

Faculty Dissatisfaction:

In Summer quarter of 2016, a survey was posed to the faculty of Antioch College. The results displayed the opinions of 24 non-administrative faculty on issues surrounding compensation, work performed outside of the classroom, Antioch's curricular dedication to social justice, Global Seminar, and a number of other facets of faculty experience.

Following a preliminary qualitative survey presented to faculty in the spring of 2016, this survey provided a more in-depth view into the experience of Antioch professors and instructors. Though the results show faculty dissatisfaction is consistent across the board, some particularly glaring numbers stand out.

- All of the respondents supported a means for promotion among non-tenure track faculty.
- Around eighty percent of respondents stated their support of the elimination of narrative evaluations and course assessment reports to lighten faculty work over breaks.
- Nearly eighty two percent of responding faculty said they do not hold enough voice in the College's governance structures.
- Eighty seven percent felt inadequately compensated for their work.

Michael Casselli '87, Assistant Professor of Sculpture and Installation, said of his general professorial experience: "It has its ups and downs, definitely. I like the classroom a lot. I like working with students. . . I sometimes feel though that there is a lot of work that goes along with it that doesn't necessarily feel connected to it."

Out-of-class work for faculty is immense in its breadth, and is nearly continuous. During the term, faculty also stand as academic advisors for students. This responsibility carries with it two problematic burdens unearthed by the survey: the unwieldy level of paperwork, and the less tangible, albeit no less draining, level of emotional labor.

The responding faculty gave broad support in decreasing the amount of paperwork and bureaucracy at the college, and the survey summary listed nearly a dozens ideas from faculty to do so. Additionally, nearly eighty percent of faculty wished to see a "formal recognition of emotional labor (often done by women and POC) in faculty review criteria or elsewhere," the survey summary stated. One faculty member commented, "Our advising responsibilities are so extensive and go above and beyond to address the holistic well-being of our students." Another claimed, "... that faculty have this extra duty suggests that student support services should be expanded or made more accessible."

Between terms, the work continues. The letter grade and narrative evaluation duality proves to eat much of faculty break time, requiring them to write qualitative assessments and quantitatively evaluate all their students in multiple classes. Many faculty responded to the survey saying that although they appreciate the pedagogical significance of narrative evaluations, they simply take up too much time. Continuing, faculty must also provide a course assessment report on every class they teach at the end of each term. Piled on top of the necessary preparation work for upcoming courses, this burdens faculty with an enormous quantity of work in a two week break. The challenges facing faculty are heightened by an acute lack of voice within the College's governance structure and a feeling of being undercompensated.

"There is a lot of faculty dissatisfaction," said Charles Fairbanks, Assistant Professor of Media Arts. "I think a lot of the policies and procedures here are exhausting for us as faculty, and I think that's a big part of why we have had so many faculty members resign. . . The surveys beared that out."

Faculty exhaustion is addressed within the 2013 Faculty Handbook found on the Antioch College website. Under the section called "Teacher Overload and Teaching Underload," the Handbook states, "The vice president for academic affairs is responsible for monitoring teaching load and for ensuring that teaching overload and teaching underload are avoided as much as possible. When either situation is unavoidable, the vice president for academic affairs and the faculty will consult the Academic Policies and Guidelines Handbook for equitable, agreeable solutions."

The Academic Policies and Guidelines Handbook, the document that is consulted regarding solutions to teacher overload, is currently not available on the website. The Record was unable to obtain a copy.

The results of the survey reveal the experiences of Antioch faculty. After showing the results to the Senior Leadership Team, Emily Steinmetz, Assistant Professor of Cultural Anthropology remarked in an email, "Those in attendance seemed interested, some seemed surprised (especially about the [workload over breaks]), and they listened carefully. I think they are taking this seriously . . . The next step, it seems, is figuring out which issues can be resolved by faculty committees/ Faculty Assembly and which issues require higher-level or community input."

Beyond having their voices heard by Antioch's administration, faculty have organized to pass by consensus a draft of a new structure for faculty governance. Spearheaded by Sean Payne, Assistant Professor of Political Economy and a serving member of the Faculty Personnel Policy Committee, the draft was approved at the final Faculty Assembly Meeting of Summer quarter.

Kelly Gallagher, Assistant Professor of Media Arts, said in an email regarding faculty dissatisfaction: "The best way for faculty to ensure that we have a voice on the job and a say in matters that pertain to our working conditions, is for faculty to organize."

She continues: " I invite any faculty, non-managerial staff, and service-workers to contact me if you are interested in coming to our next meeting and exploring the transformative power of organizing, so that we can make Antioch College the equitable institution we know it can be. "