

Fall 2017 Faculty Survey Results

Many thanks to those of you who took time to respond to the recent survey facilitated by AFA and the Academic Senate. 158 contract faculty members (approximately 60 percent of contract faculty AFA members) and 127 adjunct faculty members (approximately 28 percent of adjunct faculty AFA members) responded. In addition to checking boxes, faculty members provided hundreds of comments, all of which we have read and which will inform our work going forward. At our October retreat, AFA will be discussing the survey results, especially the content of the many comments, so that we can identify ways of responding to our members' needs and ideas.

In a nutshell, the survey results paint a picture of a faculty that is dedicated to our students, to the College, and to our disciplines. This dedication was a strong current that ran through almost every set of responses, even when those responses expressed profound frustration with working conditions and shared governance at the College. Areas of frustration commonly cited include the faculty's diminishing role in decision-making about our programs and our work with students, as well as compensation rates that fail to address the realities of our workload and that make life in Sonoma County very difficult. Such complaints were typically coupled with expressions of a deep commitment to our educational work. The hundreds of comments that expressed commitment to our students, education, and the College, on the one hand, and frustration with shared governance and faculty professionalism, on the other, reminded us of James Baldwin's oft-quoted words: "I love America more than any other country in this world, and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her perpetually." We suggest that it is the faculty's belief in the importance of our work that compelled so many of us to provide thoughtful, sharp criticism. We want the College to be the best institution that we can make it.

We would also like to thank the small number of faculty members who offered collegial but forceful criticism of the survey itself, either in survey comments or emails sent directly to us. As stated in the email that accompanied the link to the survey, all of the substantive questions were based—many of them verbatim—on comments that faculty members had raised in the two AFA-Senate faculty forums and brown-bag lunches. Our stated goal was to learn the extent to which those comments reflect the perspective of the faculty. While we learned that significant numbers of respondents do, in fact, share those concerns—about workload, compensation, shared governance, the quality of our departments' programs, faculty autonomy in our professional work—we found that these concerns are not the whole picture. The survey results suggest a faculty that wants more autonomy and a stronger role in shared governance so that it can create an institution that lives up to its reputation. The survey results also reflect a faculty that wants adequate pay and a reasonable workload so that they can afford to live in Sonoma County and sustain their professional lives over several decades.

You can access the statistical results by using the links below. We will publish the comments after editing them to protect confidentiality and anonymity. As always, we welcome your feedback. Email us, set up a time to meet, invite us to meet with your departments, and let us know how AFA and the Academic Senate can better represent you.

Links to survey results:

[Adjunct Faculty Survey Results](#)

[Contract Faculty Survey Results](#)