

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Members of this Taskforce were generally able to achieve consensus on the research methodology. While the parties have different views about the analysis of the survey results and what conclusions can be drawn from the research,¹ they reached a general consensus about what information to collect, the methodology for doing so, and the validity of the data that was ultimately gathered.

The Taskforce's research involved:

- A review of secondary literature related to modes of delivery in post-secondary education, including the impact on faculty workload
- A review of how workload is assigned in the college system in other Canadian jurisdictions
- The collection, review and analysis of the Collective Bargaining Information Service (CBIS) data and follow-up questions to the Colleges and the Workload Monitoring Groups (WMGs), including regarding complementary functions, Special A and Special B assignments, and data regarding the number of international students and the number of students accessing counselling and accommodation services

¹ As we describe in more detail, below, the Taskforce's research involved a large-scale survey. The survey analysis was not done by consensus. It was conducted by a third-party researcher, with consideration given to questions raised by the CEC.

- A large-scale survey of faculty and administrators
- Separate focus group meetings for counsellors, librarians and administrators involved in assigning work to counsellors and/or librarians.

The Taskforce found minimal relevant research on workload or delivery modes in Ontario colleges. Existing literature was inconclusive and focused primarily on American universities.

A review of workload models in certain other Canadian jurisdictions revealed a variety of approaches to workload, with no clear best practices. For teaching faculty, full-time workload is typically based on teaching contact hours (TCH)² and other duties, with significant variation in definitions and thresholds. Non-full-time faculty's workload is typically based on a proportion of full-time faculty workload. Counsellors and librarians' workloads are generally defined by hours. Clinical placements and practicum assignments varied significantly.

In reviewing the CBIS data, the Taskforce identified the following trends across the college system for the period from 2011-12 to 2022-23:³

- A decreasing trend in the average number of TCH, from 12.64 hours/week in Fall 2011 to 12.01 hours/week in Fall 2022 (an overall decrease of 0.63 hours or 37.8 minutes per week over that period for the average of all faculty members with non-zero TCHs)
- A decreasing trend in the average number of preparation hours, which has ranged from 7.51 hours in Fall 2011 to 7.07 hours in Fall 2022 (an overall decrease of 0.44 hours or 26.4 minutes per week over that period for the average of all faculty members with non-zero TCHs)
- A decreasing trend in the average number of evaluation hours, which has ranged from 9.04 in Fall 2011 to 8.17 in Fall 2022 (an overall decrease of 0.87 hours or 55.2 minutes per week over that period for the average of all faculty members with non-zero TCHs)

² TCH is a college-scheduled teaching hour assigned to the teacher by the college.

³ Excluding 2019-20 and 2020-21, for which CBIS data was not available.

- An increasing trend the number of hours for complementary functions (as defined in Article 11.01 F 1) from 12.2 hours per week in 2011 to 13.58 hours per week in 2022
- The use of the Special A preparation factor has ranged from 37 to 107 course sections, with no clear trend
- A decreasing trend in the use of the Special B preparation factor, from 224 to 50 course sections
- The average total SWF hours assigned per full-time faculty member has been relatively consistent, ranging from 40 to almost 42 hours per week.

Based on follow-up questions asked of Vice-Presidents, Academic (VPA), Vice-Presidents, Human Resources (VPHR) and WMG co-chairs, the Taskforce learned that:

- The college system does not have a standardized approach for identifying or assigning complementary functions. While some colleges categorize these functions, these lists are non-exhaustive and are tracked in a variety of ways. The Taskforce did not receive information that provides insight into increasing trends in complementary functions and decreasing trends in TCH
- Special A and Special B preparation factors are no longer used in many colleges. For Special B, there is a range of different approaches: this work is sometimes assigned as a complementary function, sometimes assigned to support staff and sometimes assigned to contract faculty. There appeared to be a lack of clarity regarding the purpose and use of the Special A and Special B preparation factors
- Information about the number of international students and students accessing counselling and accommodation services is not routinely compiled and there was no established methodology for doing so. The Taskforce was unable to conduct a system-level analysis based on the information provided.

The October staffing data shows that from 2011 to 2022, the number of partial-load faculty has steadily increased from 4251 to 6720. The total TCH assigned to partial-load faculty rose significantly, from 44,221 to 70,057. However, the average TCH per partial-load faculty member has remained relatively stable, ranging between approximately 10.2 to 10.3 TCHs.

The survey identified a general trend of reported increases to faculty workload, particularly with the adoption of diverse course delivery methods, with full-time faculty reporting the most significant impacts. More specifically, survey participants reported:

- Various course delivery modes (online synchronous, asynchronous, flexible synchronous, hybrid synchronous, and hyflex) generally required more time for preparation, evaluation, feedback, and routine out-of-class assistance compared to traditional in-person courses. In some respects, hyflex courses demanded the most additional time
- Time for normal administrative tasks, AODA compliance, student accommodations, and language of instruction issues all increased on average
- Full-time faculty consistently reported greater increases in workload compared to partial-load faculty across various aspects of course delivery and assessment
- Years of employment were not typically associated with workload increases. However, in some cases, more years in the current position correlated positively with increased time for certain tasks.

Focus groups were conducted with librarians, counsellors, and administrators who assign work to these professionals. From these focus groups, we learned that:

- Librarians reported diverse roles and modes of student interaction, with fluctuating workloads influenced by job responsibilities, academic calendars, and institutional priorities. They reported increased workload, because of factors such as the shift to online work and the demands of AI. Librarians reported mixed success in addressing workload concerns with managers. They indicated that they often worked overtime to meet workload demands, although compensation for and recognition of overtime work varied
- Counselors reported that their workloads were generally based on student appointments. Workload fluctuated with the academic cycle. Counsellors reported that overtime was common, though recognition and compensation varied. Counsellors indicated that their workload increased due to factors such as a growing student population, the complex needs of international students, and the demands of crisis intervention

- Administrators' feedback generally aligned with the information received from librarians and counselors. However, there were some nuances in terms of how administrators reported management's role in addressing workload. Notably, administrators reported that overtime was consistently addressed.

Summary of the Chair's Recommendations

In the Chair's view, the research conducted by the Taskforce supports the following recommendations:

- SWF and workload formulas for full-time faculty should be maintained but reconsidered to reflect the survey results indicating increased workload
- To better understand the trends in the CBIS data, more consistent information should be gathered about complementary functions assigned across the college system
- Compensation for partial-load faculty should be clarified in the Collective Agreement. It should also be reconsidered to reflect increased workload identified in survey results
- A consistent method should be developed to address and compensate the work done by counsellors and librarians that exceeds 35 hours per week
- The annual collection of CBIS data should be continued. In addition, more information should be collected about partial-load faculty's workload assignments. The Chair recommends the creation of a bi-partite CBIS Committee, with equal representation from OPSEU/SEFPO and CEC
- Special A and Special B preparation factors should be clarified and be consistently applied across the college system
- Both parties should have ongoing access to research conducted by the Taskforce and its research partners for use in their bargaining process. This may serve as a valuable tool to both parties in their bargaining process