<u>Faculty Environment and Employment Committee (FEEC)</u>
<u>Final Report and Recommendations</u>
<u>May 2022</u>

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<u>Committee charge</u>
The 2021-2022 FEEC was charged with undertaking an in-depth study of the university's junior faculty to better understand their experiences prior to coming to USC, their current experiences in their jobs, and their aspirations going forward. The committee was asked to design a survey to assess not only junior faculty's relationships with their work, but also how outside factors including, but not limited to, job security, college debt, cost of living, housing affordability, mental health, and the changing landscape of higher education are influencing their decision making. The results of this survey are intended to inform the work of the Senate and Faculty Councils in two ways: (1) to guide their work with administration and advocacy for policy changes at the university and school levels, and (2) to provide direction for their efforts to develop the leadership capacity of USC's junior and mid-career faculty.

<u>Data collection process</u>
The FEEC survey was designed to capture the range of experiences of USC's junior and mid-career faculty across tracks (tenured/tenure track, RTPC, librarian), appointment types (full-time and part-time), and ranks (adjunct, instructor, lecturer, assistant professor, and associate professor). Full professors—whether tenured or RTPC—and university librarians were determined by the committee to be more accurately categorized as senior-level faculty, and thus were excluded from participation in the survey by a screener question.

The FEEC Survey of Junior and Mid-Career Faculty was designed around three main categories of inquiry—participation in leadership activities, faculty stressors, and faculty supports—utilizing both qualitative and quantitative questions. It was distributed via email to all USC faculty by the Academic Senate on April 4, 2022. Participants were given two weeks to complete the survey. The survey was completed by 595 junior to mid-career faculty representing all schools and tracks. 71% of respondents (329 faculty) identified themselves as RTPC track, while 16% (73 faculty) identified themselves as tenured and 14% (63 faculty) identified as tenure track. Because the FEEC does not have access to a comprehensive list of USC faculty members who fit into the junior and mid-career ranks as defined by this survey, we cannot assess participation rates by school. Keck had by far the largest number of participants (184), more than doubling the number of responses from the second-most-represented school, Dornsife (76).

<u>Cross-cutting findings</u>
Survey results paint a picture of junior and mid-career faculty who are deeply committed to their students, patients, research, and colleagues but who feel ambivalent about their long-term futures at USC. This ambivalence is most frequently traced to perceived shortcomings in university **compensation** and **support systems**, broadly speaking.

Compensation. Undoubtedly, the most consistent theme that emerged in the survey results was the issue of insufficient compensation. Across the board, respondents revealed dissatisfaction with their current salaries and benefits, especially in relation to soaring housing prices and other costs of living in Los Angeles. Survey takers feel underpaid relative to both peers at comparable institutions and colleagues at similar rank within their own departments and schools. They indicate particular disappointment with the university's decision to suspend

raises and retirement contributions during the pandemic—a time when the university requested and received significant investments of faculty energy. Faculty who felt their compensation was substantial identified salary as a significant motivator to remain at USC, but the majority of respondents admitted to currently looking for work elsewhere or were already in the process of accepting positions outside of USC (or outside of academia) because of these concerns. In their open-ended responses to questions about engagement with leadership activities, many respondents insisted there is no financial incentive to do additional service work, a sentiment felt most acutely by those faculty who already believe the time and labor expected by their position is not commensurate with their salary. At the same time, faculty response suggested an openness to alternative forms of compensation for their university service; a common request, for instance, was the alleviation of other demands upon their time and labor in the form of course releases or other methods of reducing professional responsibilities elsewhere so faculty no longer feel additional service is merely an added burden to bear. Finally, responses to questions about the merit review process characterized the financial rewards for exceptional faculty performance as inconsequential—proportionate to neither the extraordinary costs of living in Los Angeles nor the time and effort required by the merit review process itself.

Support systems. Throughout the survey, faculty raised concerns about inadequacies in formal and informal support systems at the university. A major factor in many faculty members' decisions to apply for employment outside USC is a perceived lack of opportunity for career advancement. In the leadership section, responses indicate that faculty find participation in school- and university-level service both personally and professionally meaningful but that they often struggle to find pathways to this kind of engagement. They express a desire for better communication about leadership opportunities, better mentorship around matching service possibilities to career goals, and more meaningful valuation of their effort when it comes time for raise and promotion decisions. Some respondents who have participated in service feel the voices and contributions of junior faculty are undervalued, disincentivizing further service that would progress into leadership roles. For adjunct faculty respondents, this also takes the form of an unclear pathways to full-time employment, creating additional obstacles even for these colleagues eager to participate in faculty governance. In the questions about merit review, some respondents noted a lack of constructive feedback on their files. This suggests an avenue to begin addressing some of these gaps in mentorship and outreach, in terms of pathways to career advancement and meaningful service opportunities for full-time faculty, and to full employment for part-time faculty.

On a separate but related note, it is worth mentioning that two bright spots revealed by the survey are junior and mid-career faculty's appreciation for their colleagues and for the lifestyle afforded by their roles at USC. When asked what factors would keep them at USC over the next 5 years, the most-selected answer was "colleagues," followed by "good work/life balance" and "satisfaction with day-to-day workload." These answers point to significant strengths that USC can build on to address some of the weaknesses illuminated by the survey. For instance, facilitating more peer-to-peer mentoring may help ameliorate the perceived inadequacies in university support systems.

FEEC recommendations
(1) **Address the two main barriers to junior and mid-career faculty participation in university leadership: unclear communication about opportunities and lack of compensation.** Survey results indicate relatively high junior and mid-career faculty participation in department/unit-level leadership with lower involvement at the school and university levels, despite faculty interest in serving at these levels. Responses point to two main barriers to increased participation: (1) a lack of clarity regarding what opportunities for service exist outside one's department and how one might put one's name forward, and (2) a lack of compensation for these efforts in the form of stipends, reallocated time (e.g., course releases, reduced research expectations), and impact on promotion files. The survey results indicate that inequitable distribution of labor in faculty service/leadership leads to, on the one hand, burnout

for those who are repeatedly asked to serve, and, on the other, untapped potential amongst faculty who aren't sure how to get involved. The data indicate that the Executive Board, Academic Senate, and Faculty Councils would be well served to direct their attention to addressing the perceived "clubby" nature of many service/leadership opportunities by improving communication, mentorship, and outreach from the ground up. Faculty governing bodies can also improve leadership participation rates by advocating for more significant rewards and career recognition for time-consuming service efforts.

(2) **Improve faculty satisfaction and retention by addressing pain points around salary and benefits, career advancement opportunities, and university culture.** Survey results identify areas of pronounced faculty dissatisfaction and reveal that considerable work must be done by the university to retain its junior and mid-career faculty. Perhaps most significantly, 65% of respondents reported that they are very or somewhat likely to apply for positions outside USC in the next few years, while only 16% indicated they were unlikely to do so. Qualitative and quantitative responses alike point to dissatisfaction with salary and benefits, career advancement opportunities, and university culture as the most consistent stressors for faculty and the factors underlying their desire to leave USC. These responses demonstrate the urgency of recently announced efforts to "right size" faculty salaries. The committee also urges the university to prioritize mentorship of junior and mid-career faculty across tracks, ranks, and schools in order to address widespread faculty discontent around the perceived murkiness of paths to and mechanisms for career advancement.

(3) **Overhaul the merit review processes.** Survey results point to faculty's overwhelming disapproval of current merit review processes. Multiple respondents noted a disproportionate investment of time and labor to produce merit review files for only a modest impact on salary and no meaningful career mentorship/feedback. Some respondents felt their university service was not adequately recognized or valued by merit review, which itself was a reflection of service's devaluation in terms of promotion, while others noted that student evaluations were still being given disproportionate weight despite the university's commitment to changing how it assesses teaching quality. Respondents repeatedly describe a process that is burdensome and, in its imposition of additional demands on faculty who already feel overworked, one that contributes to burnout. They also raise concerns about merit review standards and processes that are not consistently or transparently applied across departments. As the university has already convened a taskforce to reconsider the extant merit review system, these responses underscore the timeliness and importance of that committee's charge.

Theme 1: Interest in Leadership
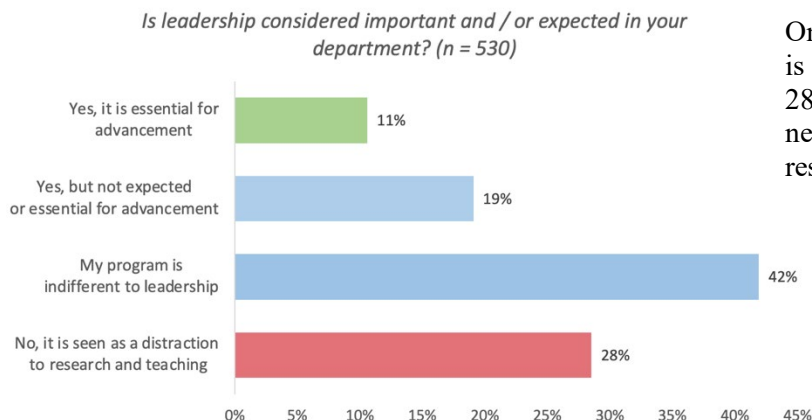
Faculty interest and motivation related to leadership

◊ **19%** of faculty report being uninterested in leadership, primarily due to <u>lack of time</u> and <u>compensation</u>.

◊ **81%** of faculty express interest in leadership positions ($^1/_3$ are very interested), but their reasons for that vary.

Why are you interested in taking on leadership roles? (n = 482)*

Informs me of school operations	74%
Important to me	52%
Necessary for career advancement	36%
Expected of me	29%

*12% reported "Other" reasons
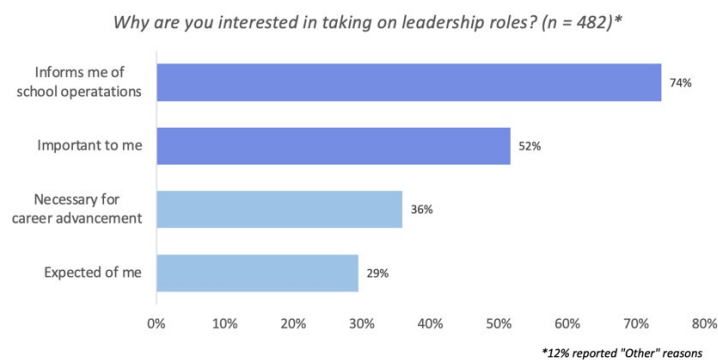
The most frequent motivators to take on leadership roles were (1) gaining insight about how things work and (2) perceived importance.
Expectations and advancement were still important, but less commonly mentioned.

◊ Most faculty have engaged in some service/leadership, mostly in their departments (76%), despite it not being considered important by their department.

Is leadership considered important and / or expected in your department? (n = 530)

Yes, it is essential for advancement	11%
Yes, but not expected or essential for advancement	19%
My program is indifferent to leadership	42%
No, it is seen as a distraction to research and teaching	28%

Only 11% of faculty say leadership is essential for their careers and 28% say that leadership can have negative consequences for their research and teaching.

What faculty said would help them get more interested / involved in leadership

62% Compensation	**51%** Better communication about opportunities	**45%** More recognition of leadership & service
41% More opportunities for junior faculty	**29%** Senior faculty mentor	**18%** Leadership as formal criterion for career advancement
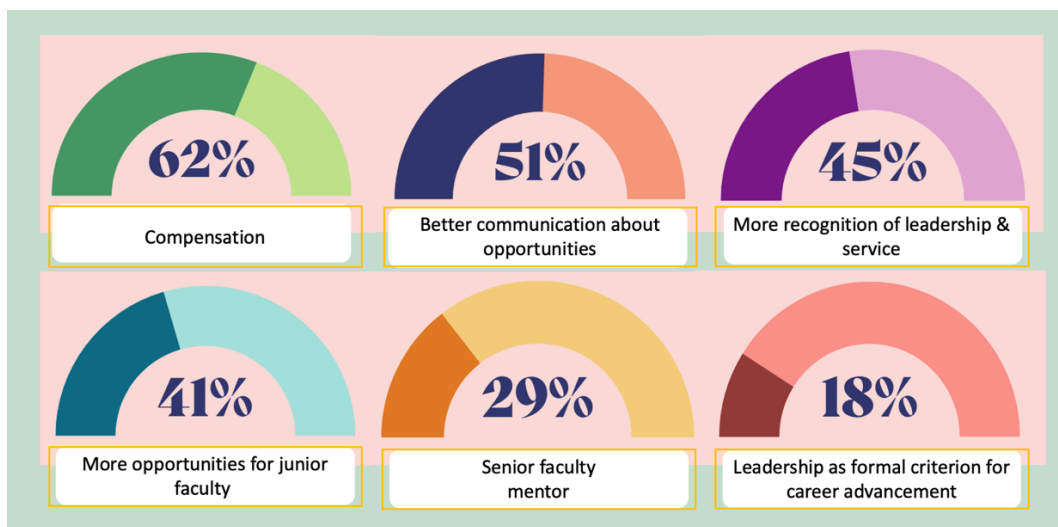
Potential Negative Effects of Service / Leadership on Promotion

"Service work takes time away from research and slows down the process of promotion from Associate to Full Professor"

"I have found that committee service and leadership have generally had a negative effect on my ability to advance, since they are not recognized as part of my promotion track."

Barriers to Service / Leadership

"If I did volunteer for something at the university level, I'm not sure anyone would notice... I have sometimes tried to learn more about the various Senate committees via the website, but (perhaps inevitably) things are out of date or there's only a list of participants. I've tried volunteering.... a couple of times but didn't receive a response."

"Not only is it unclear what leadership opportunities are available to me at the Department, School, and University level, I also do not understand how to get involved (e.g., whom to approach, what qualifications would enhance my chances of being selected, etc.)."

"There are certain positions that seem like it would be more appropriate for senior faculty members, but it would be help to have it explicitly stated when positions are open to junior faculty as well."

Compensation as a Motivator for Engagement in Leadership / Service Roles

"I think that support - compensation and mentorship - would definitely be motivating. I am interested but it's hard to know what to take on when tenure is a priority, plus family/other non-work priorities. Leadership as part of tenure/promotion, and support to decide what to take on vs say no to, would really help."

"I would like to see that being asked to serve on large projects includes course release (not just Vice Dean / admin-type role, but oversight of a minor, lead faculty of massive multi-sectioned courses, chair of school wide diversity committee or provost task force, etc.). In my school, there is not usually compensation, but in the rare cases there is, it is a very small amount that is not commensurate with the work required."

"The faculty are expected to absorb the extra work, stress, and responsibilities of such leadership roles without any benefit of additional compensation or protected time to work on these extra leadership roles, which contributes to burnout and high turnover."

Theme 2: Faculty Satisfaction

Faculty satisfaction with current situation financial situation

◊ No one is satisfied with their salary and only 3% are satisfied with their fringe benefits.
◊ More folks are satisfied with financial rewards for research than teaching or service:

38% satisfied with financial rewards for *research* excellence

19% satisfied with financial rewards for *teaching* excellence

18% satisfied with financial rewards for *service* excellence

Faculty satisfaction with hiring package

◊ Overall only one-third of faculty were satisfied with their start-up package.
◊ Of the faculty who received it, 44% were satisfied with their research funds, 24% were satisfied with their professional development funds, and 46% were satisfied with their relocation funds.

48% satisfied with start-up *housing assistance*

46% satisfied with start-up *relocation funds*

62% satisfied with start-up *childcare assistance*
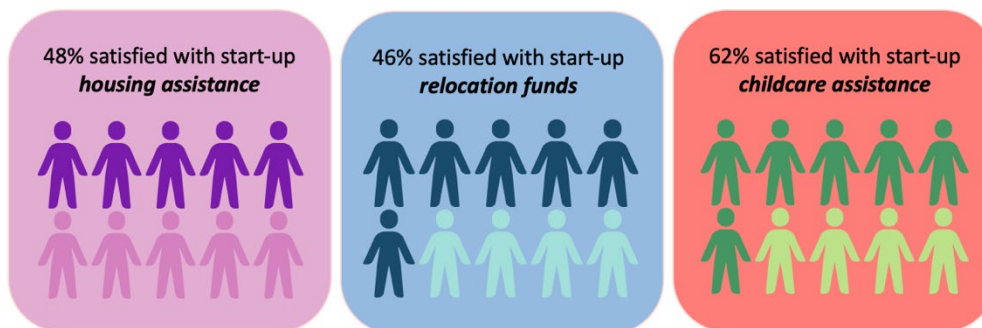
Theme 3: Faculty Retention

Likelihood faculty will apply for another position in the next 3-5 years
- ◊ 65% of faculty said they were likely to apply for another position, including 39% who said very likely.
- ◊ 16% said they were unlikely to apply to another position.

*Top 5 factors contributing to the decision to **stay at** or **leave** USC in the next 3-5 years:*

✔	✖
Colleagues	Better financial opportunities elsewhere
Good work / life balance	Career advancement & support
Satisfaction with day-to-day workload	Disappointment with university culture
Salary	Lack of sense of community at USC
Benefits	Lack of mentorship

Faculty want to stay but relatively low compensation is a challenge for many

"I feel appreciated by my department which helps me stay."

"I would love to stay at USC- as it offers many opportunities for professional development, leadership, research, service and teaching career advancement. Financial compensation is the primary factor influencing my ability to stay employed at USC."

"The financial disparity in compensation between similar opportunities in Los Angeles at other academic institutions is very wide unfortunately. I like my department and colleagues, but cost of living has increased without a corresponding increase in salary or incentive-based pay at USC."

"Compensation is key. There has been no transparency or equity in the process. And it's clear I am woefully underpaid (compared to national and local colleagues) and undervalued as such. I have grown to cherish my work partners here and the patient population. However, that is not sustainable for the workload without the appropriate compensation."

Lack of transparency, communication, and support from university also factor into decisions to stay

"I don't know what the raise pool is or how merit raises might be earned. As far as I know I've only ever gotten the COLA increase, and as it hasn't kept up with my rent increases, I'm now effectively making less than when I arrived nine years ago. At this point it's not even about the money as much as feeling valued."

"I am unbelievably disappointed with leadership at the upper administration level, and also frustrated with the inability to make meaningful change even at the department or school level. I am incredibly burned out and feel like there is minimal, lip-service level acknowledgement of how hard the past two years have been... The salary and benefits freeze during the pandemic still makes me upset due to its cumulative impact for the rest of my career."

Theme 4: General Stress

◊ Nearly all faculty report job stress, with 61% reporting moderate and 24% reporting extreme stress.

◊ Job security is also a source of stress for 78% of faculty, with 17% indicating it is a source of extreme stress.

*Factors contibuting to **moderate/severe** job stress* (n = 595)

Factor	Percentage
Housing costs	68%
Department dynamics	56%
Childcare or other caregiving responsibilities	44%
Lack of university leadership	43%
Lack of mentoring	37%
Childcare costs	34%
Lack of support for diversity, equity, or inclusion	31%
Student debt	22%
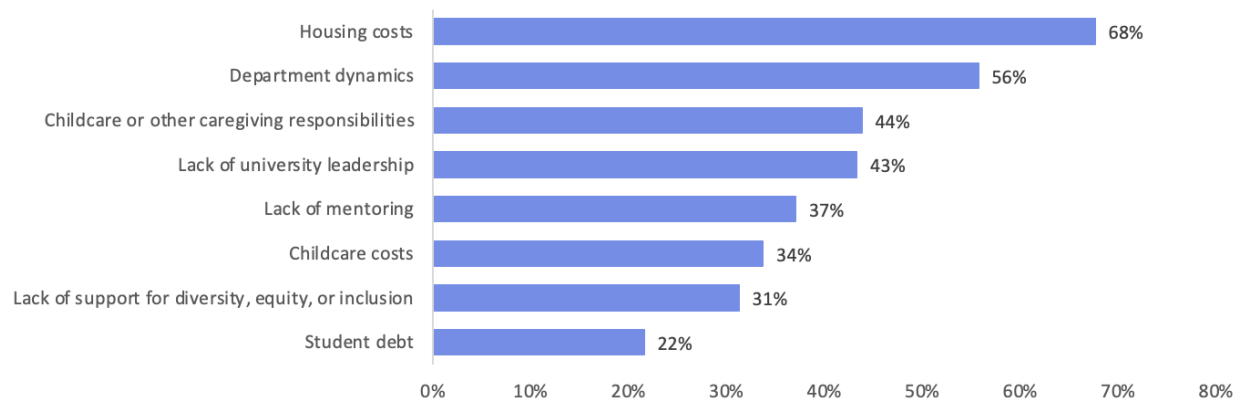
Theme 5: Stress around Merit Review & Promotion

◊ Very few faculty (15.5%) are satisfied with their last performance evaluation.

◊ Nearly 65% of faculty say they feel stress about their ability to achieve tenure/promotion.

◊ Faculty cite likelihood of achieving expectations and fairness and clarity around expectations as major sources of stress.

*Factors contributing to **moderate/severe stress** in promotion/tenure (n = 543)*

Factor	Percentage
Perceived likelihood of achieving expectations and receiving promotion	81%
Suitability or fairness of promotion expectations	77%
Lack of clarity regarding expectations for promotion	75%
Lack of mentoring	56%
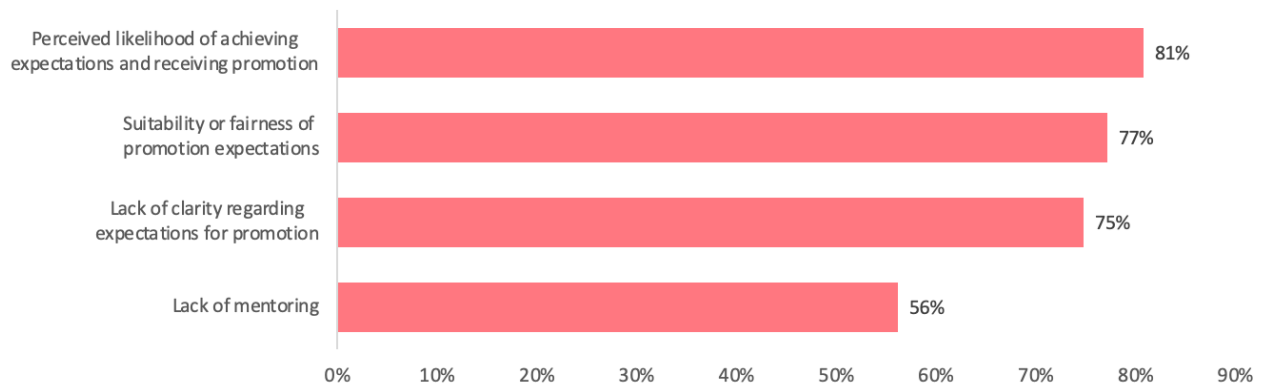
Faculty thoughts on merit review process and outcomes
◊ Around one-third of faculty think merit reviews are helpful for identifying areas for improvement and supporting/encouraging productivity.
◊ 48% of faculty think the merit review process is counter-productive

Factors contributing to merit review stress (n = 538)
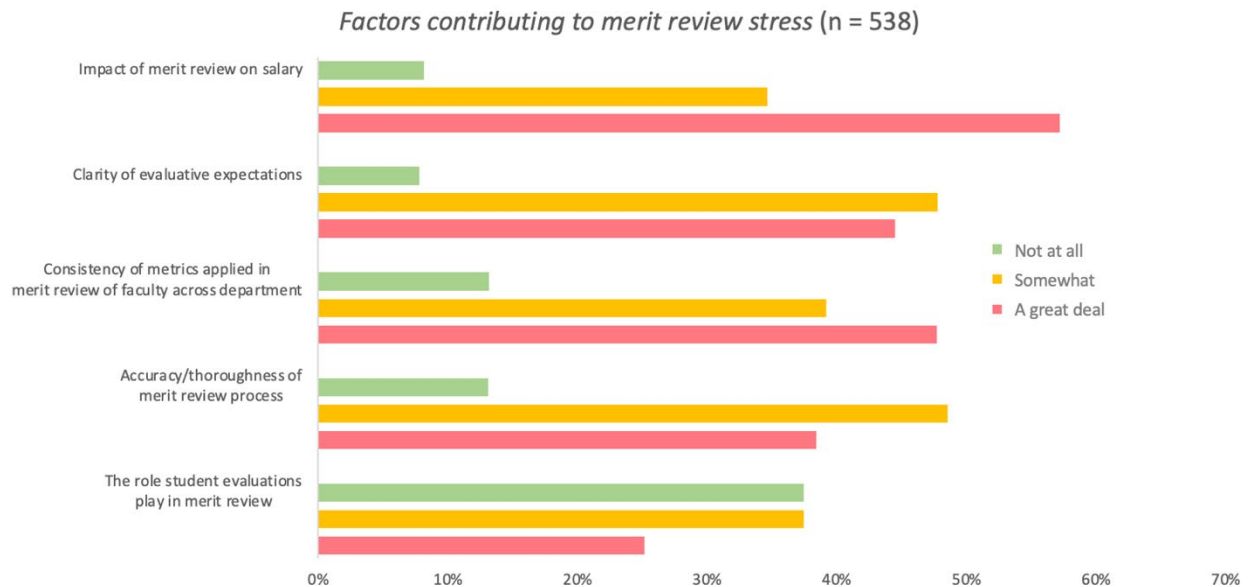
Faculty also said:

"Review process is done 'a posteriori' - with limited guidelines for future work. It would be more productive if some mentoring was done prior."

"The merit review is an exhausting process that places an absurd amount of work on the individual, with the associated bonus being equivalent to basic increases due to inflation."

"In my department, the merit review process is extremely thorough and feels relatively fair, but it's immensely time consuming and the rewards for a high merit review are miniscule. The return on investment for everyone involved in the process is miniscule, and the cost (time and stress) is quite high."

Theme 6: Faculty Supports

Faculty perceptions of support
◊ Most faculty perceive a great deal of support from colleagues, and department chairs to some extent.
◊ On the other hand, most faculty feel they are not supported by HR or University Administration.

To what extent do the following factors make you feel supported? (n = 595)
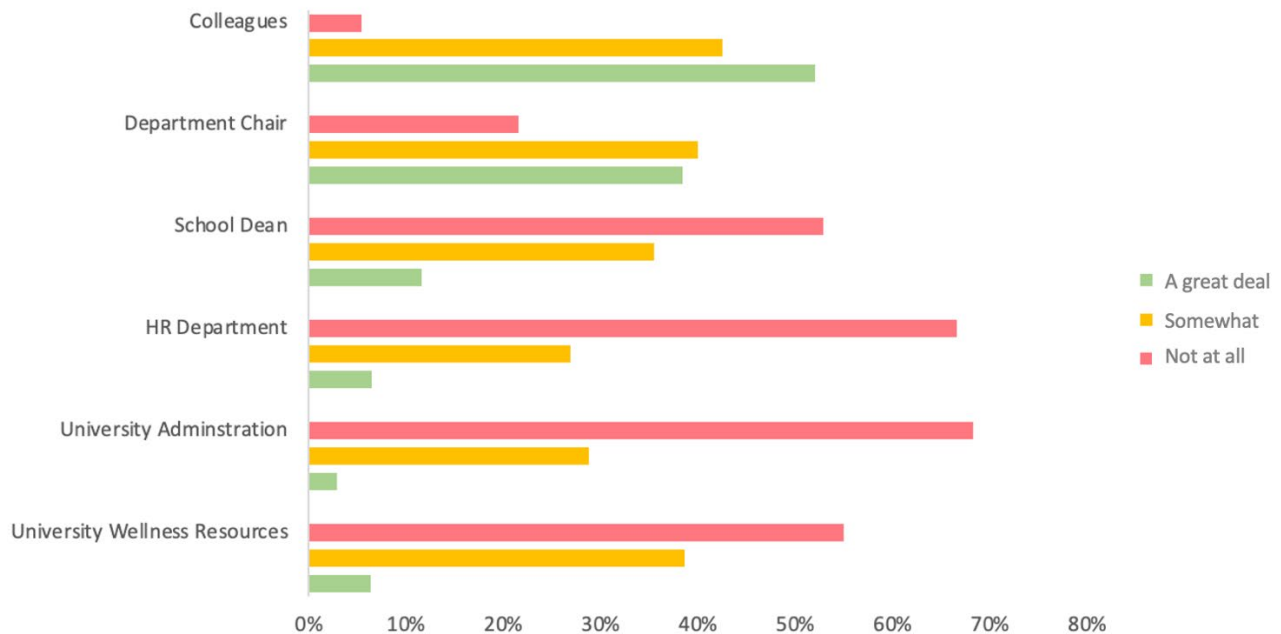
Appendix A. Tables

Table A1: Sample characteristics (N = 595)

	n	Percent		n	Percent
Gender Identitiy	517		**School**	490	
Female	268	51.8%	Annenberg	10	2.0%
Male	203	39.3%	Architecture	3	0.6%
Non-binary/third gender	2	0.4%	Bovard College	5	1.0%
Prefer not to answer	41	7.9%	Chan Division OS/OT	23	4.7%
Prefer to self-describe	3	0.6%	Davis	2	0.4%
Race/Ethnicity	452		Dornsife	76	15.5%
White	293	64.8%	Dornsife	48	9.8%
Asian	87	19.2%	Dramatic Arts	5	1.0%
Latino	32	7.1%	Dworak-Peck	12	2.4%
Black	17	3.8%	Gould	2	0.4%
Other	23	5.1%	Iovine/Young	2	0.4%
RTPC or TT	465		Kaufman	2	0.4%
RTPC	329	70.8%	Keck	184	37.6%
Tenure	73	15.7%	Libraries	12	2.4%
Tenure-Track	63	13.5%	Marshall	13	2.7%
Faculty Rank	526		Ostrow	13	2.7%
Associate Professor	218	41.4%	Ostrow DPT	15	3.1%
Assistant Professor	193	36.7%	Pharmacy	11	2.2%
Adjunct Professor	56	10.6%	Price	12	2.4%
Lecturer	22	4.2%	Rossier	6	1.2%
Instructor	20	3.8%	Rossier	4	0.8%
Senior Lecturer	7	1.3%	Viterbi	30	6.1%
Associate Univerity Librarian	6	1.1%			
Assistant University Librarian	4	0.8%			
Mid-Career	519	62.0%			
Part-time	535	18.7%			

Table A2: Leadership interest (N = 595)

	n	Percent
Degree of interest in leadership	587	
Not interested at all	113	19.3%
Somewhat interested	281	47.9%
Very interested	193	32.9%
Reasons for being interested in leadership roles	482	
Leadership informs me of dept/school/uni operatations		73.7%
Leadership is important to me		51.7%
Leadership is needed for career advancement		35.9%
Leadership is expected		29.5%
Other		10.6%
Reasons for being uninterested in leadership roles	113	
Lack of time		69.0%
No compensation		50.4%
Not helpful for career development		38.9%
Involved in leadership outside USC		17.7%
Other		23.0%
Factors that would help increase interest / involvement in leadership	595	
Compensation		61.8%
Better communication of leadership opportunities		51.1%
Better recognition of leadership/service		45.2%
More opportunities for junior faculty		40.7%
Senior faculty mentor		28.9%
Leadership as formal criterion for career advancement		18.0%
Other		11.3%

Table A3: Leadership Positions (N = 595)

	n	Percent
Departmental Service Roles	595	
Member of committees		70.8%
Chair/co-chair of committees		30.4%
Advisor to student group		28.1%
Director of UG/grad programs		11.4%
Chair/co-chair		5.2%
Other		10.4%
Any leadership positions in department	595	79.0%
School Service Roles	595	
Member of committees		40.2%
Advisor to student caucus or group		20.7%
Chair/co-chair of committees		13.6%
Center director/co-director		6.4%
Assistant/associate dean		2.9%
Other		6.7%
Any leadership positions in school	595	55.6%
University Service Roles	595	
Member provost/university committees		14.3%
Member academic senate committee		10.1%
Member academic senate		5.9%
Chair/co-chair academic senate committee		2.9%
Chair/co-chair provost/university committees		2.5%
Other		4.0%
Any leadership positions in university	595	26.1%
Leadership is considered important / expected by the department / school	530	
School / program is indifferent to leadership roles	222	41.9%
Leadership is seen as a distraction to research and teaching	151	28.5%
Leadership is important, but not expected / essential for advancement	101	19.1%
Leadership is essential for advancement	56	10.6%
Interested in / involved in leadership opportunities outside of USC	566	58.7%
External roles prevent you from taking on USC leadership	327	15.0%
Sought out external opportunities due to a lack of opportunities at USC	328	33.5%

Table A4: Satisfaction with current salary/benefits/financial rewards (N = 595)

	n	Percent
Satisfaction with current experience at USC		
Salary	550	
Dissatisfied	337	61.3%
Neutral	133	24.2%
Satisfied	1	0.2%
N/A	79	14.4%
Fringe benefits	548	
Dissatisfied	144	26.3%
Neutral	183	33.4%
Satisfied	17	3.1%
N/A	204	37.2%
Financial rewards for research excellence	544	
Dissatisfied	192	35.3%
Neutral	136	25.0%
Satisfied	203	37.3%
N/A	13	2.4%
Financial rewards for teaching excellence	546	
Dissatisfied	290	53.1%
Neutral	141	25.8%
Satisfied	106	19.4%
N/A	9	1.6%
Financial rewards for service excellence	545	
Dissatisfied	303	55.6%
Neutral	130	23.9%
Satisfied	98	18.0%
N/A	14	2.6%
Comparative assessments of satisfaction with salary		
Relative to others in same department	557	
Dissatisfied	194	34.8%
Neutral	91	16.3%
Satisfied	239	42.9%
I don't know what other's salaries are	33	5.9%
Relative to others at peer universities	557	
Dissatisfied	307	55.1%
Neutral	61	11.0%
Satisfied	145	26.0%
I don't know what other's salaries are	44	7.9%

Table A5: Satisfaction with start-up package at hiring (N = 595)

	n	Percent
Start-up package	551	
Dissatisfied	177	32.1%
Neutral	153	27.8%
Satisfied	67	12.2%
N/A	154	27.9%
Research funds	549	
Dissatisfied	133	24.2%
Neutral	88	16.0%
Satisfied	240	43.7%
N/A	88	16.0%
Professional development funds	547	
Dissatisfied	204	37.3%
Neutral	103	18.8%
Satisfied	132	24.1%
N/A	108	19.7%
Relocation funds	548	
Dissatisfied	115	21.0%
Neutral	60	10.9%
Satisfied	252	46.0%
N/A	121	22.1%
Housing assistance	551	
Dissatisfied	184	33.4%
Neutral	49	8.9%
Satisfied	263	47.7%
N/A	55	10.0%
Childcare assistance	548	
Dissatisfied	142	25.9%
Neutral	52	9.5%
Satisfied	340	62.0%
N/A	14	2.6%

Table A6: Faculty retention and contributing factors (N = 595)

	n	Percent or Mean
Likelihood of applying to another position	557	
Very Unlikely	36	6.5%
Somewhat Unlikely	54	9.7%
Neither Likely or Unlikely	108	19.4%
Somewhat Likely	144	25.9%
Very Likely	215	38.6%
Importance of factors affecting decision to leave USC		
Mean of score on 10-point scale: (1) Unimportant to (10) Important		
Better financial opportunities elsewhere	351	8.44
Better career support/chance of advancement elsewhere	341	7.85
Disappointment with university culture	306	6.12
Lack of sense of community at USC	308	5.49
Lack of mentorship	298	5.20
Service Burnout	256	4.99
Teaching Burnout	272	4.75
Inadequate university housing assistance	263	4.47
Issues related to family/caregiving constraints	259	4.20
Research Burnout	220	3.67
Inadequate university childcare subsidies	229	3.65
Desire to live elsewhere	222	2.69
Other	75	7.88
Importance of factors affecting decision to stay at USC		
Mean of score on 10-point scale: (1) Unimportant to (10) Important		
Colleagues	87	7.97
Good work/life balance	85	7.94
Satisfaction with day-to-day workload	86	7.77
Salary	87	7.59
Benefits	86	7.47
Desire to stay in LA	83	7.43
Sense of connection to department/division	87	7.41
Quality of Students	87	6.72
Opportunities for career development/advancement	80	6.61
Sense of connection to university	87	6.17
Research resources/opportunities	68	5.75
Other	10	9.20

Table A7: Magnitude of job stress and contributing factors (N = 595)

	n	Percent		n	Percent
Overall job stress	556		***Aspects of university culture that contribute to stress***	595	
I have no job stress	17	3.1%	Your home department or program		46.1%
Mild	63	11.3%	University policies		31.8%
Moderate	341	61.3%	Your College / School		28.6%
Severe	135	24.3%	University leadership		27.4%
Job security stress	540		Higher education broadly		23.7%
No stress	121	22.4%	Campus community		6.6%
Minimal stress	155	28.7%	Other		17.8%
Moderate stress	170	31.5%			
Extreme stress	94	17.4%			
Factors contributing to job stress			***Factors contributing to job stress (cont.)***		
Housing Costs	506		Lack of mentoring	489	
No stress	77	15.2%	No stress	138	28.2%
Minimal stress	87	17.2%	Minimal stress	170	34.8%
Moderate stress	205	40.5%	Moderate stress	127	26.0%
Extreme stress	137	27.1%	Extreme stress	54	11.0%
Departmental dynamics	494		Childcare/caregiving	473	
No stress	64	13.0%	No stress	204	43.1%
Minimal stress	155	31.4%	Minimal stress	62	13.1%
Moderate stress	179	36.2%	Moderate stress	127	26.8%
Extreme stress	96	19.4%	Extreme stress	80	16.9%
Student debt	474		Lack of support for DEI	474	
No stress	309	65.2%	No stress	179	37.8%
Minimal stress	63	13.3%	Minimal stress	147	31.0%
Moderate stress	58	12.2%	Moderate stress	102	21.5%
Extreme stress	44	9.3%	Extreme stress	46	9.7%
Lack of university leadership	483		Childcare costs	469	
No stress	101	20.9%	No stress	245	52.2%
Minimal stress	173	35.8%	Minimal stress	66	14.1%
Moderate stress	141	29.2%	Moderate stress	90	19.2%
Extreme stress	68	14.1%	Extreme stress	68	14.5%

Table A8: Stress around tenure/promotion and merit review (N = 595)

	n	Percent
Promotion/Tenure		
Feel stress about ability to achieve promotion / tenure	543	64.8%
Factors contributing to promotion/tenure stress		
Perceived likelihood of achieving expectations and receiving promotion	338	
No stress	8	2.4%
Minimal stress	57	16.9%
Moderate stress	167	49.4%
Extreme stress	106	31.4%
Suitability or fairness of promotion expectations	341	
No stress	17	5.0%
Minimal stress	61	17.9%
Moderate stress	152	44.6%
Extreme stress	111	32.6%
Lack of clarity regarding expectations for promotion	341	
No stress	17	5.0%
Minimal stress	69	20.2%
Moderate stress	154	45.2%
Extreme stress	101	29.6%
Lack of mentoring	340	
No stress	39	11.5%
Minimal stress	110	32.4%
Moderate stress	129	37.9%
Extreme stress	62	18.2%
Merit Review		
Feel stress about the merit review process	538	58.9%
Factors contributing to merit review stress		
Impact of merit review on salary	306	
Not at all	25	8.2%
Somewhat	106	34.6%
A great deal	175	57.2%
Clarity of evaluative expectations	308	
Not at all	24	7.8%
Somewhat	147	47.7%
A great deal	137	44.5%
Consistency of metrics applied in merit review of faculty across department	304	
Not at all	40	13.2%
Somewhat	119	39.1%
A great deal	145	47.7%
Accuracy/thoroughness of merit review process	305	
Not at all	40	13.1%
Somewhat	148	48.5%
A great deal	117	38.4%
The role student evaluations play in merit review	302	
Not at all	113	37.4%

Somewhat	113	37.4%
A great deal	76	25.2%
Satisfaction with last performance eval	554	
Dissatisfied	236	42.6%
Neutral	117	21.1%
Satisfied	86	15.5%
Does not apply to me	115	20.8%
Merit review helped identify areas of improvement or professional strength	529	30.4%
Merit review process played a role in supporting/encouraging productivity	527	34.3%
Merit review process has been counter-productive	521	48.0%

Table A9: Faculty supports (N = 595)

	n	Percent
Feel supported by Colleagues	536	
Not at all	29	5.4%
Somewhat	228	42.5%
A great deal	279	52.1%
Feel supported by Department Chair	520	
Not at all	112	21.5%
Somewhat	208	40.0%
A great deal	200	38.5%
Feel supported by School Dean	515	
Not at all	272	52.8%
Somewhat	183	35.5%
A great deal	60	11.7%
Feel supported by HR Department	506	
Not at all	337	66.6%
Somewhat	136	26.9%
A great deal	33	6.5%
Feel supported by University Administration	507	
Not at all	346	68.2%
Somewhat	146	28.8%
A great deal	15	3.0%
University wellness resources	500	
Not at all	275	55.0%
Somewhat	193	38.6%
A great deal	32	6.4%

Appendix B. Survey

Preamble and Consent

The Faculty Environment and Employment Committee (FEEC) has been tasked by the Senate Executive Board to survey junior and mid-career faculty to better understand faculty engagement in leadership positions at USC as well as to get a general sense of faculty contentment. The survey results will help the Senate advocate for faculty needs.

This survey, which takes between 5 and 15 minutes to complete, is voluntary and you are free to skip any questions you do not wish to respond to. We will not be collecting any identifying information from you and your responses will only be viewed by members of the FEEC and Senate Executive Board. The information learned from this survey will be summarized at the University level, with some de-identified school-level data shared with Faculty Councils only (i.e., no gender or race/ethnicity characteristics will be shared).

I understand and agree to continue the survey.

○ Yes

○ No

Are you a Full Professor (tenured or RTPC), Master Lecturer, or University Librarian?

○ Yes

○ No

Faculty Leadership

What service roles have you had during your time as faculty at USC in your **Department/Unit**?

	[Select All that Apply]
Chair/co-chair	☐
Director of undergraduate/graduate programs	☐
Member of committees (e.g., admissions, DEI, curriculum, hiring, etc)	☐
Chair/co-chair of committees (e.g., admissions, DEI, curriculum, hiring, etc)	☐
Advisor to student caucus or group	☐
Other [_____]	☐

What service roles have you had during your time as faculty at USC in your **School**?

	[Select all that apply]
Assistant/associate dean (e.g., of research, faculty, undergraduate education, etc)	☐
Member of committees (e.g., promotion and tenure, faculty council, etc)	☐

[Select all that apply]

Chair/co-chair of committees (e.g., promotion and tenure, faculty council, etc)	☐
Advisor to student caucus or group	☐
Center director/co-director	☐
Other [_____]	☐

What service roles have you had during your time as faculty at USC at the **University**?

	[Select all that apply]
Member of Academic Senate	☐
Member of Academic Senate committee (e.g., FEEC, RTPC Faculty Affairs, Nominating Committee)	☐
Chair/co-chair of Academic Senate committee (e.g., FEEC, RTPC Faculty Affairs, Nominating Committee)	☐
Member of Provost or University committees (e.g., IACUC, DEI, Reviewer for Zumberge and/or mentoring awards, Research Integrity, ad hoc Committees, etc)	☐
Chair/co-chair of Provost or University committees (e.g., IACUC, DEI, Reviewer for Zumberge and/or mentoring awards, Research Integrity, ad hoc Committees, etc)	☐
Other [_____]	☐

Are you interested in taking on leadership positions?

◯ Very interested

◯ Somewhat interested

◯ Not interested at all

Why are you interested in taking on leadership positions? [select all that apply]

☐ It is important to me

☐ It helps me to better understand how the department/school/university operates

☐ I am expected to engage in leadership as part of my service

☐ I need it for career advancement

☐ Other
[_____]

Have you encountered any barriers to taking on leadership roles? [select all that apply]

☐ I have not encountered any barriers

☐ There are no opportunities for leadership

☐ I am uncertain how to obtain or pursue leadership positions

☐ Other

[   ]

Why are you uninterested in taking on leadership positions? [select all that apply]

☐ Lack of time

☐ Doesn't lead to career development

☐ No compensation

☐ Involved in leadership outside USC

☐ Other

[   ]

Is there anything that would help you get more interested and/or involved in leadership? [select all that apply]

☐ Better communication of leadership opportunities

☐ Senior faculty mentor

☐ More opportunities for junior faculty

☐ Better recognition of leadership and service at the department or school level

☐ Compensation

☐ Leadership as formal criterion for career advancement

☐ Other

[   ]

Is leadership considered important and/or expected in your department/school?

○ Yes, it's essential for advancement

○ Yes, but it's not expected or critical to advancement

○ Not really, my school/program is indifferent to it

○ No, it may detract from more valued activities (e.g., research, teaching)

Are you interested in, or currently involved in, any leadership positions outside the university?

○ Yes

○ No

Does involvement in these positions prevent you from being able to be more involved in university leadership?

○ Yes

○ No

Did you seek out leadership positions outside of the university because you have not had opportunities for leadership at USC?

○ Yes

○ No

Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your opportunities for or engagement in leadership at USC?

[ ]

Faculty Satisfaction

Thinking about your current situation, how satisfied are you with:

	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	N/A
Salary	○	○	○	○
Fringe benefits	○	○	○	○
Financial rewards for excellence in research	○	○	○	○
Financial rewards for excellence in teaching	○	○	○	○
Financial rewards for excellence in service	○	○	○	○

Thinking back to when you were hired at USC, how satisfied were you with:

	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	N/A
Your start-up package	○	○	○	○
Your research funds	○	○	○	○
Your professional development funds	○	○	○	○
Your relocation funds	○	○	○	○
Your housing assistance	○	○	○	○
Your childcare assistance	○	○	○	○

How satisfied are with your salary compensation in comparison with:

	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	I don't know what others' salaries are
Other colleagues in your department	○	○	○	○
Other colleagues at peer universities	○	○	○	○

How satisfied were you that your last performance evaluation score corresponded to your annual raise? (excluding the freeze on merit raises during the pandemic)

○ Dissatisfied

○ Neutral

○ Satisfied

○ Does not apply to me

How likely are you to apply for a position at another institution or outside academia in the next 3-5 years?

○ Very Likely

○ Somewhat Likely

○ Neither Likely or Unlikely

○ Somewhat Unlikely

○ Very Unlikely

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being unimportant and 10 being very important, please rank the following on how it affects your decision to **apply for another position** outside USC in the next 3-5 years.

	Unimportant										Important
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Better financial opportunities elsewhere											
Better career support/chance of advancement elsewhere											
Lack of mentorship											
Lack of sense of community at USC											
Issues related to family/caregiving constraints											
Inadequate university housing assistance											
Inadequate university childcare subsidies											

	Unimportant									Important	
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Disappointment with university culture											
Teaching Burnout											
Research Burnout											
Service Burnout											
Desire to live elsewhere											
Other											

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being unimportant and 10 being very important, please rank the following on how it affects your decision to **stay in your current position** at USC in the near term.

	Unimportant									Important	
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Benefits											
Salary											
Colleagues											
Quality of Students											
Research resources/opportunities											
Opportunities for career development and advancement											
Sense of connection to University											

	Unimportant									Important	
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sense of connection to your Department/Division											
Satisfaction with day-to-day workload											
Good work/life balance											
Desire to stay in LA											
Other [ ]											

Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about factors that would contribute to your decision to stay in or leave your current position?

[   ]

Faculty Stressors

How would you rate the level of your job stress?

○ Mild

○ Moderate

○ Severe

○ I have no job stress

Which aspects of university culture contribute to your stress? [select all that apply]

☐ Your home department or program

☐ Your College / School

☐ University leadership

☐ University policies

☐ Campus community

☐ Higher education broadly

☐ Other
[   ]

☐ Other

[   ]

To what extent do each of the following contribute to your stress?

	No Stress	Minimal Stress	Moderate Stress	Extreme Stress
Housing costs	○	○	○	○
Childcare costs	○	○	○	○
Student Debt	○	○	○	○
Childcare or other caregiving responsibilities	○	○	○	○
Departmental dynamics	○	○	○	○
Lack of university leadership	○	○	○	○
Lack of mentoring	○	○	○	○
Lack of support for diversity, equity, or inclusion	○	○	○	○
Other [ ]	○	○	○	○
Other [ ]	○	○	○	○

Do you feel any stress about your ability to achieve promotion / tenure?

○ Yes

○ No

How much do these factors contribute to the stress you feel about your ability to achieve promotion / tenure?

	No Stress	Minimal Stress	Moderate Stress	Extreme Stress
Lack of clarity regarding expectations for promotion	○	○	○	○
Lack of mentoring	○	○	○	○
Suitability or fairness of promotion expectations	○	○	○	○
Perceived likelihood of achieving those expectations and receiving promotion	○	○	○	○
Other [ ]	○	○	○	○
Other [ ]	○	○	○	○

Do you feel any stress about the merit review process?

○ Yes

○ No

To what extent do these factors contribute to your stress around the merit review process? [select all that apply]

	Not at all	Somewhat	A great deal

	Not at all	Somewhat	A great deal
Clarity of evaluative expectations	○	○	○
The role student evaluations play in merit review	○	○	○
Accuracy/thoroughness of merit review process	○	○	○
Consistency of metrics applied in merit review of faculty across your department/program	○	○	○
Impact of merit review on salary	○	○	○
Impact of merit review on prospects for promotion	○	○	○
Other [_____]	○	○	○
Other [_____]	○	○	○

In your experience, has the merit review process played a role in helping you to identify areas of professional strength and/or areas for improvement?

○ Yes

○ No

In your experience, has the merit review process played a role in supporting or encouraging your continued productivity?

○ Yes

○ No

Have there been any circumstances in which the merit review process has been counter-productive?

○ Yes

○ No

If desired please explain which aspects about the merit review process have been counter-productive.

[_____]

To what extent is job security a source of stress for you?

○ Not at all

○ Minimum Stress

○ Moderate Stress

○ Extreme Stress

To what extent do each of the following make you feel supported?

	Not at all	Somewhat	A great deal
Colleagues	○	○	○
Department Chair	○	○	○
School Dean	○	○	○
HR Department	○	○	○
University Administration	○	○	○
University wellness resources	○	○	○
Other ____	○	○	○
Other ____	○	○	○

Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about faculty stressors and/or supports?

Demographics

Is your appointment full-time or part-time?

○ Full-time

○ Part-time

Are you RTPC or Tenured/Tenure-Track?

○ RTPC - Research

○ RTPC - Teaching

○ RTPC - Practice

○ RTPC - Clinical

○ Tenured

○ Tenure - Track

What is your rank?

○ Adjunct Professor

○ Instructor

○ Lecturer

○ Senior Lecturer

○ Assistant Professor

○ Associate Professor

○ Assistant University Librarian

○ Associate University Librarian

Thinking about your position in the University or in your department/unit/school, do you consider you career level to be

○ Junior

○ Mid-Career

In which school do you hold your appointment?

[⌄]

How do you describe yourself?

○ Female

○ Male

○ Non-binary/third gender

○ Prefer to self-describe

[   ]

○ Prefer not to answer

Please indicate your race [select all that apply]

☐ White

☐ Black or African American

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native

☐ Asian

☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

☐ Latinx or Hispanic

☐ Other

[   ]