

Report on the FIP Service Survey

Survey overview

In spring 2011, the Agenda Committee distributed a survey on faculty service, with slightly different versions sent to tenured/tenure track faculty, and to FIP faculty (faculty on term appointments, Instructors in Science Laboratory, and PERA faculty). This is a report on the FIP survey results. That survey is appended as an appendix at the end.

The survey was sent to 74 FIP faculty, of whom 41 responded, for a 55% response rate. There were 19 FTA faculty, 16 ISL faculty (of whom 3 were part time), and 6 PERA faculty among these 41 respondents.

The balance of teaching, research, and service

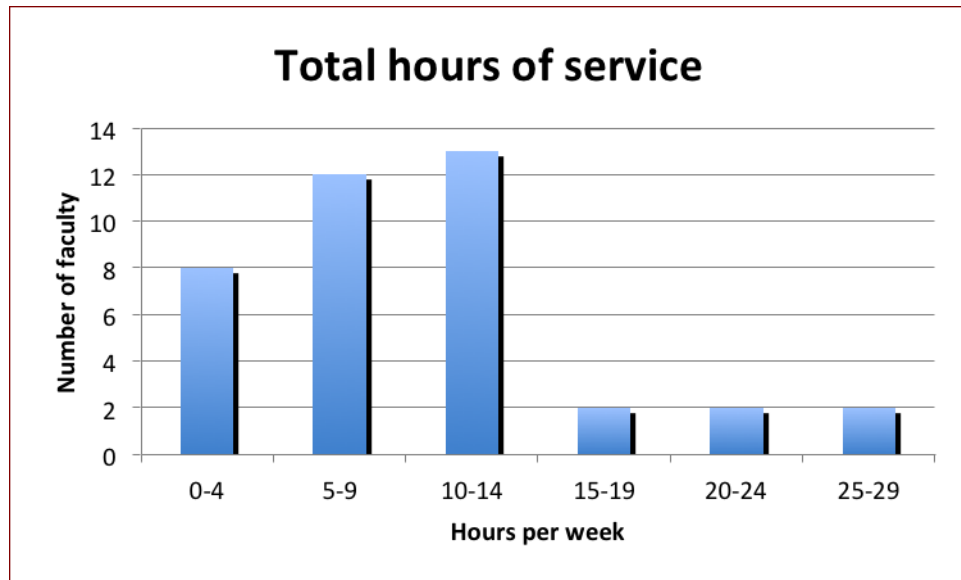
In the following tables, the numbers listed are median hours per week during the semester.

FIP faculty (hours per week)

	Teaching	Research	Service	Total
Semester	33	5	9	47
January	11	10	5	26
Summer	10	15	5	30

While high quality teaching is the primary responsibility of FIP faculty, the guidelines for reappointment and promotion, e.g., for FTA faculty, include “evidence of scholarly and professional development”. In this survey research was defined to include “time spent attending conferences, networking with colleagues in your field, and any other work designed to enhance your scholarly skills, reputation, and portfolio.”

We remark that some individuals spend far more hours than the median in a category. Here’s a graphical portrayal of *service hours per week* during the semester by FIP faculty respondents:



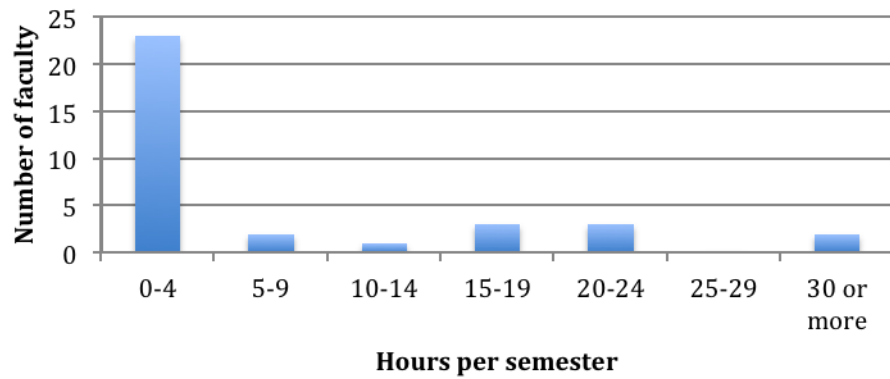
Distribution of service by category

The charts below describe the amount of time (in hours per semester) spent on various types of service. Hereafter all data discussed is for the period during the semester rather than January or summer.

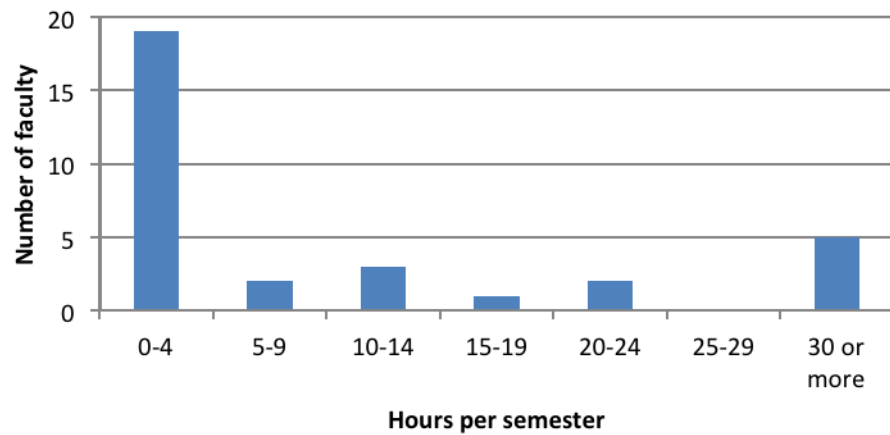
As can be seen from the charts below, most FIP faculty service is spent in departmental service and student service. However, it is also clear that in each category there are a few individuals who devote a very large amount of time to that type of service.

It should be remarked that the category of FTA faculty was only formalized in legislation three years ago, and preferences for Academic Council committees for FTA faculty were collected for the first time in spring 2011, so very few FTA faculty have been able to be on Academic Council committees.

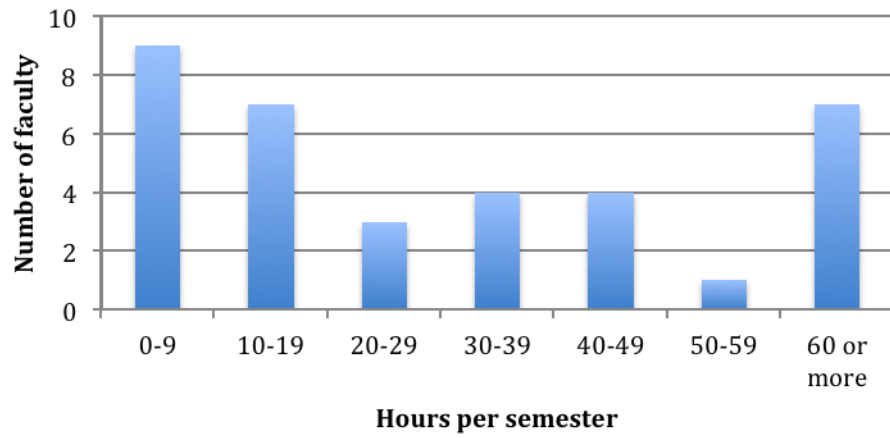
Academic Council committee service



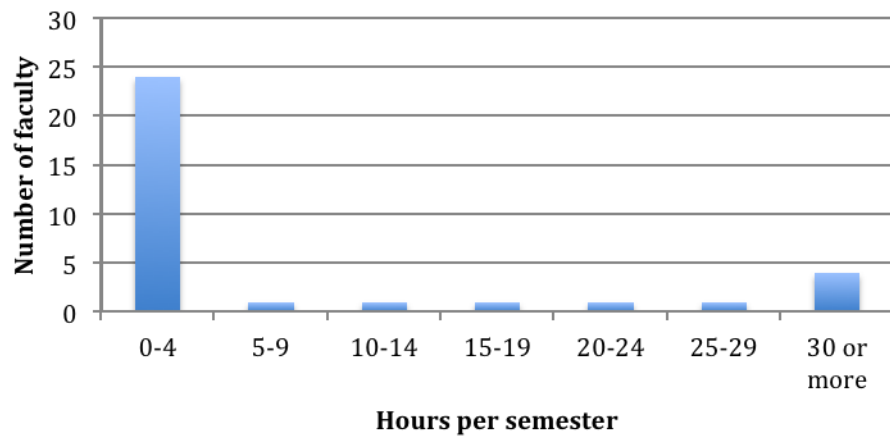
Other committee service



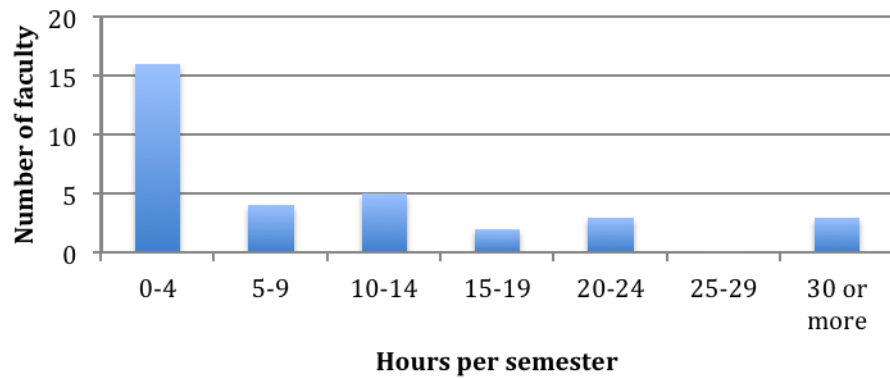
Departmental service



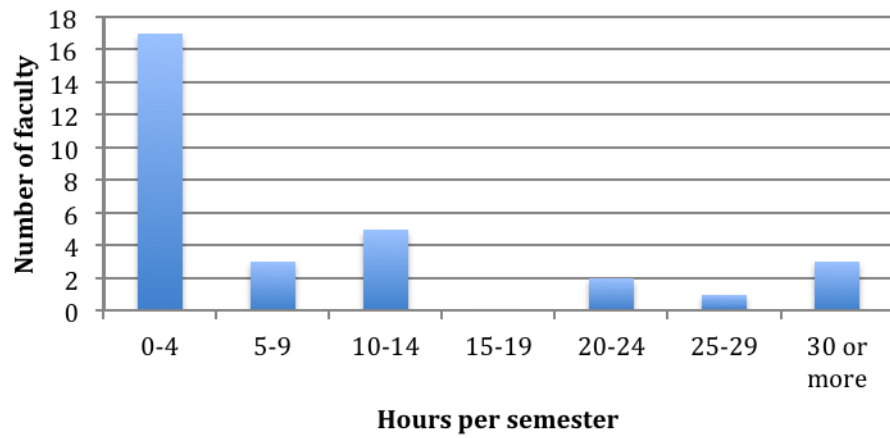
Professional service

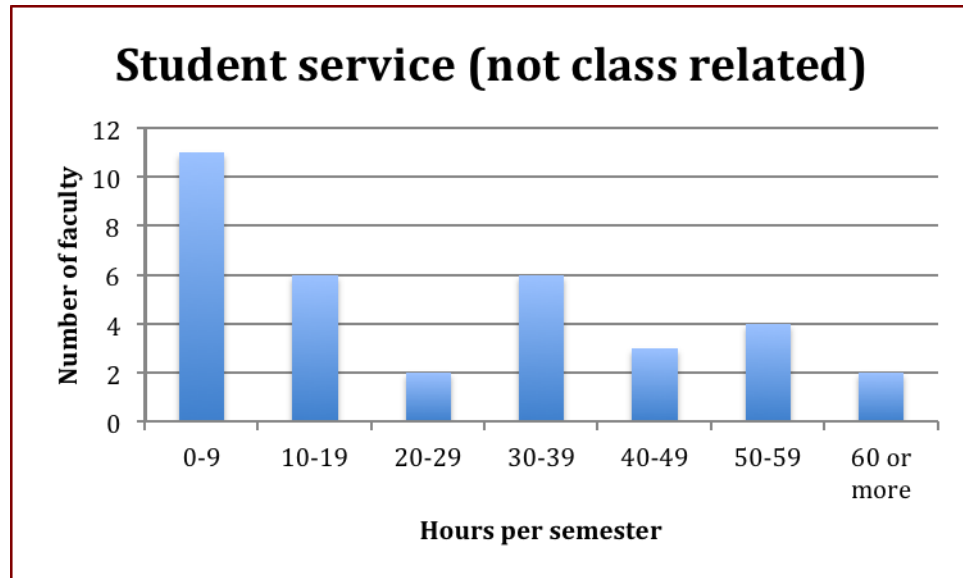


Community service related to Wellesley



Professional outreach





Service equity

A substantial majority of respondents (65%) felt that service is not equitably distributed. The graphs above illustrate the inequality of time spent on service, especially in each particular service category, but also in overall service where a few individuals spend much more time than the average.

Below we've listed the most common themes in comments about inequity of service, with percentages indicating what fraction of those commenting listed that theme.

(1) FIP faculty have little opportunity to serve on College wide committees, and would like more opportunity. (44%)

"As a long term non-tenure I have seldom been invited to participate in college wide committees... I would love to contribute on some college wide committee in Wellesley."

(2) FIP faculty do more than their share of departmental service, including the least desirable tasks. (11%)

"FTAs shoulder departmental service disproportionately (placement, language house, tutor supervision, language tables). Were FTAs welcomed to do more college-wide service, this balance could shift and departmental jobs could be shared more equitably with tenured colleagues".

(3) The same faculty always get elected. (11%)

(4) Senior faculty carry a heavy service burden. (11%)

"Department service is often overwhelming for senior members in large departments due to many annual assessments, R&P decisions, search committees, and departmental leadership committees."

(5) Those that are the most capable get repeatedly asked to serve. (11%)

"My perception is that some individuals perform service very effectively and are often asked to serve on committees ..."

(6) Committees vary in workload and perceived value. (11%)

"Some committees require more time than others (admissions, department R&P, etc.) yet are not given more value."

Service burden and service opportunities

About 40% of FIP faculty feel overburdened by service activities, and 60% do not. About 63% are not interested in additional service opportunities, while 37% would like more of such opportunities. As remarked above, until recently FTA faculty were not eligible to be on Academic Council committees, which perhaps explains why 56% of FTA faculty would like more service opportunities, while only 19% of ISL's and 33% of PERA faculty feel that way. (We caution that the PERA figure represents only 6 respondents.)

Here are the most common themes for the comments expressing a desire for more service opportunities, with percentages indicating what fraction of those commenting listed that theme.

(1) A desire to be able to be on Academic Council committees and other College-wide committees, rather than being restricted to departmental service. (69%)

"Would love to be part of admissions, Tanner, Ruhlman, and many other committees."

(2) A desire for more variety of service. (31%)

"I would like to see tenured faculty and FTA in my department embrace a mixture of opportunities (college-wide, departmental) that would not pigeon-hole folks by rank into the same sorts of service year after year."

There was one comment with an opposing view:

"I think the tenure track faculty should be and are required to do more service – as it should be – because they are compensated more than the NTT faculty."

For those who would like additional service opportunities, according to the comments it is primarily service on a College-wide level (including membership on Academic Council committees and other committees and task forces) that is being requested.

Weighting of teaching, research, and service for reappointment and promotion

The survey asked respondents to estimate the weight given to teaching, research, and service in reappointment and promotion decisions.

	Teaching	Research	Service
FIP respondents	53%	29%	18%

It is interesting to note that this is fairly close to the weights estimated by CFA respondents on teaching, research, and service weights *for tenured/tenure track faculty* at time of reappointment:

CFA respondents for TT/T	53%	36%	11%
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This survey question was intended to refer to the weight of teaching, research, service in decisions involving FIP faculty. Some respondents may have interpreted it as referring to reappointments and promotions decisions involving all faculty, including tenure track faculty.

The CFA guidelines (e.g., for FTA faculty) say “Although the primary responsibility of faculty on term appointments is instructional, review for reappointment and promotion includes evaluation in three areas: teaching (including supervising independent research, as appropriate), professional development, and service (including advising students).” It’s difficult to translate this into percentage weights to know whether the estimates above are accurate or not.

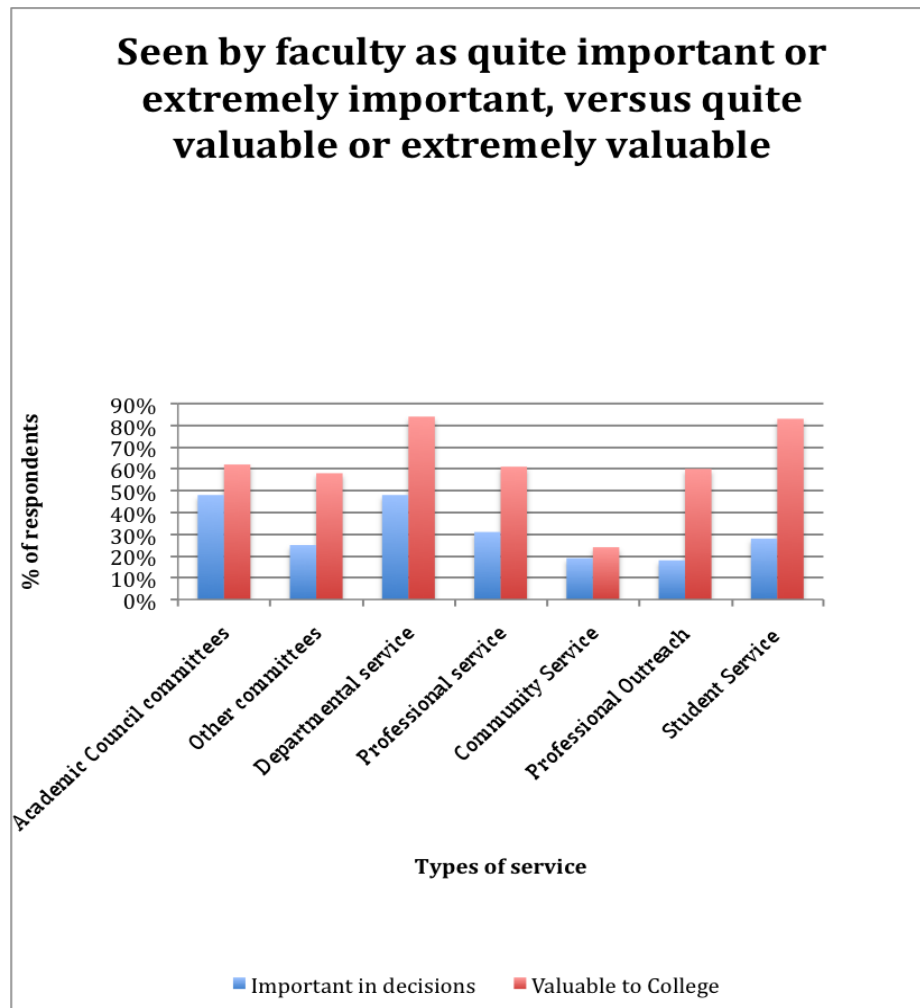
Importance and value of service categories

The survey asked respondents to estimate the importance of various types of service in decisions for reappointment or promotion. They were also asked to estimate the value of each type of service to the College.

Interestingly, the answers were quite different for categories of service other than service on Academic Council committees. For most other types of service, the view was that their importance in decisions was far less than their value to the College. (The same pattern occurred in the survey results for tenured/tenure track faculty.)

The chart below gives the percentage of FIP respondents rating each category as “quite important” or “extremely important” in reappointments/promotion decisions, compared to the percentage rating that category as “very valuable” or “extremely valuable”. (This is the

percentage computed among those who gave an answer other than “don’t know”; about 10%-20% answered “don’t know”.)



One might conjecture that the reason for this sizable difference is the difficulty of measuring contributions in various areas. For example, all would agree that writing student recommendations is very valuable, but the number and quality is quite difficult to measure.

Redistributing work among faculty and staff

38% of all faculty feel there are tasks now allocated to faculty that would be better done by staff, 16% disagree, and 46% don’t know.

76% of those responding answered “Don’t Know” to the question that asked if there are tasks now allocated to staff that would be better done by faculty. 21% answered yes and 3% answered no.

32% feel some tasks could be eliminated or done more efficiently, 3% disagree, and 65% don't know.

Here are the most common themes in the comments on these topics.

(1) Event planning should be done by staff. (18%)

“Faculty should not be spending time publicizing events, booking rooms, etc.”

(2) Faculty are now forced to do what administrative assistants would do before.

“The administrative staffing has been cut back so far that more and more administrative work (paperwork associated with registering, exam administration, scheduling, bookkeeping) is falling to the faculty”

(3) Make better use of student employees. (18%)

(4) Department web sites should be created and maintained by staff. (18%)

“Much of the work that is done in our department as ‘service’ might better be done by staff—developing and maintaining our web site for example”

Background of respondents

Of the FIP respondents, 84% were female. There were 6 male respondents.

Roughly half of the respondents were from group C; the others were split evenly between groups A and B. Because membership in group C is highly correlated with being an ISL, and all PERA faculty are in group B, any differences due to group are confounded with the different types of positions.

Four of the 41 respondents viewed themselves as a person of color.

Among the FTA respondents, 20% are lecturers and 80% are senior lecturers. The ISL respondents are evenly split between ISL's and Senior ISL's, and the PERA respondents are evenly split between Assistant and Associate Professors of the Practice.

2 respondents are chairs of Academic Council committees, and 6 are chairs of a department or program, or director of an interdepartmental major.

For various reasons, making comparisons of service by different subgroups wasn't practical. For example, job descriptions for FTA, ISL, PERA are so different that direct comparisons aren't appropriate. Thus comparisons should be restricted to those within each category. Further subdivision (e.g. by gender, minority status, rank) gives subgroups too small for valid comparisons. Finally, in several categories of service,

service time is concentrated in a relatively small group of individuals, making comparisons impractical.

Some other suggestions and comments

“There are too many task forces that do not implement any changes.”

“There are many service opportunities for which FTA/PERA/ISL’s are excluded and never considered, even when they are more than qualified. There is a caste system that operates in an exclusive rather than inclusive fashion. Too bad. Waste of resources”.

“Service gives me the opportunity to interact with colleagues outside my department and to contribute to the community of students and faculty in constructive and significant ways”

Conclusions

We need to find a way to recognize types of service other than Academic Council committee service in proportion to their value, including service that is not very visible.

There is a great variability in the amount of service among FIP faculty, more so than among tenured/tenure track faculty. Now that FTA faculty are eligible for Academic Council service, and Academic Council has endorsed the 3 years on, 1 year off goal for Academic Council committee service, such service is likely to be more evenly distributed in the future.

Given that the formal category of FTA faculty is relatively new, it isn’t surprising that expectations for teaching, research, service are still evolving. It would be worthwhile to clarify expectations for each of these categories for all FIP faculty.

Finally, there is a substantial segment of FIP faculty that feel their talents and possible contributions have been overlooked for non-departmental service. We conclude this report with a particularly eloquent comment from one respondent on this theme:

“As a NTT faculty member, I would like for our group to be able to do more college-wide service. This service has been readily available to me ... and has really helped me feel integrated into the community (and also helped me become a more effective teacher). I think it’s important for other NTT faculty to have these opportunities. By college-wide service, I mean service on committees and task forces – not necessarily only committees of academic council) in which we interact closely with tenure-line faculty. I would not want us to be isolated as a group by virtue of the kinds of service we are asked to do.”

Agenda Committee, 2010-11

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