



COVID-19 Uncompensated Faculty Labor - Summer 2020

A report to the UWW Faculty Senate, Oct. 2020

Eric Compas, Chair, Ad-hoc Committee on Uncompensated Labor

Key findings

Table 1 and 2 show the results in hours and total value of surveyed faculty ($n=165$) on the number of uncompensated, COVID-19 related hours they worked in summer 2020 (beyond normal summer preparation and workload). **In total, faculty reported contributing 29,844 additional hours of work in response to additional COVID-19 needs for a total of \$1.5 million in uncompensated labor.** Extrapolating to the whole faculty ($N=386$), faculty likely contributed 69,800 hours worth \$3.4 million in uncompensated labor in summer 2020 – an average amount of \$8,950 per faculty member.

Table 1. Total number of uncompensated hours in teaching, service, and research by rank.

Academic rank	# responses	How many uncompensated hours did you contribute to:			
		Teaching	Service	Research	Total
Assistant Professor	52	4,655	1,328	4,664	10,647
Associate Professor	72	5,206	2,009	3,192	10,407
Full Professor	41	5,032	1,440	2,318	8,790
Total	165	14,893	4,777	10,174	29,844

Table 2. Total value of uncompensated hours in teaching, service, and research.

Academic rank	Average hourly wage ¹	Amount (\$) of uncompensated time			
		Teaching	Service	Research	Total
Assistant Professor	\$49.60	\$230,873	\$65,865	\$231,319	\$528,057
Associate Professor	\$46.44	\$241,757	\$93,294	\$148,231	\$483,282
Full Professor	\$52.96	\$266,480	\$76,258	\$122,754	\$465,492
Total		\$739,110	\$235,417	\$502,304	\$1,476,831

¹ Source: [Inside Higher Ed/AAUP Salary Survey](#)



Overview of survey

In July 2020, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) created the Ad-Hoc Committee on Uncompensated Labor with the goal of surveying faculty on the additional workload – mostly uncompensated – that faculty were facing in summer 2020. In May 2020, faculty received a disproportionate share of the UW-Whitewater furlough time, and there was a concern that the administration did not understand the additional workload that faculty were taking on along with their other colleagues on campus. This effort also contributes important information to our administration on the total cost of our campus’s COVID-19 response.

A survey was approved by FSEC in Aug. 2020 and sent to faculty on Aug. 19, 2020 and Sept 20, 2020.

Results

A total of 165 complete responses were received representing 43% of all faculty ($N=386$)². The number by rank and college are shown in Table 1 & 3. As stated above, responding faculty reported contributing 29,844 hours of additional, uncompensated time, from May 20, 2020 through Aug. 19, 2020, for an average of 180.9 hours per faculty member – more than a month of full time work.

Table 3. Total number of uncompensated hours in teaching, service, and research by college.

College	# responses	How many uncompensated hours did you contribute to:			
		Teaching	Service	Research	Total
Arts and Communication	29	2,574	1,078	2,207	5,859
Business and Economics	34	2,271	898	2,639	5,808
Education & Professional Studies	21	1,443	268	590	2,301
Integrated Studies	9	773	71	297	1,141
Letters and Sciences	72	7,832	2,462	4,441	14,735
Total	165	14,893	4,777	10,174	29,844

² [UWW Institutional Research](#)



Compensated time

The survey also asked faculty to report on their *compensated* time through the Learn Center and other programs and whether this time was compensated appropriately. A total of 53 respondents participated in Learn Center or similar programs for a total of 940 hours and were compensated a total of \$11,151 – an effective hourly wage of \$11.86 per hour.

Table 4. Hours worked and effective hourly wage by rank for compensated time

Academic rank	# participants	Hours worked	Compensation	Effective hourly wage
Assistant Professor	14	185	\$3,050	\$16.49
Associate Professor	27	515	\$6,051	\$11.75
Full Professor	12	240	\$2,050	\$8.54
Total	53	940	\$11,151	\$11.86

Faculty comments

Faculty were asked to provide additional comments about their uncompensated labor in summer 2020. What follows is a selection of these comments that highlights the themes and range of comments received.

Most raised concerns about the significant increase in workload:

- “Placing field students for the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 Semesters has taken double the amount of work.”
- “The entire furlough policy is based on either forcing us to do the same work for less pay or make us take a hit on teaching evaluations.”
- “In terms of department chair service -- this summer's work rearranging the fall schedule and keeping up with COVID developments was considerably more time and effort than... that stipend could cover.”
- “The uncompensated work was largely comprised for course redesign that would not have otherwise been necessary if not for the Covid pandemic.”
- “From my perspective, faculty moral is at an all-time low..... The faculty is being marginalized with respect to university governance and are now being asked to do loads of extra uncompensated work.”
- “This summer was the most I have ever worked for teaching related duties. ...I am already exhausted.”
- A department chair: “I basically worked full time all summer.”
- “We received email of apparent importance more than once a week, none of which would have been issued in a normal summer - clearly, we were expected to be on duty at all times.”



- “It's frustrating to lose time to teaching preparation this summer when we will also not be fully compensated for it during the 2020-2021 school year (due to furloughs).”
- “Under the circumstances, some degree of uncompensated labor was inevitable. The amount this summer was at least doubled by the fact that guidance from campus leadership was either missing or inept.”
- “It isn't just hours spent; it's *wasted* hours spent. For instance, faculty have spent considerable time making suggestions or offering solutions that were simply ignored, or considered too late. Many colleagues across campus have told me about frustrations stemming from lost potential.”
- “I probably actually worked less this summer than usual because I did virtually no research. i'm just really tired of working for free.”
- “Given the investment in time that faculty gave over the summer, I cannot understand the regressive nature of the furlough plan. It is obvious that faculty are undervalued at UWW.”
- “I'm a chair, so I received a summer stipend. I took a total of 5 days off in summer 2020. I can't even begin to calculate the hours I worked, but it is certainly more than I have ever worked before in a summer by at least double.”

But, not all comments were negative:

- “I am afraid I may harm your goal, but I have, for years now, done uncompensated work in the summer. ...It comes with the territory.”
- “Please reflect this idea that there has been no change in my workload year to year.”
- “I put the time in this summer because I take pride in my work as a professional and I simply accepted that this unusual time and energy investment would be necessary.”
- “None of this work was compensated, but I think that most ethical faculty and staff members know that they have to adjust their teaching practices this semester. We're all scrambling to do the best that we can for our students, but I have never been more exhausted and worried about returning to campus.”
- “We're all in this together.”

Several comments did raise methodological concerns about the difficulty of estimating summer time at the end of the summer without detailed tracking. Two individuals explicitly stated they believed their estimates were conservative.

Conclusions

The COVID-19 crisis imposed significant burdens on our campus, and as the results of this survey shows, many of these burdens, largely hidden, fell on the shoulders of faculty and other instructional staff. This survey reveals the average faculty member worked at least one month of additional work this summer for a net worth to campus of approximately \$3.4 million.