

# Loyola Staff and Faculty Thoughts on Future Planning and Experiences During the Spring 2020 COVID-19 Transition

## Office of Institutional Effectiveness Research Report, May 2020

June 1, 2020

In March 2020, in response to the worldwide public health crisis around the COVID-19 pandemic, the Loyola community was given a few days to leave campus and move all classes to an online format. Loyola University Chicago and Arrupe College faculty and staff made a transition to online operations with the last on campus courses taught on March 13 and from then, all campus offices closed and all courses were offered online. On May 18, 2020, all staff and faculty were invited to participate in the *Well Being and Benefits Survey*. The survey asked about their recent working experiences, their views on how the university had been supporting them, and their advice for university leadership on challenging decisions needing to be made in relation to the shape of the fall 2020 semester. Over 1100 staff and almost 900 faculty participated in the survey providing important insights into these areas.

This report summarizes some of the candid and rich information they shared in their survey responses. Specifically, it documents:

- Who answered the survey
- How they reported being able to work during spring and summer 2020
- Their sense of general well-being as they carry out their work during this time
- Their views on important decisions university leaders must make about the future

In brief, the response rate of full-time faculty and staff was excellent at over 65 percent. Most staff and faculty were able to carry out their full work responsibilities at home during spring and summer 2020 though there were challenges with technology and it was harder to engage with students. Most faculty and staff felt that their peers and university administrators were concerned about their well-being, but some tenure-track and tenured faculty who felt less cared for. Many faculty and staff were experiencing extensive stress related to the changes underway at the university, COVID-19 impacts on their lives, and family care-giving. Staff and faculty expressed their candid perspectives that administrative decisions attend foremost to the health and safety of students and all employees. Both faculty and staff agreed that freezing hiring was the first necessary budget cut, but they hoped that the university can avoid staff furloughs of considerable length.

### **Survey respondents**

A large proportion of the staff and faculty contacted for this survey responded over the 7-day period it was open. Given an overwhelmingly high response rate among full-time employees, the results can reasonably be considered somewhat generalizable and used in context to inform decisions impacting the university population of full-time staff and faculty. Much more caution

should be given to how these findings provide information about the views of part-time employees.

Survey response rates

	N respondents	N surveys sent	Rate of return
Staff: Part-time	39	295	13%
Staff: Full-time	1058	1509	70%
Faculty: Part-time	232	1206	19%
Faculty: Full-time	644	992	65%

The respondents were distributed across many units, campuses, and different titles, roles, and socioeconomic categories. In a few cases, this report will examine how faculty or staff in specific sub-groups responded to survey questions. However, additional analyses are called for to adequately differentiate among various groups.

Which Loyola campus do you primarily work at?

	Staff		Faculty	
	N	%	N	%
Lakeshore Campus	520	47.5	401	48.1
Water Tower Campus	346	31.6	296	35.6
Maywood Campus	210	19.2	133	16
Other	19	1.7	4	0.5
Total	1095	100	834	100

Staff: How are you compensated for your work on staff?

	N	%
Salaried (exempt)	754	69
Hourly (non-exempt, eligible for overtime pay)	338	31
Total	1092	100

Staff: What is your annual salary range?

	N	%
Below \$50,000	307	28
\$50,000-\$59,000	224	20.4
\$60,000-\$74,999	214	19.5
\$75,000-\$99,999	196	17.9
\$100,000-\$124,999	91	8.3
\$125,000-\$149,999	34	3.1
Above \$150,000	30	2.7
Total	1096	100

Faculty: What type of position

	N	%
Part-time instructor	232	26.5
Full-time, non-tenure track instructor	278	31.7
Full-time, tenure track but untenured instructor	90	10.3
Full-time, tenured instructor	276	31.5
Total	876	100

Faculty: Where do you primarily work?

	N	%
College of Arts and Sciences -- Science/Math	122	14.6
College of Arts and Sciences -- Humanities	174	20.9
College of Arts and Sciences -- Social Sciences	88	10.6
Arrupe College	19	2.3
Quinlan School of Business	83	10
School of Communication	41	4.9
School of Continuing and Professional Studies	10	1.2
School of Education	48	5.8
Parkinson School of Health Sciences and Public Health	24	2.9
School of Law	59	7.1
Stritch School of Medicine	55	6.6
Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing	54	6.5
School of Social Work	27	3.2
Institute of Pastoral Studies	9	1.1
Institute of Environmental Sustainability	17	2
John Felice Rome Center	4	0.5
Total	834	100

Finally, though the survey respondents represent a large number and wide variety of employees, care should be taken in terms of interpreting the following findings only within the context of the time period in which the survey was taken in May 2020. Just prior to the survey, Loyola's President Joanne Rooney wrote the campus community an update on the financial impact of the coronavirus response. See

[https://www.luc.edu/coronavirus/previousmessages/2020-050720-](https://www.luc.edu/coronavirus/previousmessages/2020-050720-1universityupdateandfinancialimpact.shtml)

[1universityupdateandfinancialimpact.shtml](https://www.luc.edu/coronavirus/previousmessages/2020-050720-1universityupdateandfinancialimpact.shtml). The State of Illinois had announced a five-stage plan for reopening businesses. On May 8<sup>th</sup>, Illinois, and the region encompassing the Chicagoland area, were both in Phase 2 of the Restore Illinois plan with a stay-at-home order in effect:

<https://www.nprillinois.org/post/regions-and-phases-pritzker-s-plan-reopen-illinois#stream/0>.

Respondents to the survey were well aware that the context of their lives and thoughts about Loyola's plans were changing day by day.

### Spring and summer 2020 work experiences

Almost all staff and faculty carried out their work responsibilities while sheltering-at-home during spring and summer 2020. Campus buildings were closed and administrative, instructional, and research activities had to be conducted from home. There were small numbers of essential staff who continued to work on campus and access campus facilities. There were a handful of faculty who had to come to campus to care for animals in research labs. There were also a small number of staff who reported that they were unable to work remotely and were not working on-campus.

Most staff and faculty reported that with respect to their working conditions their workload was manageable. However, there were 16 percent of staff and 15 percent of faculty who strongly disagreed or disagreed that their workload was manageable. Staff surveyed shared candid assessments of what proportion of their job was possible to perform remotely and how many hours per week they were able to work. The following tables show this distribution.

Staff:

Report roughly what percentage of job staff are able to perform remotely

	N	%
None of my job can be performed remotely	14	1.4
Less than 50%, some of my job can be performed remotely	36	3.6
50%, about half of my job can be performed remotely	92	9.1
75%, the majority of my job can be performed remotely	279	27.7
100%, all of my job can be performed remotely	585	58.2

Staff:

Report on average, within the past three weeks, staff worked the following hours per week

	N	%
Less than 10 hours	25	2.3
10-19 hours	27	2.5
20-30 hours	130	12
More than 30 hours	904	83.2
Total	1086	100

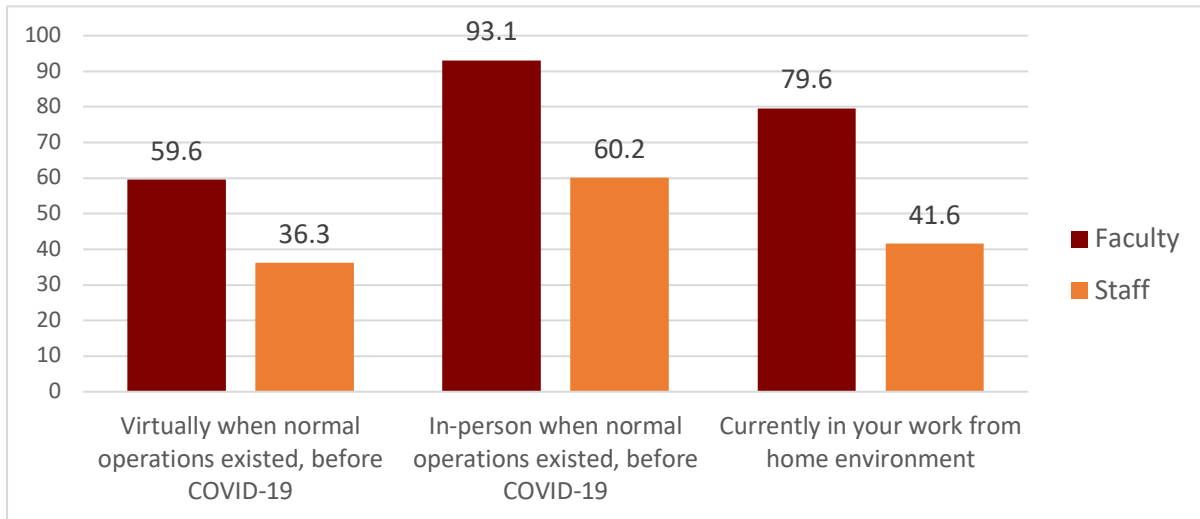
In an earlier survey, faculty were asked to report their views on how they dealt with instructional issues and engaged with students during the spring and summer 2020. A summary of these findings can be found at:

<https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/oie/Faculty%20Online%20Transition%20Report.pdf> .

In this survey, both faculty and staff answered three different questions: How often do you interact with students - Currently in your work from home environment? Virtually when normal operations existed, before COVID-19? In-person when normal operations existed, before COVID-19? As expected, fewer of those faculty and staff who regularly worked often/very often with students pre-COVID were able to do so in a virtual environment during spring and summer

2020. A significant number of both faculty and staff are now using the virtual communications more often with students than previously. Still, there were many faculty and staff who used to be able to interact often/very often with students but who were not able to do this in spring and summer 2020. The figure below shows the percent of faculty and staff who interacted often/very often with students in these ways at these times.

Percent of Faculty and Staff interacting often/ very often with students before and after COVID transition



Staff and faculty were varied in terms of the level of stress they reported relative to have what they need to work remotely. The majority were not stressed but many were somewhat or extensively stressed.

Staff and Faculty: Report some levels of stress related to lack of access to tools or information that they need to do their job remotely

	Staff		Faculty	
	N	%	N	%
Not at all	630	63.4	410	48.3
Somewhat	311	31.1	316	37.3
Extensive	53	5.3	122	14.4

In terms of having the tools and technological resources they need, about one-half of the staff reported they had not have any difficulties with technology tools. However, almost 30 percent of staff noted that internet access and connectivity was problematic. About 20 percent of staff noted their computer or laptop at home made carrying out their duties difficult.

Staff: Experiencing difficulties with job duties due to the following? (select all that apply)

	N	%
Internet access and connectivity	328	29.5
Computer or laptop	226	20.3
Tablet	21	1.9
Webcam	57	5.1
Headset/Microphone	94	8.4
Microsoft Teams	26	2.3
OneDrive	57	5.1
Outlook	89	8
SharePoint	31	2.8
Zoom	171	15.4
I have not had difficulty with any of the above	596	53.5

In the earlier survey, faculty responded to questions specifically about instructional technology. Almost all faculty reported using Zoom and Sakai and about one-half used Panopto. Most faculty were satisfied or very satisfied with the applications they used. There were about 10 percent of faculty who used Sakai though that expressed dissatisfaction.

Faculty: Satisfaction with applications for teaching online and communicating with students

	Zoom		Sakai		Panopto	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Very satisfied	291	48.7	223	37.2	89	15
Satisfied	278	46.5	289	48.2	160	26.9
Dissatisfied	13	2.2	47	7.8	28	4.7
Very dissatisfied	7	1.2	12	2	7	1.2
NA- I do not use this tool	9	1.5	28	4.7	311	52.3

In general, as we noted earlier, most faculty and staff reported that they agreed or strongly agreed that in their working environment, their workload was manageable. About 85 percent of both groups reported that it is manageable.

The relationships and communications that faculty and staff access play a critical role in their ability to do their jobs. Most staff and faculty agreed or strongly agreed that their manager had clear expectations for their schedule and performance, managers provided them the support that they needed to do their job, their job duties were clearly defined, colleagues in their department cared about their well-being, they had a sense of connection with their colleagues, and there was adequate communication and collaboration with other units across the university.

Staff: Percent of Staff who strongly agree or agree that

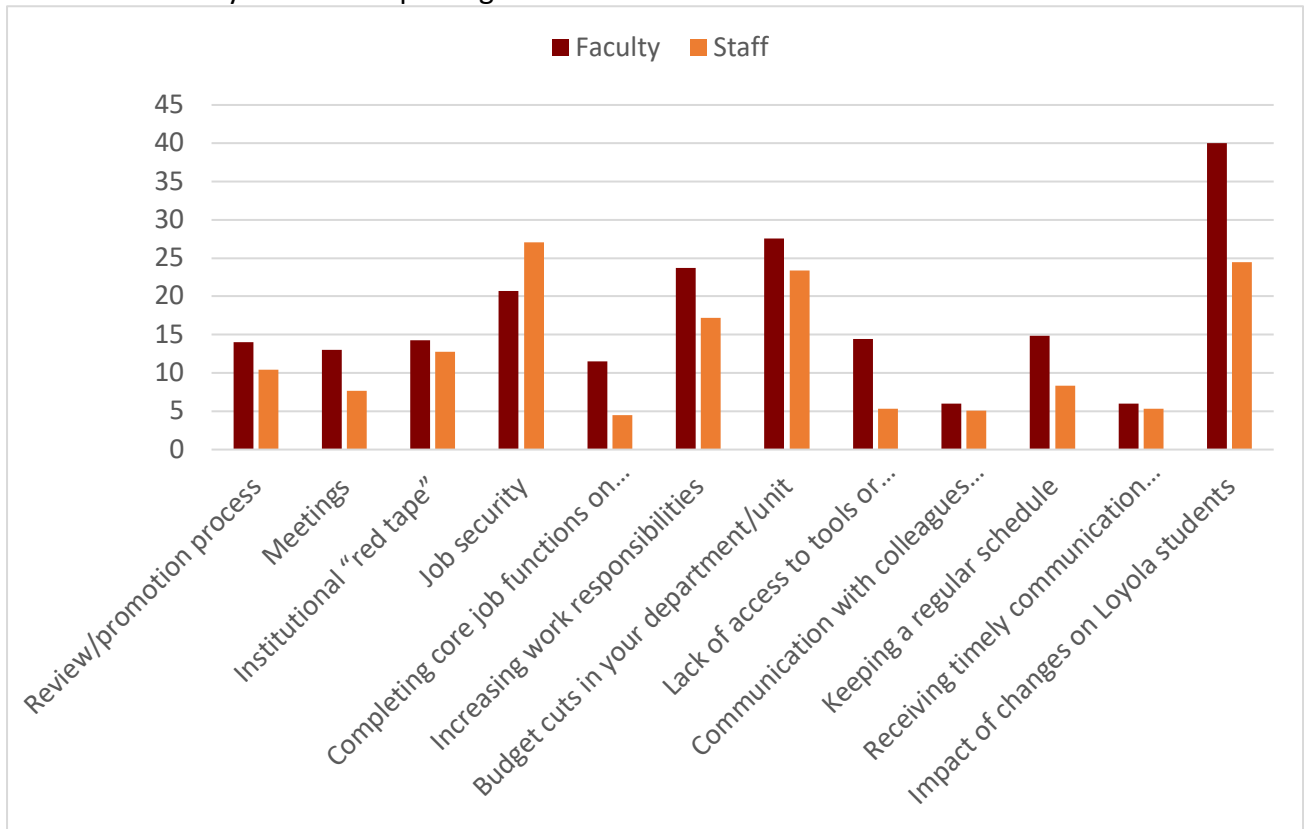
	Colleagues in their department care about their well-being	Sense of connection with their co-workers	Clear expectations from their manager for schedule and performance	Manager provides them the support that they need to do their job	Adequate communication and collaboration with other units across the university
Staff	95.4	84.1	89.8	90.2	72.9

Faculty: Percent of Faculty who strongly agree or agree that

	Colleagues in their department care about their well-being	Job duties clearly defined
Faculty	93.7	85.9

Still there were staff and faculty who needed more of these supports and reported not receiving them. They reported that this was sometimes an extensive source of stress.

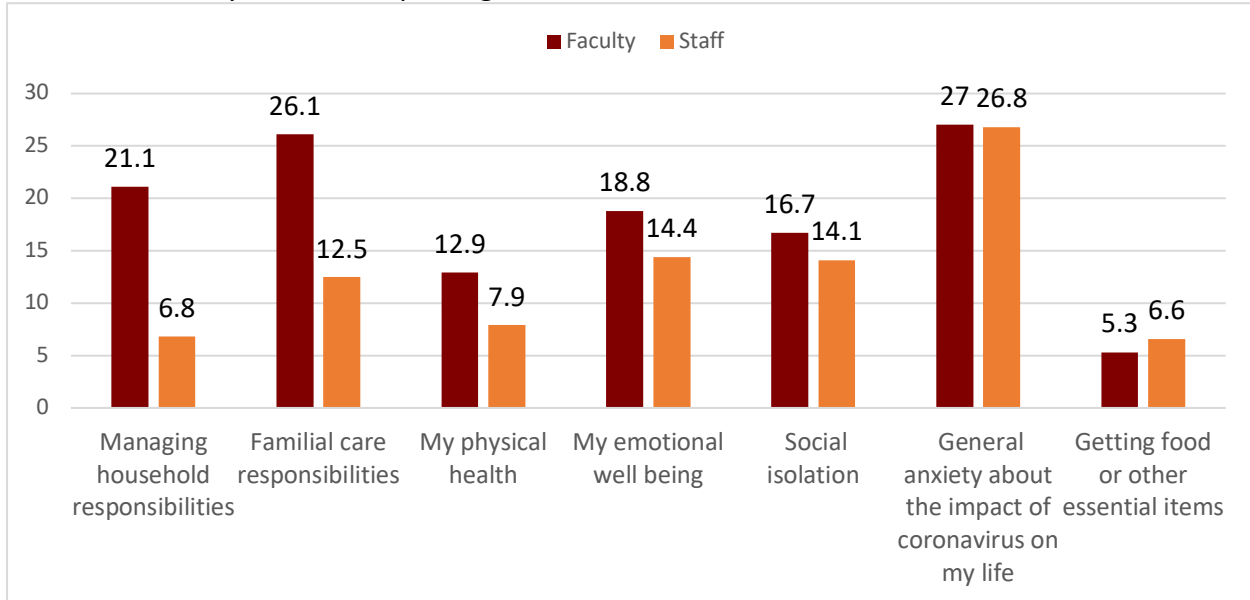
Percent of Faculty and Staff reporting extensive sources of stress-Work issues



Given the new work environment -- at home for most and in the context of a world-changing pandemic-- it was important to understand the many other factors impacting the work of

faculty and staff. While many of these contextual, “outside-of-work” issues existed before the March shift at Loyola, after March it was not uncommon for faculty and staff to report these issues as extensive sources of stress given the greater intermingling of work and home spaces and time.

Percent of Faculty and Staff reporting extensive sources of stress-Life issues



The topic of familial care emerged as an issue of importance in both the staff and faculty surveys. Slightly less than half of staff respondents (47%) reported that familial care responsibilities were extensive/somewhat a source of stress. An even larger percentage of faculty respondents (65%) reported that they felt extensive/somewhat stress due to familial care responsibilities during this time.

Staff and Faculty report how stressful they found their familial care responsibilities

	Staff		Faculty	
	N	%	N	%
Not at all	112	53.1	280	35.0
Somewhat	307	34.4	311	38.9
Extensive	474	12.5	209	26.1
Total	893	100	800	100



Roughly similar percentages of staff felt higher levels of stress due to familial care responsibilities based on their income level.

Staff across different income levels report how stressful they found their familial care responsibilities

	Staff making less than \$60,000 annual salary		Staff with \$60,000 or more annual salary	
	N	%	N	%
Not at all	230	56	240	50.4
Somewhat	147	33.3	170	35.7
Extensive	44	10.7	66	13.9
Total	411	100	476	100

Regardless of appointment type, the majority of respondents in each group reported extensive/somewhat levels of stress due to family care responsibilities. Full-time, tenure track but untenured professors reported the highest levels of stress due to familial care responsibilities with 43 percent reporting extensive and about one-third reporting somewhat (77% overall reporting extensive/somewhat). Full-time, non-tenure track instructors (69%) and full-time, tenured professors (69%) reported similar levels of stress. Part-time instructors were the least likely to report family care as a stressor. However, one-half of that group still reported family care as an extensive/somewhat stressor.

Faculty across different titles report how stressful they found their familial care responsibilities

Faculty	Part-time		Full-time, non-tenure track		Full-time, tenure track but untenured		Full-time, tenured	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Not at all	96	50	76	30.8	18	22.8	80	31.4
Somewhat	65	33.9	108	43.7	27	34.2	94	36.9
Extensive	31	16.1	63	25.5	34	43	81	31.8
Total	192	100	247	100	79	100	255	100

Beyond the survey item asking about family care responsibilities, 6 percent of faculty and 5 percent of staff elaborated on family care responsibilities in the short answer responses. Faculty and staff used this space to voice concerns about working both online and in-person in the fall. Those with concerns about working remotely reported challenges with lack of school and daycare options to allow them the time to have meetings or host classes. Further, employee parents were also balancing remote learning for their own school-aged children who competed for time, hardware/software use, and physical space within their remote working locations. Those with concerns about in-person working in the fall, had questions about availability and safety of daycare or in-person schooling options. Another area of concern that emerged was a lack of support or acknowledgment from university leadership, including Human

Resources, about the new challenges that employees were juggling while at home with their children or adults for whom they care.

Faculty and staff also shared their views on how much attention their needs were receiving and how much support they perceived getting from university administrative leaders. About 80 percent of both faculty and staff agreed or strongly agreed that administrators both cared about their well-being and took into consideration their groups' concerns when making decisions related to Loyola's COVID-19 response. There was some variation across faculty groups with more pockets of full-time, tenured and tenure track but untenured faculty disagreeing that administrators cared about their well-being or that their concerns were considered than part-time or non-tenure track faculty.

Faculty:

To what extent do you agree or disagree, faculty concerns are considered by administrators when making decisions related to Loyola's COVID-19 response.

	All		Part-time		Full-time, non-tenure track		Full-time, tenure track but untenured		Full-time, tenured	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Strongly Disagree	43	5	5	2.3	6	2.2	5	5.7	24	9.2
Disagree	159	18.3	21	9.5	51	18.8	24	27.6	56	21.4
Agree	505	58.2	134	60.9	166	61.3	52	59.8	138	52.7
Strongly Agree	161	18.5	60	27.3	48	17.7	6	6.9	44	16.8
Total	868	100	220	100	271	100	87	100	262	100

Faculty:

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements with respect to your current working environment: - Loyola senior administrators care about my well being

	All		Part-time		Full-time, non-tenure track		Full-time, tenure track but untenured		Full-time, tenured	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Strongly Disagree	39	4.5	7	3.2	5	1.9	5	5.7	20	7.5
Disagree	154	17.7	31	14	44	16.4	22	25.3	50	18.7
Agree	467	53.6	117	52.9	148	55	47	54	141	52.8
Strongly Agree	212	24.3	66	29.9	72	26.8	13	14.9	56	21
Total	872	100	221	100	269	100	87	100	267	100

Staff:

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements with respect to your current working environment: - Loyola senior administrators care about my well being

	All		Less than \$60,000		\$60,000 or more	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Strongly Disagree	43	4.1	21	4.2	22	4
Disagree	152	14.3	85	16.9	65	11.8
Agree	548	51.7	251	49	293	53.2
Strongly Agree	317	29.9	146	29	171	31
Total	1060	100	503	100	551	100

Staff:

To what extent do you agree or disagree, staff concerns are considered by administrators when making decisions related to Loyola's COVID-19 response.

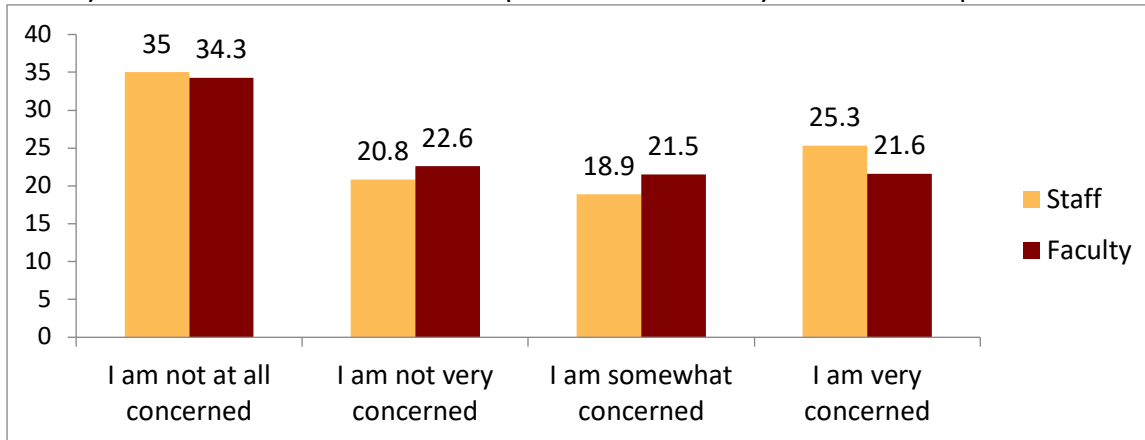
	All		Less than \$60,000		\$60,000 or more	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Strongly Disagree	54	5.1	28	5.6	26	4.7
Disagree	181	17.1	96	19.2	82	14.9
Agree	585	55.3	272	54.4	310	56.3
Strongly Agree	237	22.4	104	20.8	133	24.1
Total	1057	100	500	100	551	100

### Views on the future

Staff and faculty also addressed questions about policy, practice, and budgetary options that the university will be considering as gathering on campus becomes legally and medically allowable and there is potential to work on campus. Questions were asked about areas where university leaders will be making decisions on how to care for students, staff, and faculty, and on how to deal with issues of financial sustainability for the university.

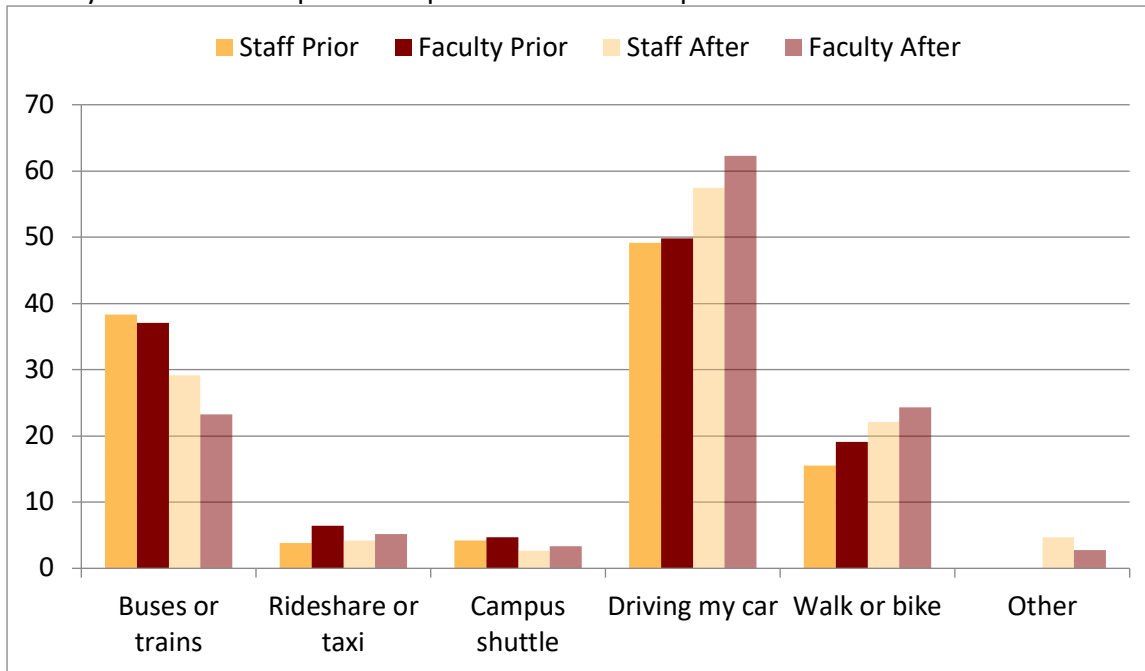
How individuals would physically travel to campus was one important issue considered. Faculty and staff commented on their concerns and plans. When asked about their degree of health concerns about transportation when they return to campus to perform their jobs, both staff and faculty responded in similar ways. While a majority had no or very little concerns, about 40 percent reported being somewhat or very concerned.

### Faculty and Staff concerns about transportation when they return to campus

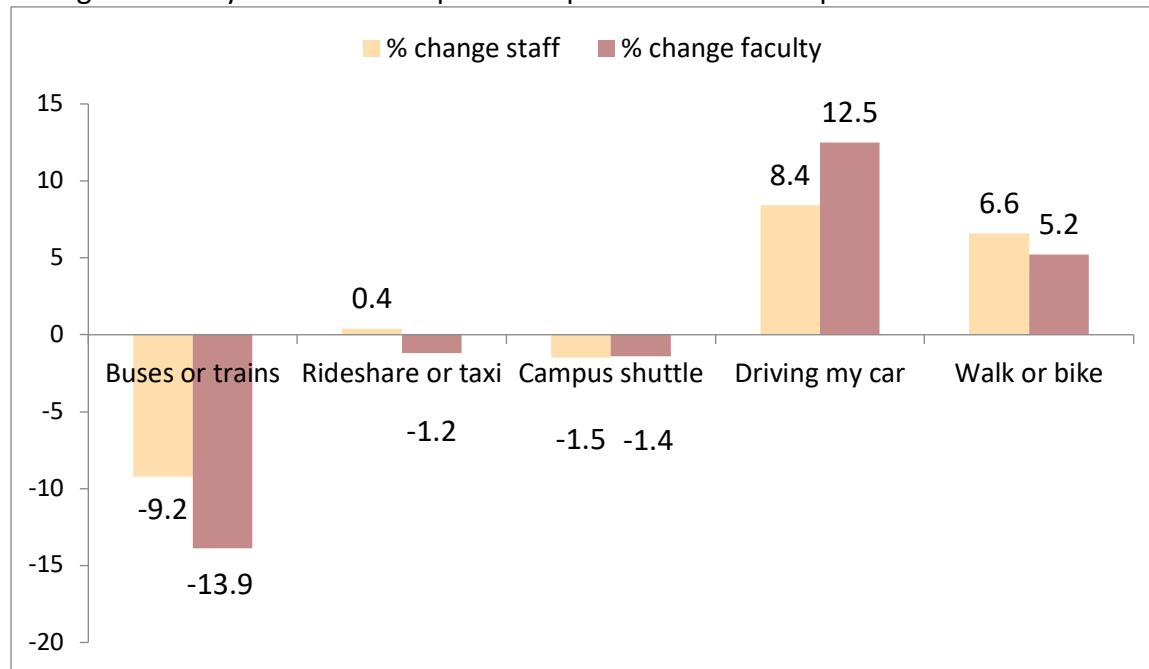


The concern was reflected in how faculty and staff planned to shift how they traveled to campus to work. It appears that when they return to campus, more faculty and staff will drive a car and fewer will use public buses and trains. There also will be more walking or biking to work. Resources for more parking space, increased expenses, and safety in public spaces were of concern for many.

### Faculty and Staff transportation prior to COVID and planned for after



Change in Faculty and Staff transportation prior to COVID and planned for after



Many faculty and staff elaborated on their worries about transportation when asked for additional feedback on the survey. Thirty-nine staff respondents and 14 faculty respondents raised and elaborated on their transportation concerns. Some respondents reported that they rely completely on public transportation to travel to and from work. These individuals expressed concerns over the ability for social distancing and proper COVID-19 safety protocols on public transportation and many did not feel comfortable taking public transportation. One respondent suggested a Loyola shuttle might be used to go through neighborhoods to bring employees to campus in a safe way. Another respondent suggested setting up a way for Loyola employees to find carpooling connections with each other. Respondents also indicated that, when they return to work, they plan to drive instead of using public transportation. A few individuals brought up concerns with limited parking availability and the cost of parking/fuel that comes with driving to campus.

Many people commented that they did not feel comfortable returning to campus until there was a treatment, vaccine, or widespread testing/tracing. Others stated that they would feel comfortable if all of the measures we asked about were in place-- not just one of them. Finally, other respondents just were not sure because the context of what we know about COVID-19 changes daily, they couldn't say how they would feel in August.

Among those individuals who commented on their comfort returning to campus, 15 faculty and six staff said that they would feel more comfortable if all workplace safety precautions were in place, and 14 faculty and 16 staff stated that they did not want to return until there was a vaccine/treatment/widespread testing. Nine faculty and six staff respondents shared that they did not know if they wanted to return to campus for in-person work in the fall because society

was still learning about COVID-19 and what we know was changing so quickly. One person shared:

*It's very difficult to gage what I will feel comfortable with in the fall, given that things may look very different then.*

Four faculty and two staff members also shared that their comfort was based on state guidance and which phase of the Restore Illinois plan will be in place at that time. A faculty member shared that:

*I don't currently have enough information about what the public health situation will be and what safety measures will be taken to feel at all comfortable now with the prospect of in-person classes, if we remain in Phase IV of Restore Illinois in the Fall.*

During spring and summer 2020, senior administrative leaders have critical decisions to make about the shape of the university for fall 2020 and beyond. The survey to faculty and staff offered them a chance to directly and indirectly provide advice on these issues.

In terms of whether fall 2020 should be all online instruction for all students or include face-to-face instruction, many faculty and staff commented that making this decision was extremely important and complicated. There were many comments in the open short answer spaces where staff and faculty expressed concerns, prayers, and best wishes to senior administrators who would be making these decisions.

There were some individuals though who shared their direct advice on the question of whether students should be brought back to campus for the fall. Of the 404 faculty, who wrote in an answer on the final open survey question, 55 faculty (14% of overall write-in comments or 6% of total faculty respondents) addressed directly their view of what Loyola should do in terms of allowing or not allowing students to take classes on campus in fall 2020. Of the faculty who wrote in their views, most (n=40) favored not allowing students on campus in fall and 15 advocated for bring students to campus. Of the 449 staff responding to the short answer question, very few (n=15 or 3% who wrote answers in or 1% of total staff respondents) addressed specifically if Loyola should bring students to campus for the fall or have an online only format.

Here are examples of faculty who felt strongly that fall classes should be online only.

*As much as I would like to see our students, faculty, and staff return to classes in some format in the fall, I am very concerned that there will be a resurgence of the virus in the fall/winter which will put lives at risk. It is just not worth the risk. I think that the University should strongly consider being fully online in the fall and hiring consultants to help get online classes up to par. I appreciate you asking for our feedback - this is such a difficult situation with no easy answers.*

*Given what little we continue to know about COVID and the lack of a cohesive, strategic, and national plan to address it per the inconsistent and flawed testing/tracing procedures, I don't see how it's safe for in-person classes to resume in the fall.*

Here are examples of those who felt strongly that fall classes should be on campus.

*The corona virus poses very little threat for the health of students and most faculty members. Online teaching significantly lowers the quality of teaching and learning. Faculty and students should have the freedom at the very least to have in-person classes.*

*When scheduling for fall I would like consideration given to the value of engaging students in person, in small groups and/or in synchronous online meetings to activate the benefits of social learning - especially for students in courses with high DFW rates - in order for students to have a better chance for success.*

In terms of the need to make decisions related to the large projected budget deficit projected for 2020-2021, faculty and staff were asked very direct questions. Both faculty and staff were asked:

How would you rank the following fiscal responses in order of how you think Loyola should respond? Consider that more than one response may be needed. Therefore, we share approximate savings amounts with each option over the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

There were eight choices that respondents ranked from 1 to 8: (1 = first step Loyola should take, 8 = last step). The weighted average of the option and the percentage of respondents who placed that option as one of their top three choices are included in the table below.

Faculty and staff agreed that the university should take the temporary hiring freeze as the first step, and that a university wide staff furlough for longer periods should be the last option. The largest difference between faculty and staff in the Top 3 metric was requiring tenured faculty to teach an additional course (staff favored this by 24.4 percent over faculty although this option has the third "highest" weighted average among the faculty).

Faculty and Staff ratings of university budget reduction options

	Faculty		Staff	
	Wtd Avg	% in Top 3	Wtd Avg	% in Top 3
Temporarily reducing Loyola’s 403(b) contribution by 3% for all employees	2.91	46.4	3.43	58.2
Temporarily reducing Loyola’s 403(b) contribution by 5% for all employees	3.35	47.8	4.10	36.2
Temporarily suspending Loyola’s 403(b) contribution for all employees	4.49	28.9	5.16	20.9
Requiring tenured faculty to teach one additional course in the upcoming academic year	3.55	44.4	2.73	68.8
Temporary hiring freeze of all staff and faculty	2.23	68.7	2.38	73.5
Temporary and graduated pay cuts based on salary ranging from 2-5% for staff	4.85	20.8	5.92	10.3
Temporary and graduated pay cuts based on salary ranging from 2-5% for faculty	5.11	19.2	4.93	39.3
University-wide staff furloughs for longer periods of time	6.50	11.9	7.16	6.3

With the budget containment strategy-ranking question the last one on the survey, when asked for any additional comments, many respondents added additional insight into their responses through a short answer response. A major theme that appeared was the idea of fairness in the reduction strategies. The idea of fairness meant different things to different people. Some felt that an individual’s specific circumstances should be taken into account before any reduction was made in their pay/benefits. Others felt that those employees who were able to continue to work and do their jobs should be considered last in a furlough/reduction situation. There was also a feeling among some of the respondents that people who did not have enough work for full-time hours or whose services were not needed with reduced student numbers should be furloughed or temporarily reassigned. Some people felt that pay cuts should be graduated with those make less than a certain amount to be exempt from a cut altogether. Faculty and staff both felt that “administrators” should bear a larger pay reduction with the assumption that administrators are on the higher end of the Loyola pay scale or that they would not “feel” the salary reduction as much.

Many people gave other suggestions for budget cuts or reductions ranging from voluntary furloughs of a day or two, cutting activity budgets, or early staff retirement options. One of the most popular suggestions was using the endowment.