Innovating Faculty Workloads Through An Equity Lens (*IFWEL*) *Project*

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
LONG BEACH

NSF

Faculty Baseline Survey
March 2023

Silvana McCormick, PhD
Adriana Ariza, MA
Redwood Consulting Collective, Inc.

REDWOOD
CONSULTING COLLECTIVE

Introduction

The Innovating Faculty Workloads through an Equity Lens (IFWEL) project at CSULB is funded by the National Science Foundation. This ADVANCE grant is an adaption of the Faculty Workload and Rewards Project, led by the University of Maryland, which resulted in a set of department-level interventions that addressed common issues that lead to inequitable workloads. CSULB has recognized the presence of many of the issues identified by FWRP, particularly in Science Technology Engineering and Mathematic (STEM) departments, and therefore proposed the IFWEL project with the following goals:

1. Identify and recognize invisible labor by women STEM faculty, including any differences that occur as the result of the intersection of race and gender for women of color.
2. Develop and implement policies and institutional practices at the department, college, and university level that promote equity in workload and reward structures.
3. Create greater equity in workloads within STEM disciplines at CSULB.
4. Improve retention, advancement, and workplace satisfaction of women faculty in STEM, with acute attention to women of color.

To support this project, CSULB has partnered with Redwood Consulting Collective Inc. (RCC) to serve as the external evaluator. Over the three years of the grant, RCC will evaluate the quality of the IFWEL project's implementation and its impact on workload equity.

CSLUB Faculty Baseline Survey

The CSULB IFWEL faculty baseline survey was implemented at the start of 2023 to better understanding the institutional context for the project and to capture baseline data on workload equity and related topics prior to project implementation. This survey will be distributed again at the end of the grant period to determine, in combination with other data sources, the impact of this grant. The goal of this summary is to present baseline findings for CSULB stakeholders to use as the basis for group discussion and action planning.

The survey was composed of two validated scales and several additional items created by CSULB and RCC. A total of 684[1] CSULB faculty responded to the survey resulting in a response rate of approximately 28%. The response rate[2] for Tenure or Tenure track faculty was 38% and

---

[1] This includes respondents who completed at least one full scale. Data were tested for multivariate outliers using Mahalanobis distance and no outliers were found.

[2] Response rates distinguished between faculty type and target colleges are estimates as they were calculated based on numbers most recently available (Fall 2021).

for adjunct or Lecturers was 17%. Lastly, the response rate for the target colleges were as follows: College of Engineering (22%), College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (30%), and College of Language Arts (31%).

The data were primarily analyzed using descriptive statistics (i.e., mean, standard deviation, frequency, percentage). Inferential statistics (i.e., regressions, T-test, ANOVA) were used to analyze differences between groups when statistically significant correlations were present. The reliability of the survey's scales was also analyzed using Cronbach's alpha. The results of these analyses are presented below.

Participant Descriptions and Characteristics
Table 1 provides a summary of the respondents' demographics. More than half of the respondents identified as women (59%) and most respondents were white or Caucasian (45%).

All data was disaggregated by respondent demographic characteristics. Unless reported, there were no significant differences by respondent demographics (i.e., ethnicity, gender, college).

Table 1. Pre-Test Survey Respondent Demographic Characteristics		
Gender (n = 585)	Female	59%
	Male	36%
	Genderqueer/Gender nonconforming	<3%
	Trans Woman/ Trans Man	<1%
Ethnicity (n = 550)	White or Caucasian	46%
	Asian	12%
	Hispanic or Latinx	10%
	Multi-Racial	10%
	Black or African American	4%
	Indigenous	<1%
	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	<1%
	Other	<1%
Location of Graduate Training (n = 593)	United States	96%
	International	4%

Position at CSULB (n = 593)	Adjunct Faculty/ Lecturer	43%
	Full Professor	24%
	Associate Professor	17%
	Assistant Professor	16%
Affiliated College (n = 593)	Liberal Arts	38%
	Health & Human Services	17%
	Natural Sciences & Mathematics	13%
	The Arts	11%
	Engineering	8%
	Business	6%
	Education	6%
	Multiple	<1%

Reliability Analysis

The two survey scales, adapted from previously validated surveys, were subject to reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha to examine their internal consistency. The alpha values reported in Table 2 indicate that one scale had excellent internal consistency (α = 0.94). And the Empowerment scale had good internal consistency (α = 0.87). Overall, these findings indicate that the scales used are reliable.

All mean scores ranged from 2.50 to 3.03, falling around the low to mid-point of the scales. These results suggest that there is room for growth; therefore, ceiling effects are unlikely to be an issue for this pre-post evaluation method.

Table 2. Descriptive and Cronbach's alpha Statistics for Survey Scales					
Scale	Number of Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range	α
Perception of Workload Equity	11	2.65	1.18	4	.94
Equity Subscale	2	2.90	1.26	4	.82
Transparency Subscale	4	2.50	1.23	4	.92
Clarity Subscale	4	2.50	1.14	4	.88
Empowerment	4	3.03	1.07	4	.87

Pre-Test Survey Results

As mentioned, the survey included two scales and several sets of items to measure respondents' perspectives on various topics related to workload equity. Response frequencies for each item are provided in the subsequent sections. Percentages reflect the sub-sample of respondents' who provided responses for each question; thus, the sample size varies from 550-684.

Perceptions of Workload Equity, Department Commitment to Equity, & Fairness in Evaluating Workload

This scale was comprised of 11 items regarding respondents' perception of workload equity, department commitment to equity, and fairness in evaluating their workload. The overall mean for this scale was 2.65 (SD = 1.18) on a scale of 1-5, where higher scores indicate greater agreement in workload equity, commitment to equity, and fair evaluations. Consequently, it can be inferred from these data that faculty generally disagree that their workload is equal, transparent, nor clearly communicated.

For the most part, agreement was either low or lacked consensus. For example, 51% either strongly disagreed or somewhat disagreed that faculty in their department feel work is distributed fairly. The lowest levels of agreement were observed for '*There are clearly identified benchmarks for expected campus service* contributions' and '*There are clearly identified benchmarks for expected advising contributions.*' These findings suggest there is room for improvement across departments for clarity around workload expectations.

Table 3. Perceptions of Workload Equity, Department Commitment to Equity, & Fairness in Evaluating Workload (Misra et al., 2021) N= 555-617					
Item	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
I think most people in our department feel work is distributed fairly.	23%	28%	19%	19%	11%
There is a strong commitment within our department faculty that workload be fair.	18%	19%	19%	22%	22%
The most important teaching, mentoring, and campus and community service work I do is credited within my department reward system.	24%	24%	21%	17%	14%
Our department has transparent information about faculty work activities for all department faculty to see (e.g., no of advisees, committees, size of classes).	26%	24%	17%	16%	17%

Table 3. Perceptions of Workload Equity, Department Commitment to Equity, & Fairness in Evaluating Workload (Misra et al., 2021) N= 555-617

Item	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Our department has transparent information about compensation for key roles (e.g., support for taking on specific administrative roles).	32%	27%	17%	12%	12%
Our workload decisions tend to be informed by data that is visible and widely available to everyone.	33%	28%	20%	10%	9%
There is transparency related to faculty workload (e.g., data about faculty teaching, mentoring, and campus service activities available for public scrutiny).	34%	28%	19%	10%	9%
There are clearly identified benchmarks for expected campus service contributions.	36%	28%	17%	12%	7%
There are clearly identified benchmarks for expected advising contributions.	31%	28%	22%	12%	7%
Our department chair and faculty have discussed and agreed upon which roles faculty will be compensated for (with additional resources or reassigned time), and which are simply part of their jobs.	26%	26%	20%	14%	14%
Our department has consensus on a clear set of priorities for faculty time.	27%	29%	20%	14%	10%

When aggregated by position at CSULB, there were statistically significant differences across perception of workload equity[3]. As shown in Figure 1, adjunct faculty and lecturers had significantly greater agreement in CSLUB workload equity, their department's commitment to equity, and fairness in evaluating workload than their peers. These data indicate faculty who have a greater teaching load (i.e., tenured, tenure track etc.) and work closely with CSULB are less likely to perceive their workload as equal.

---

[3] $F_{(3,576)}$ =19.18 $p<.01$

Figure 1. Differences across Faculty Positions

Perception of Workload Equity
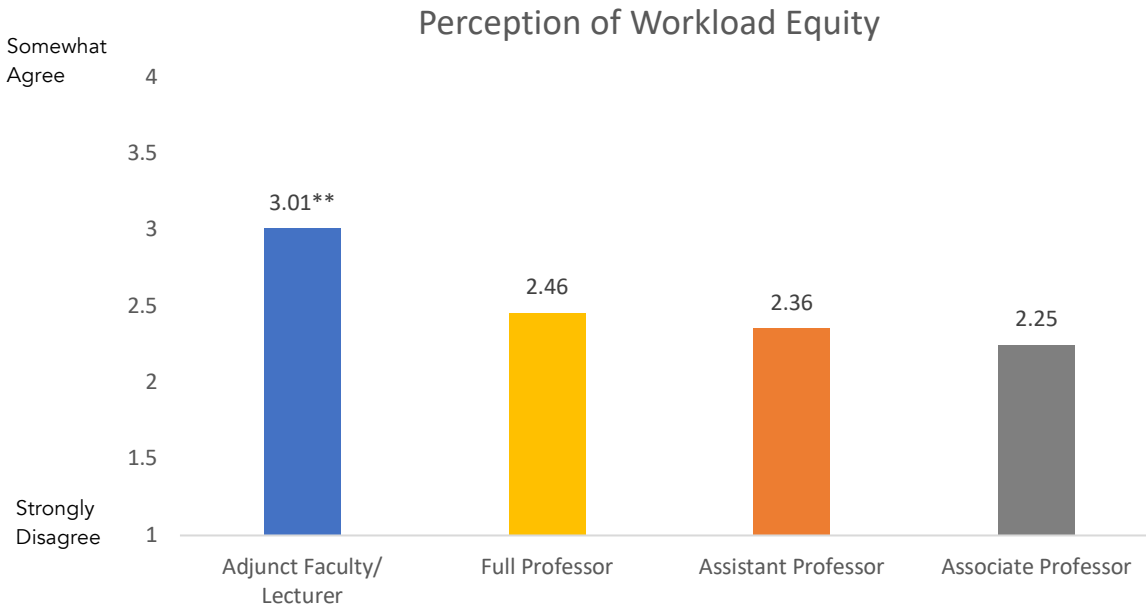
Sense of Empowerment to Balance Workload

This scale was comprised of four items regarding respondents' sense of Empowerment to balance their own workload. The overall mean for sense of empowerment was 3.03 (SD=1.07) on a scale of 1-5, where higher scores indicate greater empowerment.

Overall, respondents varied across indicators of empowerment over their workload. For example, 19% agreed and 18% disagreed that they felt comfortable asking for additional resources. This lack of consensus may be explained by differences amongst respondents (i.e., gender, ethnicity etc.). However, only differences across position type at CSULB were significant (see Figure 2).

Table 4. Sense of Empowerment to Balance Workload (adapted from O'Meara et al., 2018) N= 575-624					
Item	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel like I can say no to requests	14%	24%	14%	27%	21%
I feel comfortable protecting my time	17%	27%	12%	23%	21%
I feel comfortable asking for additional resources	18%	24%	14%	25%	19%
I can use data to initiate discussions about my workload	19%	22%	25%	18%	16%

When aggregated by position at CSULB, there were statistically significant differences across and sense of empowerment to balance workload[4]. As shown in Figure 2, adjunct faculty and lecturers had significantly greater agreement in their sense of empowerment over their workload compared to their peers. These data indicate faculty who are Tenured or considered Tenure Track less likely to feel empowered to balance their workload.

Figure 2. Differences across Faculty Positions for Empowerment
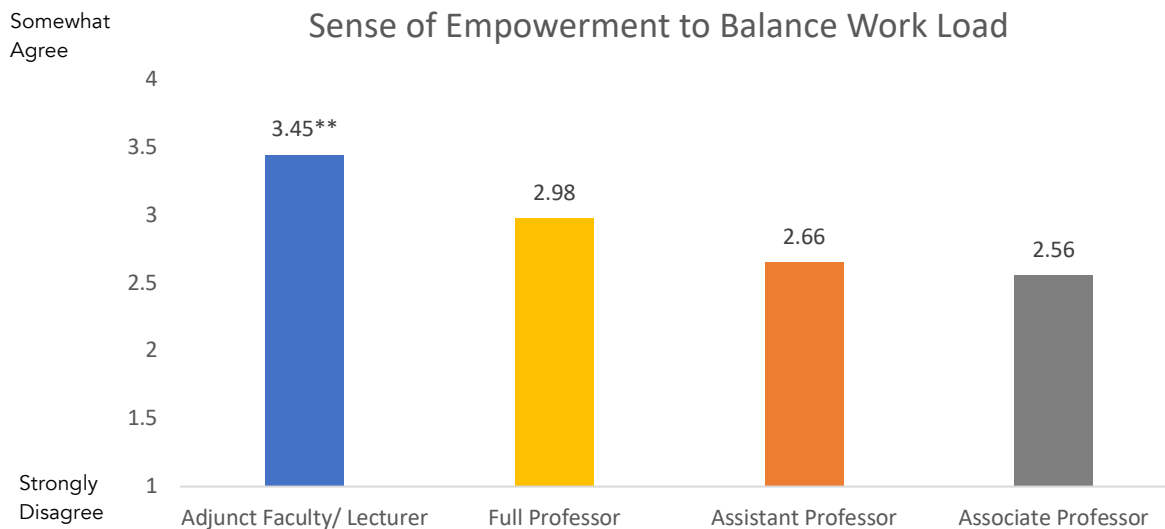
Fair Workload Assignment Policies

The following 12 items were created by CSULB and RCC to assess respondents' satisfaction with workload assignment policies at CSULB and their overall job satisfaction. The mean for the following items ranged from 2.55 - 4.35 on a scale of 1-5, where higher scores indicate greater satisfaction.

For the most part, agreement was moderate to high across the items. For example, 66% responders were somewhat or extremely satisfied with 'the process in which classes were assigned. However, it is important to note that the majority (53%) were either extremely or somewhat dissatisfied with 'the amount of work you do on committees versus the amount others do.' This may indicate respondents are dissatisfied with the workload from committees they are a part of.

---

[4] $F_{(3,583)} = 20.45$ $p<.01$

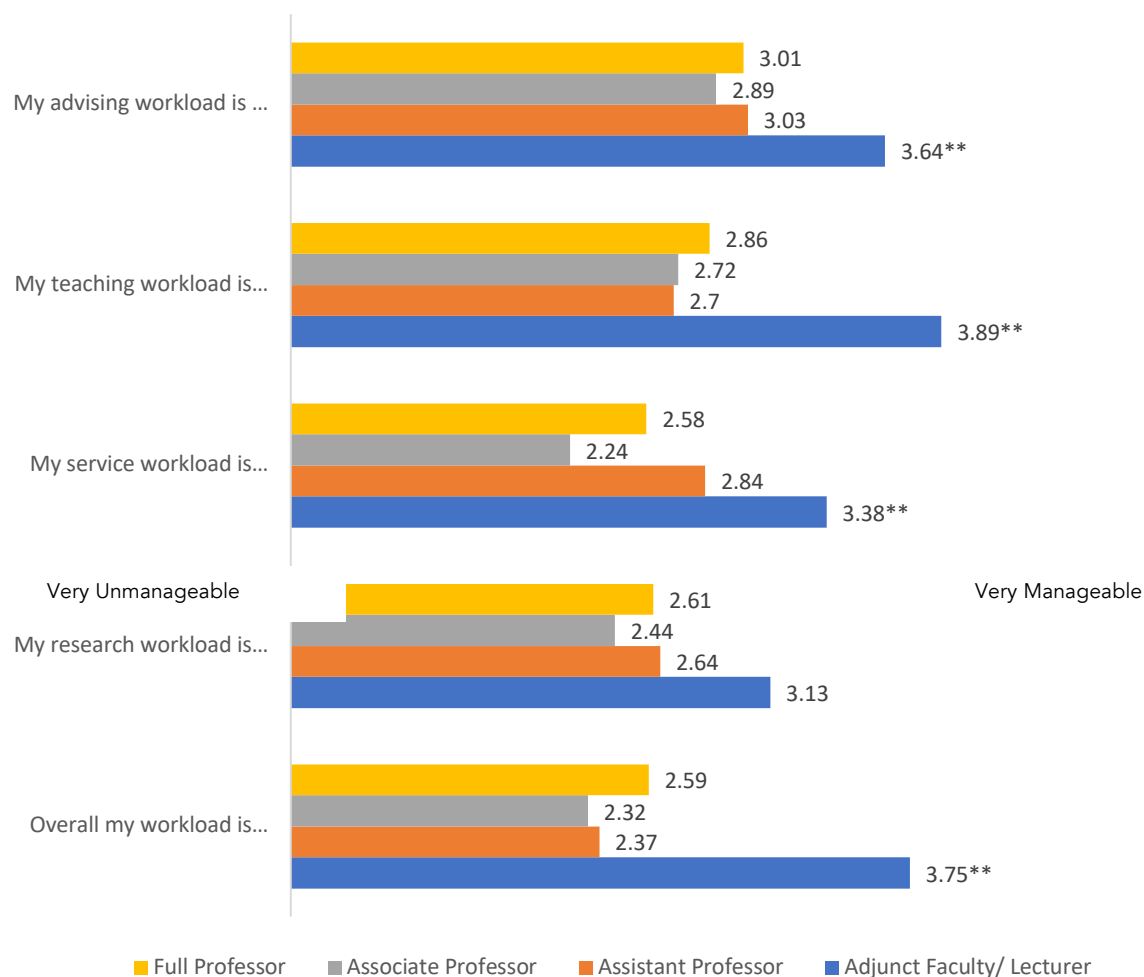| Table 5. Fair Workload Assignment Policies (N = 317 -684)					
Item Please rate your current Satisfaction with…	Extremely Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
Number of classes you teach.	19%	21%	8%	26%	26%
Class sizes.	9%	20%	13%	30%	28%
Support for classes (TAs, RAs).	36%	26%	15%	12%	11%
The kinds of classes you teach.	2%	5%	7%	26%	60%
The process in which classes are assigned.	8%	12%	14%	27%	39%
The number of advisees you have.	12%	18%	31%	24%	15%
The process in which advisees are assigned.	11%	15%	37%	18%	19%
The number of committees on which you serve.	17%	29%	22%	23%	9%
The amount of work you do on committees versus the amount others do.	24%	29%	24%	15%	8%
The attractiveness (e.g., value, visibility, importance, personal preference) of the committees on which you serve	9%	18%	35%	25%	13%
Thinking about all the things that make up your job, how satisfied in general are you with your current job?	10%	22%	9%	38%	21%

Perceptions of Workload

The following five items were created by CSULB and RCC to capture respondents' perception of their workload. The mean ranged from 2.68 – 3.25 on a scale of 1-5, where higher scores indicate a *manageable* workload. Consequently, it can be inferred from these data that respondents generally perceive their workload as somewhat manageable or neutral.

For the most part, agreement varied across all items. For example, 28% reported their teaching workload was *somewhat manageable* and 23% reported it was *somewhat unmanageable*. Analyses were conducted to determine whether responses varied by characteristics of respondents (i.e., gender, ethnicity, etc.). Only position at CSULB (e.g., full professor etc.) had statistically significant differences across the following survey items (See Figure 3.).

Table 6. Perceptions of Workload (N=359-668)					
Item	Very Unmanageable	Somewhat Unmanageable	Neither Manageable or Unmanageable	Somewhat manageable	Very manageable
My overall workload	16%	32%	6%	26%	20%
My research workload	20%	34%	16%	20%	10%
My service workload	19%	32%	14%	23%	12%
My teaching workload	15%	23%	9%	28%	25%
My advising workload	12%	25%	22%	20%	21%

Adjunct faculty and lecturers rate their workload as significantly[5] more manageable than their peers. For example, adjunct faculty and lecturers reported their overall workload was *somewhat manageable* (3.74) compared to full professors (2.59), assistant professors (2.37), and associate professors (2.32). These data indicate there is a significant difference between how adjunct faculty and more full-time faculty perceive their workload. As expected, considering all of the data, full professors, associate professors, and assistant professors, report their workload as much less manageable compared to adjunct faculty and lecturers.

Figure 3. Differences in Perceived Workload Across Faculty Positions

My advising workload is …
- 3.01
- 2.89
- 3.03
- 3.64**

My teaching workload is…
- 2.86
- 2.72
- 2.7
- 3.89**

My service workload is…
- 2.58
- 2.24
- 2.84
- 3.38**

Very Unmanageable   Very Manageable

My research workload is…
- 2.61
- 2.44
- 2.64
- 3.13

Overall my workload is…
- 2.59
- 2.32
- 2.37
- 3.75**

■ Full Professor   ■ Associate Professor   ■ Assistant Professor   ■ Adjunct Faculty/ Lecturer

Understanding of Workload Equity and its Importance

The following four items were created by CSULB and RCC to measure respondents' understanding of workload equity. The mean for these items ranged from 2.34 – 3.60 on a scale of 1-5, where higher scores indicate greater agreement.

For the most part, levels of agreement varied across items. For example, an equal number of participants agreed and disagreed (37%) agreed that 'Issues of workload equity is a frequent topic of discussion in my department.' This trend may indicate that understanding of workload equity and its importance varies greatly across CSULB STEM respondents.

Table 7. Understanding of Workload Equity and its Importance (N = 581 – 606)					
Item	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Issues of workload equity is a frequent topic of discussion in my department	18%	19%	26%	20%	17%
People in my department are concerned about the issue of workload equity	8%	12%	22%	27%	31%
Ensuring a reasonable workload is the responsibility of the individual. *	32%	30%	16%	15%	7%
Workload equity is not within the control of individual departments. *	22%	27%	19%	18%	14%

*Note: These items were reversed, meaning the item has a negative connotation

Faculty Evaluation Fairness

Lastly, these six items were created by CSLUB and RCC to determine whether respondents who experienced a faculty evaluation endorsed the process as fair. The mean for these items ranged from 3.29 – 3.98 on a scale of 1-5, where higher scores indicate greater agreement. Consequently, it can be inferred from these data that respondents generally agree the evaluation process is fair and equitable.

For the most part, agreement was moderate to high across all items. For example, 71% of respondents either somewhat or strongly agreed the evaluation process was fair. Similarly, 51% of respondents either somewhat or strongly agreed 'the criteria for retention, promotion and rewards decisions were clear.

Table 8. Evaluation Fairness (N = 499 – 525)					
Item	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Overall, the evaluation process was fair	5%	14%	10%	32%	39%
Overall, the evaluation process was equitable	8%	15%	14%	29%	34%

Table 8. Evaluation Fairness (N = 499 – 525)					
Item	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Overall, standards for evaluating performance were well defined	12%	20%	11%	26%	31%
Overall, the criteria for retention, promotion and rewards decisions were clear	13%	22%	14%	26%	25%
My <u>departmental</u> evaluators considered all of my work and contributions in their evaluation of my performance	7%	12%	9%	22%	50%
My <u>college</u> evaluator(s) considered all of my work and contributions in their evaluation of my performance	8%	14%	12%	24%	42%

Qualitative Findings

The baseline survey contained two open-ended questions which were qualitatively analyzed. Through this process, several themes emerged that support the quantitative findings as well as provide critical details and voices from respondents who are often underrepresented.

Several respondents (n= 287) shared their thoughts candidly when asked to provide additional comments about the topic of workload and workload equity. The most prominent themes that emerged are overwhelming workloads and substantial invisible labor.

Overwhelming Workload (n = 56)

One of the most significant themes that emerged from the content analysis is that respondents (*n* = 56) believe their workload is overwhelming and unmanageable. Respondents voiced their workload has grown due to being short staffed, rises of invisible labor, and a workplace culture that promotes overworking. The following exemplar quotes illustrate respondents' concern about unmanageable workloads that are inevitably unsustainable.

- **"Workload for faculty at CSULB is oppressively high**. We are expected to teach 12 units a semester, engage in 3 units of service, and are not compensated for research despite the fact that we cannot earn tenure or promotion without scholarly research and publications. That means that we are expected to engage in part of our job without allocated time or compensation."

- "Our teaching load is somewhat outside the norm for balanced schools in my field. It's a problem, because it makes hiring more difficult. The fact that pay is below market for our field, coupled with the cost of living here, makes it even more difficult. **Everyone is**

feeling the pinch between workload and below par pay, especially with this inflation, and it's really starting to cause attrition. One of these issues needs to be solved quickly, or I fear we're going to lose a lot of good people to more attractive alternatives. Even I'm considering a move for these very reasons."

- "I want to note that the workload effects my physical and mental health. I also want to say that it is not just the workload but a number of organizational factors within our school. Examples: 15 minutes between classes and scheduling meetings during lunchtime. These two factors alone are decreasing my productivity, longevity and my morale. Also, these 2 things effect my relationships with students and the ability to build community with them and my colleagues. **This kind of scheduling encourages a workaholic atmosphere and discourages personal interaction, conversation and collaboration."**

- "Additionally, **faculty of color, and women of color especially, face cultural and identity taxation on a routine basis and although the university purports to support equity it routinely implements and protects policies that exacerbate the inequitable workload** that faculty of color women of color face on campus. Other minoritized faculty (LGBTQIA+, those with disabilities, among others) face similarly inequitable working conditions."

Invisible Labor (n = 49)
Another substantial theme that emerged was the significant amount of invisible labor respondents' carry (n = 49). Invisible labor was described as work that respondents manage that goes unacknowledged, unpaid, and undervalued. Below are exemplar quotes that support this theme:

- "In my experience, there is a considerable amount of advising work that I do that is not compensated in my role as lecturer. I am constantly writing letters of recommendation and meeting with students to discuss their academic work and plans that do not directly pertain to my courses. **I feel I should do these things as a good teacher, but I am not compensated for them.** It is unfortunate because CSULB already pays a rate for lecturing that is well below what I can receive elsewhere at other institutions in southern California."

- "Any faculty member that is a person of color or a member of the LGBTQ community would have **an enormous invisible workload because he/she/they would be able to relate to these groups and would be sought out more often to assist.** These workloads would either simply be ignored or possible even misunderstood by the evaluating entities."

- "There are certain types of work that tend to be feminized in that women do the work, and the work is invisible and undervalued (e.g., mentoring, internship supervision, oversight of student clubs, advising). **I am tired of shouldering more than my share of "administrative housework" only to hear that this type of work does not warrant resources or recognition."**

The baseline survey also asked respondents who have undergone formal evaluations to elaborate on their answers regarding their evaluations if they indicated that all of their work was not considered during the review process. Several respondents (n= 131) shared their thoughts about the evaluation process, workload, and more.

Invisible Labor Not Accounted For (n = 34)
Unsurprisingly, invisible labor emerged as a significant theme when concerning faculty evaluations. Respondents (n =34) elaborated that the evaluation process over emphasizes traditional indicators such as research publications and student evaluations but doesn't account for a substantial amount of invisible labor they often undertake.

- **"There is a lack of understanding about how time consuming my service work is and more institutionalized forms of committee work tend to be more highly valued.** Further, much of the advising and mentoring work I engage in is informal, therefore it is not valued as much as other forms of formalized advising and mentoring work. It also seems that my department RTP committee did not count an article that was accepted with minor revisions as a published work because it had not yet been assigned a publication date. I believe the policy says the article should have been counted as a publication, but due to my high workload I do not have the time or the energy to ask for a revision."

- "I am in a unique position where 40% of my responsibilities are only partially accounted for through the RTP process since they lie outside the three boxes of Research, Teaching, and Service. For this reason, **a good portion of my work is "invisible" to the RTP process**, yet it is work that takes away from my research efforts (which I end up doing on "my own time"--evenings, weekends, holidays, etc.)."

- "Overall, there is a culture of critique in faculty evaluations**. Certain faculty, especially faculty of color, are often critiqued and not praised for non-traditional contributions to the Department, College and University.** For example, faculty contributions to training, facilitation, and on-campus workshops are often minimized or ignored. Equally important, faculty contributions in the community, in the press, and on social media are often ignored or minimized on formal evaluations."

Too Much Weight on Student Eval (n = 10)

The content analysis also revealed some respondents believe there is too much value placed on student evaluations. Respondents voiced the emphasis placed on student evaluations may not accurately reflect their work and in turn miss other components of their workload. Below are two quotes to illustrate this theme:

- "There is considerably **disproportionate value placed on SPOT evaluations which are well known to be deeply flawed**, grossly inaccurate, profoundly irrelevant, and very imbalanced on a multitude of levels. This blunt instrument undermines any greater good intentions to advance student opportunities... The SPOT evaluations then undervalue the success narrative while instead weaponizing the negative "perceptions", resulting in a very discouraging evaluation process. This negativity disincentivizes and bleeds out morale to reinforce perceived protected privilege. To add, all additional contributions, including service to the university and department were barely acknowledged instead pointing out these are not required of my contract. As a result, I have withdrawn from all such activities in order focus solely on my students and my instructional design."

- "I am currently undergoing a 3-year review through the new (to me) interfolio system. I have been surprised to discover that it appears that the main evaluation centers on SPOT reports. In the past I had been asked to supply teaching materials and student work/outcomes. **Now I am left wondering if my main goal as faculty is to please the student vs to teach the student**.