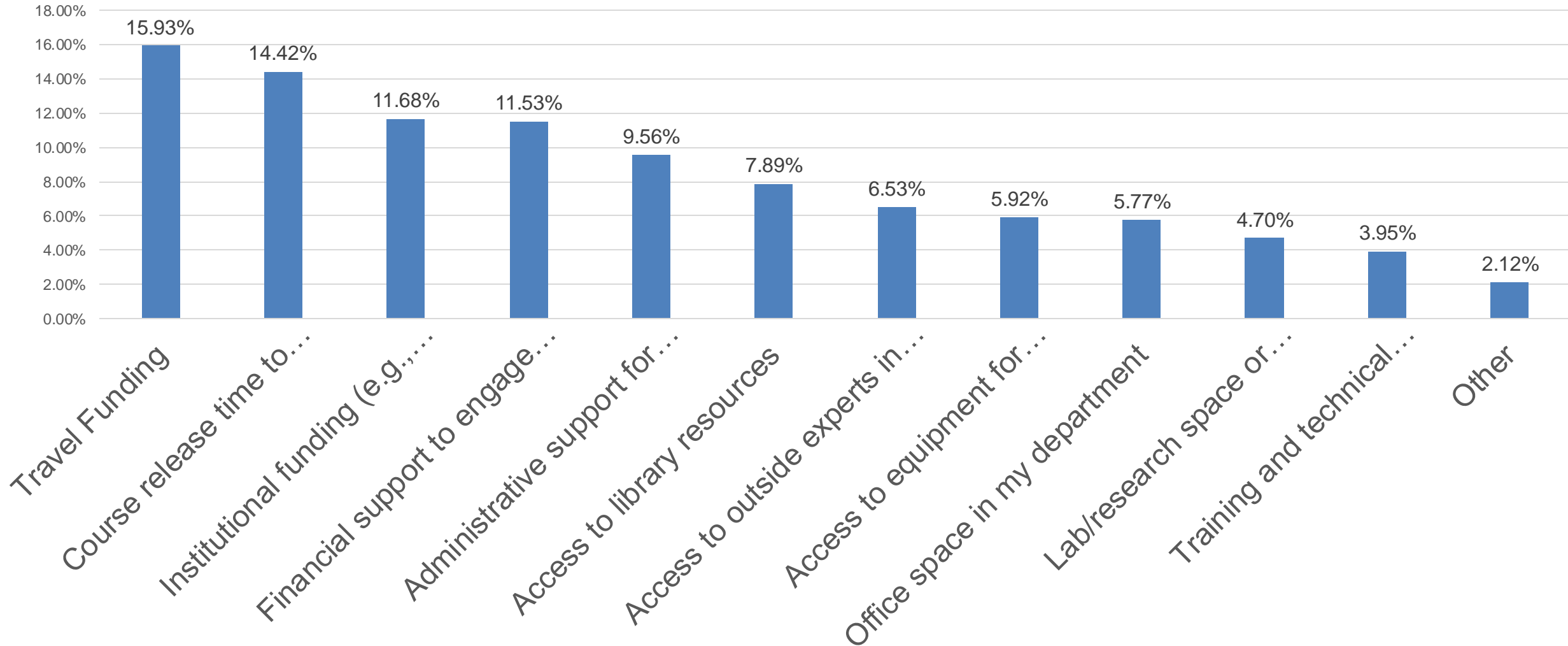
Financial Support

- "Support to hire a graduate students to both mentor and collaborate with on these research projects.”
- “More OSP support...More post-award support. Tuition matching for grants.”
- "More departmental GTAs and GRAs...”
- “Summer pay to cover cost of child care”
- “My tech is getting older and the budgets for a primary replacement computer are much lower than before.”
- "Decent IT support...”

Time through Reduced/Redistributed Workloads

- “Time. I would argue that a universal shift to a 2-2 course load for T/TT faculty...”
- “Need \$ support and decreased teaching loads to get research productivity back to where it was. As a qualitative researcher, my new projects were effectively cancelled.”
- "A course release 1 semester per year would also help as I try to get my research back on track...”
- “Honestly, if the service and administrative responsibilities were less then I could continue my research...”

In the upcoming 1-3 years, to feel supported in my research, I need: (check all that apply)



Service

Q: What do you need to facilitate your service activities?

Time

- *“Time. My service load is so heavy, and if I taught one less course, this would be a huge help to my wellbeing.”*

Flexibility/Fewer Meetings

- *“I like virtual meetings since they don't break up my online/remote work if I am not on campus. I also feel safer due to COVID. I do like some/a few in-person gathering for some work/some social interaction.”*

Structural Support

- *“Ideally, UCCS would hire more full-time faculty of color so that diversity-related service would be spread more equitably.”*
- *“I am over-serviced. I'd love to see a culture where we're encouraged to look at our % of service. My service responsibilities cut into my research/writing time regularly every week.”*

Suggested Faculty Workload Accommodations

Q: What accommodations would make the balance between teaching, service, and research more manageable?

Reduction in course load

Increase in course releases

Flexibility in course delivery format

Reduce Service load

Reassess how we credit service

Flexibility in adjusting workloads

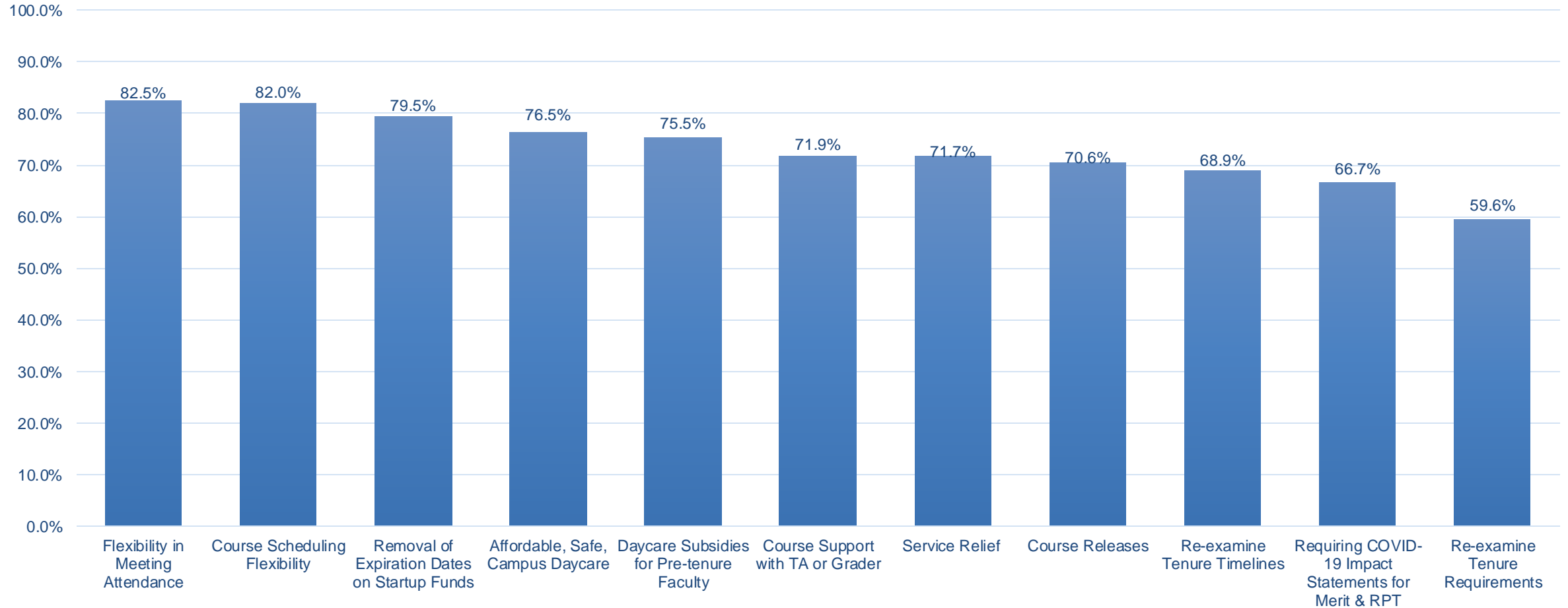
“We teach 5 courses per year in my department because it is required, not because student demand necessitates that load; it's a backward approach.”

“Rolling offloads to effectively compensate faculty for the time they invested in going online.”

“Let people adjust their workload. For some, teaching drains them. For others research drains them. Just because this system has been employed for the past 300 years doesn't mean it still needs to be this way.”

Caregiving

Q: What support would help balance the responsibilities of caregiving and work?



Caregiving Needs & Examples of Institutional Support

"Provide flexibility to faculty in how they do their job so they can take care of their families."

"Without course releases or pre-tenure sabbatical, it's likely that this Covid interruption of my research will result in me quitting this job because I can't possibly meet the expectations."

"Honestly, the only thing that would help here is more money."

Culture Change

- More faculty & administrative support
- Some supervisors are known to be disparaging to caregivers and there is no available recourse
- Acknowledge that promotion delays have long-lasting effects
- Service loads need to be re-conceptualized to properly acknowledge the university functions through faculty service

Policy Change

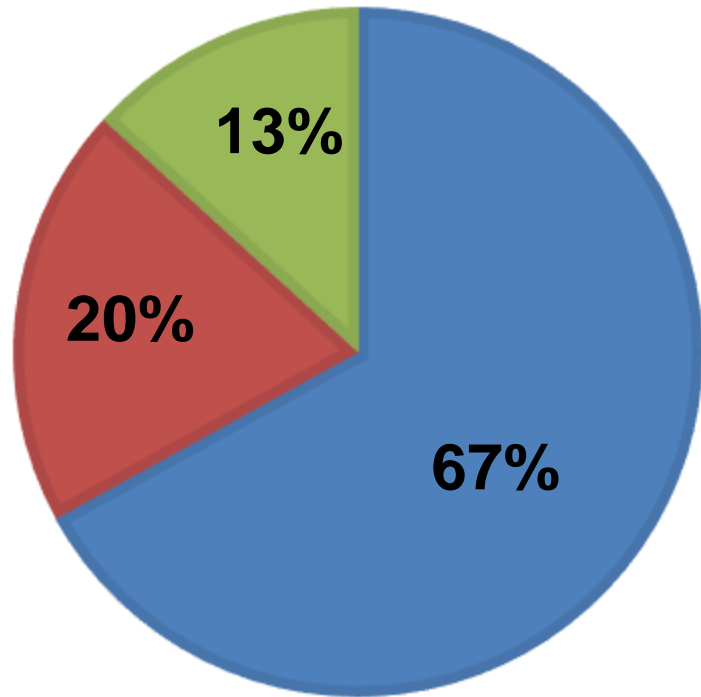
- Universal leave policies
- Pre-tenure sabbaticals
- Reimagine workload (e.g., 2-2-1)

Institutional Support

- Resources such as Bright Horizons
- More childcare options & drop-in childcare
- More connection between caregivers
- Faculty Assembly Standing Committee on Caregiving

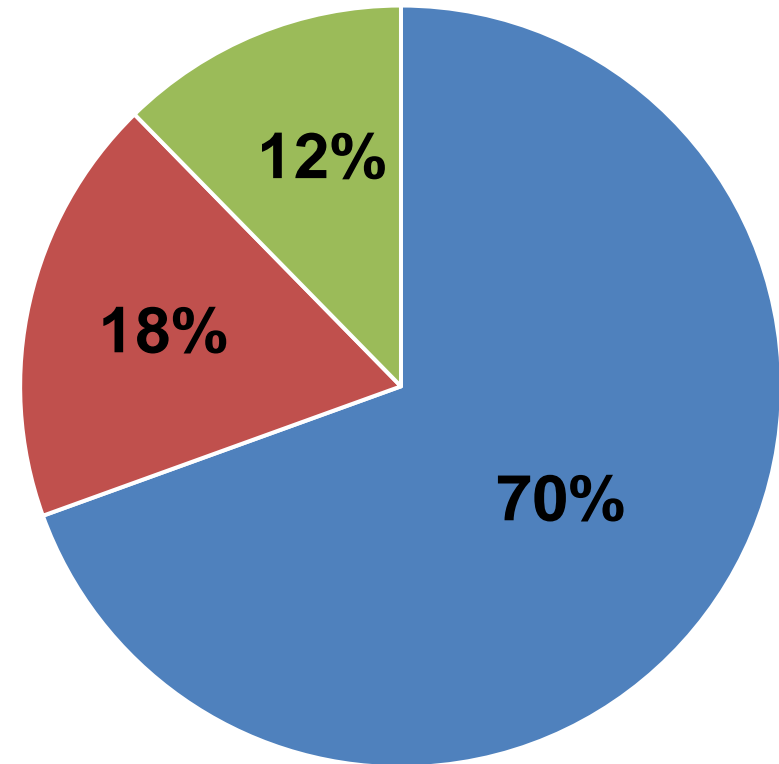
Food & Housing Insecurity

SECURING FOOD & OTHER NECESSITIES



- Very/somewhat easy
- Neither easy nor difficult
- Very/somewhat difficult

SECURING STABLE HOUSING



Key Takeaways

- The impacts of COVID will be long-lasting; we need a sustainable plan to address ongoing challenges
- Faculty are spending more time teaching and doing service; research is suffering
- Faculty report concern over financial strain and want to see institutional supports (e.g., merit, pay equity, summer pay, retroactive raise for tenure clock stop)
- Some faculty are experiencing strain in housing and food/necessities
- Caregivers are facing ongoing challenges and need support
- Faculty report challenges related to work/life balance
- Time, flexibility, resources, and institutional supports are needed
- Faculty ask to continue remote meetings, flexible course format/scheduling, differentiated workloads, and online Town Halls

Next Steps and Requests

Recommended non-financial supports:

- Continued transparency in decision making and communication around COVID-19
- Supporting flexibility in course delivery and creating opportunities for differentiated workloads
- Allowing/encouraging continued remote meeting formats
- Continued efforts to prioritize mental health and wellbeing (Thank you for investing here)
- Continue collaborating with Faculty Assembly and the Faculty Representative Assembly (FRA) COVID-19 Task Force on institutional support/resources for long-term strategies to continue to mitigate impacts of COVID-19

Next Steps and Requests continued...

Recommended prioritizations of funding:

- **Establish support for caregivers**
 - institutional membership in caregiving platform such as Bright Horizons. This would benefit ALL campus caregivers (faculty and staff).
 - caregiving subsidies
- **Provide financial support for faculty workload adjustments for both TT and IRC faculty** who have a demonstrated need due to COVID.
- **Provide compensation for each faculty member who stopped-the-clock** due to the pandemic once they are promoted. *This will help offset future pay inequities and mitigate lost wages.*
- **Continue virtual mentorship program through NCFDD** - *hard-fund through Provost office, (also helps grad students).*

Thank you

- Thank you for the support and collaboration around COVID during the past 2 years. We appreciate your leadership!
- We hope the discussion today will result in continued dialogue and meaningful action to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on faculty at UCCS.
- A big thank you to all the FA COVID Impact Task Force members who have been working to raise awareness and promote dialogue around these long-term issues.
- Thank you to Chancellor Reddy for inviting us to speak today.