

2022-2023 Academic Policy Committee (APC) Full Final Report

Academic Policy Committee (APC)	
SAC Liaison: Michael Gonyeau	Ex Officio: Deb Franko Senior Vice Provost
Faculty	Faculty
Darin Detwiler (CA) co-chair Assoc. Teaching Professor, CPS	Gary Porter Assist. Teaching Professor, DMBS
Jennifer Ingemi Assist. Teaching Professor, COS	Lynn Reede, Co-chair Assoc. Clinical Professor, BCBH
Michael Jaeggli (Senator) Assoc. Teaching Professor, COE	Daniel Noemi Voiomaa Assoc. Professor, CSSH

Charge 1. In collaboration with the Provost and Chancellor's offices, survey faculty about on-ground in-person, remote online, and hybrid approaches to learning, as well synchronicity of courses. Provide recommendations based on survey data.

- a. Specific areas to obtain feedback (in addition to others identified by the committee):
 - i. Faculty perceptions of quality of their teaching and student learning
 - ii. Logistical considerations of teaching technology and any impact on faculty teaching time and/or quality
 - iii. Any changes to teaching and assessment strategies and student performance faculty need to make based on type of course (i.e. in person, online, hybrid, etc.)

Process: Nine questions were submitted relative to this charge for inclusion in the 2023 Fall Faculty Senate Committee Survey. There were 507 faculty who participated.

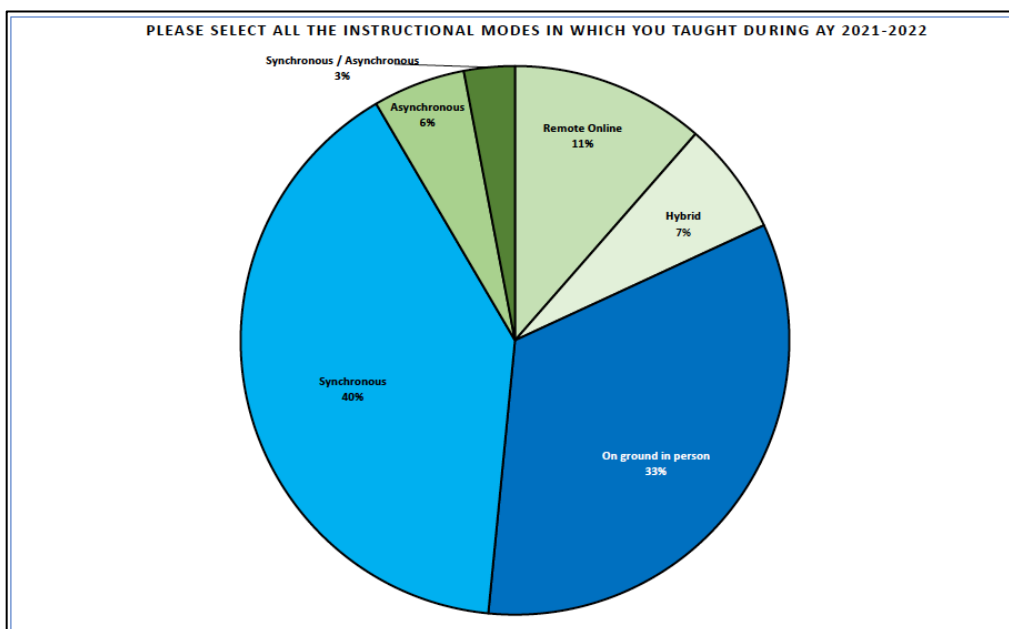


Figure 1.1- Northeastern University Survey Results: Instructional Modalities Reported 2021-2022

Instructional modalities are often discussed as being on-ground or online, six distinctly different modalities of instruction can be found across the many colleges and campuses of Northeastern University. While the two most dominantly reported modalities for 2021 -2022 are Synchronous and On-Ground, In-person, other modalities reported include Remote Online, Hybrid, Asynchronous, and a blend of Synchronous and Asynchronous.

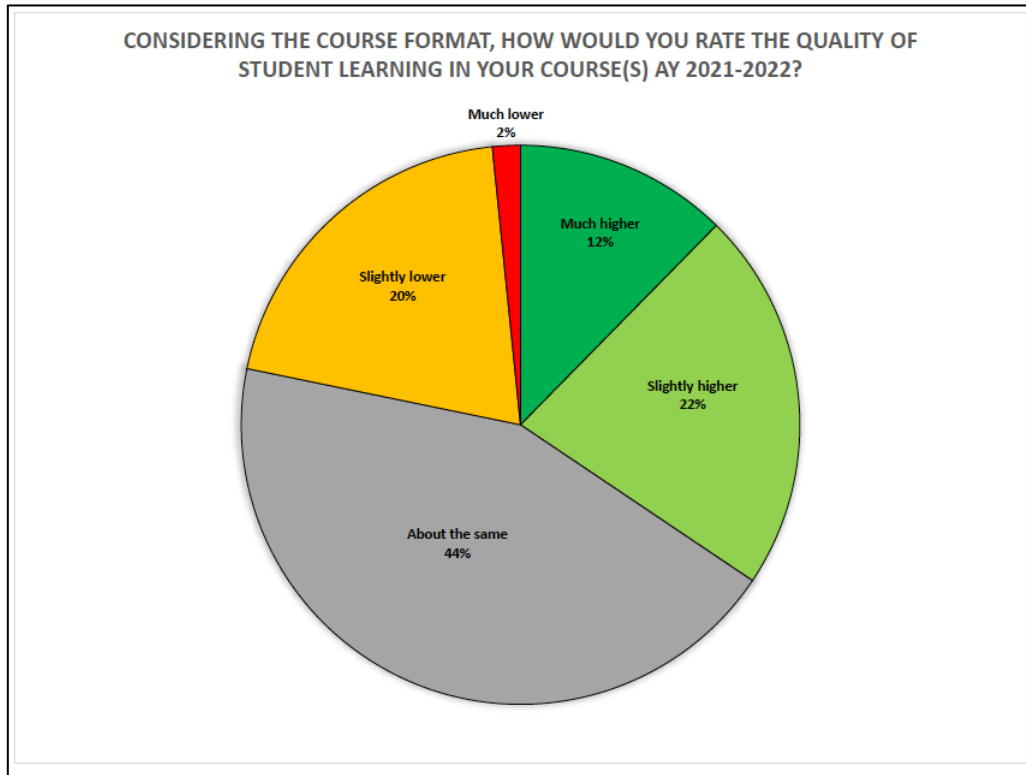


Figure 1.2 - Northeastern University Survey Results: Rating the Quality of Student Learning in Courses AY 2021-2022

A large percentage of instructors surveyed (44%) reported that the quality of student learning remained “about the same” in AY 2021-2022, 34% rated the quality of student learning as ‘slightly’ or ‘much’ higher. Only 22% of instructors surveyed rated the quality of student learning as ‘slightly’ or ‘much’ lower.

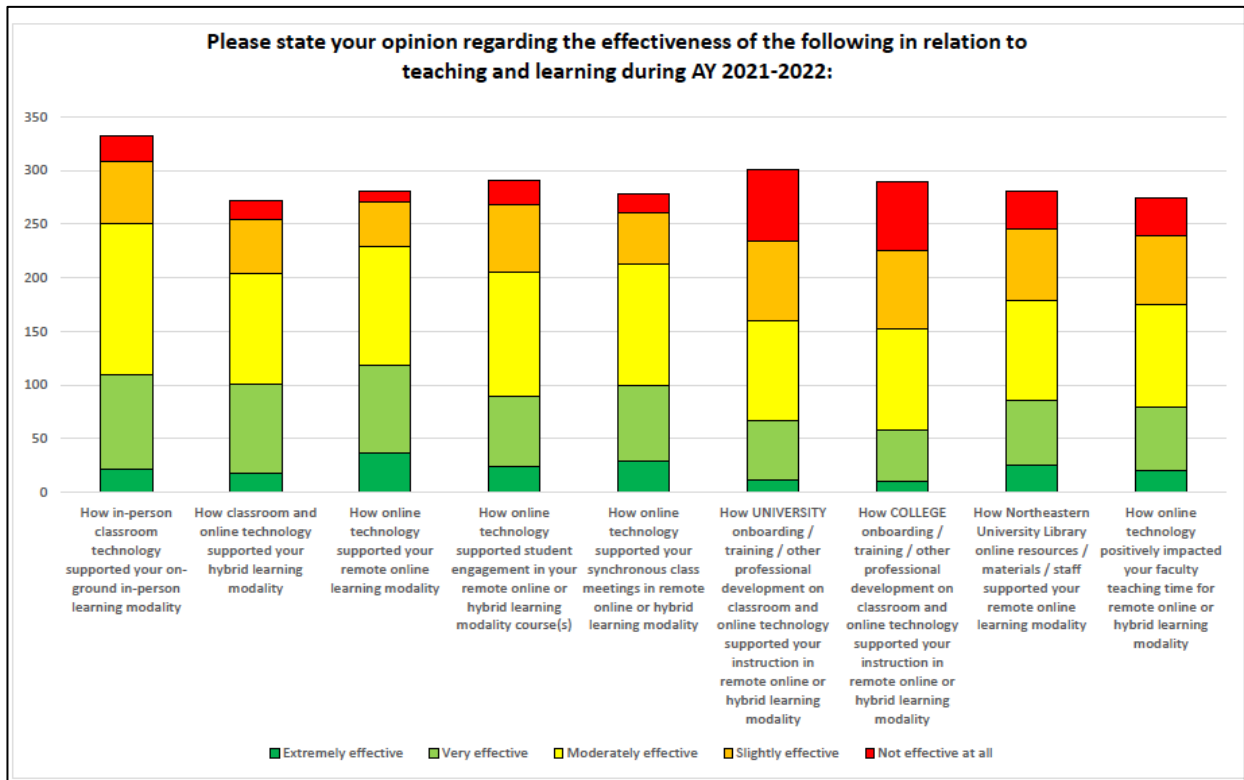


Figure 1.3- Northeastern University Survey Results: Rating Effectiveness of Professional Development and Resources

Classroom technology (supporting on-ground in-person learning modality) as well as online technology (supporting hybrid and/or remote online learning modalities) elicited the larger number of positive responses. The two questions that elicited the largest number of negative responses pertained to how UNIVERSITY and COLLEGE onboarding / training / other professional development on classroom and online technology supported instruction in remote online or hybrid learning modality.

Fall Survey Question 3 Please describe one change that you made in AY 2021-2022 in your teaching and assessment strategies related to an in-person, hybrid or remote online course

Process: Qualitative responses were first organized by hybrid; on ground in person; on ground in person, hybrid; on ground in person, remote online, hybrid; remote online; and remote online, hybrid. Themes were identified and responses counted using Excel find function. Representative responses for the committee charge were identified. Some faculty did not provide their teaching modality, but their responses were included for consideration.

Theme	Responses	Representative Comments
Class Attendance	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stopped taking attendance Students felt high level of trust
Office Hours	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used Zoom to increase office hours and team meetings
Flipped Classroom	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moved to a flipped classroom leveraging video lectures for out of class learning and more in-class activities and exercises.
Peer	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added more peer review/peer feedback to improve online engagement Teaching online provided students opportunity for peer review of writing
Technology	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching with tablets recommended (4)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tech support slow, lack knowledge; improve tech support (3) • Sound often does not work in classroom
Exam	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moved to take home, open note in Canvas (4) • Eliminated exams due to online cheating risk
Recorded Lectures	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recording synchronous lectures supported student absence and review by those who attended class • Created short recorded lectures to improve engagement
Zoom	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoom allowed both students and faculty to stay home when ill or to protect others in their household • Increased use of guest lecturers who would not of come to campus previously • Breakout discussion points, pre/post work posted in Canvas Discussion to foster engagement • For each class have individual/small-group/full cohort activities
Canvas	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed more robust course pages • Synchronous/asynchronous components provided flexibility and variety • Canvas Collaborate
Online Classroom Technology		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate Rise for asynchronous course modules • GradeScope dynamic rubric • Padlets for informal communication and discussion • Teaching Tablet, all faculty should have one • Web-based personal response system • Google sheets, docs • Online tools for informal discussion/response homework

Analysis: AY 2021-2022 instruction modes could be divided into three domains with mixed perception of the quality of the student learning during AY 2021-2022. Qualitative response themes crossed all teaching modalities. Several faculty who taught hybrid courses strongly expressed interest in on ground courses only. They found the technology distracting, cumbersome, support response slow and not always knowledgeable. Those who taught in online appear in the responses to of utilized more technology and multiple methods to engage their students with success. CATLR was referenced by faculty as core their hybrid/online success. Attendance and exams were eliminated by some with no impact on the learning in the online courses. In fact, it was noted by several faculty that there was a shift from test stress to improved learning.

Recommendation(s):

1. Assess faculty onboarding, ongoing training, and other professional development needs related to both in the classroom and online technology for remote online or hybrid learning modalities.
2. Evaluate hybrid, NU Flex classroom technology and support to improve the teaching and learning experience.

Charge 2. In collaboration with the Provost’s office and the FTNTTF Committee, **review faculty equity across the institution** for the following:

a. Teaching workload:

- i. Limits on number of courses (max or min)
- ii. Compensation procedures related to faculty paid by credit hour (known to occur in at least DMSB, CPS)

Process:

The [Provost's resource page](#) was accessed to review current teaching workload policies for Bouvè College of Health Sciences (8), College of Arts, Media and Design (6), Khoury College of Computer Sciences (1), College of Engineering (8), College of Professional Studies (1), College of Science (8), College of Social Sciences and Humanities (11), D'Amore-McKim School of Business (1), and School of Law (1).

It was found that there is variability by faculty role and administrative responsibilities in assigning workload for teaching/research/scholarship within each college and school . Several of these that we noted include:

- Teaching workload is described in policy and may be modified at the discretion of the department chair or similar role.
- One teaching workload unit may be defined by the program/college as 3 or 4 credit hours.
- The majority of teaching workload in reviewed policies is 9 months.
- Nowhere in the policies reviewed were compensation procedures by credit hour identified.

Analysis:

The teaching workload policies reviewed were well-developed and appeared to be equitable if an instructor met the criteria outlined in the schools. Because of the variability of the teaching, scholarship, service, and research workload by various faculty tracks, even within the same college, a variability in expectations for NTT/TT/TT exists.

Recommendation(s):

1. That faculty office assignment criteria be reflected in policy to reflect equitable consideration across faculty.
2. That the One Faculty model be evaluated for adoption and impact.

Charge 2 continued. In collaboration with the Provost's office and the FTNTTF Committee, **review faculty equity across the institution** for the following:

- a. **Distribution of faculty workspace:** breakdown of shared versus individual office space and any procedures utilized to determine distribution of office space
- b. NTT faculty, clinical lab, research, theater rehearsal space not included in decisions. How is this being done? Who are the decision makers, oversight?

Process:

The distribution of faculty workspace was estimated by survey. 133 tenured or tenured track faculty (TT) and 211 non tenure track faculty (NTT) responded. Procedures for office space allocation were determined through communication with college leadership. Information on the total number of empty offices across campus was unavailable, but discussions with COE staff and faculty suggest that there are a very limited number of available offices.

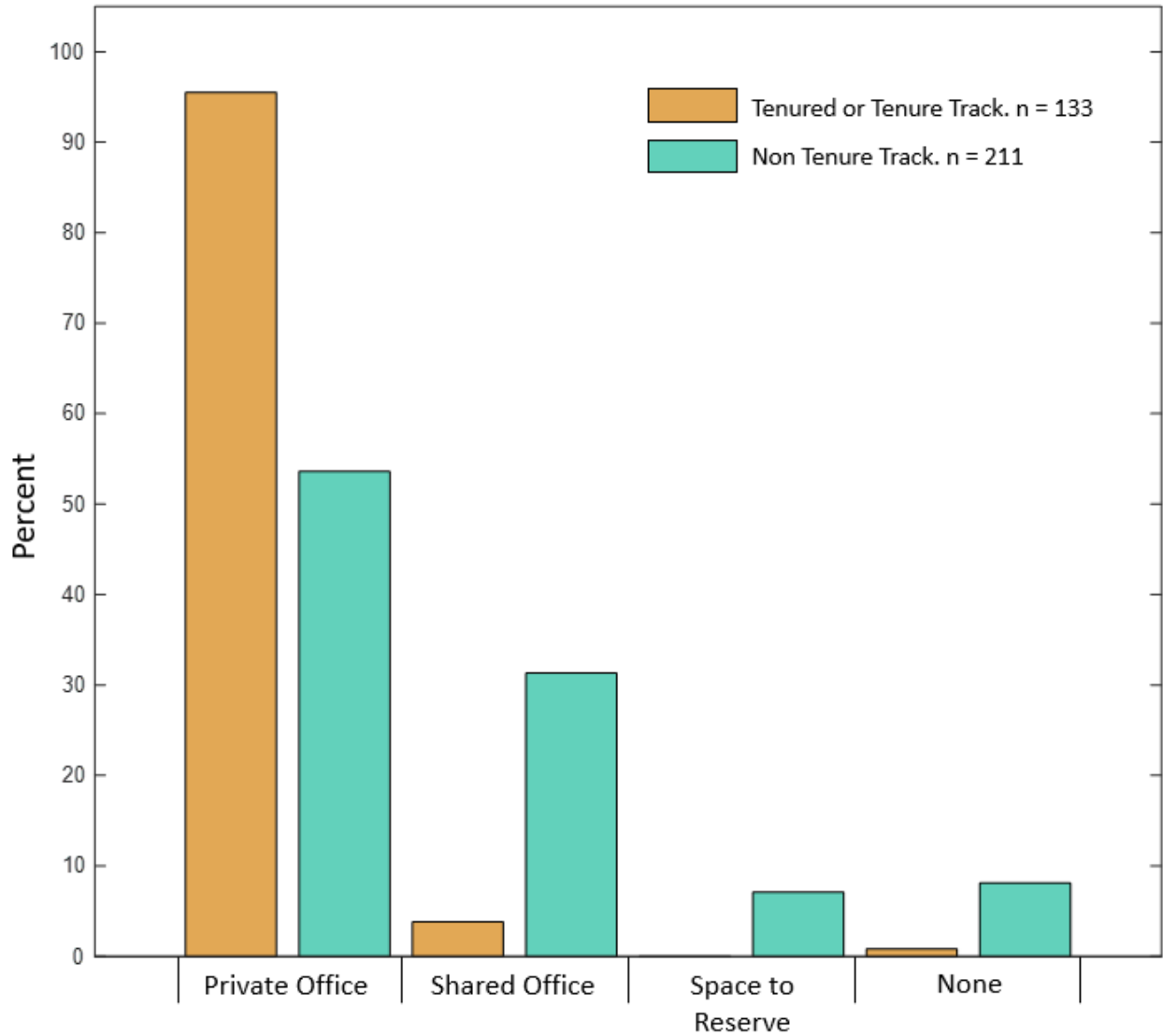


Figure 2.1. Percent of faculty in different office spaces indicates a disparity between tenure track and non-tenure track allotment of private offices.

It's worth noting that concerns about these inequities in office space assignment can have a significant impact on the morale and productivity of faculty members. NTT faculty expressing concern and bad feelings for the disparity in office space assignment may feel undervalued and unsupported, which could lead to a negative impact on their work, retention issues, and difficulties in attracting new faculty.

Table 2.1. Percent of faculty respondents by office space and track

	Private Office	Shared Office	Space to Reserve	None
Tenured or Tenure Track	95.5	3.8	0	0.8
Non Tenure Track	53.6	31.3	7.1	8.1

The table provided suggests that there is a significant difference in the distribution of private versus shared office space between TT and NTT faculty. Specifically, the table shows that 95.5% of TT faculty have access to private offices, while only 53.6% of NTT faculty have access to private offices. Similarly, 31.3% of NTT faculty are assigned to shared office spaces, compared to only 3.8% of TT faculty.

The table also provides information on the percentage of faculty in each category who have reserved office space or no space at all. The disparity between tracks is stark for both space to reserve and no office space at all. This suggests that NTT faculty are particularly vulnerable to not having any office at all.

The data presented in Table 2 suggests that the One Faculty model, which aims to treat all faculty equally, is not viewed as successful by most faculty members. Specifically, the table shows that a relatively high percentage of NTT faculty (23.6% and 28.6 respectively) strongly disagree or disagree that differences between faculty classifications have been minimized, compared to 11.5% and 20.6% of TT faculty. This indicates that NTT faculty may have less positive perceptions of the One Faculty model than their TT track counterparts.

Table 2.2. Percent of faculty responding to the prompt *My experience over the past 6 years is that differences between faculty classifications have been minimized (I.e., the One Faculty model is successful)* by track.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Tenured or Tenure Track	11.5	20.6	34.4	26.7	6.9
Non Tenure Track	23.6	28.6	24.6	18.6	4.5

The median response for TT track faculty was Neutral while for NTT track faculty it was Disagree. Responses between tenured or tenure track and non tenure-track had significantly different ($p < 0.001$) median values and an effect size of 0.19 according to the Wilcoxon rank sum test.

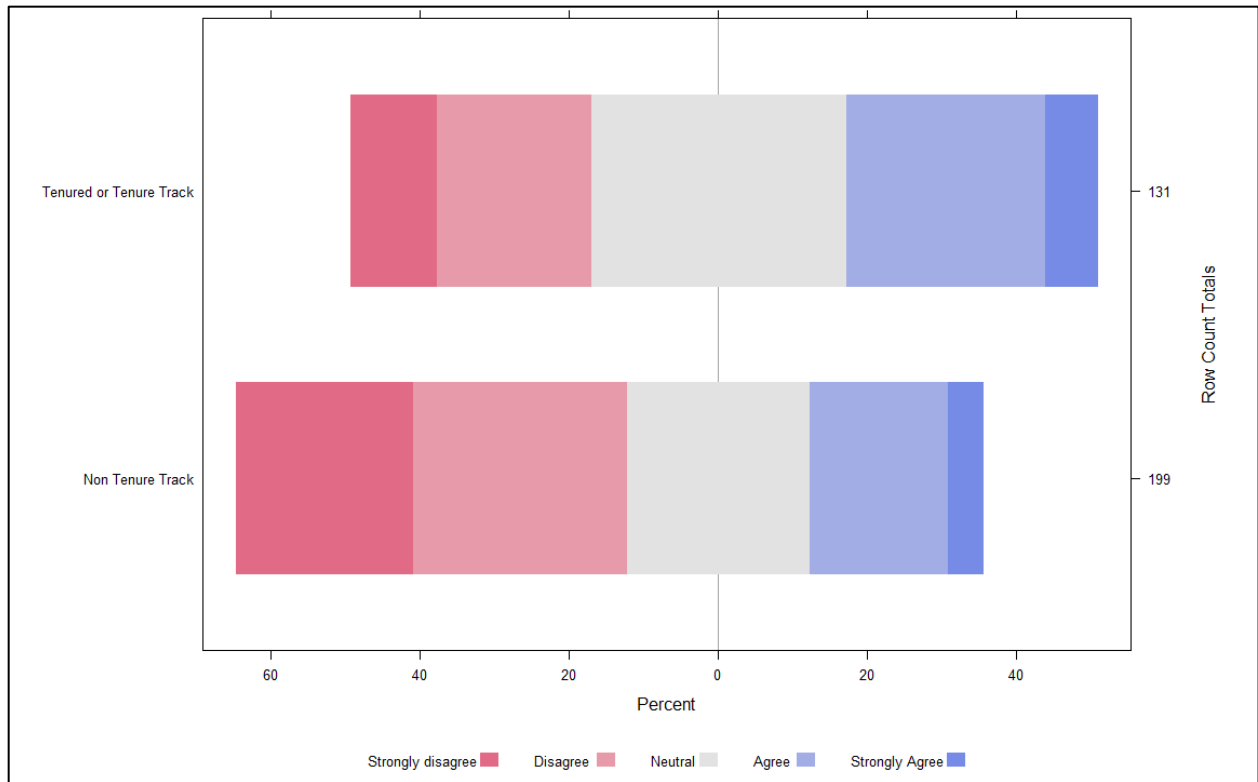


Figure 2.2. Responses to the prompt My experience over the past 6 years is that differences between faculty classifications have been minimized (I.e., the One Faculty model is successful) show significant difference between faculty tracks.

Analysis: There appears to be a connection between the inequity in office space allocation and differences in perceptions of the One Faculty model, as reflected in the data presented in Tables 1 and 2. Specifically, the table in response to the initial prompt suggests that there is a significant disparity between tenure track and non-tenure track faculty in terms of their access to private offices. Meanwhile, Table 2 shows that a higher percentage of non-tenure track faculty strongly disagree or disagree that differences between faculty classifications have been minimized compared to tenured or tenure track faculty.

These findings suggest that differences in perceptions of the One Faculty model may be linked, in part, to the allocation of office space, which can have a significant impact on the overall experience of faculty members. NTT track faculty members who feel that they are being treated unfairly in terms of office space allocation may be more likely to perceive the One Faculty model as unsuccessful, while TT faculty members who have access to private offices may be more likely to perceive the model as successful.

The survey results have revealed a disparity between TT and NTT faculty in terms of their allotment of private offices. This discrepancy has created feelings of inequity and frustration among NTT faculty who feel that they are being treated unfairly.

Recommendation(s):

1. It is recommended that each college creates an office space allocation policy in their bylaws. This policy should outline the process for allocating office space, taking into account factors

such as faculty preferences, accessibility, collaborative needs, seniority, proximity to research space, and other relevant considerations. A comprehensive office space allocation policy should also define who is responsible for making decisions related to office space allocation.

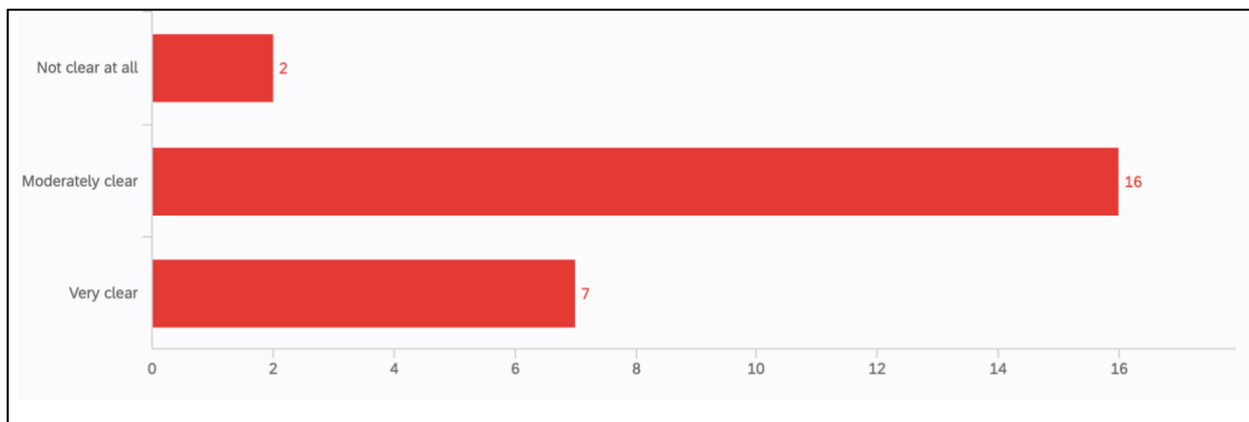
2. Additionally, it is recommended that colleges calculate and publish the distribution of office spaces, in order to increase transparency and promote equity in the allocation of office space. This information could be shared with faculty members on an annual basis, and could be used to inform discussions and decisions related to office space allocation.

Charge 3. Conduct a survey of **jointly appointed faculty** across the university to explore and provide recommendations on perceptions of:

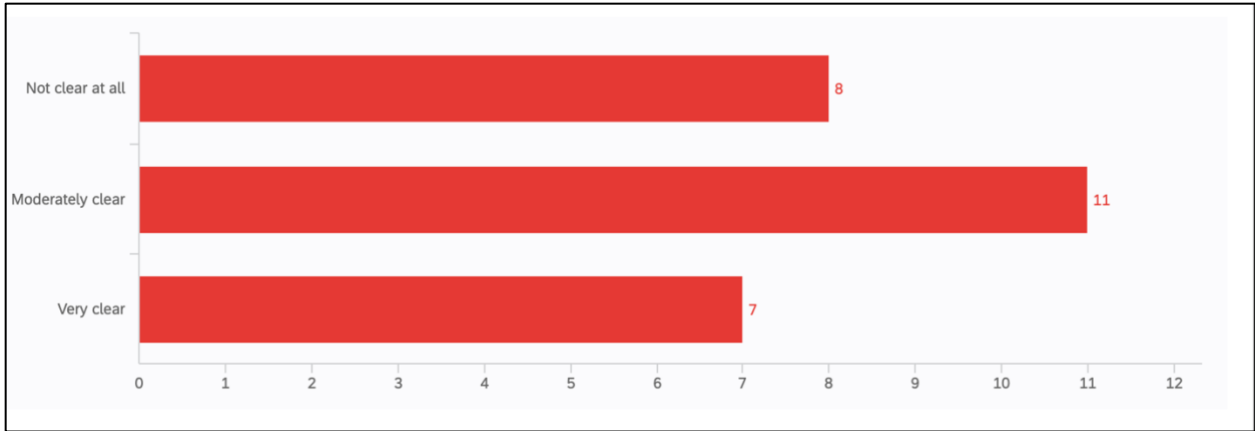
- a. Clarity in distribution of workload percentages
- b. Clarity with merit and equity compensation processes
- c. Communication processes between unit administrators and jointly appointed faculty
- d. Unit leader adherence to approved merit/equity and workload policies

Process: A survey of jointly appointed faculty consisted of the following 11 questions. The results of the survey can be seen after each question. 351 people answered the survey, 61% were full time non-tenure track faculty, 37% were tenure track faculty, 2% of respondents declined to answer this question. Of the respondents 31 faculty hold joint appointments (8.8%), of these 65% were T/TT faculty and 35% FTNTT faculty, with 5 faculty declining to answer the question.

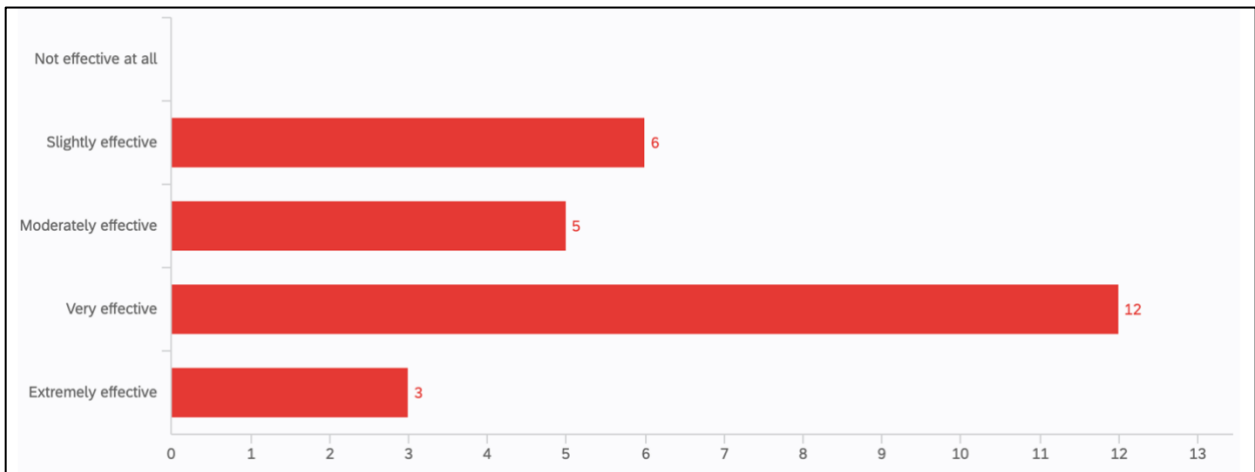
1. Please rate how clear the workload percentages are in each unit?



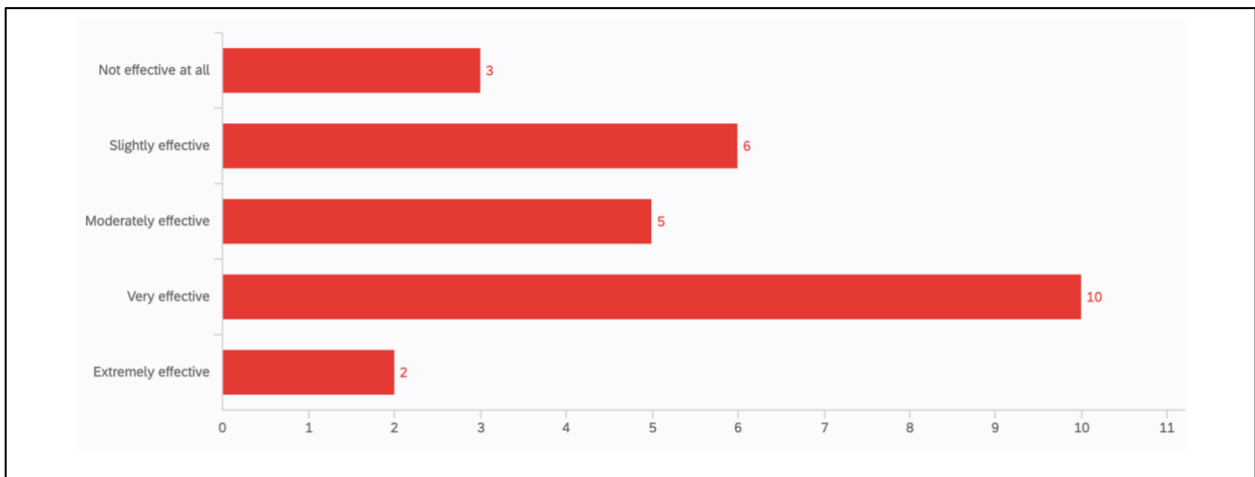
2. Please rate how clear the merit and compensation processes are in each unit?



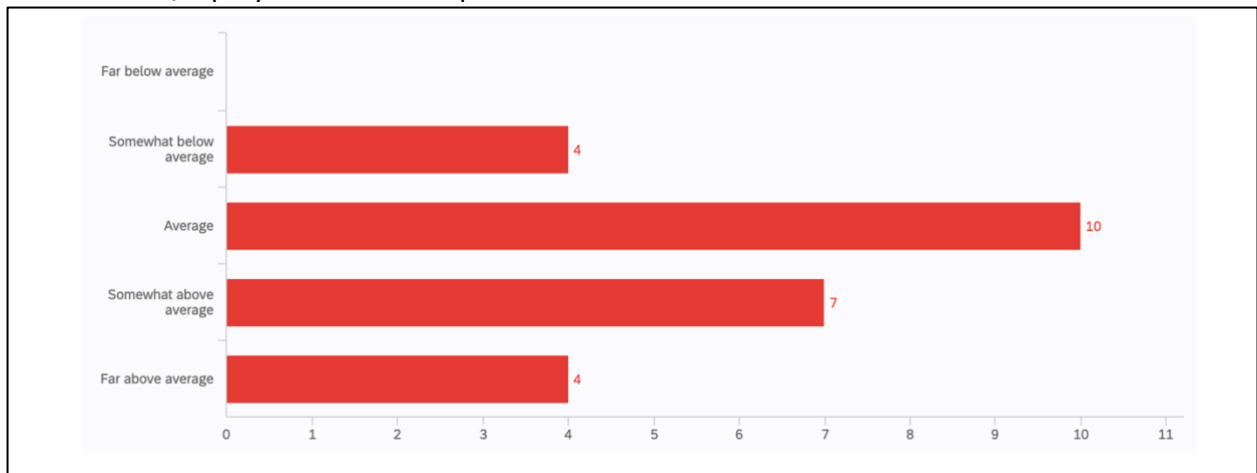
3. How would you rate your communication with the administrators of each unit?



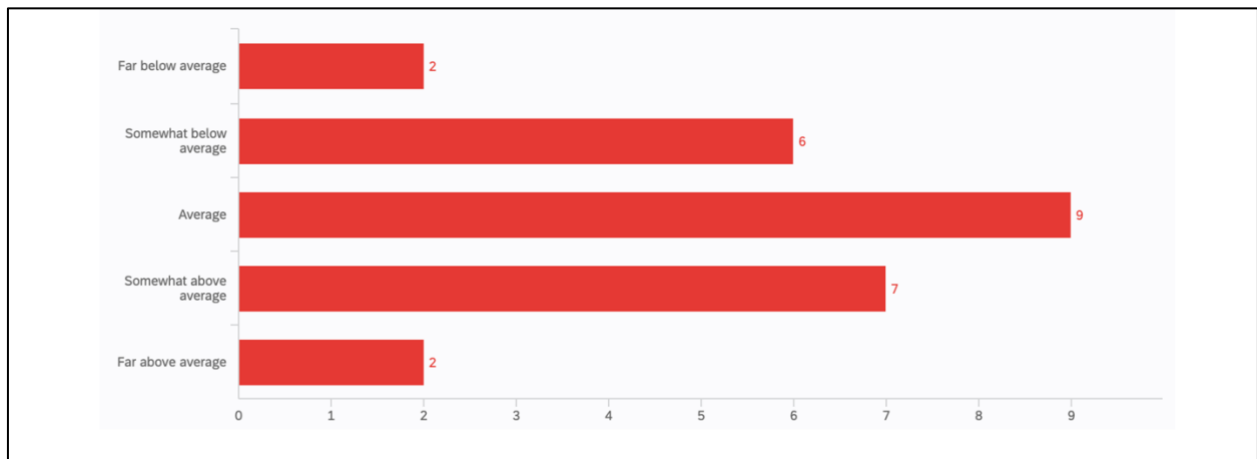
4. How would you rate the communication between administrators of each unit as it relates to your joint appointment?



- Please rate how well your unit leaders in each department/college adhere to approved merit/equity and workload policies.



- Please rate how well your unit leaders in each department/college communicate information on merit/equity and workload assignments to you.



Analysis:

While the combined results of the survey questions seem to suggest satisfactory communication, workload and merit procedures between departments/colleges regarding joint appointments, when asked to expand beyond these questions there are underlying concerns for faculty who hold these appointments.

It should be noted that this is a small sample size and may not reflect the concerns of all faculty who hold joint appointments.

Recommendation(s):

- Merit and workload assignments be clarified in written policy for current jointly appointed faculty and negotiated by the departments/colleges prior to joint appointment for new hires.

2. Chairs/department heads should collaborate to clearly define expectations for service in addition to teaching load.
3. Service should be limited to the department/college for which the faculty has the largest percentage of affiliation for FTNTT faculty or for T/TT faculty whichever is considered their pre-tenure home department.
4. Regular communication between chairs/unit heads occur with joint appointment faculty to relieve the burden of the faculty having to initiate conversations.

Charge 4. Review NU academic plan, **identify aspects of the plan that apply to the work of this committee**, and provide recommendations for possible future committee charges

Process: The pillars of the academic plan were compared to the committee recommendations.

Recommendation(s):

- Explore ways to incorporate diversity and inclusion considerations in office space allocation and workload assignment policies. This could include ensuring that faculty from underrepresented backgrounds have equitable access to resources, as well as accommodating the unique needs of faculty involved in interdisciplinary or collaborative projects.
- Develop guidelines for communication between departments, colleges, and administrative units to ensure that office space allocation and workload assignment policies align with the broader goals and priorities of the academic plan. This may include creating a centralized system for tracking and sharing information about office space allocation and faculty workloads.
- Monitor the impact of the academic plan's global initiatives on faculty workloads. Consider how expanding global opportunities and partnerships may affect faculty members' needs for office space and resources and develop strategies to accommodate these changes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Darin Detwiler
Co-Chair-CPS - Graduate Programs

Lynn Reede
Co-Chair -BCHS - School Of Nursing

Jennifer Ingemi
COS – Psychology

Michael Jaeggli
COE - Bioengineering

Daniel Noemi Voionmaa
CSSH - Cultures, Societies, & Global Studies

Gary Porter
DMSB - Finance Group