

USF FACULTY EXPERIENCE SURVEY RESULTS & ACTION STEPS

Academic Year 2020-2021 // August 11, 2021





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INTRODUCTION

Faculty are the lifeblood of an academic institution and central to the performance trajectory of the University of South Florida (USF), the lifelong success of our students, and the generation of new knowledge through research, scholarly and creative activity.

Building upon recommendations presented by the [Faculty Success Workgroup in December 2019](#), USF's [Faculty Success initiative](#) was launched in August 2020. Adopting a strategic and holistic approach, the initiative focuses on personal and professional development and support with point-in-time resources for early-career, mid-career, and senior faculty, emphasizing equity and excellence across all 13 colleges and three campuses.

Paramount to supporting and promoting Faculty Success is a thorough understanding of the faculty experience, including teaching and learning, research, scholarly and creative activity, community engagement, work-life balance, along with mental health and wellness. To achieve this, the Office of the Provost developed, designed, and administered the *USF Faculty Experience Survey*, a cross-campus collaborative effort in which all college deans and the USF Faculty Senate leadership were consulted to design the 29-item instrument. This detailed *Survey* included 10 questions with multi-part answers and an additional 15 free-form follow-up questions, making a total of 74 responses across the *Survey*.

The *Survey* ran from May 4, 2021, to June 4, 2021, and polled all 2,442 full-time faculty at USF. In total, 1,142 faculty members completed the survey amounting to a robust 46.8% response rate. This high response rate is indicative of faculty engagement in providing academic leadership with input on their experiences in the 2020-2021 academic year. The respondents were representative of all campuses across USF: Tampa (745 respondents or 65%), Health (264 respondents, 23%), St. Petersburg (81 respondents, 7%), and Sarasota-Manatee (52 respondents, 5%). Of the total respondents, 621 identified as female (54%), and 521 identified as male (46%). The list of respondents can also be delineated by race/ethnicity: White (798 or 70%), Asian (112, 10%), Non-Resident (58, 5%), Hispanic (54, 5%), Black (52, 5%), two or more (45, 4%), and other (23, 2%). This corresponds to a 54% response rate for female and 40% for male faculty at USF. The corresponding response rates by race/ethnicity are: Two or more (53%), White (50%), Non-resident (45%), Black (42%), Hispanic (42%), Asian (35%), and other (35%).

“ Paramount to supporting and promoting Faculty Success is a thorough understanding of the faculty experience...”



SUMMARY of findings

While the legislative mandate to consolidate USF's once three separately accredited institutions into a single preeminent research university prompted a renewed emphasis on Faculty Success in 2019, no one could have imagined the series of historic and disruptive events of global proportion that would rapidly emerge in the months to follow. The incomprehensible loss of life, feelings of fear, isolation, and unprecedented impacts brought on by the COVID-19 global pandemic, escalating political divides, an attack on the U.S. Capitol, and the manifestation of long and deep-rooted systemic racism, added to social unrest, doubts and uncertainty in the lives of so many. At the same time, businesses and educational institutions were dealing with economic uncertainty while managing the financial implications associated with COVID-19. USF was no exception facing significant budgetary challenges, a change in university leadership, along with accreditation and consolidation. Taken individually, any one of these events would have presented substantial challenges and stressors for our university leaders, faculty, staff, and students. Collectively these events represent an unprecedented set of disruptions challenging our faculty, at the personal, familial, and professional levels, in accomplishing their teaching, research, and service responsibilities.

As a result of this confluence of stressors at the global, national, state, and local levels, it is not surprising that faculty have faced added responsibilities, stress, and isolation in both their work and personal lives. Yet, thanks to the resilience of our USF faculty members, they have fared better than expected compared to national benchmarks as they appear to have constructively navigated these unprecedented conditions better than most. Indeed, much credit must be given to USF faculty for their ability to weather the tremendous pressures of the last year and a half. However, we also recognize that as a university, we have much work to be done to ensure a sustainable and supportive environment where USF faculty can thrive under any circumstance.





KEY FINDINGS

In this section, we are pleased to summarize key findings of the *USF Faculty Experience Survey* followed by a comparison to national data. See responses to all quantitative questions and national comparative data at [Faculty Responses and National Comparisons for the Faculty Experience in 2020-2021 Survey](#).

Stress and Its Impact

With stress felt on a global scale, it is not surprising that 58% of USF faculty stated that they felt “very” or “extremely” stressed during the pandemic, with an additional 27% feeling “somewhat” stressed.

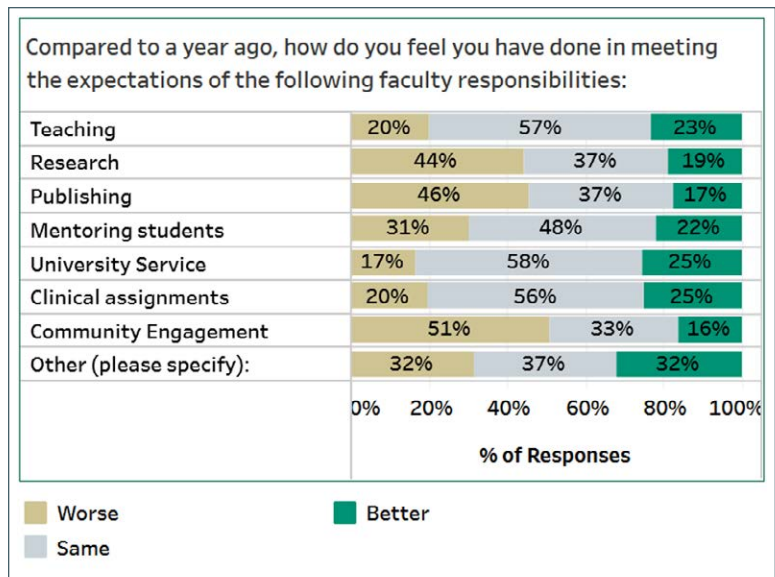
Work-life Balance

As the pandemic necessitated a rapid, unplanned shift in university operations towards remote and hybrid instruction and student learning, faculty were presented with new and unexpected work structures, resulting in 78% of USF faculty stating that their workload had increased due to the pandemic.

Professional Responsibilities

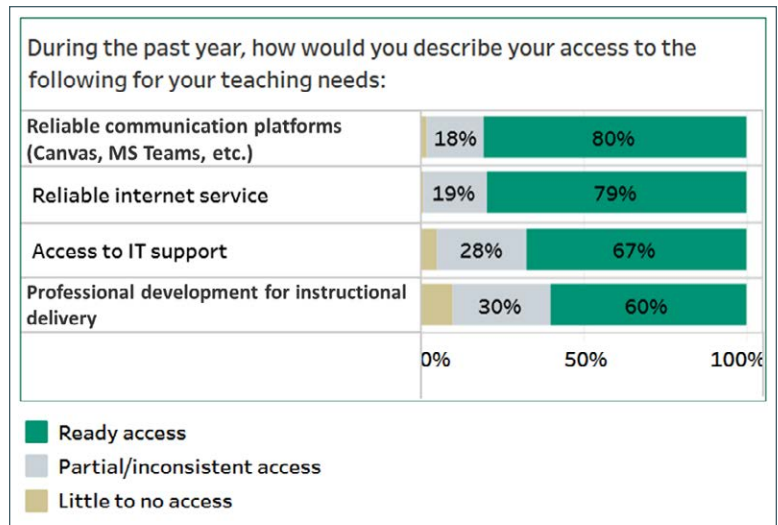
With these added stresses and changes, it is unsurprising that over two-thirds of faculty felt that their work-life balance deteriorated over the past year.

As faculty fulfilled their assignments under new guidelines and constraints, they encountered challenges in their work, and roughly half of faculty respondents felt they had performed worse in comparison to the previous year in meeting their responsibilities in research (44%), publishing (46%), and community engagement (51%).

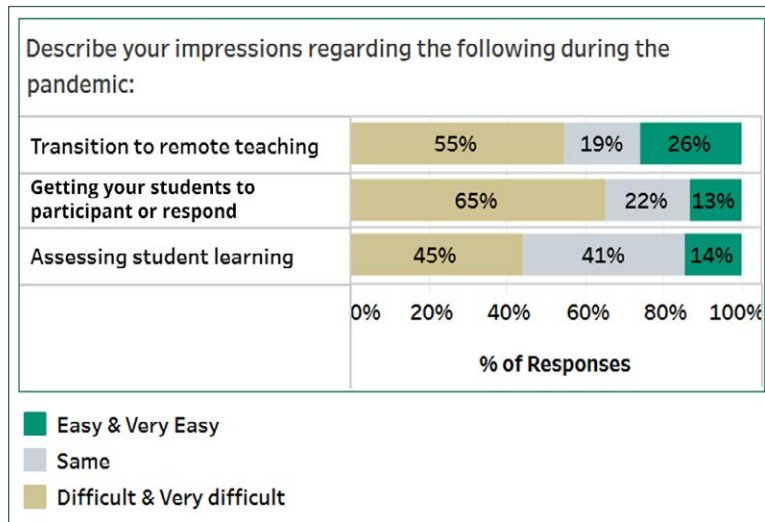


Teaching and Learning

During this time, 49% of USF faculty shared that their enjoyment of teaching had decreased, with only 10% of faculty responding that their enjoyment of teaching increased. However, most faculty had regular access to reliable communication platforms, Internet, IT support, and professional development in support of instructional delivery. In this area, we also see an opportunity for improvement to address the 33% of faculty who describe having partial or no access to IT support and the 40% of faculty who felt they needed enhanced professional development for instructional delivery.



As the rapid shift in remote work and schooling took place on a global scale the families of our faculty were undoubtedly impacted. Fortunately, in reviewing access to devices, tools, or Internet services 68% shared that changes in their family or household members' work/school-from-home status impacted this access "not at all" or "a little", with 13% of faculty having their access "very" or "extremely" impacted.



Considering these factors, 55% of faculty stated that the transition to remote learning was "difficult" or "very difficult." One of the many challenges faculty faced was student participation and responsiveness during the pandemic, with 65% of faculty stating that this was "difficult" or "very difficult." Students appeared to be under similar stressors personally, academically, and technologically during this time, affecting their participation in their classes.

Research and Scholarly Activity

While USF faculty members were managing new modalities of classroom instruction, they were also responsible for continuing their research, scholarly, and creative productivity with travel and physical proximity restrictions, due to the pandemic, hindering their efforts.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, 74% of faculty reported feeling "extremely," "very," or "somewhat" concerned about continuing their research productivity, with 57% similarly concerned about the ability to continue funded research projects effectively. As 42% of faculty reported having currently funded research projects, this concern affected a

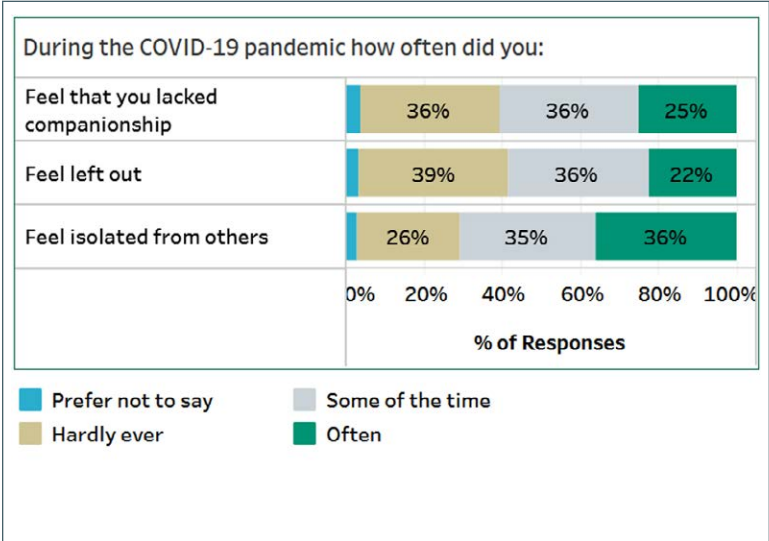
large number of USF faculty. In line with concerns regarding continuing research productivity, 70% of faculty were “extremely,” “very,” or “somewhat” concerned with their current ability to develop competitive research proposals for external funding. Understanding that the effects of the pandemic may linger on a national and global scale, 59% of faculty are “extremely,” “very,” or “somewhat” concerned about their ability to resume national or international collaborations in Fall 2021.

Personal and Familial Responsibilities

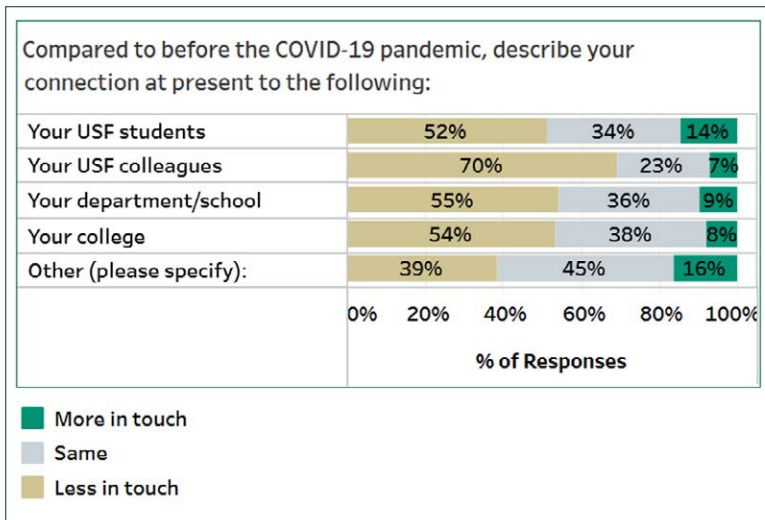
In addition to gauging the professional impacts of the past year on USF faculty members, this survey also attempted to assess the impact on their personal responsibilities and their sense of social and professional connectivity and perceived isolation. As the personal and professional lives of faculty members became more intertwined during the pandemic, this assessment was more important than ever. For example, when asked about their level of daily responsibilities, 49% of faculty had full or partial responsibility for caring for children, and more broadly, 98% of faculty had household responsibilities.

Connectedness and Perceived Isolation

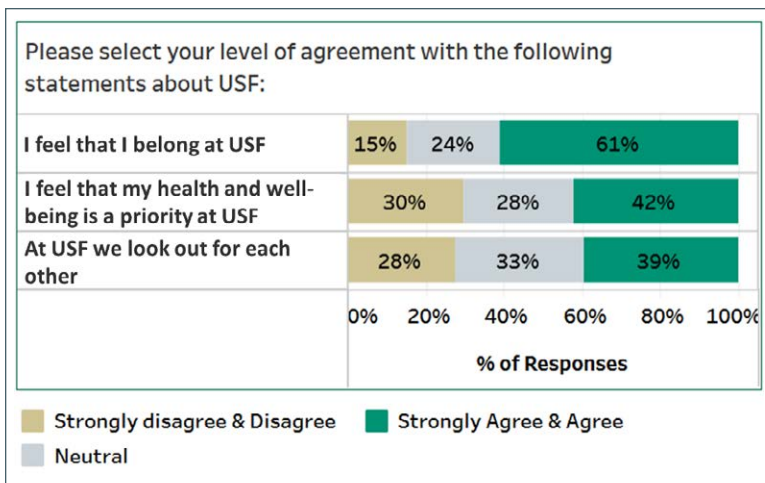
As USF faculty members sought to balance teaching, research, service, and various household and personal responsibilities, they needed a supportive personal and professional network. 67% of faculty felt they “definitely” or “somewhat” had that network of supportive people at USF during the pandemic, with 30% of respondents identifying they “definitely” were provided that support.



Unfortunately, 61% of faculty felt they “sometimes” or “often” lacked companionship during the pandemic, 58% of faculty “sometimes” or “often” felt left out, and 71% of faculty “sometimes” or “often” felt isolated from others. These three questions comprise the *UCLA 3 Item Loneliness Scale* that measures three dimensions of loneliness: relational connectedness, social connectedness, and self-perceived isolation. Using this quantitative scale, 58% of the faculty surveyed were positive for loneliness (or would be considered lonely).



As two of the indicators of loneliness are relational connectedness and social connectedness, it follows that just over half of USF faculty felt less in touch with their students, their department, and their college, while 70% felt less connected to their USF colleagues during the pandemic. With remote operations and the resultant virtual meetings and classes, this decreased feeling of connection is unfortunately expected. Even the best mitigation measures do not match the connections made in person. As people are inherently social beings, similar struggles with connection have been felt across sectors and demographics worldwide.



Despite this lack of physical proximity and connectivity, 61% of faculty “agree” or “strongly agree” that they feel they belong at USF, a testament to the strength and resilience of our academic community in the face of overwhelming circumstances. However, there is an opportunity for significant improvement as only 42% of faculty felt that their health and well-being is a priority at USF. Only 39% “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with the statement: “At USF we look out for each other,” an indicator of the vital work ahead as we continue to create a more connected and supportive university community.

Reconsideration of Priorities

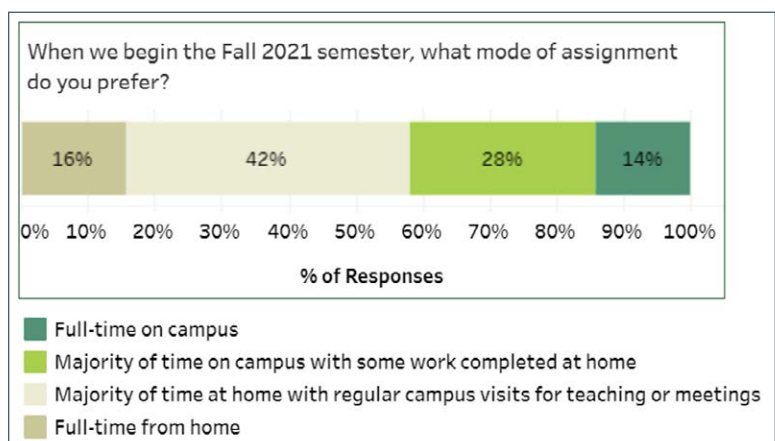
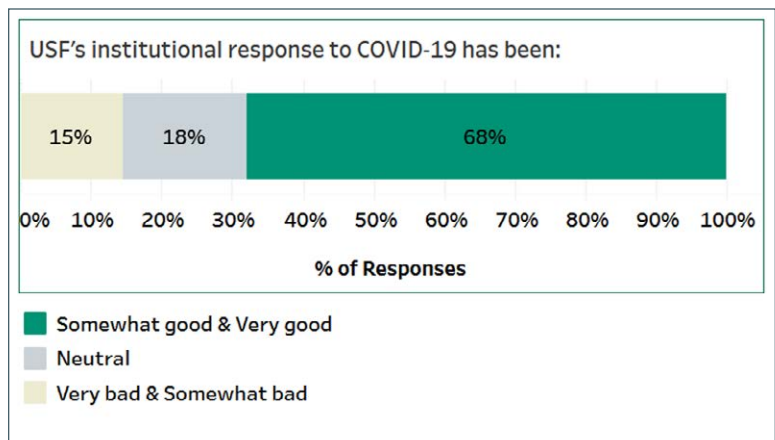
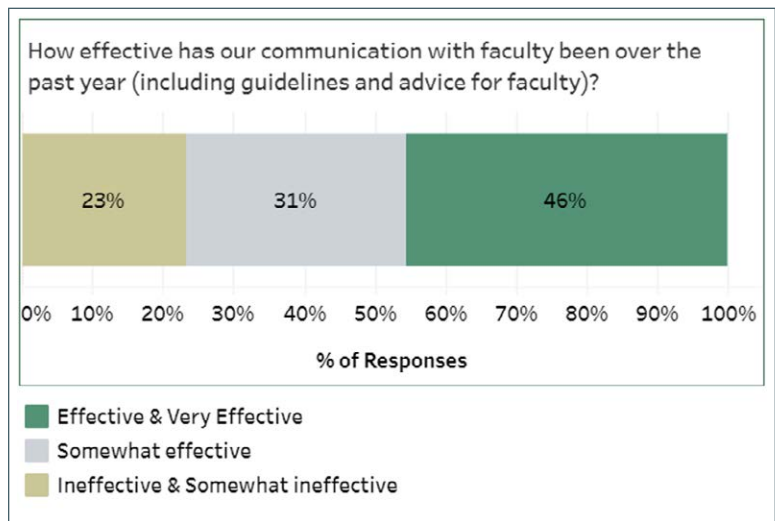
The anxiety that USF faculty have felt due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its related stressors cannot be understated. Since the start of the pandemic, many faculty have reconsidered their priorities and futures. Approximately one-third of faculty “seriously” considered changing careers and leaving higher education or changing jobs within higher education. The pandemic has caused many shifts in this sector, some temporary and some potentially long-lasting. As such, USF faculty are similar to their nationwide peers. Future efforts to strengthen the faculty experience will need to take a careful look at the fact that 44% of faculty surveyed reported they seriously considered leaving USF.

Faculty Opinions of Institutional Response and Future Concerns Related to COVID-19

Throughout the pandemic, USF worked tirelessly to address the needs of, and support for, our faculty, staff, and students. With the transition to remote and hybrid operations, the effectiveness of our communication was critical to our institutional response to these needs. Over the past year, 77% of faculty thought that communication was “somewhat effective,” “effective,” or “very effective.” Similarly, over two-thirds of faculty felt that USF’s institutional response to COVID-19 has been “somewhat” or “very” good. As we address the concerns highlighted in this *Survey*, we will look to build upon and improve our communication strategies to ensure even higher levels of effectiveness.

With the approach of Fall 2021, there are lingering concerns related to COVID-19 and USF operations. For example, 47% of faculty felt “somewhat” or “very” concerned if they would be required to return in-person to the classroom in Fall 2021. With the state’s and our students’ expectations of having a larger in-person presence than compared to the pandemic, these concerns are worth considering. It is acknowledged that such concerns have most likely been accentuated since administration of the *USF Faculty Experience Survey* with the rise of infection due to the highly contagious delta variant and the incidences of breakthrough infections for some who are fully vaccinated.

USF faculty indicated they prefer a hybrid assignment of working from home and on campus in Fall 2021, with 42% preferring more time at home with regular campus visits.



visits for teaching and meetings. Nearly half of the faculty are concerned about being required to return to campus in Fall 2021, and the majority of faculty would prefer a combination of working from home and on campus.

A majority of faculty are still planning on being fully vaccinated (94%) before fall 2021. Faculty believe it is “very” or “extremely” important for their colleagues, students, and staff to be vaccinated (93%, 92%, and 93%, respectively), and 86% believe COVID-19 mitigation measures are at least “somewhat” important. Two-thirds of USF faculty are “very” or “extremely” willing to continue compliance with the university’s daily symptom checker and random COVID-19 testing. This level of faculty commitment to the health and wellbeing of our USF community underscores the compassion and dedication of our faculty.

As previously mentioned, throughout the pandemic, USF students, faculty, staff, and administration had to contend with concerns about their health, physical and mental stress, personal lives, and concerns regarding budget cuts. 45% of faculty were “somewhat,” “very,” or “extremely” worried that they may lose their job due to budget cuts. Even more, pressing is the 83% of faculty who were similarly worried that if budget cuts were implemented, it would increase their stress or workload.





COMPARISON to National Benchmarks

Faculty faced challenges and stressors throughout the pandemic, some of which were specific to USF, but others were clearly felt by university faculty members across the nation. Using data from the [Chronicle of Higher Education Survey](#) of faculty conducted in October 2020, we can compare certain areas of stress, isolation, and professional responsibilities that have affected USF faculty with that of our national peers. It should be noted that the *Chronicle Survey* included adjuncts and part-time faculty while USF surveyed only full-time faculty.

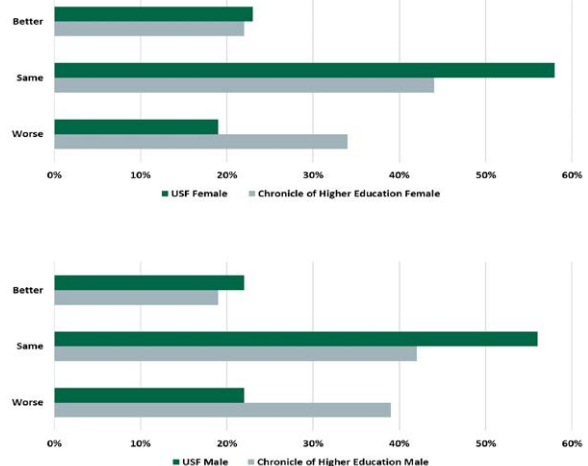
USF faculty showed tremendous resilience, faring better than the national averages. While we are grateful and heartened by the strength of our faculty, we recognize that even in areas where we perform better than the average, we must still focus our attention on improving the faculty experience and their overall wellbeing.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, an average of 69% of faculty surveyed by the *Chronicle Survey* reported feeling “very” or “extremely” stressed compared to 58% at USF. Our faculty members also performed slightly better in work-life balance, with fewer male and female faculty members at USF reporting that their work-life balance deteriorated. However, despite this somewhat improved performance at USF, it is notable that the majority of faculty, both at USF and nationally, describe a deteriorating work-life balance.

Similarly, both USF and the national average found that faculty workload overwhelmingly increased during the pandemic. With this increased workload, USF saw a parallel decrease in faculty’s enjoyment of teaching, only slightly less than that reported in the national average. Though the enjoyment of teaching had decreased, faculty at USF reported that they met their teaching expectations either the “same” or “better” than the previous year at a notably higher rate than the national average.

Along with teaching, fewer USF faculty than the national average reported that their mentoring of students worsened compared to the previous year. USF faculty also met their service obligations at a higher rate than the national average, with higher numbers in both those who felt they met expectations the “same” or “better” than the previous year.

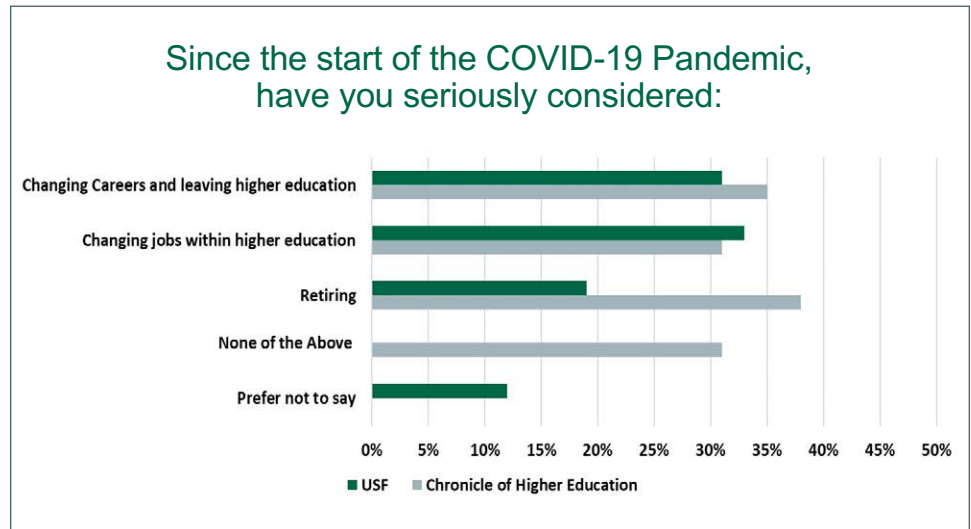
Compared to a year ago, how do you feel you have done in meeting the expectations of the following faculty responsibilities:
Teaching



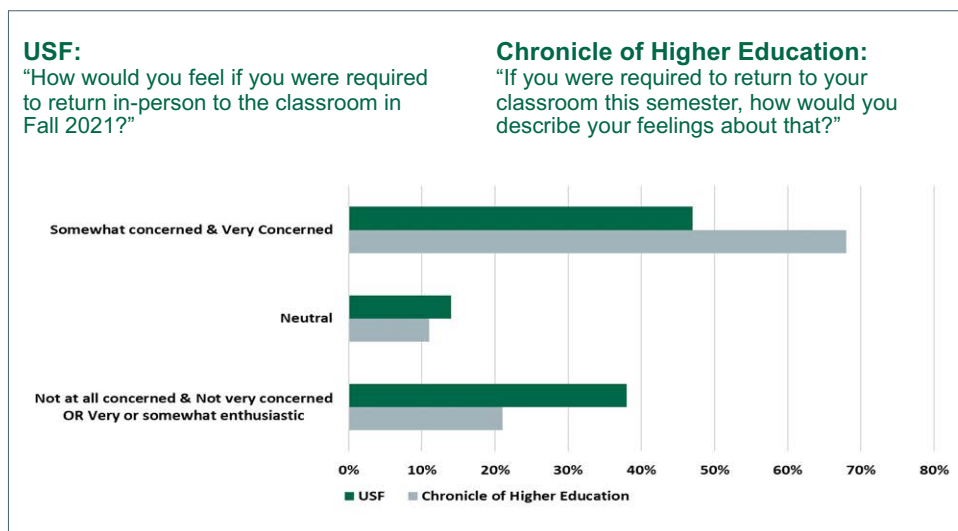
Most notably, compared to the average, roughly 10% more of USF's faculty respondents felt they met their research and publishing expectations better than before.

These comparisons show that despite the pandemic-related stress, instructional and scholarly work is continuing at USF at a higher rate than our national peers, a clear testament to the dedication, tenacity, and strength of our faculty members.

Further evidence of this strength can be seen in the smaller proportion of USF faculty who seriously considered leaving higher education and the 19% fewer USF faculty who seriously considered retiring compared to the national average. While this is a positive comparison, it also showcases the stress that the COVID-19 pandemic has placed on faculty members and the broader higher education sector.



USF scored slightly better than average on faculty's perception of our institution's response to COVID-19. In comparing these responses with our peers, the questions and answers remained substantively the same allowing for direct comparisons.



In one question, however, for clarity, the wording of the question and answer were changed more substantially. Therefore, while it appears that USF faculty are significantly less concerned about returning in person to the classroom, we are aware that the changes may have resulted in a less accurate comparison.



ONGOING AND FUTURE INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES to the USF Faculty Experience Survey

A wide range of initiatives have been completed and many are still underway in response to findings of the *USF Faculty Experience Survey* and to lessons learned over the past 18 months. Guided by USF's institutional goals including "...the lifelong success of well-educated, highly skilled, and adaptable alumnae/alumni... high-impact research and innovation to advance frontiers of knowledge, [to solving] global problems and improve lives... creating robust global, national and regional partnerships to build a prosperous and sustainable future... to provide a safe, inclusive and vibrant community for learning, discovery, creative activities... [and] to ensure a strong and sustainable financial base..." we are dedicated to striking a responsible balance by meeting the needs of our students, faculty, staff and communities while preserving the health and wellbeing of our proud academic community.

This section presents the context and specifics of some of these initiatives. However, it should be noted that these are not all-inclusive yet serve as representative examples. The development of future Faculty Success initiatives will include consultation with deans, the Faculty Senate, campus leadership, and other stakeholders across USF.

Alleviating Stress and Loneliness

While USF faculty members have demonstrated remarkable flexibility and resiliency over the past 18 months, the *Survey* results suggest we have much work to do in alleviating stress and ameliorating the feeling of loneliness by building a more diverse, sustainable, and supportive community at USF. The following initiatives are intended to enhance the level of support:

ONGOING INITIATIVES

New Faculty/Early Career

- Restructuring of *USF's New Faculty Orientation* to focus more on Faculty Success
- Conduct focus groups on the *New Faculty Experience at USF, Faculty Assessment and Mentoring*
- Implementation of a monthly *Early Career Faculty Workshop Series*

Diversity and Inclusion

- Active participation in *Aspire: The National Alliance for Inclusive and Diverse STEM Faculty*
- USF has joined the *National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity*
- Building and learning from USF's *DARE Dashboard*

Faculty Professional Development

- Workshop on Multi-dimensional Faculty Mentoring
- Building Communities of Learners
- Redefining and clarifying courtesy and affiliate faculty roles at USF
- Focus on ensuring fair and equitable distribution of service assignments, encouraging academic units to streamline committees to reduce in-unit service loads

FUTURE/PLANNED INITIATIVES

Faculty Professional Development

- Renaming selected faculty titles, placing them in dedicated job codes, and developing new job codes/titles to better match faculty with their assigned roles
- Strengthening infrastructure to align and match expectations of faculty in tenure and promotion guidelines

Supporting Faculty Members' Professional and Personal Development

USF is also dedicated to providing purposeful, supportive attention to developing and strengthening skills essential to faculty assignments in teaching and learning, along with research, scholarly and creative responsibilities. We are mindful of the significant time that faculty also spend on their service and personal responsibilities. The following represent ongoing and future initiatives dedicated to this improvement:

ONGOING INITIATIVES

Faculty Professional Development

- Institutional membership for USF in *National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity*
- Chairs' Planning Workshop for Formative Faculty Assessment
- Conducting an inventory of the current recognition, incentive, and reward systems for faculty activities to identify gaps and needs
- Developing a comprehensive plan to enhance systems that incentivize, recognize, and reward faculty activities

Teaching & Learning

- Formation of a unified USF [*Center for Innovative Teaching & Learning \(CITL\)*](#)
- Developing innovative teaching through faculty learning communities
- Seeking faculty input on future classrooms and technology
- Engaging students through technology
- Investing in online proctoring solutions
- Supporting learning in hyflex modalities
- Workshops on equitable and inclusive teaching and learning
- Investing in virtual lab tools
- Workshop: *Getting Started in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*
- Using the Information + Data Literacy Canvas Workshops for Instruction

Faculty Engagement with Community & Partnerships

- Develop a comprehensive plan to increase provisions for internal support and knowledge to facilitate partnerships within community-engaged learning and research
- Inventory available systems to support community-engaged research and scholarship to identify gaps and needs
- Inventory current local, regional, national, and global partnerships to identify gaps or needs
- Promote opportunities for faculty in programs abroad to stimulate partnerships that can develop into robust collaborations in grant writing, community-engaged learning, and research
- Inform faculty of, and improve access to, available maps of partnership networks

ONGOING INITIATIVES, *continued*

Faculty Research, Scholarship & Creative Activity

- *Open Access Toolkit* for faculty publishing
- Integrating the USF Libraries' special and digital collections into faculty courses and research
- *USF Research Task Force on Understanding Blackness and Addressing Anti-Black Racism*
- Conducting an inventory of current research-related resources and their allocation to various campuses, departments, and classifications of faculty and identify gaps/needs
- Granting a year extension to the tenure clock for those who request it
- Prior to COVID-19, specifying that tenure-track faculty hired on the branch campuses before Fall 2017 (with some exceptions) could elect to be considered under the prevailing tenure guidelines of their branch campus

Communication

- Conduct an inventory of the internal and external communication systems available to raise recognition of faculty contributions to knowledge generation and amplification and local, national, and global initiatives that benefit society
- Developing a comprehensive plan for internal and external strategies to raise recognition of faculty contributions

Finances, Infrastructure & Analysis

- Developing and implementing strategies for the effective synergistic use of available buildings and facilities, including potential repurposing, to promote faculty success
- Identifying hubs, reports, and other data tools/resources that can be used by college and university leadership in analysis of faculty success

FUTURE/PLANNED INITIATIVES

Professional Development

- Departments will be adding annual evaluation criteria to their governance documents this fall
- Planning to develop guidelines, principles, and best practices for equity of assignment and support
- Planning to develop guidelines for non-tenure track, non-librarian promotion guidelines
- Supporting diverse faculty activities by identifying, and assisting in applying for, a broad range of both internal and external awards of recognition
- Begin establishing internal awards that recognize individual and group accomplishments related to interdisciplinary activities
- Promote award recipients' accomplishments for both internal and external awards of recognition

Research, Scholarship & Creative Activity

- New model for distribution of F&A earnings
- Planning for increases in time, dollars, and support linked to scholarly work, research, and partnerships
- Reviewing plans to establish a more robust support infrastructure, including, but not limited, to a communications strategy for incoming and outgoing Fulbright Scholars
- Subject to negotiation with the United Faculty of Florida (UFF) and approval by the Colleges, allowing additional extensions of the tenure clock to those faculty already granted one extension if extenuating circumstances related to COVID-19 have further delayed their scholarly progress toward a successful tenure outcome. Further, on a case-by-case basis, those faculty not eligible for the first extension may be considered for a COVID-19 related extension if extenuating circumstances support that action.

FUTURE/PLANNED INITIATIVES, *continued*

Finance, Infrastructure, & Analysis

- Reviewing opportunities for autonomy across colleges for resources allocation and decisions specific to the department/college
- Create a “one stop” repository of tools for use in performance against goals for Faculty Success initiatives

Community Engagement & Partnerships

- Considering providing additional accessible funding for projects that contribute to the development of local, regional, national, and global relationships
- In collaboration with the community, investigate community needs, including social and emotional educational projects, ensuring USF is supporting and meeting the needs of its stakeholders
- Providing additional financial assistance to support increased community engagement

Communication

- Create a lecture series for invited scholars
- Create exchange colloquia series
- Develop university- and community-wide acknowledgments and PR that recognize interdisciplinary research and community-engaged learning across diverse settings within our communities
- Plans to strategically disseminate faculty research and conference presentations across local, regional, national, and global audiences
- Establishing communication networks internal to One USF for interdisciplinary collaborations

Teaching & Learning

- Promote interdisciplinary and international collaboration to design, develop, implement, and evaluate an innovative virtual teaching simulation system that prepares highly skilled preservice teachers to meet college needs
- Promote high-impact practices in teaching, aligning practices across USF and providing incentives and funding
- Invest in Graduate Assistant/Teaching Assistant support
- Align Student Success with Faculty Success
- Streamline the Ethics and Integrity process



Recent Institutional Investments in Support of Faculty Success

Over the past 18 months, USF has invested millions of dollars of institutional and federal funds to support faculty success and by extension, student success. These investments continue and include, although are not limited to:

- Classroom instructional technology enhancements for faculty
- Laptops and cybersecurity enhancements to support remote assignments
- Grant funding for *USF Research Task Force on Understanding Blackness and Addressing Anti-Black Racism*
- Online course conversions and additional instructional designers to support faculty
- Student instructional learning assistants (SILAs) to assist faculty in large and multi-modality classes
- Remote learning software (e.g. Kaltura)
- Remote STEM Lab licenses (e.g. Labster and JoVE)
- Global classroom enhancements (e.g. virtual education abroad)
- Online proctoring services (e.g. HonorLock) to assist faculty
- Increased capacity for research computing
- Florida Institute of Oceanography for enhanced access to research vessels and the Keys Marine Lab
- Institute for Black Life (IBL) and Institute for the Study of Latin America and the Caribbean (ISLAC)
- Diversity, equity and inclusion
- Instructional and research space modifications to support faculty success
- Personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitizer, administration of COVID-19 testing and vaccines, and enhanced cleaning
- HVAC repairs and replacement to enhance instructional and research facilities for faculty
- Faculty Early Retirement programs
- Planned performance bonus for eligible faculty

In addition, USF college budgets for FY 2022 have been restored to beginning FY 2021 levels and the 6% state holdback has been returned to colleges. We anticipate that these necessary and unprecedented levels of investment to support Faculty and Student Success will continue into FY 2022.





CONCLUSION

While we look to the future with optimism and a return to some level of “normal” campus life, we also recognize that the full weight and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to unfold for years and perhaps decades to come. Even as we prepare for the start of a new academic year, we see rising infection rates due to the highly contagious delta variant and large percentages of communities that have yet to be vaccinated. We also acknowledge that while the pandemic has left no member of our community and the world untouched, our day-to-day experiences have varied quite considerably.

As such, the *USF Faculty Experience Survey for Academic Year 2020-2021* has provided insight into the faculty experience during these tumultuous times. Insights that will better inform our current and future actions toward a stronger and more inclusive, and supportive environment for all of our faculty members to thrive.

After all, we know that the issues explored in the survey “*stress and its impact*,” “*work-life balance*,” “*professional responsibilities*,” “*personal and familial responsibilities*,” “*connectedness and perceived isolation*,” “*teaching and learning*,” “*research and scholarly activity*,” “*reconsideration of priorities*,” and “*communication and institutional responses (to a crisis)*,” are essential components in faculty success within any context.

We also expect that this critical work will not only serve as an initial step in understanding and addressing the faculty experience at USF, but it will also serve as an important baseline by which we measure our progress against the findings of future faculty experience surveys including a follow-up survey planned for the 2021/22 academic year.

It is clear that we have more work to do to strengthen the faculty experience and promote faculty success. We must also recognize that there is no blueprint to follow, no roadmap to guide us. Instead, we called upon the same elements that have propelled USF forward since its inception, and that is the collective resilience and strength of our talented faculty and staff, their unyielding dedication to the success of our students, and a commitment to research that changes lives for the better.



For survey results please visit:

**[Faculty Responses and National Comparisons
for the Faculty Experience in 2020-2021 Survey](#)**