University Faculty Affairs Committee (UFAC) Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 30, 2023, 2:30 p.m

Virtual Meeting through Zoom

Attendance: Amrita Dhar, Smita Jain Oxford, Bradley Lamphere, Miriam Liss (acting secretary), Kyle Schultz, Jessica Zeitz (chair)

Upcoming Meetings: February 2, 1:30 pm; February 23, 1:00 pm; March 29, 1:00 pm.

Continuing Business

Faculty Morale and Burnout Survey: UFAC reviewed the faculty morale survey report written by the committee last year and determined some recommendations may be out of date due to the AOWG initiative. UFAC edited the document accordingly and included it as an addendum to these minutes.

Academic Organization Workgroup: AOWG will distribute their report tomorrow. UFAC discussed whether the process has been sufficiently transparent. Although AOWG elicited input regularly regarding the models being discussed, these models were often in draft form and quite vague. UFAC unanimously agreed that, under these circumstances it was difficult to provide feedback without having sufficient detail. UFAC would like to see another opportunity for faculty to comment on the AOWG report with specific model(s) presented.

UFAC specifically calls upon the Provost to allow the faculty an opportunity to provide feedback to the AOWG report and ask that he use both the report *and* faculty feedback on it to inform his final decision. The UFAC chair will email the Provost to make this request.

Faculty Teaching Loads: UFC has charged UFAC to review this issue further. The chair has contacted Ian Finlayson, who has written code to scrape information from Banner that will provide data on all courses taught during the last 5 to 7 years, organized by faculty member. The chair provide these data to UFAC for review.

The UFC charge entails a two-step process. First, UFAC needs to determine the current landscape of faculty teaching loads, organized by department. Important data include: credit hours, contact hours, WI classes, FSEM classes, independent study/internships, and number of students taught. UFAC will bein reviewing the data from Banner.

Additional information, such as how independent studies or internship is handled, will be elicited from department chairs. UFAC will also seek information about special assignments or any other reason that a faculty has an official release (e.g., Jepson Fellowships, Sabbaticals, QEP releases). The UFAC chair will ask the Provost for assistance with gathering special assignment information.

Second, once we understand the current situation, UFAC will make recommendations, which could include a weighting scheme or a model, such as the one used at Texas Tech.

New Business

UFAC determined meeting times for the spring semester:

- Friday, February 2, 1:30 pm
- Friday, February 23, 1:00 pm
- Friday, March 29, 1:00 pm.

The meeting concluded at 3:41 pm.

Report on the Results of the Faculty Morale Survey
UMW Faculty Affairs Committee
November 2023

Introduction

The University Faculty Affairs Committee (UFAC) is charged with studying and recommending to the University Faculty Council action concerning University-level policies on faculty welfare as well as to formulate and present to the University Faculty Council recommendations concerning workload distribution, academic leave, compensation, and employee benefits. To that end, the UFAC conducted a survey of faculty experiences in the spring semester of 2023. The last faculty morale survey was conducted in 2015 and was limited to College of Arts and Sciences faculty. Particularly given the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, the committee believed it was important to provide an opportunity for faculty to share their thoughts. The UFAC includes representatives from all three colleges.

The objectives of this study were to gain insights into the experiences and perceptions of the faculty community at UMW and to better understand faculty concerns. Our goal was to be able to identify critical problems facing faculty and help develop ideas for solutions.

Methods

The questions on this survey came from a number of sources and were informed by the survey previously administered to faculty affiliated with the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies program. Other questions were inspired by the 2020-2021 Faculty Morale Survey from Missouri State University and the Maslach-Burnout Inventory. The committee designed and wrote the survey and it was disseminated and analyzed with help from the Office of Institutional Analysis and Effectiveness.

Instrument

The survey included nine sections covering the core areas of life as a faculty member at UMW, from facilities and support services to compensation to workload and balance. Most items had a Likert-type scale (Agreement, Higher/Lower, Frequency, etc.) Each section also included an open-ended comment block. Faculty were free to leave any question blank. Two optional demographic questions were provided at the end of the survey to ask participants about tenure status and college, and general demographic information (such as gender identity) was provided by the Office of Institutional Analysis and Effectiveness.

Distribution

All full-time faculty were invited to take the survey, which was sent from the Office of Institutional Analysis and Effectiveness to each faculty member's UMW email address using a unique link.

The survey was conducted through the Qualtrics online survey platform. 229 total faculty members were invited to complete the survey and 130 responded, a response rate of 56.8%.

Data Analysis

The University Faculty Affairs Committee, with assistance from the Office of Institutional Analysis and Effectiveness, used the reports generated by Qualtrics to provide descriptive statistics. The Office of Institutional Analysis and Effectiveness used coding to identify themes across survey sections and comments. Most sections had over twenty comments provided by respondents.

Results

Faculty were asked about their satisfaction with regard to university facilities and support services. As displayed in the charts below, most faculty were relatively satisfied with university facilities and services, but a notable exception was "Support for scholarly research and creative activity (time, finances, space, etc.)" Over half of respondents (56.58%) were "Somewhat dissatisfied" or "Dissatisfied" with support in this area.
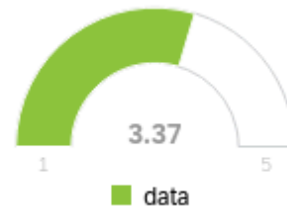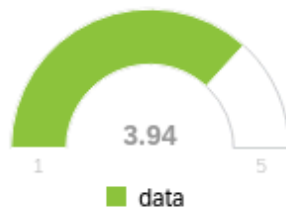
Classroom facilities

4.04
1   5
■ data
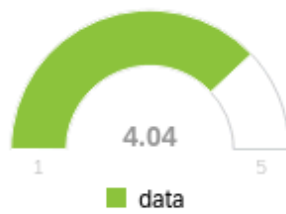
Personal office facilities

4.14
1   5
■ data
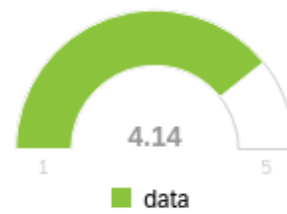
Instructional technology (projectors, lectern computers, office computers, etc.)

4.11
1   5
■ data

Administrative support for faculty

3.37
1   5
■ data

Support for teaching development

3.94
1   5
■ data

Faculty development programs such as sabbaticals and fellowships

3.32
1   5
■ data
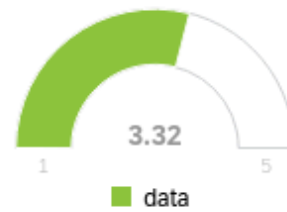
Support for academic conference travel
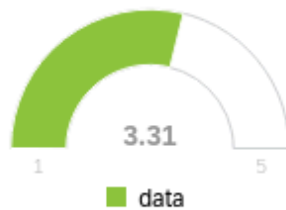
3.31
1   5
■ data

Support for scholarly research and creative activity (time, finances, space, etc.)

2.63
1   5
■ data
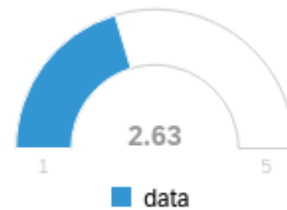
When we consider compensation, ratings were relatively low when faculty compared themselves to others in their department (or college if the respondent was a faculty member in COB or COE) or the university as a whole. They were lowest, however, when faculty compared their salaries to other faculty members at peer institutions.
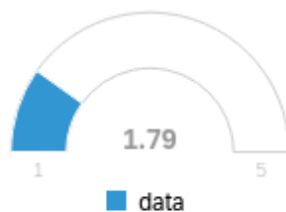
In comparison to my department (or college if COB or COE), my salary is...

2.78

1   5

■ data
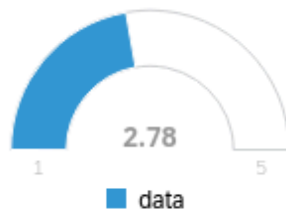
In comparison to other faculty at the university of my rank, my salary is...

2.48

1   5

■ data
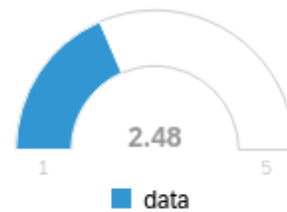
In comparison to other faculty at peer institutions of my rank, my salary as a faculty member at the University of Mary Washington is...

1.79

1   5

■ data

In general, faculty reported that the courses they taught were aligned with their interests and background, and that class sizes were generally conducive for student learning. Perceptions of teaching loads, however, varied, with over one-third of faculty (35.35%) reporting that they "Disagreed" or "Strongly Disagreed" with the statement: "My teaching load is equitable compared to that of other faculty members at the University."
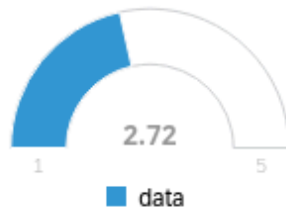
Class sizes for the courses I teach are conducive to student learning.

4.01

1   5

■ data

My teaching load is acceptable.

3.01

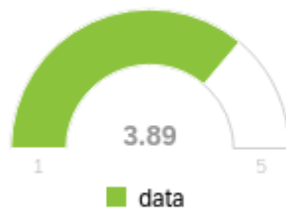1   5

■ data

My teaching load is equitable compared to that of other faculty members at the University.

2.72

1   5

■ data

The courses I am assigned to teach are aligned with my interests and background.

4.3

1   5

■ data

The support I have for my teaching is appropriate.

3.89

1   5

■ data

My academic advising load is reasonable.

3.3

1   5

■ data

A considerable number of faculty (66.31%) reported that their service responsibilities extended beyond formal departmental or university service roles. Faculty also felt that committee assignments and service duties were not equitable across the university.
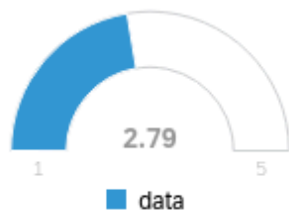
Committee assignments and service duties are reasonable.

3.25

1   5

■ data
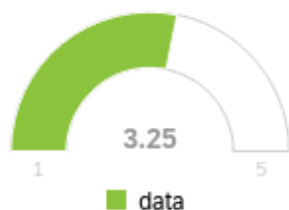
My committee assignments and service duties are equitable compared to other faculty across my department (or college if COB/COE).

3.15

1   5

■ data

Committee assignments and service duties are equitable compared to other faculty across the University.

2.79

1   5

■ data

My committee work is appreciated and respected by other faculty.

3.16

1   5

■ data
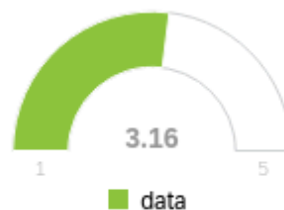
My service responsibilities are limited to formal departmental or university service roles.

2.28

1   5

■ data
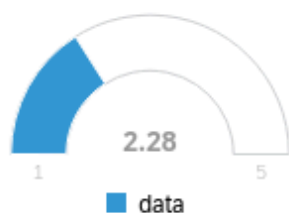
When faculty considered their ideal balance of teaching, research, and service, most faculty preferred the balance to be more focused on teaching and research, with either a relatively even balance of each or slightly more emphasis on teaching, and less time for service.
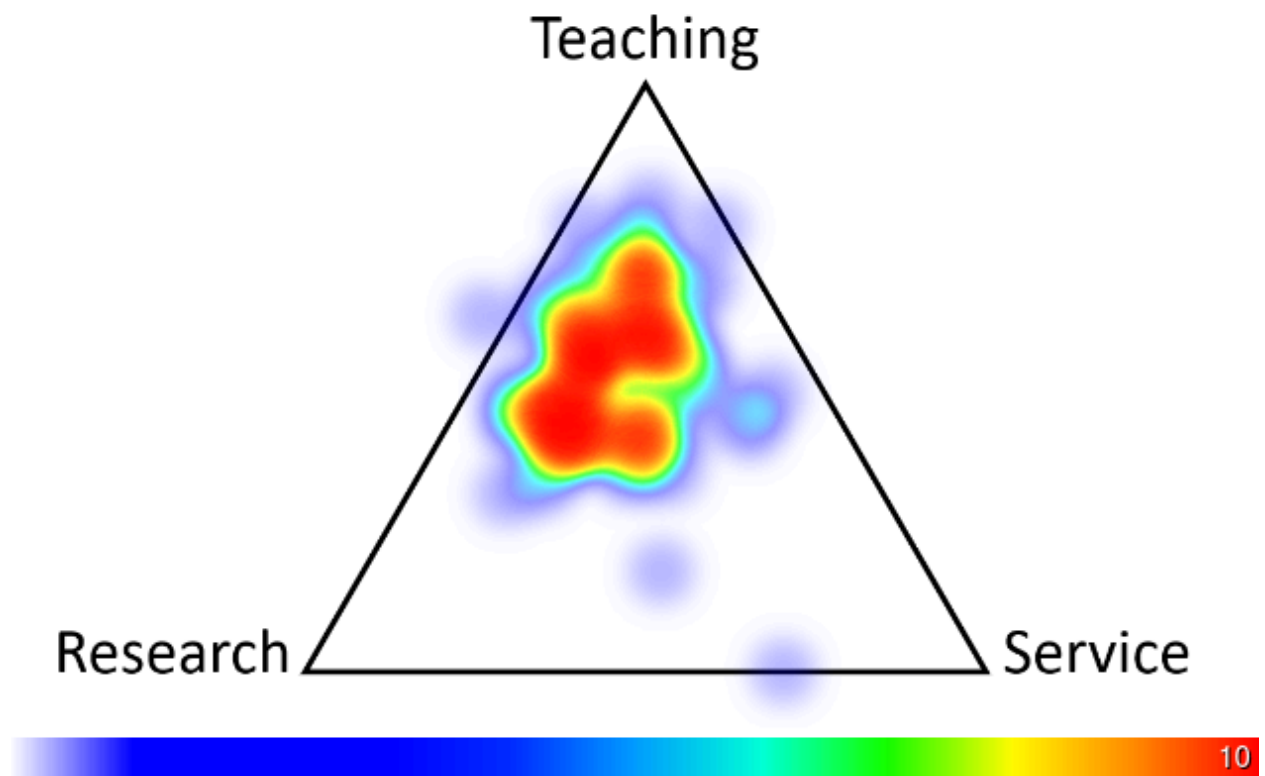
In reality, however, faculty reported a significant amount of time on service, almost as much as teaching in many cases, and another cluster reported spending far more time and energy on teaching than the other two areas.
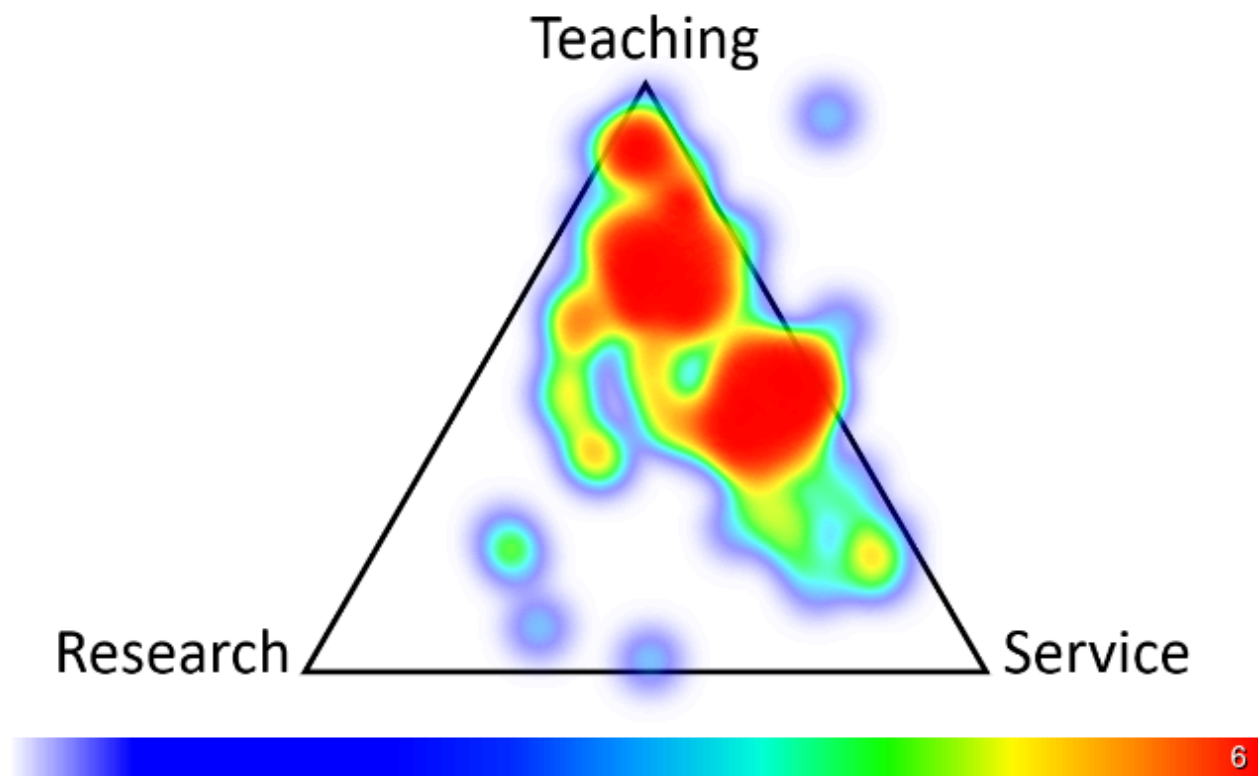
Averages of each of the question clusters were calculated and analyses were made based on gender, race, and college. There were several significant differences based on gender. Female faculty felt significantly more stressed by workload. For this variable cluster, higher scores mean less satisfaction and more stress. Men were significantly more satisfied with their service load - for this variable higher scores indicated greater levels of satisfaction. Finally, men were significantly more likely to say that their salary was equitable compared to other people in the University.

Overall, these gender differences indicate that the female faculty at UMW are feeling more overburdened by workload (e.g., dealing with students' emotional needs) and feel that their service loads are inequitable and overly taxing. They also feel as though their compensation is not equitable.

Workload average

Simple Bar Mean of workload by Gender

Error Bars: 95% CI
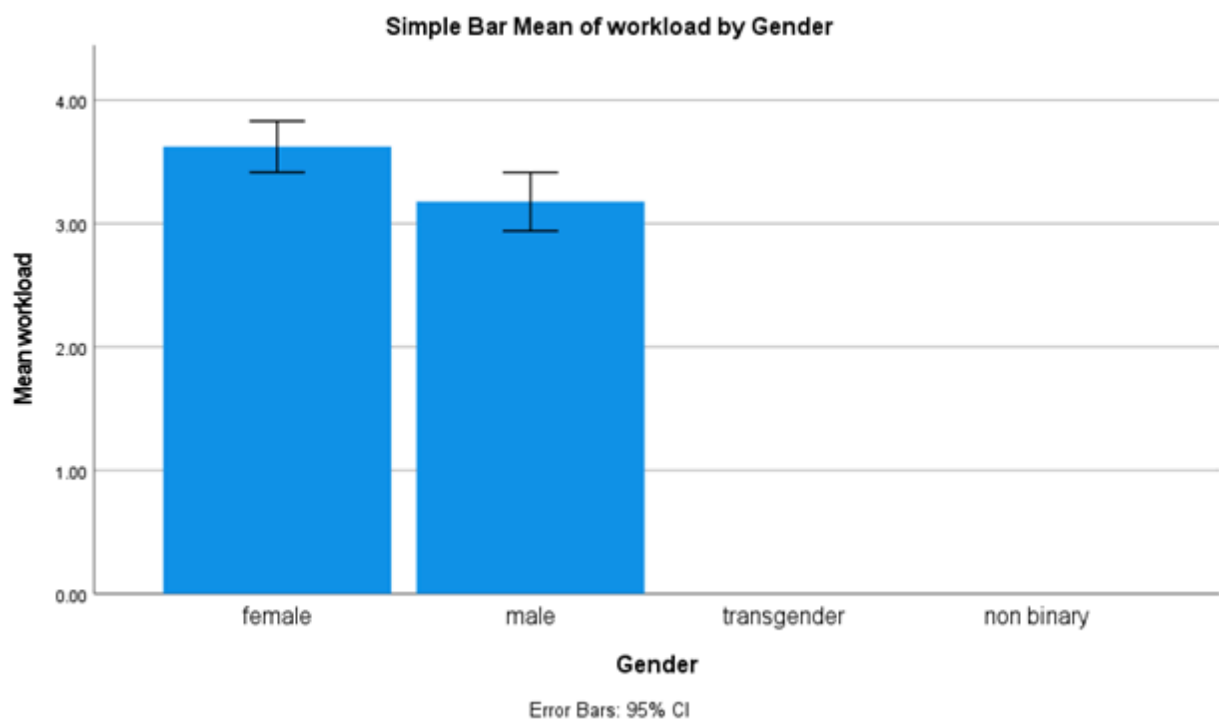
Women are taking on significantly larger workloads than men

Note: Men are more likely to feel that service is fair and equitable than women

Average of perceptions of service:

Simple Bar Mean of compensation2 by Gender

Error Bars: 95% CI
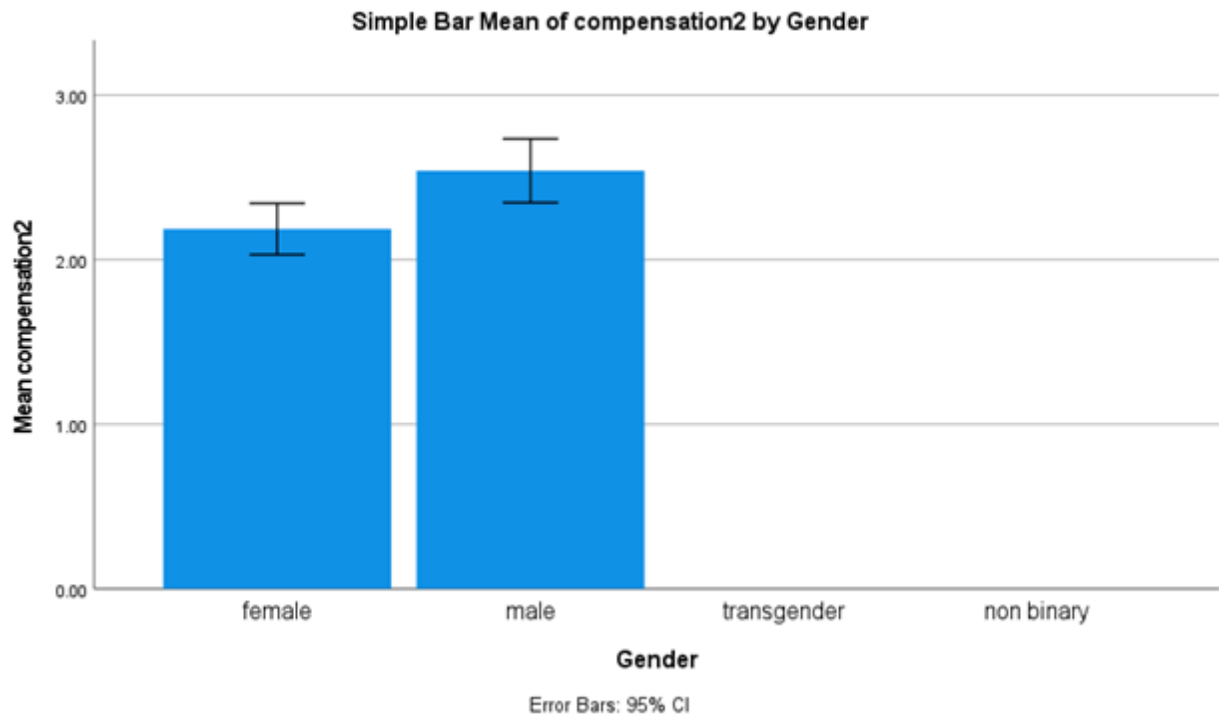
Note - men are more likely to say that their compensation is higher than their colleagues

Qualitative Coding (From Debra's Office)

Q3 - Please add any comments you have about this section (facilities and support services). If you have suggestions about steps the University could take to improve your satisfaction in this domain we are particularly interested in hearing them.

Practical solutions being offered:

1-   **Guidance for accessible furniture. (2)**

2-   **Cleaner work repairs (use of dropcloths)**

3-   **Occasional office vacuuming and emptying of trash (2)**

4-   **Faculty training on new instructional technology**

5-   **AC/heating system maintenance**

6-   **Clearer/more flexible tenure requirements (2)**

7-   **More rigorous teaching innovative program (team teaching, teaching exchanges, meaningful workshops programs for mid-career faculty)**

8-   **Reboot access to computers open to faculty**

9-   **Regular spot checking in the HCC to make sure technology is working adequately**

10- **Time compensation for research/work with individual students (4)**

11- **Guaranteed sabbaticals every X years (2)**

12- **3-3 workloads (rather than 4-4) for active research faculty, etc (2)**

The relationship between UMW and the Foundation continues to baffle me.

-   **Improve relationship between UMW and the Foundation.**

Here again, I think a lot of this depends on the individuals in the specific positions. Some chairs are very strict about policy and others not. Especially in CAS there's a lot of variation in terms of what faculty experience, how much support, transparency, etc. they get.

-   **More transparency on decision making**

Departmental democracy has been slipping away. Increasingly chairs have made unilateral decisions without consultation with the department. The Dean has been too timid to intervene.

- Better coordination with departments and more intervention from the office of the Dean.

Expectations for P&T do not equate to the reality of the work expected. Provide more opportunity to pursue individual interests that fall outside mission/interests of the university/college/department.

- More interest and interaction from P&T.

I have a great department chair, so no complaints there. I do feel like some of the promotion/tenure criteria could use a look. I remember that at the last CAS P&T meeting, no one could answer the question of whether teaching/scholarship/service done in the 6th year can be considered when one is going up for full professor. (Some on the committee said yes, and some no.) But if that year can't count for full professor, then it can't count for anything, as it's too late to count for tenure. It would also be great if the digital tenure files specified a page limit rather than a size limit in MB, as scanned files can be quite large these days. The page limit would keep things fair, rather than giving an advantage to those with advanced computer skills. Or maybe an either/or? (500-page limit OR X MB?)

- Limit the size in MB and/or pages of digital tenure.

Teaching load is anything but transparent, this needs to be addressed. As of now, the disparity is evident and unfair.

- More transparency and fairness teaching load.

I love my department. It feels very fair and democratic.

- No issues.

The communication is done primarily though the Handbook, but the policies within departments is not well defined. Department Handbooks should be developed to permit committees such as the tenure and promotion committee specific information on what is expected within the discipline

- Improve department's Handbooks.

The promotion and tenure committee does excellent work.

- No issues.

The Faculty Handbook is a reliable source of information. Decisions about budgets within COE seem to be less-reliably communicated, but that's also literally above my paygrade. :-)

- More communication within COE about budget decisions.

Teaching load makes research impossible but maybe more incentives over the summer to get into research (fellowships, stipends etc) might help productivity

- More incentives over the summer to make research more possible.

I'd like to see more transparency in workload of faculty across departments. Rumors have it that some faculty/departments have lower teaching credit hours for whatever reasons. Other departments seems to incorporate undergraduate research into their teaching load when others don't. Also, the fact that a 3-hour lab course only counts as 1 credit hour of teaching seems unfair when the same amount of teaching time is required for a 3-hr class and the prep time can be just as much as time consuming in preparing for the lab, purchasing lab materials, and setting up the lab. More transparency with this would be helpful.

- Better balance of credits within 1 and 3 hours classes.

Faculty should be fully paid for laboratory instructional time during summer school.

- Fully pay faculty for laboratory instructional time during summer semester.

Again, many small issues. I am chair of my department; it is hard to really discuss issues with all faculty. Partly this is caused by holding department meetings by zoom, because not everyone is or wants to be on campus on a meeting day. But it was an issue before that too - hold lots of small conversations instead of any or many whole group discussions. Budget is okay for us, but fear of cuts. Evaluation feedback is quick and cursory for most faculty. I try hard to trust my colleagues re. P&T and for the most part do; occasionally hear about bizarre admin decisions though.

- Make complete payments to faculty for their laboratory instructional time during summer period.

Why can't there be a congratulatory announcement to the entire university listing those who won promotion and/or tenure?

- Make promotion and/or tenure announcements public to the entire university.

In reference to the question about us sticking to our own policies, I was very frustrated to see that we again appointed a provost without a full search. I very much like Tim O'Donnell and this is in no way a statement against him. But it does rankle that we cannot hire so much as a one-year visiting instructor without conducting a time-intensive national search, while a position as important as that of provost can be appointed directly (for the second time in a row). Especially when we are told that it is for DEI reasons, our searches are more complicated because of that, and the provost is a white male (again nothing against Tim -- I believe he'd be a strong candidate had we done a search).

- Improve research and make a more detailed search when hiring a provost.

As long as the college follow the P&T guidelines in the Faculty Handbook, we're fine. Once a committee strays from the Handbook, we have problems.

-       Always follow the guidelines and rules from the Handbook.

Speaking specifically to department budgets, why do some departments have enough "extra" money to fund faculty development and student travel to conferences and others could not come close to that?

-       More equality on department budgets.

Compensation doesn't reflect cost of living increases, inflation, housing prices in Fredericksburg, not to mention that many colleagues actually live in higher cost-of-living areas

-       Increase on payment due to higher living expenses and inflation.

1. Suggestion - have some sort of "tenure and promotion" workshop available once or twice a year where people can hear from the provost or deans about P&T. The handbook leaves room for interpretation, which can be advantageous but also makes it difficult as an applicant. 2. Suggestion - Sometimes I think our communication top-down could be a lot better. Things are inevitably going to pop-up, but when they do, communication from the top about why, what things are going to look like, etc. are so important.

-       Have tenure and promotion workshops and improve communication.

I'm not sure any way around it, but tenure decisions can vary widely depending on who is on the committee, which is unsettling for new faculty.

-       Inform who is on the committee and who make the tenure decisions.

Having more particulars in terms of promotion to full would be helpful. And ensuring that rating teaching, which should be our main priority, is at the top of that would be nice.

-       Have more information about the criteria to be promoted, and focus more on rate teaching.

P&T unless you're on the committee, you really don't know how decisions are made. Question is kind of bogus. Annual evaluation criteria are at odds with the P&T criteria. Use of teaching evaluations in P&T needs to be formally addressed.   I forget what the other things were in this section.   Budgets-the info is there for the faculty who are interested enough to seek it out, but a whole lot of faculty are clueless about our real situation.

-       Share how the committee's decisions are made.

Communication seems lacking at every level. I don't know why there isn't MORE communication from all levels of admin. And the tight curation of messaging, and increasing reliance on Eagle Eye - and the removal of all fac/staff email makes this problem SO much worse. Please consider revising this approach to internal communication.

- Improve communication from all levels of admin.

Why do department chairs focus so completely on developing centers of power within a department? Why are chairs allowed/encouraged to chair continuously? The position of chair here at UMW needs a serious review. This should be a position that faculty share within the department. Does anyone really think there will be an open discussion in a department meeting about this?

- Review the position of chair.

Question 8: Please add any comments you have about this section (compensation).

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Readjust for Cost of Living/Readjust Benchmark	34.29%	12
2	Unaware of Others Salaries	14.29%	5
3	Salaries Based on Experience/Raises on Merit	11.43%	4
4	Moving College of Business back under College of Arts and Sciences	11.43%	4
5	Paying for Summer Student Research Mentoring and Mentored Student Research During the Summer	11.43%	4
6	Better Benefits In Lieu of Higher Salary Increase (Free education for dependents of faculty)	5.71%	2
7	More Pay for Faculty with 14+ Students in Summer Sessions	2.86%	1
8	Prioritize Lower Paid Departments	2.86%	1
9	Shift Responsibilities from Faculty back to Administration	2.86%	1

#	Answer	%	Count
10	Create J-Term to Supplement Faculty Salaries	2.86%	1
	Total	100%	35

Q10: Please add any comments you have about this section (teaching advising). If you have suggestions about steps the University could take to improve your satisfaction in this domain we are particularly interested in hearing this.

#	Answer	%	Count
1	High Contact Hours / Count Contact Hours vs. Credit Hours	11.11%	6
2	Administrative Functions Becoming Faculty Functions	3.70%	2
3	Lack of Resources for Certain Courses	3.70%	2
4	Unequal/Heavy Teaching Loads	38.89%	21
5	Creating Smaller Class Sizes	14.82%	8
6	Burden of FSEMS	14.82%	8
7	Lack of Pay/Time for Conducting Undergraduate Research, Independent Projects, etc.	7.41%	4
8	Lack of Faculty on Campus Due to Online Learning	3.70%	2
9	Inadequate Class Times/Schedules (Ex: 8am)	1.85%	1
	Total	100%	54

Q12 - Please add any comments you have about this section (service).

- **Explain better about service in the university and in each department.**

- **Be fair in the amount of effort put into service.**

- **Service expectations should be communicated to more senior faculty.**

- **More clear university and department service expectations.**

- **Give more time to small departments to do their responsibilities.**

- **Make committee meetings in-person.**

- **Create more positions in order to get more people elected.**

- **Reduce the service expectations.**

- **Be more equitable between COB and CAS faculty.**

- **Check the unofficial service.**

- **More guidance to untenured faculty on service.**

- **Explain questions better.**

- **No issues.**

- **Distribute formal service more equitably within faculty.**

- **Change some rules on committees about people who chair and the process to be part of it.**

- **Service should be equal to every faculty member.**

- **Count service more highly in P&T.**

- **Compensate equally the time of service.**

- Reduce the time of service for people who have a lot.

- Improve service.

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- Appreciate more informal advising to faculty of color.

- Not let untenured faculty take informal service roles.

- Make service time equal to all faculty.

- Make service time equal to all faculty.

- Make service time equal to all faculty.

- Distribute the workload equally within the committees.

- The Dean should make a list of who is not doing service, and make it more equal.

- Make special assignments' rules clearer and more equal to everyone.

- University admin should be more aware of informal service.

- Change some promotion's rules.

- Make service equal to everyone.

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- Prevent faculty to serve on more than one university wide committee.

- Improve the added and uncompensated service commitments.

- Be more aware of the service that connects UMW to communities.

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- Make more appointed committees positions and make them more available to all faculty members.

Q14: Please add any comments you have about this section (workload).

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Heavy Work Loads	26.19%	11
2	Shouldering the Burden for Student Mental Health Issues Versus Having Proper Therapy Channels for Students to Utilize	23.81%	10
3	Expectation to do Service Work, Admissions Events, etc.	16.67%	7
4	Emotional Labor	14.29%	6
5	Lack of Office Support / Admin Tasks Being Placed on Faculty	11.90%	5
6	Faculty, Chair, and Leadership Toxicity Issues Not Being Addressed	7.14%	3
	Total	100%	42

Suggestions for 14:

o Set expectation of service quantified in hours

o Transparency and uniformity across departments and programs

o Compensation for admissions events, recruiting, etc.

o Mental health services for students that does not fall on faculty

       o Restructure UMW image so that the university balances out 'needy students'

o Create M/W, T/Th teaching schedule to free up Fridays for meetings, research, grading, committees, etc.

Q17 – graphic

Reduce load, get compensated for overloads, summer teaching / research – 4

Reduce service loads – 2

Account for course prep time – 1

Hold tenured faculty accountable for service - 2

Don't get triangle – 4

Liked triangle - 1

Q19 - How do you feel UMW could better develop a sense of community on campus among faculty?

Practical Solutions being offered:

1- Encouragement and positive feedback at department meetings 2

2- Free lunch per month or semester to bring together cross departmental faculty 2

3- More all-faculty events/faculty social spaces on campus/all faculty dining 13

4- Collaboration between departments through workshops 2

21. Anything else?

Practical solutions being offered:

1- More master programs for popular subjects

2- Administrators could take the time to recognize faculty success

3   Moving away from 4/4 teaching loads

Practical Recommendations:
1. A consistent message on service expectations that can be applied equitably across departments. For example, 1 university wide committee and 1 department committee

2. UFAC Handbook:

a. Re-evaluation of P&T service commitments. Make it clear what is expected.
b. Re-evalute COE and COB commitments in order to better reflect the number of faculty we have vs. the number of roles that need to be filled.

3. Pursue a market study on salary with appropriate benchmarks, which accounts for inflation and cost of living. Faculty salaries need to be a priority. Too often any salary adjustment is stated as a burden.

4. Create clear and consistent messaging from the administration to students that faculty are one of many options to learn about resources about mental health on campus but are not licensed to treat mental health.

5. Reinstate the summer faculty research grant and increase the supplemental fund during the academic calendar to match inflation.

6. Greater transparency is needed regarding teaching loads across campus with a goal to create equity. For example, we would support an explicit goal to move away from a 4-4 teaching load consistently across campus. Overloads should also be fairly compensated.

7. Create more opportunities for faculty to connect with each other both formally and informally. For example, faculty used to have free access to gym classes at times that matched faculty schedules. This could be reinstated as a policy (free access and services available).

8. The administration could explicitly note and recognize faculty achievements. This could be done in their UFC minutes or in All Faculty wide emails to create a sense of pride in their faculty (beyond extraneous service and applauding sacrifice). For example, noting recent publications or presentations or taking a moment to recognize Promotion and Tenure to help increase morale.