

Faculty Senate Faculty Development Committee

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Faculty Senate Faculty Development Committee

2020-21 Charges to explore

- faculty concerns related to teaching, research/scholarship, and service during the COVID-19 pandemic and how this period will impact merit and promotion
- faculty transition to remote learning and Canvas, including the effectiveness of the training procedures for the transition to Canvas and remote learning
- university communication of COVID-19-related new policies and procedures to faculty

Faculty Senate Faculty Development Committee

Methods of data collection: 28-question survey distributed via the Faculty Senate office to faculty at all ranks:

- We received responses from 127 TT/T faculty and 201 NTT faculty for a **participation rate of 23%** (328/1424 total FT faculty according to 2020 University Fact Book).
- 55% survey respondents identified as female, 36% as male and about 8% preferred not to respond.
- 55% of participants represented three colleges: Bouve College of Health Sciences, College of Engineering, and College of Arts, Media and Design

Faculty Senate Faculty Development Committee

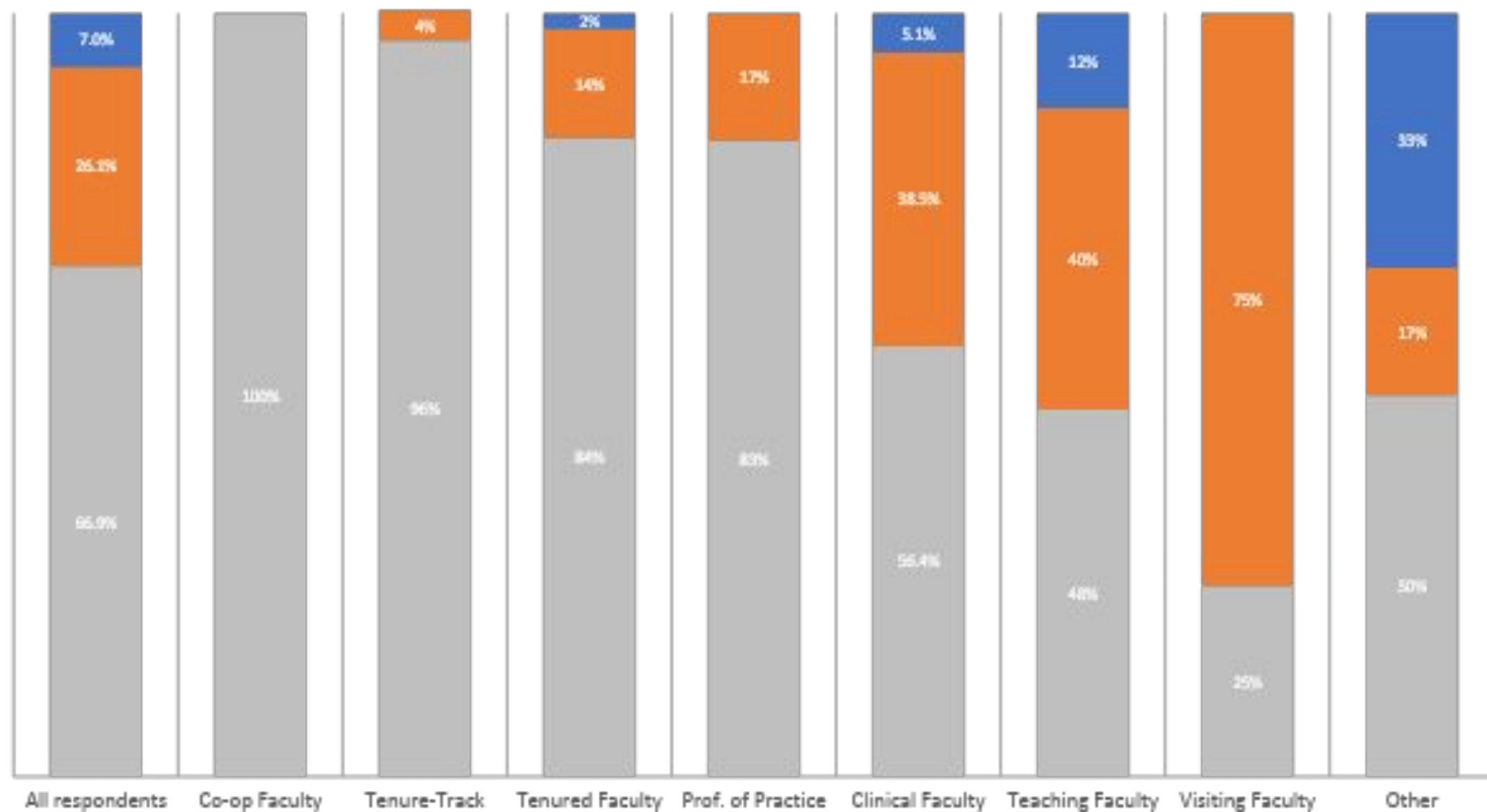
Survey contained seven primary sections:

1. Teaching Mode in 2020 and Prior Years
2. Training Preparation
3. Workload
4. Research/Scholarship
5. Health & Wellness
6. University Response
7. Merit evaluation/Promotion

Training and Prior Experience

TEACHING MODE PRIOR TO 2020

■ Had never taught a remote or hybrid course ■ Taught at least one remote or hybrid course ■ Taught the majority of my classes remotely



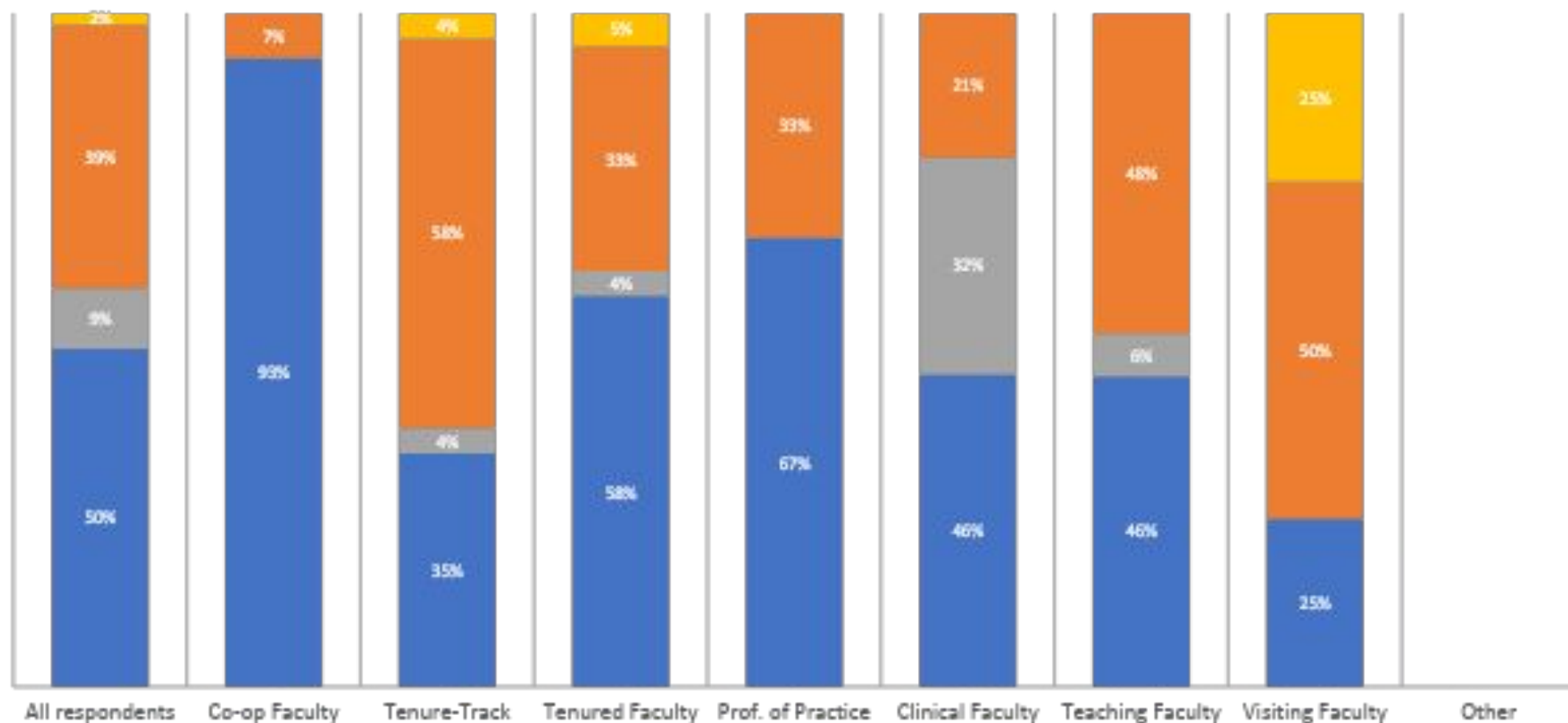
TEACHING MODE IN FALL OF 2020

■ Taught remote courses

■ Taught on-campus lab courses

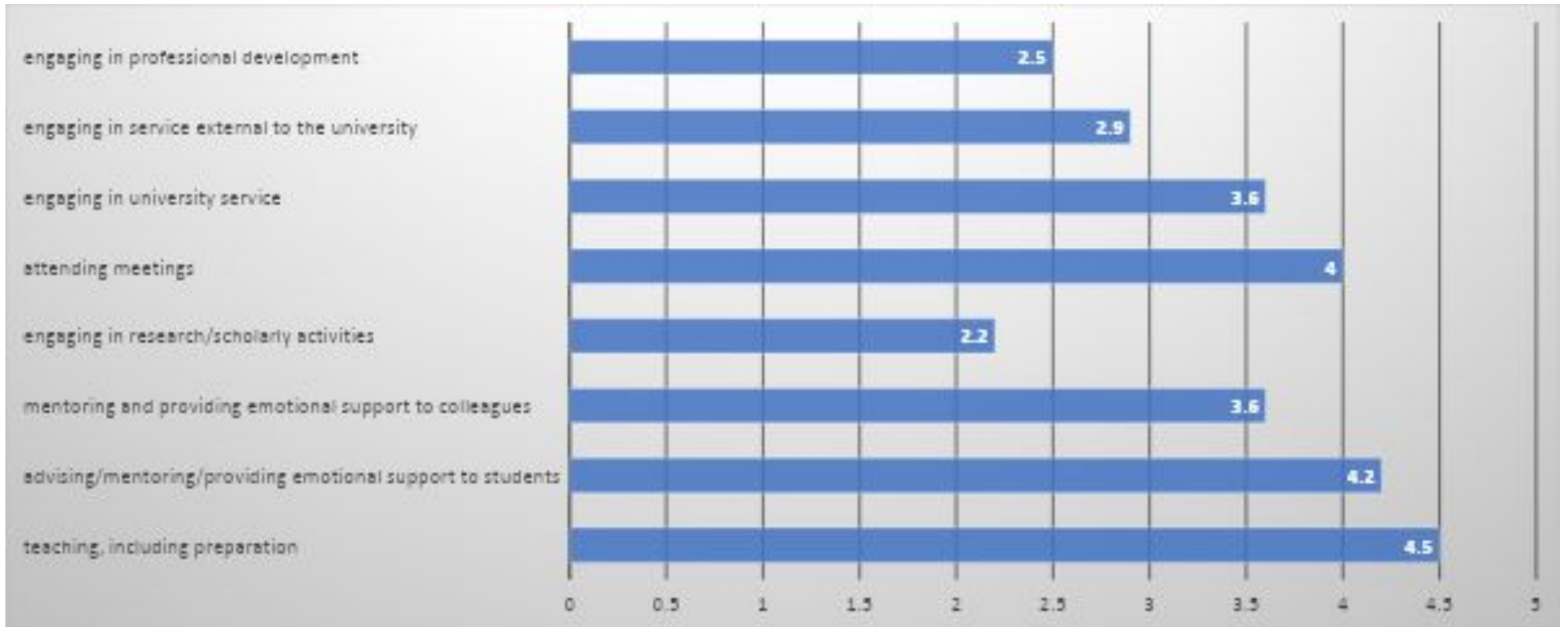
■ Taught NU-flex blended courses

■ N/A (did not teach)



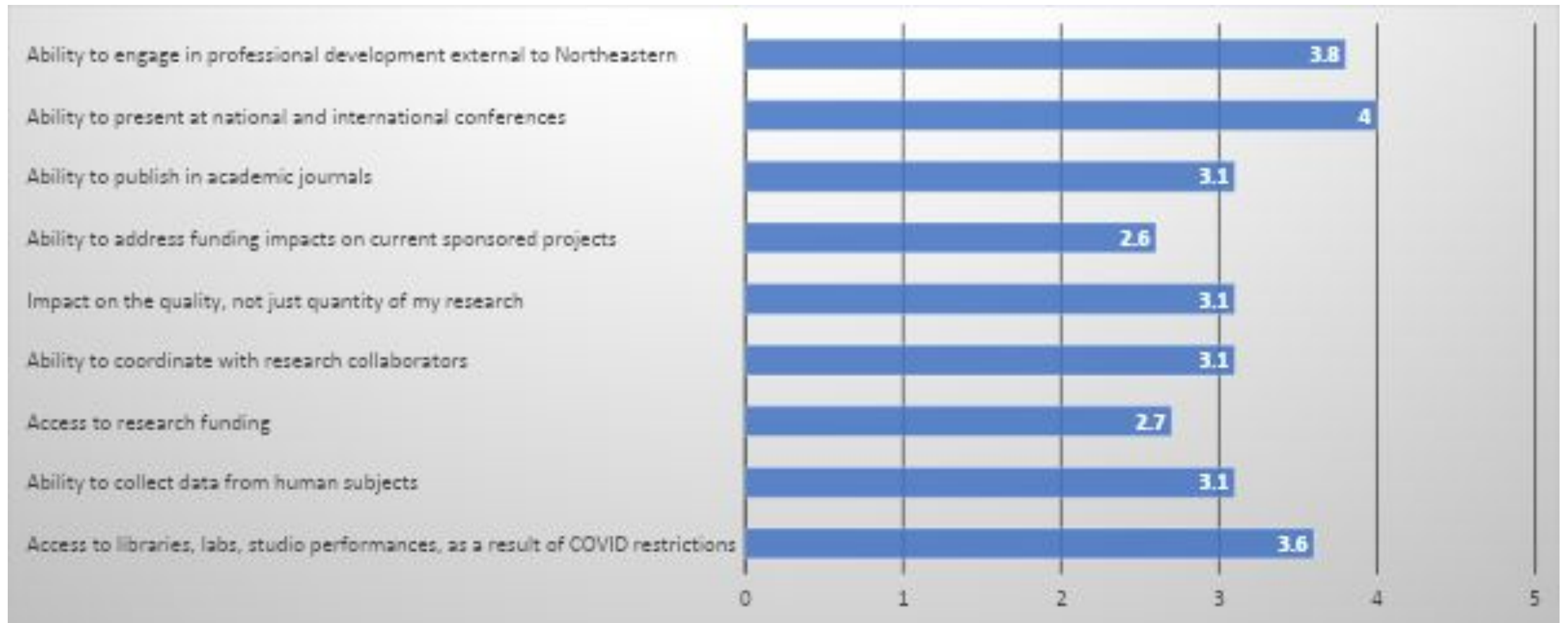
Impact of COVID-19 on Workload

Please rate the impact of COVID-19 and the social and political climate on your time spent on the following in 2020 compared to previous years: (1 = significantly less time, 2= less time, 3 = same time, 4 = more time , 5 = significantly more time)



Impact of COVID-19 on Research/Scholarship

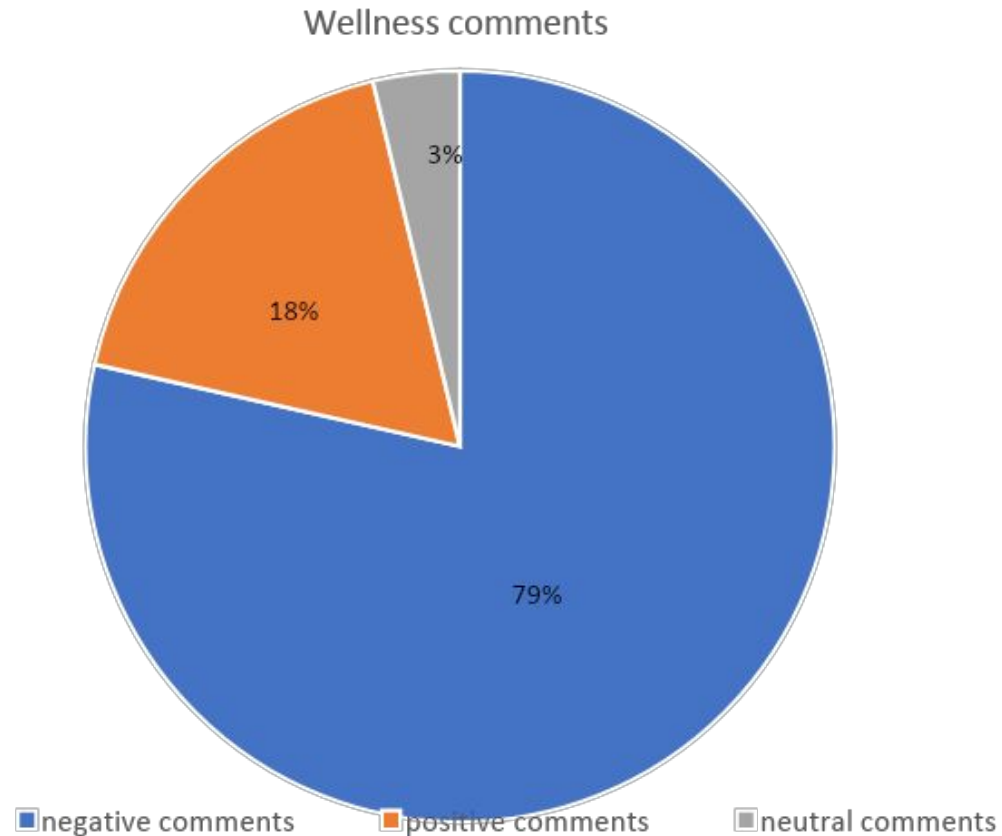
Please rate how much the following have been impacted by COVID
(no impact = 1, slight impact, no change, some impact, significant impact = 5)



Health and Wellness

• Comments indicate significant negative well being impact

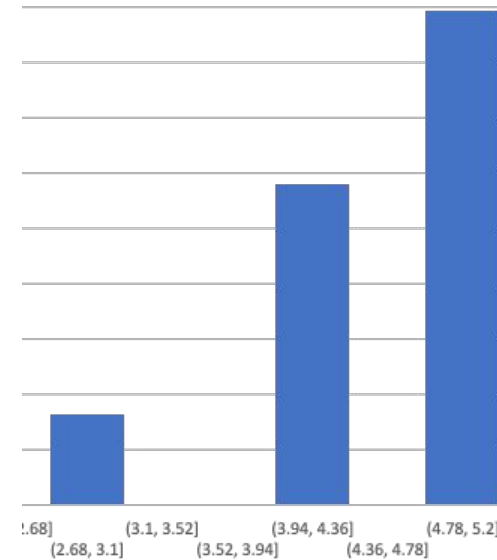
reflects 2020 global data



- I hate working from home
- I have concerns about stability in all life aspects ; personal , occupational, political, etc.
- I feel very burnt out.
- I am concerned about the longer term impact.
- At a time of extreme stress the university the university..added mandates and more on screen .
- I was concerned that teaching remotely was going to be a promotion/renewal factor.
- Covid testing on campus has helped with my peace of mind.
- I was more productive in scholarly activities.
- **I don't have kids at home and could work more hours at home.**
- Northeastern has been a great place to work during covid.
- I am at the highest rank and not worried about promotion.
- This has been a challenging year.

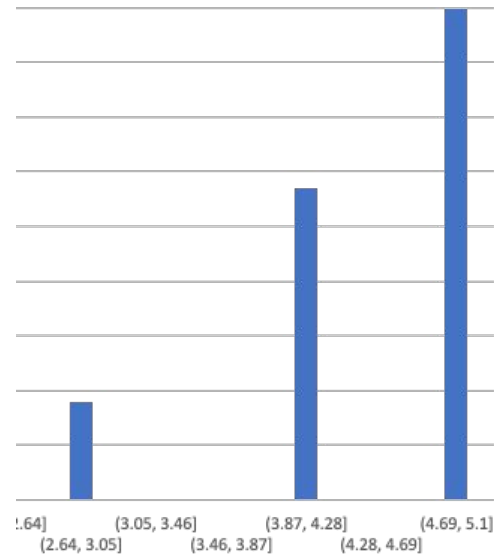
Health and well being of family impact

- It's been difficult to get access to pre pandemic health care.
- Family care is ...my biggest concern.
- Did not feel the university cared about faculty with small children..
- **All genders/ranks reported major family stress.**



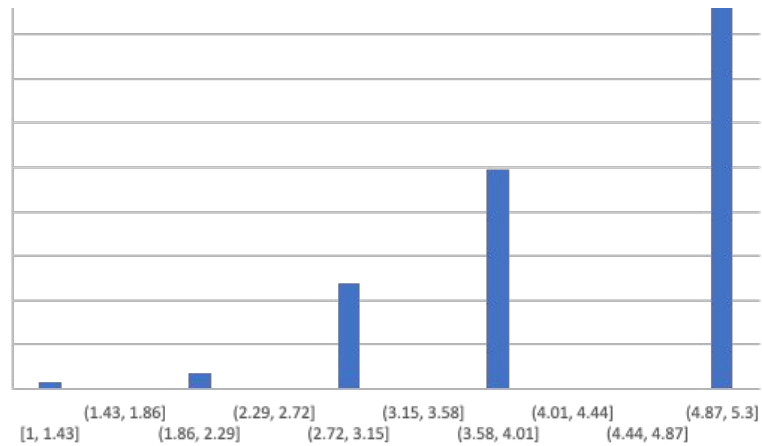
Concern for students exceeded concern for self or faculty colleagues

- 86% of faculty, across ranks, schools and genders responded that they were concerned or very concerned about students' well being.
- Will students demand hybrid? Will we ever be able to give exams without cheating?
- Depression, suicidal ideation and domestic assault. Its happening among our students..

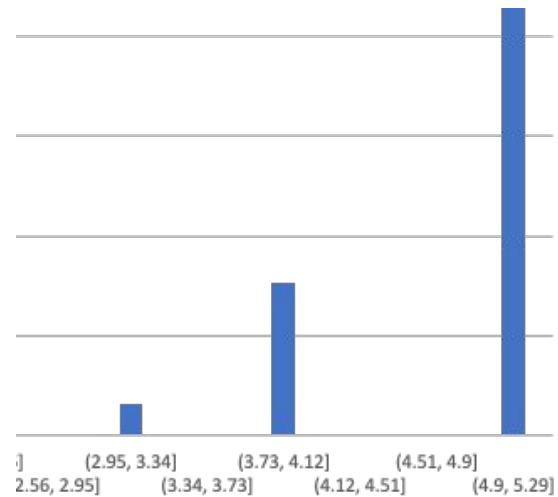


Societal pressures significantly contribute to reported faculty stress

Racial justice



US politics



University Response

section 6

Overall the faculty's quantitative feedback about the university's response to the pandemic was very positive. Open-ended responses offered a mix of positive and negative feedback, e.g.:

Positive

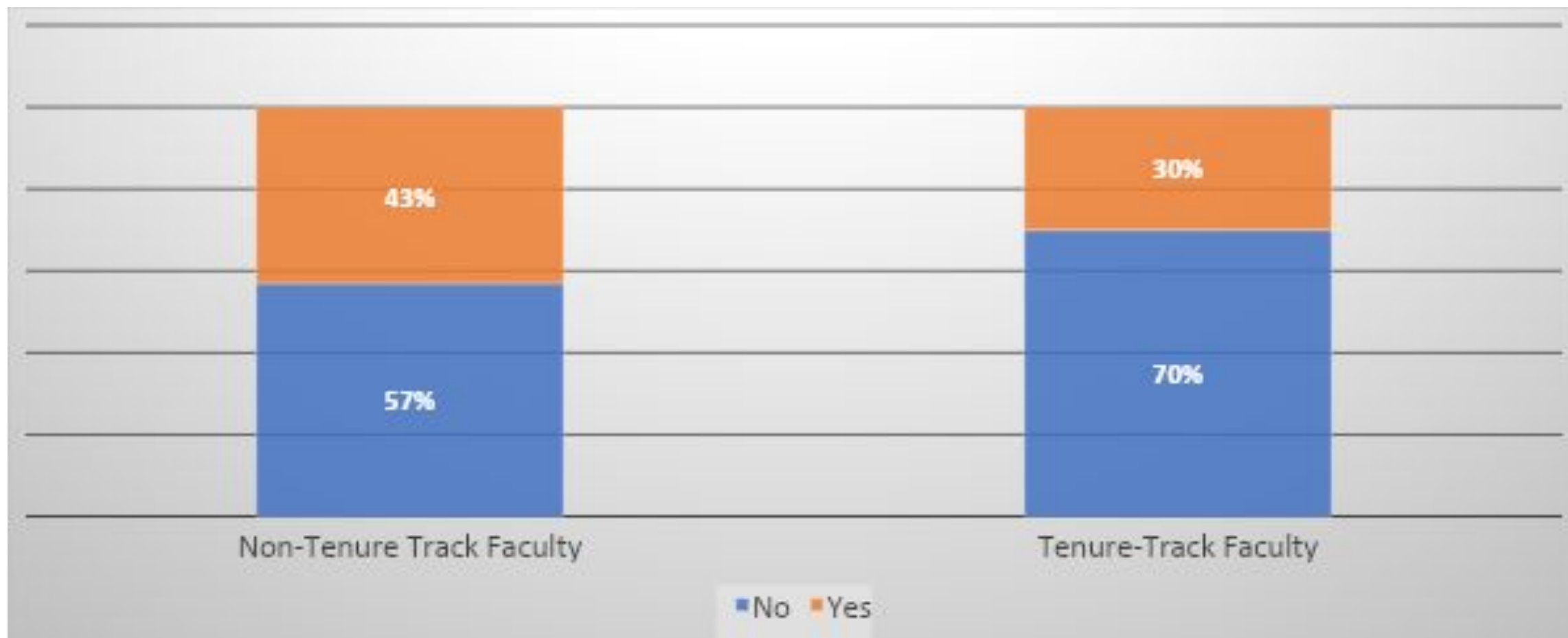
- Senior and college leadership managed things so well under conditions of true uncertainty (not to mention a toxic political environment) -- I will always remember this as one of the best examples I've ever personally seen of leading through a challenging crisis.
- Northeastern has led the pack
- The testing center is amazing.
- Thank you to the University leadership -- you did an outstanding job!
- The university has done a wonderful job keeping everyone safe and reasonably well informed under challenging conditions.
- i think the response has been phenomenal and extremely well coordinated. some of us might gripe about this or that, but really, NEU has done an AMAZING job all around; i really appreciate it

Negative

- I wish faculty had been given more latitude for making their own decisions about how much to teach in person, as I have lived with a fair amount of fear of retaliation
- I also have spoken with several colleagues who have told me that they were pressured to teach on campus despite significant health concerns, only to find that almost no students actually attended their in-person class.
- In many cases, a lot of cheerleading without addressing the issues for those of us with "boots on the ground."
- College leadership was slightly detectable; departmental leadership was absent. Although the testing program is impressive, top to bottom it felt like nobody cared about us teachers, and it still feels that way
- I don't give any credit to my College leadership - they are all smoke and mirrors to please the higher ups.

Merit & Promotion

If you are eligible for promotion in 2021, do you plan to apply?



Selected Promotion Comments

- “I am non-tenure track, very busy with extra teaching and preparation, and I am exhausted. Preparing an extensive portfolio feels challenging. Instead I am reflecting on whether I should retire.”
- “With the pandemic, no one knows where the goalposts are for a promotion dossier.”
- “I don't feel as though I have support from my chair or department, or confidence that they will support my candidacy, despite a great record prior to 2020.”
- “I don't have enough to be promoted (combined with the fact that requirements for promotion keep increasing over time; one is expected to do much more with a lot less resources and support).”

Clarification of Promotion Criteria

Recommendations

- Clarification of criteria as the “goalposts seem to always be changing” (particularly for NTT Faculty)
- Examination of Unit requirements/ workloads/ expectations for promotion and tenure relative to those outlined by the Provost
- Allow faculty to present materials according to how they were able to spend their time during 2020 (e.g., potential increase in time dedicated to teaching and decrease in research expectations)
- Re-examination of what may be included in each category based on “Impact” (e.g., those engaged in impactful community activities to address the events of 2020 could include this under “scholarship/creative activity”)
- Summary: impact of COVID will extend past one year. Adjust criteria, provide flexibility and transparency and communicate directly with faculty.

Dossier Preparation

Recommendations

- Communication and peer discussions facilitated directly from FAC about what to include in COVID AND 2020 Impact statements
- Page extensions in written comments to contextualize materials (rather than simply a covid impact statement inserted at the end)
- Ability to add * to CVs with accompanying comments to external reviewers and merit promotion committees
- Better recognition of the value of professional development and unique ways of displaying its impact
- Summary: Communicate directly with faculty, permit page extensions in dossier to explain COVID impact or allow for addition of markings (e.g., an asterisk) whenever an event was negatively impacted for COVID, and recognize professional development.

Promotion Considerations

Recommendations

- If the faculty have the option to defer, retroactive financial compensation should be awarded
- Clarity in expectations between units and the provost's office- often seem inconsistent
- Greater transparency in levels of support and expectations within Units and ability to discuss this jointly with others
- Further exploration of how lack of supervisor support, departmental restructuring, and uncertainty of success due to 2020 is impacting decision to apply
- Clarify message that the “climate may not be right for promotion” and the criterion upon which this statement was made
- Summary: greater transparency from the administration to the units and faculty, especially regarding to expectations for promotion.

University Support

Recommendations

- Faculty at all ranks benefitted from **the flexibility to work remotely** though the stress from balancing home and work could be considerable; flexible teaching/work assignments would work well for a great many.
- Considerations for reduced service and meetings and **decreased teaching load** or other workload adjustments, considering extra time required to prepare
- **Reduced class size** for faculty teaching in the lab context who were required to divide their classes and teach two (or more) sections