

**“What is enough?”**  
**Report from a survey of McMaster Faculty 2022**

**McMaster University Faculty Association, January 2023**  
**Ad hoc Committee on Working Conditions:**

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## Executive summary

In the summer of 2022, 286 faculty members responded to a survey asking how their workloads have changed since they began working at McMaster. Response rates ranged from 22% (Humanities) to 33.5% (Science). Almost all survey respondents (94.8%) indicated that their workloads had increased slightly or significantly over time. Rates were relatively even across Faculties and slightly higher for those with job tenures of six years or more. Over three quarters (252) of survey respondents made written comments related to changing workloads in research, teaching, service or other.

**Research** - Respondents highlighted how the administrative burden involved with all research processes has increased alongside mounting research expectations. Examples of increased administrative burdens include: the adoption of online/digitized systems; longer, more frequent and more intensive monitoring and accountability processes (purchasing, ethics, health and safety etc.); and the downloading of tedious, routine activities from administrative staff to faculty. Faculty members remarked that these changes have paradoxically occurred as non-teaching staff complements increased. With respect to mounting research expectations, several faculty members cited tremendous pressure to build large teams, secure more and more grants and publish more papers. Some noted that meeting increased research expectations often compromised research quality as there was insufficient time for quality graduate supervision or to develop new, innovative ideas.

**Teaching** - The most highly cited causes of increasing teaching workloads include the switch to online and then to hybrid teaching formats, the increase in student accommodations (now often  $\frac{1}{4}$  of all students), and inefficiencies in the digitized university systems related to teaching (for example Avenue to Learn, SAS, Microsoft Teams). A central concern was pressure to provide dual delivery formats. Respondents recounted being pressured or told by administration to increase the number of assignments, adopt experiential learning or alter their forms of evaluation. Some instructors felt that changes hindered student learning while others lamented how they were no longer able to control their workloads. Crucially, many faculty felt that their academic freedom to design and teach their courses had declined. Teaching related workloads were particularly unsustainable for teaching professors who often teach very large classes.

**Service** - Workload related concerns pertaining to service included the proliferation of committees and service requirements, the bureaucratization of committee and service work, and insufficient faculty numbers to fulfil needed service roles. Faculty noted that the hiring of non-academic managerial staff has often led to new initiatives requiring faculty input that had no notable positive effects on outcomes. Some activities designed to

heighten accountability duplicated other processes, while others put departments into competition with one another for students (recruitment events). Respondents also felt that many committee processes (such as hiring committees) had become overly bureaucratic and time consuming. Several faculty members who were members of equity-seeking groups questioned the efficacy of new EDI initiatives that increased their service workload but did not always affect outcomes.

**Control over work** - A cross-cutting theme from respondents in all Faculties was a declining control over their work and workloads. Several respondents linked this to the erosion of collegial governance between faculty and administration.

**Merit and remuneration** – A significant number of respondents felt that the CP/M system was inequitable and unable to recognize the very different types of work that faculty do. Some felt that the CP/M system reinscribes systemic inequalities by not recognizing service, advocacy activities or work with communities outside of the university. Other respondents noted that the competitive system of CP/M leads to a ratcheting up of workloads as the bar for being ‘good enough’ moves ever higher.

**Effects** – Several faculty members described how their ‘out of control’ workload prevented them from spending time with their families, thereby exacting a toll on their mental and physical health leading to burnout. In other cases, faculty noted that the quality of their research, teaching and graduate supervision was negatively affected by the increase in workload. One teaching professor stated that they used to love their job but now they see students as ‘work,’ stating “*I find myself furious with the way that I’ve been reduced to a “content provider” instead of an educator.*” Other faculty lamented the lack of time available for generating innovative ideas and working with graduate students.

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## 1. Introduction

Over the course of the 2021-2022 academic year, faculty members from across campus began to express concern about workload changes related to teaching, particularly in relation to online and hybrid formats which were increasingly requested by students and the administration. This initial concern prompted the creation of a McMaster University Faculty Association (MUFA) ad hoc committee on working conditions tasked with studying working conditions for MUFA members in all six faculties including faculty specific issues. The first initiative of the ad hoc committee was to survey the workload concerns and experiences of faculty from across campus.

For a period of four weeks from June 21<sup>st</sup> to July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022, the ad hoc committee collected responses using a short survey sent to all MUFA members. The survey included three substantive questions, each asking faculty members to assess whether their workloads had changed since first being hired at McMaster using a five-point scale (decreased significantly, decreased slightly, about the same, increased slightly, increased significantly). Each survey question was followed by an open-ended text box asking for written comments about what specifically had changed, followed by a text box leaving space for faculty to make other comments about other factors related to workload.

In total, 286 faculty members completed the survey: 26 in the DeGroote School of Business, 47 in Engineering, 66 in Health Sciences, 26 in Humanities, 75 in Science, and 46 in Social Sciences (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Response Rate by Faculty

Faculty	Pop total	Survey responses	Response rate (%)
DeGroote School of Business	86	26	30.2
Engineering	204	47	23.0
Health Sciences	238	66	27.7
Humanities	118	26	22.0
Science	224	75	33.5
Social Sciences	143	46	32.2

## 2. Quantitative results

The large majority of survey respondents stated that their workloads have increased slightly or increased significantly since they began working at McMaster across the three areas of research, teaching and service. Respondents who had worked at the University for more than five years were more likely report that their workloads had increased (Table 2.1 and Table 2.2). Reports of increasing workloads were relatively evenly spread across each of the five Faculties in aggregate (Table 2.3). When responses are disaggregated by teaching, research and service, some differences emerged such as a higher percent of Engineering faculty reporting increased workload related to research (Table 2.4).

**Table 2.1** Faculty members who reported increasing workloads in research, teaching or service by job tenure at McMaster.

Time at McMaster	Pop total	Sample total	Reported increasing workload	
			number	%
0 to 5 years	207	47	41	87.2
6 to 10 years	152	44	43	97.7
More than 10 years	654	195	187	95.9
Grand Total	1013	286	271	94.8

**Table 2.2** Faculty members who reported increasing workloads in research, teaching and service by job tenure at McMaster.

Time at McMaster	Sample total teaching	Reported increasing teaching workload	
		number	%
0 to 5 years	40	29	72.5
6 to 10 years	41	31	75.6
More than 10 years	179	144	80.4
Grand Total	260	204	78.5
Time at McMaster	Sample total research	Reported increasing research workload	
		number	%
0 to 5 years	40	31	77.5
6 to 10 years	34	26	76.5
More than 10 years	137	111	81.0
Grand Total	211	168	79.6
Time at McMaster	Sample total service	Reported increasing service workload	
		number	%
0 to 5 years	36	28	77.8
6 to 10 years	35	32	91.4
More than 10 years	154	135	87.7
Grand Total	225	195	86.7

**Table 2.3** Faculty members who reported increasing workloads in **research, teaching or service** by Faculty.

Faculty	Sample total	Reported increasing workload	
		number	%
DeGroote School of Business	26	25	96.2
Engineering	47	46	97.9
Health Sciences	66	65	98.5
Humanities	26	25	96.2
Science	75	68	90.7
Social Sciences	46	42	91.3
Grand Total	286	271	94.8



**Table 2.4** Faculty members who reported increasing workloads in **research, teaching and service** by Faculty.

Faculty	Sample total teaching	Reported increasing teaching workload	
		number	%
DeGroote School of Business	22	16	72.7
Engineering	42	29	69.0
Health Sciences	63	56	88.9
Humanities	23	17	73.9
Science	66	48	72.7
Social Sciences	44	38	86.4
Grand Total	260	204	78.5

  

Faculty	Sample total research	Reported increasing research workload	
		number	%
DeGroote School of Business	17	13	76.5
Engineering	35	32	91.4
Health Sciences	51	38	74.5
Humanities	20	14	70.0
Science	54	42	77.8
Social Sciences	34	29	85.3
Grand Total	211	168	79.6

**Table 2.4 (continued).** Faculty members who reported increasing workloads in **research, teaching and service** by Faculty.

Faculty	Sample total service	Reported increasing service workload	
		number	%
DeGroote School of Business	25	23	92.0
Engineering	31	27	87.1
Health Sciences	52	42	80.8
Humanities	24	20	83.3
Science	58	51	87.9
Social Sciences	35	32	91.4
Grand Total	225	195	86.7

**Table 2.5** Faculty members who reported increasing workloads in **teaching** by appointment type.

Appointment type	Sample total	Reported increasing workload in <b>teaching</b>	
		number	%
Contractually limited appointment (CLA)	25	16	64.0
Other	7	7	100.0
Research stream (pre-tenure)	23	15	65.2
Research stream (tenured)	185	128	69.2
Teaching stream (permanent)	30	25	83.3
Teaching stream (pre-permanence)	16	13	81.3
Grand Total	286	204	71.3

A higher percentage of faculty with Teaching appointments reported increases in workload related to teaching (Table 2.5). Among faculty with research appointments, pre-tenured faculty were more likely to report increasing workloads related to research (Table 2.6). Increasing service workloads were reported by a larger share of teaching stream than research stream faculty members (Table 2.7). The “other” label consists of seven individuals from health sciences who self-assessed themselves as “other”.

**Table 2.6** Faculty members who reported increasing workloads in **research** by appointment type.

Appointment type	Sample total	Reported increasing workload in <b>research</b>	
		number	%
Research stream (pre-tenure)	23	19	82.6
Research stream (tenured)	185	120	64.9
Grand Total	286	139	66.8

**Table 2.7** Faculty members who reported increasing workloads in **service** by appointment type.

Appointment type	Sample total	Reported increasing workload in <b>service</b>	
		number	%
Contractually limited appointment (CLA)	25	12	48.0
Other	7	5	71.4
Research stream (pre-tenure)	23	16	69.6
Research stream (tenured)	185	127	68.7
Teaching stream (permanent)	30	23	76.7
Teaching stream (pre-permanence)	16	12	75.0
Grand Total	286	195	68.2

### 3. Qualitative results

Of the 286 members of MUFA who completed the survey, 252 made written comments in at least one domain of research, teaching, service or other. A minority of comments (<10 % about research and service and <15% in teaching) were about workloads staying the same or decreasing. The majority of comments recounted how and why workloads were increasing. Common cross-cutting themes included: increasing bureaucracy (greater requirements for documentation and accountability mechanisms), the downloading of routine administrative tasks onto faculty, and increasing expectations in all areas. The adoption of new technical systems in research, teaching and service was associated with an increasing workload and a decline in faculty control over critical elements of their work. Several faculty members also noted that the downloading of administrative tasks and heightened expectations has coincided with an expanding non-faculty staff complement and a declining faculty complement. We begin by presenting key concerns in research, teaching and service, before turning to the issue of faculty control over work and workload and Career Progress/Merit (CP/M); two issues related to workload that were highlighted by faculty comments.

Table 3.1 Number of survey respondents who submitted written responses related to workload in teaching, research and service by Faculty as a percentage of total survey respondents in each Faculty.

Faculty	Teaching number (%)	Research number (%)	Service number (%)
DeGroote School of Business	15 (56)	11 (41)	17(63)
Engineering	36 (77)	32 (68)	26 (55)
Health Sciences	56 (83)	49 (73)	45 (67)
Humanities	23 (89)	16 (69)	22 (85)
Sciences	59 (79)	55 (73)	55 (73)
Social Sciences	40 (87)	32 (70)	34 (74)
Grand Total	229 (80)	195 (68)	199 (69)

### 3.1 Research

195 survey respondents made written comments related to research, over half (104) of whom were from the Faculties of Health Sciences and Science (Table 3.1). Most written comments described increasing research workloads as a result of the bureaucratization of research processes and increasing expectations for research production. 12 people noted that their research workloads had remained unchanged since they started at McMaster and 14 people stated that their research workloads had declined. Most respondents stating that their research workload was unchanged stated that it was because they were in teaching positions (as CLAs or Teaching professors). Others who did not experience a change in research workload were those who had research that did not involve applying for grants: “No change, but I am sick and tired of being pressured to apply for grants that in no way serve my research needs.” #272. Reasons for declining research workloads included doing less research because of taking administrative positions, nearing retirement or field work being cancelled as a result of Covid-19 or stopping doing research altogether as other workloads had become too high (see also section 3.1.3 below).

*“Time available for research has dropped mostly because of increased demand on my time by teaching.”#217*

#### 3.1.1 Bureaucratization

The most cited reason for increasing research workloads was the bureaucratization of several research processes including grant applications, ethics applications and financial administration. 64 people felt that the increasing number, complexity and digitization of processes was increasing their research workload. Faculty commented that they were required to perform a greater number of administrative processes such as forms or procedures related to research, both as a result of the downloading of tasks onto faculty and as a result of the creation of new tasks altogether. Faculty also noted that administration related to research was becoming more intense. Several respondents linked this increasing bureaucratization to declining research quality.

*“Time spent with grant applications, ethics approvals, and financial administration has overall taken time from doing research: the quality of research suffered.” #59*

*“Smaller proportion of time overall is available for actual research, as I have to spend more time on administrative issues (ethics, health/safety, writing of SOPs in a format that makes trainees’ eyes glaze over).” #221*

### 3.1.1.1 Digital systems, downloading of financial administration

Many faculty members described how their workloads were affected by the ballooning of administrative tasks over the entire research process. Processes that faculty members felt had become more onerous included: McMaster Research Ethics Board (MREB) applications, Hamilton Integrated Research Ethics Board (HiREB), Animal Utilization Protocol (AUP), Biosafety, Purchasing Forms, Purchasing Cards (BPFPC), Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Risk Management Manuals (RMM), Biohazard Use Protocols (BUP) and Isotope Licensing and Monitoring.

As one researcher noted, the increased volume of administrative tasks has coincided with the downloading of many functions onto faculty members.

*“I used to spend most of my time on research. Now I spend very little. I spend most of my time doing administrative tasks (e.g. filling out forms). Some of it is related to research such as filling out AUP, Biosafety and purchasing forms. Of course, these forms have ballooned tremendously -- just compare the number of pages in my original AUP to the same AUP today!!! The online BUP website and the number of lab audits have also swelled. Some of my tasks are downloaded from tasks that used to be done for me such as journal entries, travel reimbursement forms, requisitions for student access to purchasing, etc...” #101*

As highlighted by this respondent, the downloading of tasks onto faculty has often occurred through the adoption of digital systems such as Mosaic, which have increased a ‘busy-work’ feeling that was echoed by many faculty members:

*“Time spent on administration of grant finances had increased significantly due to downloading of accounting work to faculty members. For example, we are required to scan, annotate, and upload all receipts and documents pertaining to research expenses to Mosaic. Prior to the adoption of Mosaic this accounting work was done by the departmental office.” #204*

Another faculty member used an example of how new reporting requirements to entities such as the McMaster Industrial Liaison Office (MILO) act in consort with ‘self-service’ systems to heighten workloads:

*“There is more required paperwork and signatures prior to submitting a grant. Unfortunately, there is no increase in service provided by the Faculty Office to facilitate this. Faculty are now required to submit a MLO form for approval by the Office of the Dean for every grant, even a pittance. Once signed, you would think the research staff in the Office of the Dean would automatically forward this information to the Office of Research Services. Nope. The faculty member must do this as well. This is a small example of how self-service is really service deterioration.” #207*

Other faculty members noted that *“research support for common-user facilities has decreased significantly.” #47*. Paradoxically, as noted above, the downloading of more routine and tedious administrative tasks has often happened concurrently with an increase in non-academic staff, particularly at the managerial level. One faculty member described that *“support staff ranging from finances to Human Resources (HR) are simply not there to support, they are simply there to keep everything in line and now everything comes back to the faculty to do.”* and that *“documented increases in hiring... ..correlate directly to increased forms being emailed to the faculty.” #124*

The centralization of some research related administrative tasks was also noted by several faculty members as resulting in increased workloads:

*“...the new centralization of everything in the faculty (HR, finance, etc.) has added an unnecessary extra step and slowed things down. For instance, I “hired” a research assistant (RA) last month and she still has not been processed by central HR, despite the department doing everything they can immediately.” #169*

### 3.1.1.2 Grant applications and assistance

According to many faculty members, external changes in the research environment were also a source of increasing workloads. Several respondents noted that grant applications had become much more laborious, growing in overall length and requiring more tedious paperwork unrelated to the intellectual basis of the research itself. In some Faculties the growing workload burden of grant applications was compounded by the retreat of practical assistance. One faculty member lamented:

*“In the past there was an “office” ...dedicated to supporting faculty with the development of their research grants (such as helping develop budget modules); this was eliminated due to fiscal restraint a number of years ago. More burden*



*has thus been put on faculty to address some of the tedious and time-consuming activities of grant development.” #125*

The retreat of assistance with grant applications was not uniform across the university, however. One faculty member noted that, *“Excellent support for faculty continues to be provided by a couple of long-term staff members in the [Faculty] for some specific aspects of research related activities.” #257*

At the same time, many faculty members across campus cited increased layers of oversight for grant submissions increasing the workload of grant applications without improving the outcome. As described by one respondent:

*“It is not a good use of time to have a grant reviewed by several groups prior to submission. This alters the timeline and creates additional, high-pressure workloads.” #103*

### 3.1.1.3 McMaster Research Ethics Board applications

Notably, almost a quarter of those (44) who made written comments about how their workload had changed in relation to research made comments about changes to research ethics processes. Faculty described how ethics applications were now lengthier and more intensive requiring greater detail and multiple rewrites. Several scholars felt that these changes were not always related to ethics. One respondent noted *“reviews seem to be more grant reviews or micro-minutia that do not have much to do with ethics/ethical issues” #116*. Other respondents expressed how they felt that the time spent on ethics processes was disproportionate to the research itself:

*“Research ethics takes a ludicrous amount of time... ..I appreciate the thought and care the reviewers put into the applications, but I've honestly spent less time writing and revising some papers!” #255*

*“Ethics protocols keep getting more and more time-consuming, and, sometimes hinder the research altogether (because of delays in application review).” #151*

### 3.1.2 Increasing expectations

Many respondents, a disproportionate amount who were in Health Sciences, connected over work to increasing expectations of research productivity. Faculty felt that they needed to participate in and/or lead more research projects as bureaucratization was

making each project more time consuming. Faculty recounted how pressure to apply for more grants, publish more papers, and supervise more students was driving their unsustainable workloads. One faculty member asked:

*“...what is enough? Always working in a context that demands more research, more articles... the bar is always being raised. Leads to working seven days/week just to keep up.” #115*

*“The expectations are very high! There is considerable pressure to conduct multiple research projects all the time and secure stable funding to conduct the project and pay staff. ... actually doing the work in addition to teaching and clinical workload is almost impossible.” #109*

In one Faculty, several faculty members described feeling strong pressure to find funding to support greater numbers of graduate students:

*“Way too many students to supervise (and real pressure to keep supervising that many students).” #55*

Teaching professors also felt the need to produce: *“the expectations for scholarship still remain, especially for any type of promotion”.* #135

In Social Sciences and Humanities, several respondents felt that a focus on research quantity (numbers of publications and dollar values of grants) was altering the type and hindering the quality of research:

*“Increased expectation of yearly research output means constant churn and little time to reflect on original approaches to research. #276*

*“I feel more pressure to publish more and more frequently when the turnaround time in my field can be about 3 years. I see colleagues following the model in Sciences where team research can be done on a tiny topic but get abstracts or short papers published more quickly.” #157*

### 3.1.3 Superstar culture

Emphasis on external funding and research rankings in funding equations has created greater differentiation among faculty. One result of this differentiation is that working conditions and workloads are highly variable among faculty. Several faculty members described being able to manage their workloads and have time for research by securing course releases and/or hiring their own staff to ease the administrative burden.

*“Over the years my research has grown substantially in terms of numbers of grants, research funding and number of HQP under supervision. This is largely self-imposed. I have been fortunate to have had the support of research centre staff who take on most of the burden of financial administration. #64*

*“I have hired someone to oversee my grants, MREB, hiring of RAs, and development of KT materials. Without their help, I would do none of this.” #16*

A handful of respondents felt that opportunities were being unfairly distributed, privileging some scholars over others: *“University operates secretly (Canada Research Continuity Emergency Fund CRCEF) to select faculty for inclusion in big grant opportunities.” #222*

At the other end of the scale are those with little relief from teaching and service who stopped doing research altogether because of their heavy administrative or teaching burden.

*“I just don't have time for my research. The work is there, but the teaching overwhelms.” #154*

*“This is quite simple: the more you teach and do administration, the less time you have for research. ...Covid only accelerated the trend for more teaching/admin and less research. This is what the Chronicle of Higher Education reported in May regarding professor burnout and how many tenured faculty members are leaving the profession. #152*

### **3.2 Teaching**

229 faculty members made written comments about teaching workloads (Table 3.1). In all Faculties except for Business, over  $\frac{3}{4}$  of faculty members who filled out the survey made written comments about teaching workloads. Almost all comments described ways that workloads had increased. Those who commented about declining research workloads (14) or how their workload related to teaching was unchanged (12) were predominantly faculty who had received teaching releases because of administrative appointments, research chairs or because of department or faculty wide reductions. One teaching professor described how work time saved as a result of the shift from 24 units to 18 units per year were partially offset by increasing course enrollments and by *“the*

*"need" for accommodating students not attending class through streaming of lectures and posting notes and lecture recordings." #73*

Comments about how teaching workloads have increased follow three main threads: changes in teaching formats, particularly the push for online and hybrid learning; the institutionalization of responses to student needs for accommodation and absences; and increasing workloads resulting from larger class sizes and reduced numbers of teaching assistants.

### 3.2.1 Changes in teaching formats

A widespread concern among faculty who made written comments about teaching was the increased time and effort to teach courses in new teaching formats (154). The Covid-19 pandemic created a push to transition to online formats and now, in some cases, to hybrid formats.

#### 3.2.1.1 Online and Hybrid Teaching

73 faculty members stated that the transition online and to hybrid/dual delivery formats was resulting in a dramatic increase in their teaching workload:

*"Moving to online; then hybrid delivery took enormous time, and still takes time as now we're teaching (and learning) educational technology as well as course content. There is also an increased administrative burden (maintaining electronic messaging and dissemination platforms, preparing interactive technologies) and communication burden (prescribed detailed course outlines, online materials and announcements), electronic grading and grade submission. In the old days, most of the burden was in the classroom and preparing for classroom interactions. Those things are still there (and more challenging in online/hybrid models), but there is a lot more extra work that's not being compensated for or even acknowledged." #198*

Several respondents, particularly those in Science and Health Sciences, felt that they did not have sufficient Faculty assistance to pivot to online learning and then to hybrid learning through the pandemic.

*"During the pandemic we were asked to pivot to online teaching, including development of new online teaching materials and virtual labs. Very few resources were provided by the Faculty to support these activities." #204*

The increased workload demands from this shift were more acute for teaching professors, particularly those who teach through the spring and summer terms:

*“The learning curve was steep and was entirely learn as you go - teaching while learning how to navigate teaching tools and software was exhausting, and there has been no chance to recover with a full spring/summer teaching load.” #132*

After the return to in-person teaching, several faculty members described facing increasing pressure from administrators and students to provide online and hybrid options, despite not being “officially” required.

*“Students expect you to record the lectures and upload them to Avenue ...But, as all know, the recording has limitations compared to the blackboard to explain the theory. Thus, I must prepare my lectures to minimize writing in my notepad. On average, each lecture preparation time is 4-6 hours.” #174*

Some faculty members questioned the pedagogical value of online options, suggesting that in many cases they can be detrimental to learning:

*“When live classes are recorded, attendance drops to ~ 30% compared to over 90%...despite the fact that we are using active learning approaches....and more students struggle. When I record my classes I have a larger number of students perform poorly; I have watched the analytics on A2L and Microsoft Teams ..approximately 1/3 of the students don't keep up when all classes are recorded, 1/3 keep up, ...As a result, ...the demand for help explodes close to deadlines for projects and tests/quizzes, or afterwards when marks aren't what they hoped for.” #237*

### 3.2.1.2 Avenue to Learn

Many faculty members (33) cited the online platform used by McMaster, Avenue to Learn (A2L), as a source of increasing work. For some, A2L is a source of frustration as it is prone to glitches and is very time consuming to use, adding time to the online design of courses and assignment drop boxes, to grading and to the posting of grades.

*“The use of technology and corresponding modes of delivery does not cause me personally any problems; however, with the increase of technology use, the ineffectiveness of University Technology Services (UTS) has become a bigger time-consuming problem.” #40*

*“Each year I seem to encounter a new and different glitch that requires communication with computer services and Avenue experts. That was magnified during COVID when I spent a lot of time learning and trying to integrate alternative virtual course delivery platforms.” #101*

In addition to glitches, platforms have also increased the time required to do tasks because of what one respondent refers to as *“technical time, opening windows, uploading and downloading stuff, adding students, navigating the interfaces, keeping or deleting courses on these platforms...” #151*

### 3.2.1.3 Course policies/ administrative control over course structure

17 faculty members commented about how their workloads were increasing as administrators seek to exercise greater control over the number of assignments and the types of assessments that instructors use in their courses. The School of Graduate Studies, for example, created a Graduate Course Management Policy that was approved at Senate in June 2022 that stipulated the number of assignments in graduate courses. The School of Graduate Studies also asked graduate chairs and administrators in the fall of 2022 to prohibit instructors from assigning greater than 20% of the course grade to participation. The increasing push by the Provost office and Macpherson Institute to influence the design of courses at the undergraduate level was highlighted by several faculty as eroding their ability to control their work related to teaching.

One example cited by many faculty members is the push to provide an increasing number of weekly, short, or low-stakes assessments as opposed to larger ones or to provide experiential learning opportunities. These changes not only increase workload in and of themselves, but also compound the burden of accommodation work as faculty must administer accommodations more frequently, often on a weekly basis.

*“We now have continuous assessments throughout the academic year which means that not only (do) we have continuous evaluations in all the courses but (we) also (need to) make sure that all the needs for our Student Accessibility Services (SAS) students are being met.” #145*

*“Mode of delivery has changed to include more online components, more flexibility in assignments, more assessments (pre-test assessments, quiz examples, more assessments for lower value, more emphasis on different ways*

*to assess)... assessment changes are resulting in more marking, more accommodations, increased numbers of curriculum changes.” #203*

The loss of control over course design was also highlighted by another faculty member who described:

*“I am being told what my exam should look like by admins who have no clue what my course looks like. They insist that even for online courses, the exam must be in person, on campus. I have been told that I can't have multiple choice questions on an exam for 400 students. Ridiculous.” #288*

#### 3.2.1.4 Course outlines

Course outlines are in the process of being standardized across campus through a new online course outline portal. 31 respondents, disproportionately from the Faculties of Science and Humanities, described how the standardization of course outlines or requirements to use an online portal was eroding their academic freedom to design their courses. Comments referred to both the course outline portal as well as the use of outline templates.

*“One of the most recent developments is the standardization of course outlines. What has happened to academic freedom? One size outline does not fit all. There is too much bureaucratic red tape these days, and a constant download of administrative work to faculty.” #199*

*“I am moderately annoyed by the loss of control over my syllabi thanks for the Faculty of [omitted] implementing its standardized look and template. I see my course outlines as an extension of my approach to teaching. I really resent having to adapt so much of the language and formatting.” #241*

### 3.2.2 Increasing student needs

#### 3.2.2.1 Student accommodations

The increasing number and complexity of student accommodations were a key workload concern. 121 of the written comments about workload changes associated with teaching related to student accommodations. Several faculty members noted that the ballooning

workload related to accommodating increasing numbers of students is not sustainable in large classes:

*“The number of accommodations has increased significantly. This has the potential to become abused by the students. ...To be sure, I understand the need for accommodations, but as the numbers trend toward 25% or more of a 100 student class, it becomes unworkable. These numbers have grown from about 3 in 100 to about 15 or 20 in 100. The university will need to reduce the faculty-student ratio significantly to make this work.” #163*

In some cases, accommodation requirements dictate that faculty members provide forms of hybrid learning, dramatically increasing workloads.

*“New expectations for posting lecture slides (including required by SAS), and recording lectures for students who cannot attend, all add to workload.” #268*

*“Accommodations for students are taking a lot of time (the accommodations apply to more students and they are more extensive- i.e. have to record all lectures and figure out how to set up and download various programs to do so, extra time extensions for online quizzes/tests- require 5-10 min to set up for each person).” #78*

Others noted how the time sensitivity and individualized nature of accommodations leads to unpredictable workload increases.

*“There are many more student accommodations and student issues. Student issues can require many meetings with different individuals and this all usually has to happen fairly quickly and with no warning.” #99*

The need to address accommodations individually is compounded by the increasing complexity of accommodations that requires additional attention and monitoring by faculty.

*“SAS accommodations seem more complicated and rely more on the instructor's assessment; this puts me in the situation of worrying about seeming to be biased in implementation. I would be more comfortable with SAS simply being very clear about what accommodations are needed.” #21*

One faculty member described in detail several time-consuming aspects of the online SAS system that became untenable in large classes.



*“Greatly increased workload relating to accommodate students. ...But SAS has done nothing to make the associated administrative tasks more efficient. For example, when you pick up tests from SAS, each test is in an individual envelope. You then have to write the name of every student whose envelope you picked up on a log sheet. So for a class of 500 students you sit there for 20 minutes writing down 50 names. Also, when approving accommodations there are about 5 button clicks required to approve one student's accommodations. That's a lot of button clicks for a large class. You should be able to approve them en masse with one button click. Also, you can't download a spreadsheet with all accommodations nicely laid out, so it's hard to look for individual accommodations if needed. So more button clicks.”#232*

Most respondents who commented about accommodations felt that the burden of accommodating students fell primarily on faculty and that SAS provided little assistance.

*“SAS accommodations have increased significantly at the same time that SAS has reduced its support in administering exams.”#13*

*“SAS accommodations and MSAF accommodations seem to have increased, and it is being largely left to the instructors to deal with all of this. So I feel that for each course, I am actually in a situation of having many different types of evaluations and assignments I need to produce.” #213*

### 3.2.2.2 McMaster Student Absence Form

Faculty members also described the McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF) as increasing workloads by requiring additional work for instructors, particularly those teaching large classes. As described by one faculty member:

*“Since I arrived at McMaster, SAS has become increasingly demanding, MSAF was introduced and lead to many more students taking absences (which we have to follow via e-mail and in the final grades).” #183*

### 3.2.3 Decreasing teaching staff to student ratio

In several Faculties, increasing class sizes and reduced teaching assistant support are a significant workload issue, and of critical concern (83 respondents; 24 in Health Sciences,

21 in Science, 13 in Engineering, 11 in Social Science and 5 in Humanities). Cited increases in course numbers were substantial, often increasing by 100%.

*“Increased group and class sizes (enrolment in many classes has increased 2-3-fold over the last decade, with no change to course load for faculty, resulting in much more time spent marking assignments, handling student issues, organizing accommodations, etc.” #136*

At the same time, many faculty (25) described receiving less teaching assistant support than they did previously.

*“Less undergraduate course support: i.e., less teaching assistants, larger tutorial sizes, instructor facilitating tutorials that used to be facilitated by graduate TA's.” #134*

The above changes disproportionately affect teaching stream faculty members who are not only teaching more courses but are also disproportionately teaching very large classes (where many of the above changes have been particularly onerous) than research faculty.

### **3.3 Service**

199 survey respondents provided written feedback about how work in the service share of their faculty role has changed over time. Only 13 of those making written comments felt that their service workload had stayed the same and four described how it had decreased. Those who described their service workload as staying the same or having decreased often noted how they were doing very high levels of service already.

Faculty members from across campus pointed out how the number of committees and obligations has increased at the same time that faculty appointments have dwindled.

*“In the six years I have been here my tenure-track faculty in my department has shrunk by about 1/3. This means that even if the number of committees in our department remained the same, the workload increased significantly. Of course, administrative and bureaucratic creep keeps happening, so I think I do at least 50% more service and governance than I did when I started.” #272*

Another faculty member reiterated the dilemma of faculty reductions at the same as service expansion stating:

*“Fewer faculty with more committees to cover, more recruitment and student support events (e.g. now 2 fall previews instead of 1, increased supports for level 2 choices), higher workloads with Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) reviews, more university/faculty and departmental committees.” #203*

In some cases, faculty felt that service work was another aspect of their job that they were unable to control. One faculty member described being unable to control their workload by saying no to service:

*“Being told that you must participate on certain committees and that you must assume leadership roles even if you express concern regarding the additional workload.” #131*

### 3.3.1 Increased number of committees

Increased service demands have come as a result of an ever-expanding number of committees. 34 respondents described new committee work as a source of increasing workloads. Some examples of the new committees mentioned by faculty include: Covid committee, return to work committee, Equity Diversity Inclusion (EDI) committee, media and promotion committee and website committee. In some cases, such as media and promotion committees, faculty are asked to play a leading role in recruiting and attracting students, by designing advertisements, updating and monitoring social media and designing messaging. Respondents often commented on how the increasing number of committees has coincided with reductions in the numbers of faculty. One respondent stated *“Fewer faculty with more committees to cover...”*(#203).

Some respondents described how being a member of an equity seeking group lead to more asks to sit on committees and ultimately, more work:

*“As a woman in [area], my service workload is often higher than my peers if only for the fact that a woman needs to serve on every committee and there are far fewer of us. This needs to change.” #63*

### 3.3.2 Bureaucratization of service and committee work

Several faculty (14) noted that bureaucratization of service work generally was a source of increased workloads. As one respondent described *“Bureaucratization is truly killing us with a thousand paper cuts.”* (#274)

Similar to comments in teaching and research, some respondents described the use of digital forms or platforms as increasing rather than decreasing faculty workloads for service tasks:

*“The administrative burden has exploded. Mosaic means we do for ourselves so many things we used to have done for us... ..Just about every administrative burden has been electrified, and not in a way that reduces work for professors....”*  
#198

### 3.3.2.1 Selection committees

Many faculty (33) highlighted how selection committees have become more time consuming. Some of these changes have been implemented to correct bias in hiring decisions. One faculty member stated their support for equity, as well as their skepticism as to whether these changes have indeed changed the outcome:

*“I am proponent of Diversity, Inclusion and Equity (DIE) at the University and especially in hiring at all levels. I am also an Employment Equity Facilitator (EEF). It is my opinion and gut feeling that changes to faculty hiring practices have greatly increased the amount of required work by departments but have not really made a difference in changing hiring outcomes. I hope I am wrong about this.”* #207

*“EDI concerns have added additional bureaucracy to hiring processes, requiring time to complete assessments of all candidates, including those that are clearly in the bottom half of sometimes very large pools.”* #276

New mandatory hiring committees for sessional appointments have also expanded workloads, particularly in areas where there is a large amount of sessional teaching.

*“Because we have so many sessional appointments per term, the time costs of sessional hiring has increased 4x.”* #261

### 3.3.3.2 Recruitment events

31 survey respondents described the expansion of recruitment events as a cause of ballooning service workloads. Respondents reported that the total number of recruitment events has increased tremendously over time as has faculty expectations to attend these

events. In many cases attending these events, which often occur on weekends, falls on teaching professors or junior faculty.

*“Many more events related to teaching and recruitment and more committees on campus translates to participation on more committees because numbers of faculty hasn’t grown to match the growth in positions that must be filled.” #184*

One exception, however, was a respondent who commended on their Faculty’s efforts to take on the dominant share of promotional activity.

*“The Faculty of [omitted] has been taking on more responsibility for recruitment events and for media and promotional activity. This is now more effective than ever and taking less faculty time.” #62*

### 3.3.3.3 Program monitoring and accountability

The expansion of department and faculty self-monitoring processes was also cited by 33 of the 200 faculty who commented on service workloads. Many respondents commented specifically on the IQAP which they described as long, *“Painstakingly arduous”*, (#164), *“Punishing”* (#256), and requires a lot of paperwork. A number of faculty members also stated they did not feel the review led to any significant improvements for their department. While IQAP reviews are mandated by the provincial government, within McMaster it has become an ever-expanding process with more detail required at each iteration. More recently, administration has stipulated that an additional internal review is required in each unit whenever there is a change in leadership. This additional review duplicates the work of the IQAP and increases the workload of not only those at McMaster, but also those in the academic community at large who are asked to be external reviewers.

*“IQAP seems like a huge waste of everyone's time! Once you do an IQAP review it seems changes are expected, but why? We are just changing for the sake of change based on the opinions of random people from other schools.” #21*

In general, mirroring research and teaching, survey respondents described the expansion and increasing bureaucratization of university service. In many cases, these changes were designed to increase accountability and self-monitoring.

### 3.3.2 Equity related service

Twelve faculty members, while noting their support for EDI initiatives, described how increased attention to equity, diversity and inclusion by the university has resulted in more service. Several respondents who are members of equity seeking groups described how they are asked to do much more of this work than faculty who are not from equity seeking groups. One respondent described:

*“I have been asked to serve on extra hiring committees, award selections processes, and EDI related committees due to my expertise in Equity issues and as a racialized person. I have not been remunerated for this excess work.” # 265*

### 3.3.3 Choosing to not do service

Increasing workloads and the increasing demands of administrative appointments and service commitments has led some faculty members to avoid service that is not required altogether. One faculty member described:

*“I used to volunteer for department, faculty and university committees, and I used to provide governance to important programs like our Graduate Program in [program name]. Now I don't have time!” #101*

The decision to avoid service by faculty members contributes to the erosion of faculty governance as important positions remain unfilled.

## **3.4 Loss of control over work and workload**

When asked to provide additional comments about changes to workload, respondents from all Faculties expressed an overall concern that faculty members' ability to control their workloads, and perhaps more disconcerting, the content of the work itself, was being eroded. Several faculty members commented on how they were not able to control their workloads:

*“It is over 10 years since the structure of the [Faculty] has changed for the worse: The Dean can consult with Faculty members but other than that we have no input and/or control over the decisions affecting our workload (e.g., class size, TA per student).” #7*

Another junior faculty member described their inability to maintain any semblance of a reasonable workload and the additional pressure that they felt as a member of an equity seeking group:

*"I do not have any control over my workload; in the period September - May, I just try to survive the flood of emails and events that come my way. Many of these are inescapable. As a member of an equity seeking group, I am also under pressure to deliver excellent research work. I wouldn't like any lagging behind in terms of research to be attributed to "less than" or to "diversity quota" considerations. It is a priority for me to deliver equally well across all three divisions (research, teaching and service) that my job consists of." #146*

Another faculty member felt that the loss of control over workload was tied to a culture of silence in their Faculty about workload:

*"I do feel a loss of control and this then filters into the culture of our program as people feel defeated and burnt out-no safe way to express this, fear of merit evaluations if (you) state workload stress, culture of this is the way it is, if you express issues then you're deficient." #106*

The loss of control over workload was related by some to a decline in faculty autonomy as a whole. One respondent stated, *"Loss of control over my work and workload is a growing concern (as)- more and more tasks are downloaded to the department and from there to the individual faculty." #49.* Another faculty member observed:

*"Loss of autonomy overall; culture is rather unkind and demanding. No room for negotiation and rules are just that - no interpretation and consideration of extenuating circumstances." #102*

Beyond workloads, several respondents were concerned about a shift to greater administrative control over faculty work. One faculty member describes:

*"My general impression is that the collegial relationship between administrators and faculty has, to some extent, broken down, and that increasingly faculty are treated as hired hands who should do as they're told." #194*

This sentiment was echoed by another respondent:

*"Collegiality between administration and professors has decreased significantly. Administration has developed a mindset of "us" versus "them." #47*

### 3.5 Career progress/merit (CP/M) evaluations

In response to a question asking faculty about other concerns related to their work, many faculty (34 out of 166 who gave written responses about other concerns) expressed concern about how CP/M was being evaluated and about its role in the distribution of pay and equity more broadly.

#### 3.5.1 Fairness in remuneration and promotion

Many respondents felt that CP/M was not equitable. Concerns about the way that CP/M was evaluated differed across departments and Faculties. Several faculty members felt that the focus on 'high end publications' disadvantaged some research areas over others.

*"The entire CP/M process is broken. CP/M seems now 100% devoted to merit and high end publications and no credit what so ever for career progress...  
...This basically forces individuals to shift their research to topics that fit well in a [high end] journal or you can continue to work on research of interest to you and lose out financially (so much for academic freedom)." #17*

In other areas of campus, respondents felt that CP/M evaluations did not adequately capture the quality of publications or contributions to teaching:

*"The merit evaluation becomes more subjective. In particular, the evaluation on research puts more weight on quantity instead of quality. The evaluation on teaching is more confusing with the increasing number of teaching stream positions." #180*

Another faculty member remarked how, by stipulating what 'counts' as important work, CP/M discouraged collaboration and knowledge outside of the boundaries of the university.

*"To be honest, I do a lot of work outside of the university. I supervise PhD students in other institutions, I sit on professional boards, etc. This used to be recognized in CP/M, etc. but now it seems to be de-emphasized. I think this is a loss for the uni because it discourages professors from getting involved in the broader world outside the university." #166*

Several teaching-stream faculty members highlighted ambiguity about what was needed for promotion and whether they were required to produce research.



*“No one has any idea what it takes to get promoted to Full Professor in the teaching stream. Consequently, many of my colleagues have taken very differing strategies to move their careers ahead. All them involve a lot more work than we would otherwise be doing. ... The university's practice in guiding teaching professors is telling them to do 'pedagogical research' but not supporting or rewarding it. This practice has now moved into the domain of unfair and inequitable employment practices... it is going to lead to conflict. #72*

### 3.5.2 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Remuneration

Several faculty members reflected that the CP/M progress can exacerbate systemic inequities among faculty. One faculty member felt that CP/M processes disadvantaged women who were disproportionately performing service tasks and being assigned new course preps:

*“Merit evaluations are still not transparent, and I believe they are contributing to salary inequities. I believe more administrative work is being assigned to women, increasing their workload and decreasing the number of hours they have available for research. I also think that teaching loads are being increased for women in ways that are not captured with our "unit" system; for example, more frequent changing of courses taught, being assigned as coordinator, being assigned classes with larger numbers of students or a larger number of in-person hours, more frequent graduate teaching, frequent requests for "guest lectures" that are not credited in yearly evaluations.” #92*

Another faculty member critiqued the university's EDI efforts and felt that goals would be better met by creating common standards for salary increases, addressing salary gaps, and hiring faculty from underrepresented groups rather than hiring new non-academic staff.

*“I am a member of an equity seeking group and am absolutely exhausted by the university's performative, expensive and time-intensive efforts on this file. The university should just pay everyone according to a common scheme, develop some actual standards around how much service/teaching should be done, have group-based benchmarks for hiring, and be done with it. I'm not sure what all these various staff and associate deans hired for EDI efforts accomplish; they seem to just create conflict and act as a funnel for aggression. It would be better to use that funding to hire more currently underrepresented faculty or address salary gaps. We know what the actual gaps are; we should fix those gaps instead of hiring lots of staff and creating new offices.” #21*

### 3.5.3 Critiques of CP/M

The above examples of individual feelings of inequality become more coherent in the context of several respondents' critiques of the CP/M system as a whole. Critiques highlighted two weaknesses. First, as one faculty member noted, it is impossible to compare the very different types of work that faculty do in a way that is equitable:

*"I don't think there is a fair system in my program/department/faculty for assessing workload. It is difficult to compare workload of some faculty who do lots of teaching with those who do lots of research etc..." #109*

Second, since CP/M puts faculty members into direct competition with one another, it ultimately leads to a ratcheting up of expectations and higher workloads.

*"I think workloads for all faculty are very high. ...Merit evaluations and T&P are looking for excellence across the board. To do that means that faculty members have to work very, very long hours all the time. The more we excel and the more we achieve, the greater the expectations and greater the workload." #108*

This sentiment was echoed by another faculty member who linked the heightened competition of CP/M to higher workloads, the erosion of collegiality and structural inequality:

*"I remain strongly opposed to the Career Progress/ Merit exercise as a way to provide salary increases -- it encourages competition in a way that is corrosive to collegiality, promotes overwork, and bakes structural inequalities into the salary structure in ways that directly undermine any commitments to pay equity we may have (whether on gender, race or other grounds)." #262*

The competitive structure of CP/M creates a sense of never doing enough, and it impedes recognition of critical aspects of faculty work. Under this structure, the only way to do enough and be recognized as successful is for others to be deemed not doing enough and recognized as unsuccessful.

### **3.6 Other effects of increasing workload**

Though the survey did not ask about the effects of high workloads, several responses captured some of the ways that high workloads affected their time with family, their health and wellbeing, and ultimately their decisions about whether to stay in an academic position.

### 3.6.1 Time with family

Several respondents noted that their high workloads limited their ability to contribute to life outside of work. One faculty member stated “A work week of more than 60 h is becoming a normal way of life.”(# 38), while another described:

*“I work more hours than in the early part of my career which seems counter-intuitive. A typical week is 70 hours. Puts a lot of strain on home life and marriage.” #50*

This theme of overwork was shared across faculties. One respondent describes:

*“My workload is totally out of control. Before the pandemic I was working 6-1/2 days per week and was not coming home for lunch or dinner, working late every night. COVID has provided some respite because I am now able to stop work after dinner and spend a couple of hours with my family before bed. Because I don't have to commute and am working from home, I am getting 6-1/2 hours of sleep per night instead of my previous 5 hours. I am never caught up with my work and am always meeting deadlines last-minute. I attribute this lack of time to the previously-mentioned inflation and downloading of administrative tasks.” #101*

Another faculty member describes how there is “no time for family or for community volunteering” (#25).

### 3.6.2 Health and wellbeing

Several faculty members described their workloads as ‘unsustainable’ or unbearable and as leading to burnout.

*“The workload has become completely unbearable. It is impossible to leave work at work. The “wellness” emails from the university are tone-deaf and infuriating, positioning a systemic issue as a personal problem that could be dealt with through yoga.” #156*

*“There is no longer a 'lighter' semester to catch up, to write, to rejuvenate or to engage in your own continuing education. Burnout is on the horizon for many people. We work so hard and the merit evaluations do NOT reward the amount of work that is being done.” #103*

Pre-tenure faculty who need to maintain high research productivity while teaching and service workloads escalate, are particularly prone to burnout. Although high workloads are to some degree expected when faculty are pre-tenure, several late-stage career researchers remarked how their workloads had increased rather than decreased over the course of their careers. As one faculty member describes:

*"I'm a tenured full professor. I feel I work harder and am more stressed than when untenured. I have less control over my workload. I have burnout." #263*

Faculty members from equity seeking groups also describe being unable to maintain a sustainable workload. One faculty member recounts how they faced additional commitments related to their Indigenous identity:

*"Need balance ... it can sometimes feel like I'm always working. I do believe both my research and service commitments are related to my Indigenous identity." #273*

One faculty member describes how the toll of unsustainable workloads on the physical and mental health of faculty is so great that it may ultimately lead to sick leaves.

*"Increase in workload has been detrimental for physical and mental health (I am speaking for myself, but certainly this applies to others), and the quality of my work (especially important but unscheduled work such as graduate student supervision, research planning and grant writing) has decreased. Eventually, many of us might need to take time off to recover, or will need to take unplanned sick leave, which will create additional burdens on others." #195*

### 3.6.3 Low morale and leaving academia

Several faculty members note how changes in the nature and quantity of work has affected their morale and their ability to enjoy their work. One respondent describes:

*"For the first time in my life, I found myself complaining about my job over the past few years. It's unquestionably related to workload, especially as far as teaching and admin goes. I find myself furious with the way that I've been reduced to a "content provider" instead of an educator. My connection to students has been severed and now must be mediated by so many outside agents - SAS, the equity office, etc. ...I can feel myself looking at students now*

*as "work" rather than people, and that's a damned shame because I used to love teaching." #286*

In some cases, respondents noted that the increasing tensions arising from multiple pressures was leading them to contemplate leaving academia; as one faculty member succinctly described:

*"Less funding + more teaching + fewer resources = time to leave academia for industry." #67*

As one faculty member notes, unsustainable workloads, coupled with the devaluation of activities unrelated to publications and to the Humanities as a whole, have led to low morale and caused faculty members from equity seeking groups to contemplate leaving the university altogether.

*"Morale is at a real low and I spend a lot of time supporting/mentoring junior colleagues and grad students from marginalized groups just trying to persuade them not to quit / leave academia. The devaluation of liberal arts while increasingly widespread seems especially intense at McMaster, materially and symbolically -- it increasingly feels like the only forms of research or teaching or even service that matter are the kinds that lead to some form of commercialization, patenting, etc. as well as directly related to employability (for students)." #161*

#### **4. Conclusion**

Though there were differences across Faculties, a cross-cutting theme from the survey is the sense that despite working more hours, faculty feel as though they are never doing enough. As described by one faculty member:

*"As far as the university is concerned, everything we do is never enough. Have a SSHRC grant? You should have several as well as other grants too. Publish something? It should have been a better publication and there should be more of them, and you also have to publish special materials for research users as well as the community. You are on an editorial board? Well, that service is just to benefit you personally so it doesn't count - you have to serve the McMaster community or else you are a bad colleague. Teaching all your classes? Why aren't you using a flipped classroom / inquiry method / problem-based learning / experiential exercises / next new fad? I have another 20-25 years to go before I retire but I have to admit I'm exhausted." #16*

Additionally, several faculty noted continually increasing pressure to do administrative and teaching tasks through the summer, rendering it increasingly difficult to advance research.

*“There is no period during the academic year when urgent matters may not turn up in your mailbox. I wish the university could agree on a period in the summer dedicated to research and teaching preparation. At my former university in [European country], the Deans would wish everyone a fruitful time for academic work and rest starting before midsummer (last week of June). No teaching work other than graduate student supervision would then take place before September. This is what really research-intensive universities look like. As far as I can tell, at Mac, we are all teaching professors or administrators and do research as a hobby.” #151*

Another faculty member similarly cited the consequences of this unrelenting workload for research:

*“For an institution that claims to be at the forefront of innovation and progress, those of us on the ground spend an inordinate amount of time mired in paperwork that does nothing to advance innovation or progress.” #221*

As noted throughout this report, there are costs to the bureaucratization, downloading of administrative tasks and increasing expectations of and heightened competition among faculty. These costs include the health and wellbeing of faculty members, but also, importantly, the quality of teaching, supervision and research itself. The current model that encourages all faculty members to maximize grants, supervise ever greater numbers of graduate students and publish increasing numbers of articles often involves a reduction in research quality as the time required to contemplate and spend one-on-one time properly mentoring students is eroded. The bureaucratization and downloading of administrative tasks onto faculty further reduces the time available for intellectual aspects of faculty work while also pushing faculty to work longer and longer hours.

Ultimately, as one faculty member posited:

*“...it doesn't need to be this way. At the end of the day, this is just like any other job - there's nothing special about being an academic, so we shouldn't be putting in so many unpaid hours.” #255*

## **5. Appendix**

### **MUFA ad hoc Committee on Working Conditions Terms of Reference**

The purpose of this committee is to study workload and other aspects of working conditions for MUFA members and provide regular written reports to the MUFA Executive. These reports will help inform MUFA's discussions on issues related to working conditions at the Joint Committee.

The committee will pay particular attention to new policies and procedures that affect working conditions and will consult widely with MUFA members from all six faculties, including tenure track, teaching stream and CLA. They will also assess any changes in the overall workload, and faculty-specific issues. Reports will be provided in November and March.

Composition: A chair and at least two members, appointed by the MUFA Executive.