

Colorado College Research on Faculty Insight Transcripts-Summer 2025

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Purpose

The Faculty Insight Forums were designed to explore faculty interest in reimagining professional responsibilities to better align with the core reasons they chose to work at Colorado College—engaging deeply in teaching, research, and service. Co-hosted by [Interim] President Manya Whitaker and Dean of the Faculty Emily Chan, these forums created space for faculty to reflect on priorities, express challenges, and propose structural changes that would support meaningful, sustained impact in their roles. Grounded in both internal data and national trends, this initiative seeks to elevate faculty voice in shaping a more flexible, equitable, and mission-aligned academic environment responsive to evolving student needs and shifting higher education dynamics.

Methods

Participants

Participants per Forum

Forum	Number of Participants
Forum 1	10
Forum 2	11
Forum 3	8
Forum 4	1
Forum 5	9
Forum 6	1
Forum 7	12
Forum 8	9
Forum 9	6
Forum 10	9
Total	76

Figure 1. Participants per Forum

Overall, 28 (87.5%) of Colorado College's 32 departments were represented across the ten forums, excluding Comparative Literature, Film & Media Studies, and Geology. There were 76 total interviewees across eight in-person and two virtual meetings. Mathematics and Computer Science, Physics, and Economics and Business had the most departmental representation with five interviewees per department. With the least departmental representation with one interviewee per department were Asian Studies, Human Biology and Kinesiology,

Theatre & Dance, Anthropology, Feminist and Gender Studies, and Organismal Biology and Ecology. For the full breakdown of departmental representation See *Figure 2 Below*.

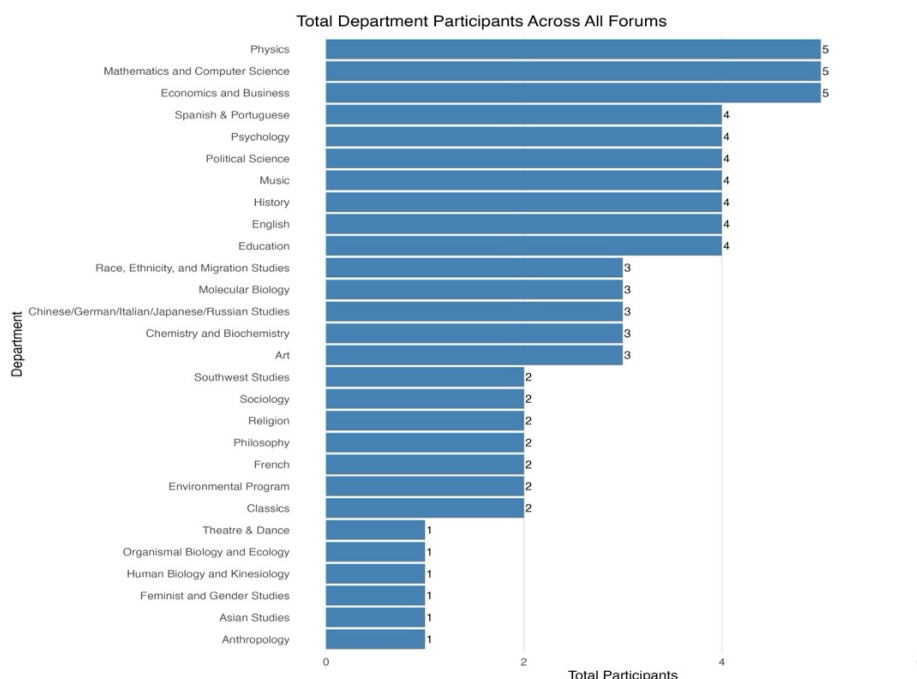


Figure 2. Total Department Participants Across All Forums

Essential Questions

In each of the ten forums faculty were asked to discuss the following four essential questions

1. “How do you currently balance teaching, research, and service responsibilities? What aspects of these roles do you see as most vital to fulfilling our mission and which feel most challenging or burdensome?”
2. “If you could reimagine your professional responsibilities, what changes would allow you to devote more time to what you find most impactful for students, whether that’s teaching, research, or service?”
3. “What strategies or structural changes could help you engage more deeply with research, especially in the context of maintaining continuity during busy teaching or service periods?”

4. “What kinds of support, resources, or institutional changes would help reduce strain and enhance your sense of accomplishment and impact in your professional role?”

Analysis

The analysis of the faculty insight forum transcripts proceeded through several systematic steps, integrating both quantitative sentiment and emotional assessments with qualitative thematic analysis to provide a comprehensive understanding of faculty experiences and perspectives.

First, the sentiment and emotional analysis was performed using a dedicated Python program. This involved processing plain-text transcripts through transformer-based models to conduct sentiment classification (positive/negative) and identify a range of emotional states such as joy, sadness, anger, and fear. This initial step provided an emotional profile for each document as well as an overall base for the analysis.

Following this, a comprehensive thematic analysis was conducted by individually examining each transcript. Using Python, this step focused on identifying recurring patterns, prevalent sentiments, and specific emotions expressed by faculty. To ensure robustness and accuracy, this process involved meticulously cross-referencing the themes identified with the sentiment and emotional data. This involved taking the output from the Python program which provided sentiment classification and a full distribution of emotion scores for each transcript and systematically comparing these emotional profiles with the qualitative themes that emerged. This cross-referencing was further validated by continually retracing back through the original transcripts and their summaries, ensuring that the emotional data accurately reflected the

qualitative context of the identified themes. This allowed for the identification of “negative” and “positive” themes but more importantly the faculties’ emotions about these themes.

The culmination of these analytical steps directly informed the primary objective: to address the four essential questions that guided the Faculty Insight Forums. By closely examining how faculty expressed their feelings, ranging from fear and anger to joy and surprise, and linking these emotions to specific themes, we gained valuable, nuanced insights into their experiences and perspectives on their professional roles within Colorado College. This integrated methodological approach enabled us to move beyond surface-level opinions, understanding the emotional depth of faculty experiences and the associated themes in detail. The detailed findings, illustrate the correlations between recurring themes, emotional landscapes, and faculty responses, as presented in the subsequent sections.

Findings

Sentiment Analysis

Examining the sentiment and emotional analysis across all ten transcripts reveals a consistent pattern of predominantly neutral emotional tone, with negative sentiment emerging more frequently than positive.

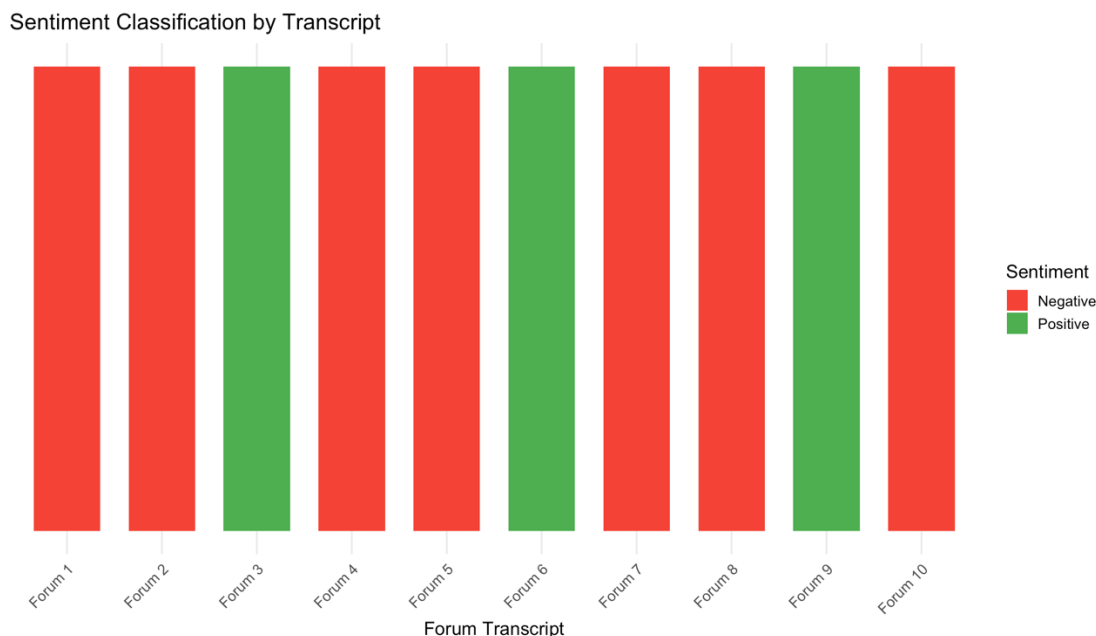


Figure 3. Sentiment Classification by Transcript

Of the ten participant groups, seven were classified as negative in overall sentiment, while only three displayed positive sentiment. Emotionally, neutral was the dominant emotion in every transcript, often accompanied by secondary emotions such as fear, surprise, and joy (See *Figure 4 Below*). Negative emotions like anger, disgust, and sadness appeared with lower intensity across most transcripts, yet their consistent presence suggests underlying concerns or tensions present in the discussions. While positive emotions such as joy were present, they were generally outweighed by more cautious or apprehensive tones. To illustrate the specific emotions identified in the analysis, the following are representative quotes from the forums, arranged in order of their prevalence in the data. The most prevalent secondary emotion expressed by faculty was fear. One professor shared, “I personally have been photographed by a community member because I attended a protest on campus, like I feel like there is a very chilling effect that is telling us that we should all shut up (Forum 2)”. Another expressed, “I can't imagine that. I live in terror of that, because I already feel really maxed out building classes from scratch (Forum 7)”.

Following fear in prevalence was joy. One faculty member stated, “I love teaching. I'm a trained teacher, and I love that here... I find that my teaching here, given it is prioritized actually infuses my research and kind of keeps that fire a lot alive (Forum 1)”. Another shared that, “there's such beautiful work that I think all of us try to do with intimacy in the classroom (Forum 3)”. The next most common emotion was surprise. For instance, one professor reflected, “I had no idea what a difference that would make in my decision, but I have stepped it up a level, and I have done amazing things in my own mind for having that extra block (Forum 2)”. Another expressed surprise at the institutional structure, saying, “it was surprising me how quickly I was like, Oh, we want to make sure that our new faculty members... don't have so many pressed responsibilities. I'm like, I'm sorry you don't do that for me (Forum 7)”.

Expressions of disgust were also present, particularly regarding administrative burdens, with one referring to the chair role as a “death by 1000 paper cuts (Forum 2)”. Another pointed to a perceived “level of favoritism and lack of, like, ethical integrity at this place (Forum 7)”. Similarly, faculty voiced feelings of anger when they felt unsupported. One questioned the institution’s hypocrisy, asking, “...why would I give Colorado College an opportunity to celebrate something that it made almost impossible to do? (Forum 10)”. Another shared their frustration, stating, “I have a student in distress. I bring it to you, and now I'm the problem (Forum 8)”. Finally, expressions of sadness centered on professional compromises and changes in the campus climate. One professor was blunt about the personal cost of their career path: “I will be very blunt that I It has taken me some time to come to terms with the fact that I have probably truncated my research career by coming to cc (Forum 2)”. Another described the drop in student engagement at academic events as “heartbreaking (Forum 1)”.

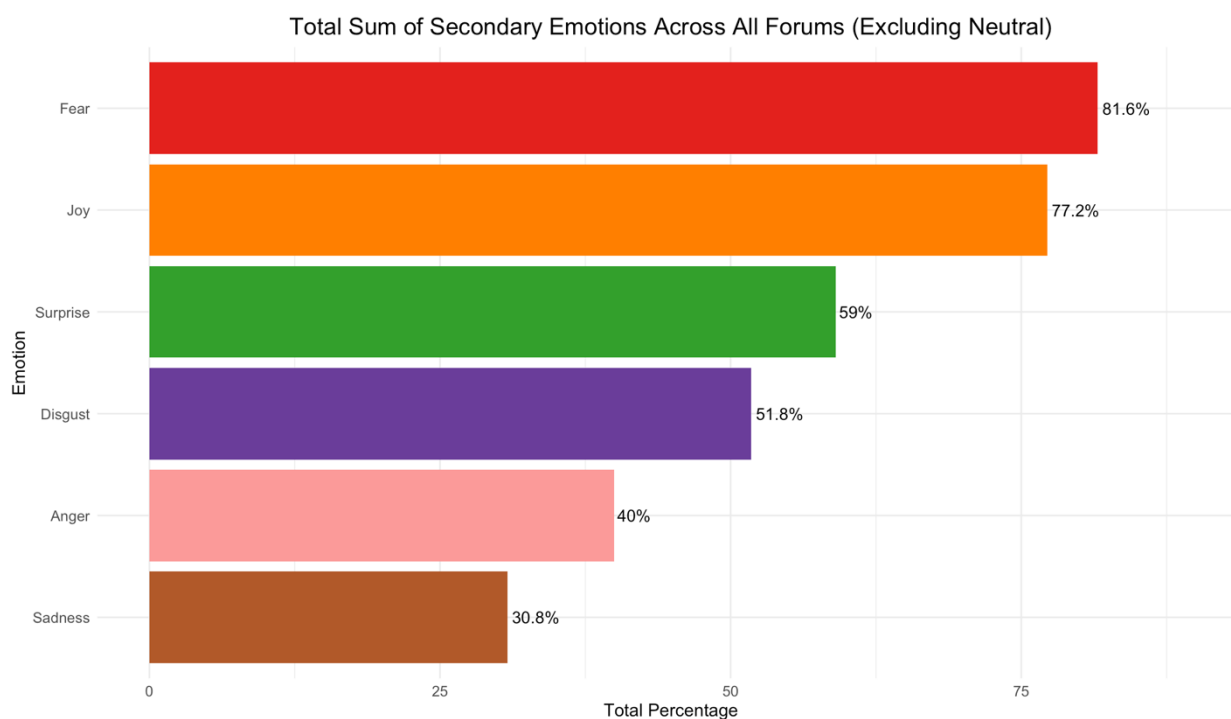


Figure 4. Total Sum of Secondary Emotions Across All Forums (Excluding Neutral)

This overall emotional landscape suggests that while participants maintained a neutral tone in expression, there were underlying emotional undercurrents that leaned more negative than positive highlighting areas of concern, frustration, or uncertainty that warrant further attention in thematic analysis.

Thematic Analysis and Correlation to Essential Questions

Thematic analysis revealed the link between reoccurring emotions and themes throughout the transcripts and transcript summaries. This allowed us to identify dominant themes that consistently emerged across the forums and how the faculty felt about these themes. Reflecting a spectrum of faculty concerns such as workload burdens, challenges in research continuity, and

perceived lack of institutional support, alongside satisfactions related to teaching freedom, interdisciplinary collaboration, and effective sabbatical systems. See *Figure 5* Below.

Faculty Emotions Thematic Analysis

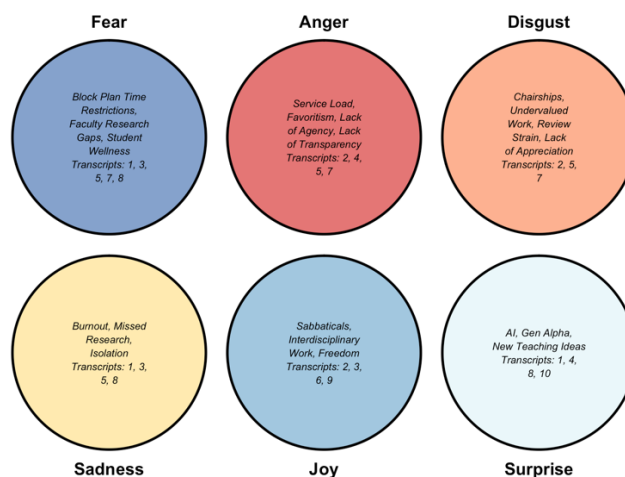


Figure 5. Faculty Emotions Thematic Analysis

By closely examining how faculty expressed their feelings, derived from the emotions identified in the sentiment analysis (including fear, anger, disgust, sadness, joy, and surprise), we gained valuable, nuanced insights into their lived experiences and perspectives on their professional roles within the institution. This allowed us to understand the emotional depth of their experiences as they related to the reoccurring themes. Four key recurring themes were identified that directly correlated with the areas of inquiry posed by the essential questions. The correlations between these essential questions and themes are shown below in *Figure 6*.

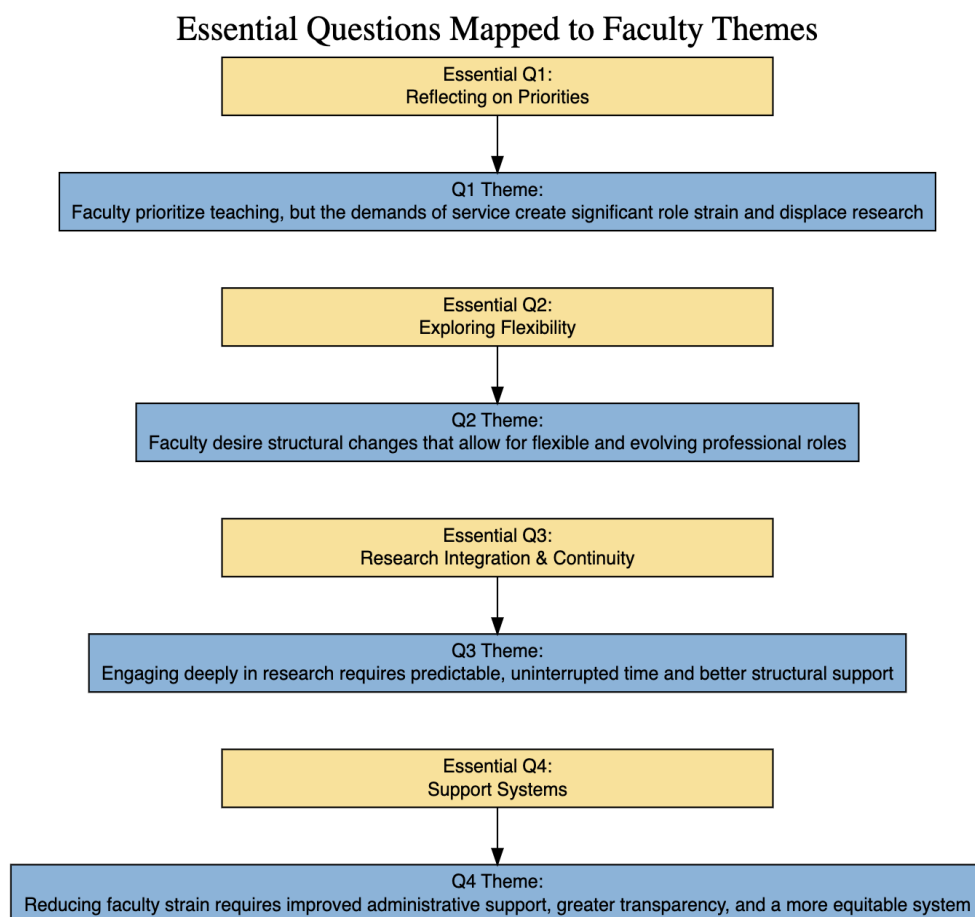


Figure 6. Essential Questions Mapped to Faculty Themes

The first essential question: “How do you currently balance teaching, research, and service responsibilities? What aspects of these roles do you see as most vital to fulfilling our mission and which feel most challenging or burdensome?” maps to the identified themes showing faculty prioritize teaching, but the demands of service create significant role strain and displace research. Analyzing how faculty feel about this question, we find: Faculty consistently expressed that service responsibilities are often the most challenging and burdensome. These duties are frequently described as unpredictable, heavy, and disproportionately distributed, leading to negative sentiment, particularly emotions such as fear, disgust, sadness, and anger (Forums 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 10). While teaching and research are generally seen as more

vital and rewarding (Forum 2, 3), the demands of service often impede faculty's ability to fully engage with these core missions, generating frustration (Forum 2, 4, 7). The impact of the Block Plan is also crucial to balancing these roles was also a significant concern due to high workload, time constraints, and unpredictability (Forum 1, 5, 6).

The second essential question: “If you could reimagine your professional responsibilities, what changes would allow you to devote more time to what you find most impactful for students, whether that’s teaching, research, or service?” maps to the identified themes expressing faculty desire structural changes that allow for flexible and evolving professional roles. A primary desire was for the college to move away from a “one-size-fits-all” model and recognize that faculty priorities change over time. As one professor explained, “I hope that the college administration... think a lot more creatively than it has about how our answers to that might change... not sort of insisting that my wants and needs and desires be the same at 43 years old as they were when I was 28 (Forum 10)”. Furthermore, reimagining their roles also meant expanding the definition of what ‘counts’ as a core contribution, particularly for work that engages the community and provides students with professional experience. Faculty asked for structural changes that would allow more dedicated time for teaching and research. Suggestions included reducing course loads (Forum 2, 5), offering more research blocks (Forum 3), increasing sabbaticals (Forum 2), and providing better administrative and technical support (Forum 3). The discussions around these potential changes sometimes evoked surprise (Forums 1, 4, 8, 10) as new ideas were introduced, but the underlying sentiment often reflected a negative outlook on current rigidities. Conversely, the prospect of increased impact and opportunities leading to higher satisfaction often elicited joy (Forums 3, 6, and 9). The clear preference was to reduce the burden of service to free up time for more impactful work with students, including teaching and research.

The third essential question: “What strategies or structural changes could help you engage more deeply with research, especially in the context of maintaining continuity during busy teaching or service periods?” maps to the identified where faculty expressed that engaging deeply in research requires predictable, uninterrupted time and better structural support. This question highlighted a major area of struggle. Faculty articulated the difficulty of sustaining research, particularly amidst heavy teaching and service loads, and the unpredictable nature of the Block Plan (Forum 1, 5, 6). The desire for more predictable research time, dedicated research blocks (Forum 3), and enhanced collaborative research support (Forum 5, 6) was prominent. The discussions frequently surfaced negative sentiment (Forums 1, 5, 7) and emotions like fear (Forums 5, 7, 8) concerning the ability to meet research expectations and advance scholarly work without adequate institutional support and protected time. While there was some joy associated with the passion for research, these challenges overshadowed it.

The fourth essential question: “What kinds of support, resources, or institutional changes would help reduce strain and enhance your sense of accomplishment and impact in your professional role?” maps to the identified themes about reducing faculty strain requires improved administrative support, greater transparency, and more equitable systems.

Analyzing how faculty feel about this question, we find: This question brought forth a wide range of needs. Faculty sought improved administrative support (Forum 2, 3), clearer committee structures (Forum 1, 2), better distribution of service tasks (Forum 2, 7), increased funding for student research and public scholarship (Forum 3, 5, 6), and resources to address faculty well-being and high turnover rates (Forum 3). There was a strong call for more transparency and equitable resource distribution (Forum 7). Discussions around current deficiencies in support systems frequently manifested in negative sentiment, accompanied by anger, disgust, and

sadness (Forums 2, 7, 8). Conversely, the mention of effective existing supports or proposed beneficial changes sometimes elicited positive sentiment and joy (Forums 3, 6, 9), indicating the profound impact that robust support systems could have on faculty morale, sense of accomplishment, and overall professional experience satisfaction.

Conclusion

The Faculty Insight Forum Transcripts yielded a rich understanding of faculty experiences, combining in-depth qualitative insights with quantitative sentiment analysis. A predominant and recurring theme was the significant strain imposed by the perceived burden and unpredictable nature of service responsibilities. This consistently generated negative sentiment and emotions such as fear, anger, disgust, and sadness, often overshadowing the intrinsic value and satisfaction faculty derive from their teaching and research pursuits. The forums highlighted a palpable desire for greater flexibility and dedicated time for scholarly work, underscoring a clear need for structural adjustments to enhance research integration and continuity, especially given the unique demands of the block plan. While challenges were prominent, the discussions also revealed moments of joy and positive sentiment linked to faculty appreciation for aspects of their roles, existing support mechanisms, and the potential for positive institutional change.

Ultimately, these discussions underscore a critical imperative; to re-evaluate workload distribution, streamline administrative processes, and bolster comprehensive support systems. Such strategic changes are essential to fostering a more sustainable and fulfilling professional environment that empowers faculty to pursue research opportunities and effectively engage with their students.

Limitations

The analysis, findings, and interpretations presented here are based on artificial intelligence computer-generated transcriptions of recorded material. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, automated transcription may not capture every word precisely and may not fully reflect tone, context, or non-verbal elements present in the room. As such, interpretations should be considered with an understanding of these limitations. All interviewees volunteered in their own will and the names of interviewees are anonymous.

Recommendations

Based on the comprehensive insights gleaned from the Faculty Insight Forum Transcripts, the following recommendations are proposed to strategically address key faculty concerns, alleviate strain, and significantly enhance their sense of accomplishment and overall impact in their professional roles:

1. Re-evaluate and Optimize Service Loads with a Focus on Transparency and Equity:

Develop Clear, Quantifiable Service Guidelines: Establish specific, transparent guidelines for the expected time commitment and nature of various service roles (committee work, administrative tasks, advising). This clarity would address the unpredictability and ambiguity highlighted in the forums (Observed in Forums 1, 4), allowing faculty to better plan and manage their time.

Implement an Equitable Distribution Model: Create a system for tracking and distributing service loads more equitably across departments and faculty ranks. This should actively counteract the tendency for heavier burdens to fall on certain individuals, particularly mid-career

faculty (A significant concern in Forum 7). Regular reviews of service assignments should ensure fairness and prevent burnout.

Streamline and Automate Administrative Processes: Conduct an audit of administrative tasks associated with service to identify opportunities for streamlining processes, reducing redundancies, or leveraging technology (automated reporting, centralized information hubs). This would free up valuable faculty time currently consumed by bureaucratic “paper cuts” (As described in Forum 2).

Enhance Recognition and Value of Service: Beyond tenure and promotion, establish more visible and consistent mechanisms for recognizing significant service contributions, such as internal awards, stipends for particularly demanding roles (Such as department chairs as noted in Forum 2), or public acknowledgment. This would affirm that service is a valued component of faculty work, not merely a burdensome obligation.

2. Strategically Enhance Research Support and Foster Continuity:

Implement Protected Research Blocks and Dedicated Time: Design structural changes that ensure faculty have predictable, uninterrupted blocks of time specifically for research, especially considering the unique demands of the block plan (A critical issue in Forums 1, 5, 6). This could involve adjusting teaching loads for specific research-intensive periods or creating dedicated research terms.

Bolster Comprehensive Research Resources: Significantly increase investment in resources directly supporting faculty scholarship. This includes expanding access to high-quality technical assistance, providing more robust funding opportunities for faculty-student collaborative

research (A common desire in Forums 3, 5, 6), and enhancing support for external grant acquisition.

Facilitate Collaborative Research and Mentorship: Develop programs or platforms that encourage and facilitate interdisciplinary and intra-departmental collaborative research, recognizing its potential for greater impact and shared workload. Expand mentorship opportunities for faculty at all stages of their careers to navigate research challenges and funding landscapes.

Support Public Scholarship and Community Engagement: Provide institutional protection and clear guidelines for public scholarship and community-engaged research, ensuring faculty feel secure in pursuing these impactful endeavors (As raised in Forum 5).

3. Cultivate a Robust and Responsive Support Ecosystem:

Strengthen Administrative and Departmental Support: Increase the availability and quality of administrative support staff at both central and departmental levels to offload non-academic tasks that currently consume significant faculty time and energy (A recurrent plea in Forums 2 and 3).

Prioritize Faculty Well-being and Mental Health: Develop comprehensive resources and initiatives specifically tailored to address faculty mental health and stress, acknowledging the physical and mental toll of balancing demanding roles (Observed in Forum 3, 5). This includes promoting work-life balance and providing accessible counseling services.

Enhance Transparency and Communication: Improve institutional transparency regarding decision-making processes, resource allocation, and policy changes. Clear and consistent communication can alleviate anxiety and perceptions of inequity or favoritism (A concern in Forum 7).

Invest in Leadership Development and Training: Provide targeted professional development opportunities for department chairs and other faculty in leadership roles. This training should focus on effective workload management, conflict resolution, equitable resource distribution, and fostering positive departmental cultures (As suggested in Forum 2). This proactive approach would directly support faculty by empowering their immediate leaders.

Foster a Culture of Appreciation and Collaboration: Encourage a campus-wide culture that regularly acknowledges faculty contributions, fosters a sense of shared mission, and promotes opportunities for informal gatherings and lateral connections (As appreciated in Forum 3). This helps to build community and reduce feelings of isolation.

Appendix A-Transcript Summaries

Attached below are the ten transcript summaries generated by Otter.ai, for full access to the transcripts and recordings please email the Colorado College President's Office at president@coloradocollege.edu

Forum 1

Transcript

https://otter.ai/u/-e_ythRUtr4vc55rizHqUPrei-w?view=summary

The meeting focused on balancing teaching, research, and service at Colorado College, particularly in the context of Gen Alpha's expectations. Faculty discussed the challenges of service demands, the need for clearer committee structures, and the impact of the block plan on research. They emphasized the importance of teaching and suggested strategies like release blocks for research, overlapping teaching and research topics, and formalizing research writing days. Concerns were raised about the increasing transactional nature of teaching and the need to maintain intellectual rigor. The discussion also touched on the potential benefits of implementing humanities labs to integrate research and teaching.

Action Items

- [] Conduct qualitative analysis of the meeting transcript and provide a synthesized report to the faculty.
- [] Consider ways to better integrate research into teaching and service, such as designated “research intensive” courses and dedicated humanities research labs.
- [] Examine teaching load expectations compared to peer institutions to create more space for faculty research.
- [] Reflect on the institutional approach to student mental health days/wellness days and how to address it constructively.

Outline

Balancing Teaching, Research, and Service

- Manya Whitaker introduces the meeting's purpose: to discuss the needs of Gen Alpha and their implications for faculty roles at CC.
- Manya outlines four guiding questions for the discussion, focusing on balancing teaching, research, and service.
- Speaker 2 discusses the importance of service and the challenges faced in ensuring all faculty members contribute fairly.
- Speaker 4 shares their perspective as a junior colleague, emphasizing the need for transparency and trust in service roles.

Challenges in Service and Committee Work

- Speaker 5 highlights the difficulty of understanding complex committee structures and their impact on service effectiveness.
- Speaker 6 reflects on the changing priorities of faculty roles over time and the challenge of balancing teaching, research, and service.
- Speaker 2 discusses the specific challenges faced by Natural Science faculty in balancing research and service responsibilities.
- Manya Whitaker asks how faculty roles could be reimaged to allow for more time on impactful activities for students.

Teaching as the Primary Focus

- Speaker 7, a visitor in education, emphasizes the importance of teaching and the need for transparency and trust in service roles.
- Manya Whitaker acknowledges the tension between different teaching philosophies and the need to balance structure and personnel changes.
- Speaker 8 discusses the importance of valuing research to help students see faculty as academics and scholars.
- Speaker 2 suggests allowing for flexibility in teaching styles and commitments to better align with individual faculty interests.

Impact of COVID-19 on Student Engagement

- Speaker 5 reflects on the cultural transformation and the need for less restructuring and more focus on community.
- Speaker 6 shares concerns about the loss of intellectual seriousness and the need to bring it back.
- Speaker 9 discusses the impact of COVID-19 on student mental health and the need to prioritize teaching that engages students.
- Manya Whitaker introduces the topic of Gen Alpha and their expectations for higher education.

Research and Teaching Needs

- Manya Whitaker emphasizes the need for more space for faculty to engage in high-quality research.
- Speaker 2 discusses the challenges of teaching loads compared to peer institutions and the need for more time for research.
- Speaker 4 and Speaker 6 highlight the difficulty of balancing teaching and research on the block plan and the need for release blocks.
- Speaker 8 suggests creating research-intensive classes to overlap teaching and research goals and formalize research writing days.

Creative Solutions for Research and Teaching

- Speaker 8 proposes marking classes as research-intensive to model the importance of research for students.
- Speaker 4 and Speaker 7 discuss the potential benefits of implementing humanities labs to complement course content and showcase faculty research.
- Speaker 2 mentions the recommendations from past humanities passports and the Mellon grant for a dedicated humanities research space.
- Manya Whitaker concludes the meeting, thanking participants and outlining the next steps for the qualitative analysis and report.

Forum 2

Transcript

<https://otter.ai/u/3HrHjkHnJEBpIVY6dO-t2PZqy4g?view=summary>

The faculty meeting discussed the evolving roles of faculty in response to changing student needs and interests. Key points included the burdensome nature of service responsibilities, with teaching and research seen as more rewarding. The need for better distribution of service tasks and clearer committee responsibilities was emphasized. The impact of class sizes on faculty workload and student learning was highlighted, with suggestions for reducing class sizes and

increasing faculty support. The importance of research and the challenges of balancing teaching, service, and research were also discussed, with the sabbatical system seen as beneficial. The meeting concluded with a call for better support and communication from the administration to alleviate faculty stress.

Action Items

- [] Review the faculty handbook to clarify the expectations and guidelines around service, especially service to the profession and broader community.
- [] Explore ways to better recognize and value faculty contributions to their professional communities, such as by counting it towards service requirements.
- [] Investigate the possibility of adjusting course loads or class sizes to provide more time and resources for research and other scholarly activities.
- [] Improve the timing and communication around student research funding opportunities to better support faculty research agendas.
- [] Provide more clarity and support for pre-tenure faculty on the expectations and balance of teaching, research, and service.

Outline

Faculty Roles and Responsibilities: Initial Discussion

- Speaker 1 introduces the meeting's purpose: to discuss the evolving roles of faculty in response to changing student needs and interests.
- Speaker 1 outlines four guiding questions for the discussion, starting with how faculty balance teaching, research, and service responsibilities.
- Speaker 2 identifies service as the most burdensome aspect of their role, particularly in the context of personnel review.
- Speaker 3 agrees with Speaker 2, emphasizing that service is burdensome both at the college and department levels, while teaching and research are more rewarding.

Perspectives on Service and Leadership

- Speaker 4, a new department chair, finds service rewarding and vital for department health, despite initial burdens from onboarding.
- Speaker 5 discusses the importance of service for the college, noting that it can be burdensome but necessary for faculty governance.
- Speaker 2 emphasizes the need for faculty to share service responsibilities to avoid overburdening individuals.
- Speaker 6 echoes the sentiment that all responsibilities are valuable but can be impacted by workload, especially with multiple review files.

Challenges of Department Chairships

- Speaker 5 reflects on the increased complexity of chairships over time, likening it to “death by a thousand paper cuts.”
- Speaker 7 shares their experience as a former chair, highlighting the emotional work with junior faculty and the paper requirements.
- Speaker 8 expresses excitement and anxiety about becoming an associate chair, concerned about balancing research and service responsibilities.
- Speaker 4 mentions the support from leadership development and executive coaching as essential for managing their role.

Reimagining Professional Responsibilities

- Speaker 1 asks how faculty would reimagine their professional responsibilities to devote more time to impactful student work.
- Speaker 2 believes teaching and research are essential, while service is a necessary obligation for faculty.
- Speaker 6 discusses the need for clear committee responsibilities and the impact of ineffective committees on faculty workload and engagement.
- Speaker 9 highlights the pressure on pre-tenure faculty to say yes to service opportunities, leading to a sense of being overwhelmed.

Service to the Profession and College Expectations

- Speaker 6 shares their frustration with the lack of recognition for service to the profession, such as organizing conferences and refereeing journals.
- Speaker 2 suggests formalizing recognition for national service commitments to better support faculty.
- Speaker 4 emphasizes the need for clear communication and understanding of service expectations, especially for pre-tenure faculty.
- Speaker 6 and Speaker 2 discuss the importance of valuing outward-facing service and the potential for more equitable distribution of service responsibilities.

Impact of Higher Education Landscape on Faculty Roles

- Speaker 9 expresses concern about the chilling effect on social justice advocacy at the college, citing examples of faculty facing backlash.
- Speaker 5 introduces a statement from AAUP against anticipatory obedience, highlighting the challenges for higher education.
- Speaker 7 echoes Speaker 9's concerns, noting a shift in the college's commitment to anti-racism and social justice.
- Speaker 1 reorients the conversation back to the meeting's original topic, acknowledging the importance of addressing these issues in a separate forum.

Exploring Aspirational Changes to Faculty Workload

- Speaker 6 discusses the practical limitations of reducing course loads, given the college's growth and space constraints.

- Speaker 2 suggests sharing service responsibilities more evenly among faculty to reduce individual burdens.
- Speaker 4 expresses a desire to co-teach across disciplines, which requires time and resources.
- Speaker 6 highlights the benefits of smaller class sizes for both faculty and students, suggesting a more flexible approach to class size limits.

Supporting Research and Faculty Development

- Speaker 2 praises the sabbatical system for supporting research, allowing faculty to focus on their work without constant teaching responsibilities.
- Speaker 6 shares their experience of increased productivity during blocks off from teaching, emphasizing the importance of consistent funding for student research assistants.
- Speaker 5 raises concerns about the compatibility of certain research methods with the block plan, suggesting more careful evaluation of potential hires.
- Speaker 9 reflects on the impact of their current role on their research career, noting the challenges of balancing teaching and research at the college.

Final Thoughts and Recommendations

- Speaker 4 emphasizes the importance of faculty feeling supported by the college to do their best work.
- Speaker 7 suggests breaking down the discussion of executive orders and college responses to better understand the pressures on faculty.
- Speaker 1 concludes the meeting, thanking participants for their contributions and acknowledging the need for further discussion on these important topics.

Forum 3

Transcript

https://otter.ai/u/iMozaHbvIoPHglOJwzCY_O2pB1Q?view=summary

The discussion focused on balancing teaching, research, and service responsibilities. Teaching was universally seen as the top priority, with research often neglected due to time constraints. Structural changes suggested included more research blocks, better technical support, and reduced teaching loads. The need for better administrative support and retention strategies was highlighted. Faculty appreciated opportunities for interdisciplinary work, study abroad, and funding for student research. Challenges included high turnover rates, mental health pressures, and the need for more visible recognition of faculty achievements. The importance of lateral connections and informal gatherings for faculty morale was also emphasized.

Action Items

- [] Explore opportunities for more dedicated research blocks and reduced teaching loads with higher research expectations.
- [] Advocate for increased funding and support for technical/administrative staff to provide continuity and backup.
- [] Investigate ways to elevate faculty visibility and recognition of accomplishments nationally and internationally.
- [] Review decision-making processes and meeting schedules to reduce strain and allow for more thoughtful planning.
- [] Establish clear channels and support for faculty to address student issues related to microaggressions on campus.

Outline

Balancing Teaching, Research, and Service Responsibilities

- Speaker 1 initiates the discussion by asking about balancing teaching, research, and service responsibilities.
- Speaker 2 emphasizes the importance of teaching, describing it as the most impactful and beautiful part of their job.
- Speaker 3 agrees, stating that teaching is the top priority but acknowledges the challenge of finding time for research.
- Speaker 4 discusses the difficulty of balancing time, noting that research often gets neglected, while teaching and service remain priorities.

Challenges in Balancing Research and Teaching

- Speaker 5 and Speaker 6 share their experiences, highlighting the challenge of fitting research into a busy teaching and service schedule.
- Speaker 7 mentions the importance of creative work and its connection to service, particularly in the context of storytelling and community engagement.
- Speaker 8 talks about the difficulty of catching up on research during non-teaching blocks due to other responsibilities.
- Speaker 9 discusses the challenge of balancing research with teaching and informal service, often leading to a backlog of tasks.

Structural Changes to Support Research

- Speaker 1 shifts the conversation to potential structural changes that could help faculty spend more time on research.
- Speaker 5 shares their experience with an NSF grant that allowed them to hire a full-time lab technician, significantly improving research productivity.
- Speaker 8 and Speaker 3 discuss the benefits of research blocks and visitor coverage for teaching, suggesting more frequent and well-supported research blocks.

- Speaker 6 and Speaker 8 mention the value of multi-day writing workshops and the need for more supportive environments for research.

Professional Responsibilities and Research Expectations

- Speaker 1 asks about changes to professional responsibilities that could give faculty more time for impactful work.
- Speaker 5 suggests greater expectations for mentoring and reduced course loads to support research.
- Speaker 4 discusses the need for more flexible responsibilities, allowing faculty to specialize in different areas over their careers.
- Speaker 3 emphasizes the importance of balancing research with administrative roles and suggests more opportunities for mid-career scholars.

Support for Research and Teaching

- Speaker 7 highlights the importance of general advising and the need for more time to focus on research and teaching.
- Speaker 9 agrees, noting the challenges of pre-major advising and the need for better clarification of responsibilities.
- Speaker 3 appreciates the pedagogical freedom and opportunities for immersive and field study, which enhance teaching and research.
- Speaker 2 and Speaker 10 discuss the value of interdisciplinary opportunities and the need for more support for pedagogical publications.

Administrative Support and Turnover

- Speaker 5 and Speaker 4 express concerns about the impact of staff turnover on faculty support and the need for better retention strategies.
- Speaker 10 mentions the high turnover rate in academic administration and its impact on departmental stability.
- Speaker 8 talks about the potential benefits of revamping departmental websites to elevate accomplishments and visibility.
- Speaker 9 emphasizes the importance of national and international visibility for teaching and research, suggesting more proactive efforts.

Mental Health and Teaching Loads

- Speaker 7 discusses the challenges of dealing with student microaggressions and the need for better support systems.
- Speaker 5 mentions the impact of student mental health needs on faculty workload and the need for more support in teaching.
- Speaker 3 highlights the challenges of the block plan, which often leads to rushed decision-making and increased stress.
- Speaker 2 agrees, noting the intense competing demands during field trip courses and the need for better support.

Increasing Joy in Faculty Work

- Speaker 1 asks about ways to increase joy in faculty work.
- Speaker 4 suggests that taking breaks from big institutional projects can help faculty focus on regular responsibilities.
- Speaker 6 discusses the importance of supporting small language programs and the need for better compensation for lecturers and cultural program coordinators.
- Speaker 2 and Speaker 8 emphasize the value of lateral connections and informal gatherings for re-energizing faculty.

Final Thoughts and Appreciation

- Speaker 7 expresses gratitude for the support from academic support services, particularly transportation.
- Speaker 1 thanks everyone for their time and contributions, acknowledging the depth and breadth of the discussion.
- The meeting concludes with a sense of appreciation for the insights shared and the potential for future improvements.

Forum 4

Transcript

<https://otter.ai/u/3AKDWpQZgU1sdibhPN09T9ZcdUI?view=summary>

The meeting discussed the challenges of balancing teaching, research, and service responsibilities among faculty. Speaker 4 highlighted the difficulty of managing these tasks, especially the unpredictability of service commitments. They suggested that a more predictable schedule or a block off from teaching could help improve research continuity. The conversation also touched on the need for better knowledge transfer between teaching blocks and the potential benefits of a spiraled curriculum to address students' varying levels of preparation. The discussion emphasized the importance of agency in faculty roles and the potential use of AI in research tasks.

Action Items

- [] Explore opportunities for faculty to have a “block off” or reduced teaching load to focus on research.
- [] Consider implementing a mandatory 100-level course on world history to provide a common baseline for students.
- [] Investigate ways to design a more spiraled curriculum within majors and minors, where key concepts are revisited at increasing levels of complexity.

Outline

Otter AI Recording and Initial Conversations

- Unknown Speaker and Speaker 2 discuss the functionality of Otter AI, confirming it is recording and noting the feature to summarize conversations is turned off.
- Speaker 3 mentions seeing Otter AI in the room, and Speaker 2 confirms the recording but notes the summary feature is off.
- Speaker 3 shares a personal anecdote about iron absorption and infusions.
- Speaker 1 informs the group that Otter AI is taking notes and will anonymize the transcript, mentioning the meeting might be intimate if others don't join.

Sabbatical Experiences and Teaching Strategies

- Speaker 4 shares their experience of sabbatical, expressing both the benefits and the sadness of not being able to juggle teaching and research.
- Speaker 2 and Speaker 1 discuss their different teaching schedules and how it affects their ability to balance teaching and research.
- Speaker 2 mentions their strategy of teaching in blocks to create uninterrupted time for research.
- Speaker 1 shares their approach of teaching in the middle of the academic year to align with research schedules.

Starting the Meeting and Initial Questions

- Speaker 1 suggests starting the meeting as others might not join, and they have four main questions to discuss.
- Speaker 1 explains the anonymization process and the qualitative analysis by an undergraduate student researcher.
- The first question is about balancing teaching, research, and service responsibilities, with Speaker 4 expressing curiosity about how others use AI in faculty roles.
- Speaker 4 mentions using AI for simple tasks like converting endnotes but is still exploring its potential.

Challenges in Balancing Teaching, Research, and Service

- Speaker 4 discusses the unpredictability of service responsibilities and the lack of agency in certain committees.

- Speaker 1 asks which responsibility is most vital to fulfilling the mission, and Speaker 4 identifies teaching as the most impactful.
- Speaker 1 inquires about the most challenging aspect, and Speaker 4 cites service due to the lack of agency.
- Speaker 1 appreciates the focus on agency as a moderating variable in the experience.

Reimagining Professional Responsibilities

- Speaker 1 asks how professional responsibilities could be reimagined to devote more time to impactful activities.
- Speaker 4 emphasizes the need for continuous knowledge transfer between teaching blocks and suggests mandatory 100-level courses.
- Speaker 1 inquires about changes to job expectations that would help, and Speaker 4 believes institutional expectations are fine.
- Speaker 1 asks about resources to support research while teaching, and Speaker 4 suggests a block off or reduced teaching load.

Discussion on Knowledge Transfer and Curricular Design

- Speaker 1 and Speaker 4 discuss the challenges of knowledge transfer between teaching blocks and the need for continuous curricular design.
- Speaker 2 shares their experience with uneven student preparation in various subjects and the impact on teaching.
- Speaker 1 suggests a spiraled curriculum as a potential solution, revisiting concepts at deeper levels as courses increase in complexity.
- Speaker 4 and Speaker 1 discuss the benefits of spiraled curricula and how it can enhance student understanding and retention.

Final Thoughts and Conclusion

- Speaker 1 asks if there are any additional thoughts to share, and Speaker 4 reiterates the need for continuous knowledge transfer.
- Speaker 2 shares their concerns about the increasing unevenness in K-12 education and its impact on higher education.
- Speaker 1 suggests spiraled curricula as a potential solution to address these challenges.
- Speaker 1 thanks Speaker 4 for their participation and invites them to share additional thoughts via email.

Forum 5

Transcript

https://otter.ai/u/4coay6ZvQ233M-uMs_5rTzC50ys?view=summary

The discussion focused on balancing teaching, research, and service responsibilities in higher education. Participants highlighted the interconnectedness of these pillars, especially in small liberal arts colleges. Research was identified as the most challenging, often requiring significant teaching support, especially for students beyond introductory levels. Suggestions included reducing course loads, increasing sabbaticals, and providing more support for collaborative research. The need for better institutional support for public scholarship and community engagement was emphasized, along with the importance of integrating faculty efforts with community resources like museums and local schools.

Action Items

- [] Explore reducing the required course load or increasing sabbatical time.
- [] Investigate creating dedicated research spaces and funding for collaborative work with colleagues at other institutions.
- [] Update department scholarship statements to better recognize public-facing scholarship.
- [] Formalize and communicate the institutional support available for faculty engaging in public scholarship, including legal protections.
- [] Encourage more cross-departmental and community collaborations, such as with local school districts.

Outline

Balancing Teaching, Research, and Service Responsibilities

- Speaker 1 initiates the discussion by asking about balancing teaching, research, and service responsibilities, and which is the most challenging and vital.
- Speaker 2 humorously suggests there might be a magic solution to balancing these responsibilities.
- Speaker 3 emphasizes the interconnectedness of these pillars and the unique student-centered nature of small liberal arts colleges.
- Speaker 4 finds research to be the most challenging, especially when working with students, as it often feels more like teaching.

Challenges in Research and Teaching Integration

- Speaker 4 explains the difficulty of doing research with students, especially after introductory courses, as it requires significant teaching.
- Speaker 5 shares insights from other departments, noting variations in how research with students is conducted.
- Speaker 6 discusses the lack of student involvement in research in philosophy, making it challenging to integrate research and teaching.
- Speaker 8 highlights the physical and mental toll of maintaining a balance between teaching, research, and service, especially under the block plan.

Proposed Changes to Professional Responsibilities

- Speaker 1 asks for ideas on changes to professional responsibilities to allow more time for vital work.
- Speaker 6 suggests stopping encroachment on summer time for research.
- Speaker 7 proposes longer sabbaticals and more attention to course load distribution.
- Speaker 2 suggests giving faculty more agency to choose their focus at different career stages.

Structural Changes and Sabbaticals

- Speaker 1 and Speaker 7 discuss the potential benefits of reducing course loads or increasing sabbaticals.
- Speaker 3 mentions the need to align with peer institutions and the impact of research expectations on pre-tenure faculty.
- Speaker 5 expresses a preference for maintaining the current balance between teaching and research.
- Speaker 6 emphasizes the importance of being present for students and colleagues during teaching blocks.

Support for Research and Resources

- Speaker 1 asks about resources and supports that help advance research agendas.
- Speaker 3 mentions the importance of having colleagues to discuss research with.
- Speaker 5 highlights the value of long-standing research agreements and collaborations.
- Speaker 7 and Speaker 9 discuss the benefits of dedicated research spaces and funding for collaborative work.

Public Scholarship and Community Engagement

- Speaker 8 raises the topic of public scholarship and community engagement.
- Speaker 3 shares an example of a summer fellowship program with the college springs pioneers museum.
- Speaker 2 expresses concerns about public scholarship without institutional protection.
- Speaker 8 suggests updating scholarship statements to include public-facing work and formalizing institutional support for public scholars.

Collaboration with K-12 and Higher Education Institutions

- Speaker 8 and Speaker 5 discuss the potential for more collaboration with K-12 institutions and other higher education institutions.
- Speaker 2 mentions the importance of strategic conversations and partnerships with other institutions.
- Speaker 8 suggests encouraging departments to reach out to counterparts at other institutions.

- Speaker 1 highlights the need for more opportunities for faculty to engage with the community and support student learning.

Forum 6

Transcript

<https://otter.ai/u/5SjE0TLp9UfbCOE4r4AECEtogCo?view=summary>

Angela Castro discussed her challenges in balancing teaching, research, and service responsibilities, particularly during non-teaching blocks. She highlighted the difficulty in securing funding for student research collaborations and the lack of visibility for her work. Angela suggested structural changes like a year-round academic year and more workshops for teaching support. She emphasized the need for better funding to support public scholarship and international travel, expressing concerns about safety and institutional support. Emily Chan proposed mentoring cohorts and better resource sharing among departments. Angela appreciated the freedom to teach and research at Colorado College and the support received for her new course.

Action Items

- [] Explore ways to incorporate Angela's online platform “Approximations Afro Latin Americans” into the college's infrastructure.
- [] Discuss with Angela strategies to better support and recognize public scholarship as part of faculty responsibilities.
- [] Provide Angela with information about the college's resources and protocols for faculty traveling internationally, including access to the college's immigration attorney.

Outline

Balancing Teaching, Research, and Service Responsibilities

- Angela Castro discusses the challenge of balancing teaching, research, and student and faculty collaboration, mentioning the use of non-teaching blocks to organize her work.
- Angela explains that her two committees, one on admissions and one on general education, have not been burdensome, unlike FAC committees that meet more frequently.
- Manya Whitaker inquires about reimagining professional responsibilities to allow more time for teaching and research, prompting Angela to share her experiences with student research collaborations.
- Angela mentions that her recent research collaborations have involved non-Spanish majors, highlighting the need for funding to support these projects.

Challenges in Student Research Collaboration

- Angela describes the difficulty of finding funding for student research collaborations, even applying for grants from the dean's office and other sources.
- She shares her frustration with the lack of continuity and visibility in student research, noting that her students' work often goes unnoticed.
- Angela expresses a desire to find ways to continue working with her students despite her busy schedule, including teaching and travel commitments.
- Emily Chan suggests that departments with regular research programs have better infrastructure and culture to support and share research, which could be beneficial for Angela's work.

Exploring Public Scholarship and Virtual Platforms

- Manya Whitaker asks about the potential of public scholarship as a mechanism for faculty to engage in non-academic writing, such as op-eds and public-facing websites.
- Angela shares her experience with a virtual platform she created during the pandemic, which connects writers and scholars from Colombia and the US, and its importance for her research.
- She acknowledges that not all faculty see public scholarship as an expectation, but it is crucial for her work and could be a valuable addition to her portfolio.
- Emily Chan suggests that the college could better support public scholarship by providing resources and recognizing it in faculty reviews.

Funding and Support for Teaching and Research

- Angela highlights the need for more funding to support her virtual platform and invitations to speakers, noting that she currently uses her salary to pay them.
- She suggests that more workshops and support for teaching could be beneficial, such as regular meetings or workshops to discuss teaching ideas and tools.
- Angela appreciates the support she received from the dean and other faculty members for her new course, which helped her secure necessary resources.
- Manya Whitaker and Emily Chan discuss the importance of having stable support systems for teaching and research, such as the Crown Institute and teaching workshops.

Concerns About International Travel and Safety

- Angela expresses concern about international travel due to political instability, mentioning her decision not to travel to Colombia and uncertainty about traveling to Nairobi.
- Emily Chan explains that the college has resources to support faculty traveling internationally, including protocols for emergencies and consultations with the immigration attorney.
- Angela appreciates the offer of concrete resources to help her make informed decisions about traveling, which will help alleviate her concerns.
- Emily Chan emphasizes the importance of practicing digital hygiene and being prepared for potential issues during international travel.

Overall Satisfaction and Future Plans

- Angela expresses her gratitude for the freedom to teach and conduct research on topics she is passionate about, despite the challenges.
- She acknowledges the support from her colleagues and the college in allowing her to pursue her academic interests.
- Angela mentions her plans to continue working with her students and exploring new research opportunities, despite the current uncertainties.
- Manya Whitaker and Emily Chan thank Angela for her insights and express their commitment to supporting faculty in their roles.

Forum 7

Transcript

<https://otter.ai/u/hOMK-dt0YA91EmRsUT8qntX7ZjI?view=summary>

The discussion at the Insight forum 7 focused on the challenges of balancing teaching, research, and service commitments among faculty. Speakers highlighted the heavy service load, particularly for mid-career faculty, which often hinders research and teaching quality. The conversation also touched on the inequities in resource distribution, the need for transparency, and the potential for cultural shifts to address these issues. Suggestions included reducing the number of meetings, streamlining processes, and exploring alternative roles like clinical professors. The importance of individual development plans and addressing favoritism in decision-making was also emphasized.

Action Items

- [] Explore creating a system to categorize different service roles and provide appropriate compensation or course release options.
- [] Review and potentially streamline the hiring process documentation requirements for visiting faculty positions.
- [] Consider providing more permanent lecturer or teaching-focused positions in departments that rely heavily on visiting faculty.
- [] Develop a mentoring or support structure for mid-career faculty.

Outline

Challenges of Balancing Teaching, Research, and Service

- Speaker 1 discusses the difficulty of balancing teaching, research, and service commitments, noting that service often takes precedence over research.

- Speaker 2 mentions the standard advice from senior faculty to have three projects underway at any given time, but highlights the variable nature of service commitments, especially for mid-career faculty.
- Speaker 2 criticizes the structural choice that prioritizes service over research, suggesting it leads to worse teaching quality over time.
- Speaker 6 agrees, stating that mid-career research is on hold due to service commitments and involvement in campus-wide initiatives.

Personal Prioritization and Teaching Focus

- Speaker 7 expresses a preference for teaching over research, finding the pressure to publish unnecessary and preferring to focus on student learning.
- Speaker 7 mentions a project with a colleague that is research-based but not pressured by publication requirements, emphasizing the importance of teaching.
- Speaker 7 suggests that some colleagues would prefer lower research expectations in exchange for more service work, highlighting individual preferences.
- Speaker 8 agrees, finding teaching rewarding and enriching, and looking forward to a sabbatical as a chance to focus on research.

Service Commitments and Their Impact on Teaching

- Speaker 9 discusses the heavy service load, especially for mid-career faculty, and its impact on teaching quality and availability for students.
- Speaker 10 describes the integration of service, teaching, and research in their program, emphasizing the importance of student involvement in research projects.
- Speaker 10 highlights the challenges of being a small program and the need to balance service, teaching, and research while maintaining relevance in their field.
- Speaker 10 mentions the cultural shift needed to support different voices and the need for transparency in recognizing the work done by faculty.

Equity and Transparency in Faculty Evaluations

- Speaker 11 introduces the topic of reframing professional responsibilities of faculty, focusing on equitable evaluations.
- Speaker 12 emphasizes the need for transparency in resources and support across departments, suggesting that addressing financial inequities is crucial.
- Speaker 11 discusses the challenge of adjusting expectations based on the inequitable distribution of resources, considering the reality of large and small departments.
- Speaker 12 suggests that transparency and addressing financial inequities are necessary steps before discussing equitable evaluations.

Cultural Toxicity and Trust in the Institution

- Speaker 9 mentions the cultural toxicity within the institution, feeling unheard and unsupported, and the need for dialog and transparency.

- Speaker 10 discusses the challenges of teaching large classes and the need for flexibility in course offerings to benefit students and faculty.
- Speaker 6 highlights the difficulty of comparing workloads across departments and the need for a multi-factor model to evaluate equitable budgets.
- Speaker 1 mentions the added stress of the current state of higher education nationwide, with concerns about the future of certain departments.

Opportunities for Collaboration and Support

- Speaker 10 suggests opportunities for collaboration, such as teaching smaller classes with colleagues to balance workloads and support each other.
- Speaker 2 emphasizes the importance of small classes in a liberal arts college and the need to avoid eliminating entire areas due to enrollment issues.
- Speaker 12 advocates for building trust and respect across the campus, recognizing the hard work and dedication of all faculty members.
- Speaker 2 suggests that service commitments should be more flexible and accommodating, recognizing different workloads and preferences.

Addressing Service Overload and Compensation

- Speaker 9 highlights the disservice to untenured faculty when senior members do not fulfill their service responsibilities, emphasizing the need for equitable accountability.
- Speaker 10 discusses the inequities in compensation for different service roles, such as new faculty fellows and FEC personnel, and the need for a clear structure of compensation versus requirement.
- Speaker 1 mentions positive changes in service limitations, such as the hiatus rule for FEC and CEC, and suggests additional block releases for personnel review committees.
- Speaker 2 suggests that the hiatus does not apply to associate chairs, highlighting the need for case-by-case considerations.

Reducing Administrative Burden and Streamlining Processes

- Speaker 6 discusses the additional workload beyond service, such as email and advising, and the need to streamline processes to reduce faculty workload.
- Speaker 11 asks for suggestions on what to cut, prompting discussions on reducing the number of meetings and streamlining documentation processes.
- Speaker 12 suggests eliminating redundant emails and improving the Daily Digest to make it more efficient and relevant.
- Speaker 1 proposes reducing the number of block meetings and moving to a semester system for department and faculty meetings.

Exploring Alternative Roles and Structures

- Speaker 9 suggests considering clinical professors or professor practice roles for faculty who prioritize teaching and service over research.

- Speaker 4 mentions the possibility of lecture positions as an alternative for faculty who do not want to engage in research.
- Speaker 1 shares experiences from Carnegie Mellon, where teaching and research professors had different evaluation criteria, leading to internal divisions.
- Speaker 5, a senior lecturer, describes their role, which focuses on teaching without the need for service or research, and the financial compensation for additional teaching.

Individual Development Plans and Open File Systems

- Speaker 7 proposes the idea of individual development plans to align personal goals with professional expectations, addressing the challenges of perceptions and favoritism.
- Speaker 2 suggests streamlining the hiring process by canceling documentation for applicants who do not make it to the first round.
- Speaker 6 mentions the need for more support in terms of permanent positions for growing programs, possibly through lecture positions.
- Speaker 11 concludes the session, noting the importance of transparency and recording the discussions for further analysis.

Forum 8

Transcript

<https://otter.ai/u/QhYVXaGYBvxcSOTtHZJ2BOSaDXo?view=summary>

The discussion focused on balancing teaching, research, and service in academia. Speakers highlighted the challenges of maintaining work-life balance, with research being particularly demanding due to its time-intensive nature. They emphasized the need for better support structures, such as mentorship, research blocks, and sabbaticals. The conversation also touched on the impact of administrative changes and the importance of equitable funding distribution across departments. Suggestions included more divisional funding, student research stipends, and initiatives to support faculty well-being and research continuity. The need for better administrative support and the impact of external pressures on higher education were also discussed.

Action Items

- [] Explore opportunities to provide more flexible sabbatical policies, potentially including partial-pay sabbaticals.
- [] Investigate increasing divisional research funding, especially for more senior faculty.
- [] Advocate for more funding and support for student research assistantships.
- [] Improve continuity and training for staff in the advising hub to better support faculty and students.
- [] Organize a college-wide fundraising initiative to provide additional resources for departments with fewer funding sources.

Outline

Balancing Teaching, Research, and Service

- Speaker 1 asks about balancing teaching, research, and service, and which is most challenging and vital.
- Speaker 2 discusses the challenges of balancing these aspects, mentioning the impact of career stage, the block plan, and the lack of mentorship.
- Speaker 2 highlights the difficulty in finding time for research due to teaching commitments and the absence of a mentor.
- Speaker 2 reflects on the need for structural changes in the college to better support faculty.

Challenges in Balancing Teaching, Research, and Service

- Speaker 3 resonates with Speaker 2's experiences and discusses the fluctuating demands of service and research.
- Speaker 3 finds research challenging due to the need for large chunks of uninterrupted time and the value of training students.
- Speaker 3 mentions the need for summer work to advance research and the overwhelming desire to develop new classes.
- Speaker 3 values engaging with students and colleagues but finds it challenging to balance these with other responsibilities.

Prioritizing Teaching and Service in Disciplinary Spaces

- Speaker 4 emphasizes the vital importance of teaching and the challenges of balancing service and research.
- Speaker 4 discusses the pragmatic nature of service in their disciplinary space, often involving community engagement.
- Speaker 4 highlights the difficulty of balancing service with research, especially when service is non-pragmatic and takes time away from research.
- Speaker 4 expresses concern about the impact of external forces on teaching and the need to prioritize student relationships.

Phasing and Managing Workload

- Speaker 5 talks about the need to phase focus on different aspects of work over time, starting with teaching, then service, and finally research.
- Speaker 5 mentions the challenges of balancing teaching, service, and research while chairing a department.
- Speaker 5 reflects on the need for more conversations about phasing and the impact of department transitions on workload.
- Speaker 5 highlights the importance of managing energy and time effectively to balance different responsibilities.

Reconsidering Faculty Professional Responsibilities

- Speaker 1 asks about reconsidering expectations and accountabilities to create more open space for other responsibilities.
- Speaker 6 suggests eliminating pre-major advising for faculty to free up time for other responsibilities.
- Speaker 7 discusses the dissatisfaction with administrative structures that are supposed to make workloads easier but end up making them worse.
- Speaker 7 emphasizes the importance of feeling valued and having a voice in decision-making processes.

Impact of External Forces on Faculty Work

- Speaker 8 raises concerns about the impact of external forces on higher education and the need for public leadership.
- Speaker 8 discusses the challenges of balancing teaching, service, and research with the broader context of higher education challenges.
- Speaker 8 highlights the importance of having a board that is engaged and supportive of the college's mission.
- Speaker 8 calls for more public leadership and resistance to external forces that undermine the college's mission.

Supporting Research and Teaching

- Speaker 4 appreciates opportunities for research funds through divisional committees and the importance of low-risk, high-reward projects.
- Speaker 2 emphasizes the need for more funding for research, especially for new and untenured faculty.
- Speaker 5 highlights the value of divisional funding and the support of the grants office in the Humanities.
- Speaker 8 suggests sharing data on funding disparities across departments to inform more equitable distribution of resources.

Continuity and Support for Research

- Speaker 10 stresses the importance of continuity in student research support and the need for more funding for student stipends.
- Speaker 4 discusses the value of student involvement in research and the need for continuity in student support.
- Speaker 3 supports the idea of having resources to help with advising and student support to reduce faculty workload.
- Speaker 3 emphasizes the importance of having teams that can handle general campus needs and student support during teaching blocks.

Equity and Support in Research Funding

- Speaker 7 raises concerns about equitability issues in funding and the need for careful consideration in redistributing resources.
- Speaker 7 suggests a collaborative approach to fundraising to support departments with fewer resources.
- Speaker 7 emphasizes the importance of meaningful work and the need for initiatives that bring faculty together to support each other.
- Speaker 7 calls for a focus on shared governance and faculty involvement in decision-making processes.

Final Thoughts and Next Steps

- Speaker 1 acknowledges the importance of the conversation and the need for more public leadership and support for faculty.
- Speaker 8 reiterates the need for meaningful work and the importance of feeling that the work is valuable and supported.
- Speaker 6 emphasizes the need to adapt to external circumstances and the importance of balancing teaching, service, and research.
- Speaker 1 concludes the meeting by highlighting the importance of continued conversations and support for faculty.

Forum 9

Transcript

<https://otter.ai/u/MPcJ70PYGdyqPry4TYwrRpbGT3c?view=summary>

The faculty meeting discussed the evolving roles of faculty members, focusing on balancing teaching, research, and service. Teaching was universally deemed the most meaningful, while service often felt less productive. Suggestions included reducing class sizes, offering more team-teaching opportunities, and exploring financial models for student research assistants. Structural changes like lowering class sizes from 25 to 18 and providing more support for chairs were proposed. The need for better integration of the Fine Arts Center into academic programs was highlighted. Concerns about the transactional nature of student-faculty interactions and the impact of current events on research were also discussed.

Action Items

- [] Investigate the possibility of having more courses offered on a pass/fail basis.
- [] Review the allocation of research funding across divisions to address inequities.
- [] Provide clarity and support around academic freedom concerns related to research.
- [] Explore opportunities for team teaching and interdisciplinary collaboration, including applying for curriculum grants.
- [] Explore ways to integrate the Fine Arts Center and museum more into the academic curriculum.

Outline

Exploratory Conversation on Faculty Roles and Expectations

- Speaker 1 initiates the meeting by discussing the purpose of the conversation, which is to explore the evolving roles of faculty in response to student needs and interests.
- The goal is to come up with ideas to make the faculty role more meaningful and joyful.
- Speaker 1 poses the first question about balancing teaching, research, and service, asking which feels the most meaningful and challenging.
- Speaker 2 finds teaching the most meaningful, while Speaker 3 and Speaker 4 agree but also mention the challenges of service.

Balancing Teaching, Research, and Service

- Speaker 5 views teaching as the most meaningful and sees scholarship as an extension of teaching, though service is hit or miss.
- Speaker 6 mentions a zero-sum game between the three pillars, feeling that one must give up on one to do more of the others.
- Speaker 7 shares that students have been central to their growth as an instructor and scholar, and they feel their time is being wasted on service commitments.
- Speaker 7 expresses a desire for the college to address existential crises at the species level and believes the liberal arts have a role in this.

Proposed Changes to Professional Expectations

- Speaker 1 asks about changes to professional expectations that could give faculty more time to do meaningful work.
- Speaker 5 finds meaning in team teaching and wishes for more resources to support it.
- Speaker 3 mentions the difficulty of team teaching and suggests more information and support for cross-disciplinary collaboration.
- Speaker 2 proposes a financial model where students could work as research assistants during the academic year, benefiting both students and faculty.

Structural Changes to Facilitate Meaningful Work

- Speaker 1 inquires about structural changes that could help faculty find more time for meaningful work.
- Speaker 5 suggests more time for chairs to fulfill their roles, which are crucial for the college's mission.
- Speaker 3 and Speaker 4 discuss the need for more equitable distribution of service loads and the impact of COVID-19 on community building.
- Speaker 7 highlights the challenges of being jointly appointed faculty and the need for more support for research accounts.

Support for Research and Community Building

- Speaker 1 asks about current supports for research and what could be more helpful.
- Speaker 7 discusses the importance of research accounts and the need for more equitable distribution of funds.
- Speaker 5 suggests more opportunities for research groups to meet and collaborate.
- Speaker 7 proposes a program to help students connect with faculty over lunch, which could improve retention and community building.

Integration of the Fine Arts Center into Academic Mission

- Speaker 2 suggests integrating the Fine Arts Center more fully into the academic mission, seeing it as a unique resource for curriculum development.
- Speaker 3 and Speaker 7 echo this idea, mentioning the potential for exhibits to enhance teaching and learning.
- Speaker 5 asks if there is a mechanism for faculty to propose exhibits for their classes.
- Speaker 1 explains the challenges of planning exhibits years in advance but suggests the possibility of pop-up exhibits for more immediate integration.

Addressing the Transactional Nature of Student-Faculty Relationships

- Speaker 1 and Speaker 2 discuss the shift towards more transactional student-faculty relationships and the impact on teaching and learning.
- Speaker 5 notes that students are hesitant to express their true thoughts due to fear of judgment from peers.
- Speaker 9 mentions the challenges of research in the current climate and the need for institutional support for academic freedom.
- Speaker 1 concludes the meeting by thanking everyone for their insights and promising to follow up with a report.

Forum 10

Transcript

<https://otter.ai/u/XobTizuhV9QpObTQkepMn3-wWeM?view=summary>

The meeting discussed the evolving roles of faculty at Colorado College, emphasizing the need to align with Gen Z and Gen Alpha students' expectations. Faculty highlighted the importance of integrating research and service into teaching, suggesting reduced teaching loads and more research blocks. They stressed the need for structural support, such as professional development for chairs and clearer expectations for service roles. The conversation also touched on the importance of involving students in research and the need for better institutional resources, like databases and Adobe Suite licenses. The goal is to create a more meaningful and joyful work environment for faculty.

Action Items

- [] Investigate options for dedicated research blocks or time during the academic year, similar to the previous summer research grants program.
- [] Develop a more structured professional development program for faculty in leadership roles, such as department chairs.
- [] Improve the centralization and accessibility of data on alumni career outcomes to help faculty better advise and connect students to post-graduation opportunities.
- [] Explore ways to provide more flexibility and support for faculty to balance and evolve their priorities across teaching, research, and service over the course of their careers.
- [] Review the faculty evaluation process to ensure it more accurately captures and values the diverse contributions of faculty across teaching, research, and service.

Outline

Faculty Roles and Evolution

- Speaker 1 introduces the meeting, noting it is the 14th year of their tenure at CC and the need to evolve faculty roles to align with students' interests and needs.
- Speaker 1 asks about the three pillars of the profession: teaching, research, and service, and which is most meaningful and challenging.
- Speaker 2 shares their experience, highlighting the changing nature of their interests and the need for creative support from the college administration.
- Speaker 2 emphasizes the importance of allowing faculty to evolve and not being rigid in their roles, using their own experience of balancing teaching, research, and service.

Mid-Career Faculty and Scholarship Integration

- Speaker 3 discusses the concept of mid-career and the importance of mentoring students and integrating scholarship into the classroom.
- Speaker 3 highlights the need for resources to support research experiences and the integration of scholarship into the curriculum.
- Speaker 1 reiterates the question about the most meaningful and challenging pillars of the profession.
- Speaker 4 asks about the changing expectations of college students, particularly Gen Z, and their focus on career and return on investment.

Student Expectations and Liberal Arts Education

- Speaker 1 explains the shift in student motivations, with career being the primary reason for attending college.
- Speaker 4 agrees with the importance of integrating scholarship into the classroom and the need to highlight the value of liberal arts education.
- Speaker 5 discusses the challenges of balancing teaching, research, and service, especially when teaching abroad.
- Speaker 6 emphasizes the importance of high-impact practices and the need for flexibility in defining teaching and research.

Professional Expectations and Structural Support

- Speaker 1 asks about changes in professional expectations to create more space for meaningful work.
- Speaker 2 shares their experience of reducing teaching loads to chair FGS and the importance of having comparable impact.
- Speaker 7 discusses the need for mental space and the overlap between faculty and administrative roles.
- Speaker 3 suggests the idea of buying out teaching loads to allow for more service and administrative work.

Student Collaboration and Academic Seriousness

- Speaker 8 emphasizes the importance of involving students in research and the need for a culture of academic seriousness.
- Speaker 4 seconds the idea of intense commitment to the academic dimension of the college.
- Speaker 6 discusses the challenges of incorporating new ideas into teaching and the need for more structured support.
- Speaker 1 mentions the importance of advising loads and the timing of advising as potential areas for change.

Structural Changes and Professional Development

- Speaker 7 suggests the need for clear expectations around emergencies and the impact of the block plan on faculty work.
- Speaker 6 highlights the need for clarity around contact teaching hours and the challenges of department-level decisions.
- Speaker 2 proposes the idea of professional development around chairing and other administrative roles.
- Speaker 5 discusses the need for more structured support for faculty in service roles and the challenges of balancing committee work.

Research Support and Institutional Resources

- Speaker 1 asks about current supports for research and potential improvements.
- Speaker 9 suggests a full year after tenure to focus on research and the importance of professional development for chairs.
- Speaker 10 shares their experience as a new faculty member and the need for better orientation and support.
- Speaker 6 discusses the challenges of limited research resources and the need for better institutional support.

Collaborative Research and Student Involvement

- Speaker 4 proposes the idea of collaborative research blocks to support faculty and student research.
- Speaker 7 suggests specialized supports for involving students in research and the need for better mapping of students to opportunities.
- Speaker 9 emphasizes the importance of centralized support for selling majors based on career outcomes.
- Speaker 1 concludes the meeting, thanking everyone for their participation and outlining the next steps for creating a response to the discussion.

Appendix B-Individual Sentiment Analysis Outputs

Below are the outputs directly generated from the Python sentiment analyses program per individual transcript input.

Transcript 1 (Forum 1_otter_ai.txt): The overall sentiment is *negative*. The emotional tone is predominantly *neutral*, followed by *surprise*, *joy*, *fear*, *disgust*, *sadness*, and *anger*, in descending order of intensity. The corresponding emotion distribution is: neutral (59.02%), surprise (8.23%), joy (7.65%), fear (7.56%), disgust (5.87%), sadness (3.36%), and anger (3.30%). Forum Participants-10

Transcript 2 (Forum 2_otter_ai.txt): The overall sentiment is *negative*. The emotional tone is primarily *neutral*, followed by *joy*, *fear*, *sadness*, *surprise*, *disgust*, and *anger*. The emotion distribution is: neutral (53.24%), joy (12.28%), fear (12.02%), sadness (5.83%), surprise (5.74%), disgust (7.09%), and anger (4.81%). Forum Participants-11

Transcript 3 (Forum 3_otter_ai.txt): The overall sentiment is *positive*. The dominant emotion is *neutral*, followed by *joy*, *fear*, *anger*, *surprise*, *sadness*, and *disgust*. The emotion distribution is: neutral (40.10%), joy (16.17%), fear (6.91%), anger (3.58%), surprise (2.78%), sadness (2.67%), and disgust (2.78%). Forum Participants-8

Transcript 4 (Forum 4_otter_ai.txt): The overall sentiment is *negative*. The emotional tone is largely *neutral*, followed by *surprise*, *fear*, *joy*, *sadness*, *anger*, and *disgust*. The emotion distribution is: neutral (17.06%), surprise (2.86%), fear (3.60%), joy (1.87%), sadness (1.63%), anger (1.04%), and disgust (0.94%). Forum Participants-1

Transcript 5 (Forum 5_otter_ai.txt): The overall sentiment is *negative*. The predominant emotion is *neutral*, followed by *fear*, *surprise*, *joy*, *anger*, *disgust*, and *sadness*. The emotion distribution is: neutral (59.19%), fear (8.79%), surprise (5.17%), joy (4.85%), anger (4.22%), disgust (4.03%), and sadness (1.74%). Forum Participants-9

Transcript 6 (Forum 6_otter_ai.txt): The overall sentiment is *positive*. The emotional tone is primarily *neutral*, followed by *fear*, *joy*, *disgust*, *surprise*, *anger*, and *sadness*. The distribution is: neutral (32.50%), fear (6.68%), joy (4.47%), disgust (2.44%), surprise (2.28%), anger (1.59%), and sadness (1.04%). Forum Participants-1

Transcript 7 (Forum 7_otter_ai.txt): The overall sentiment is *negative*. The leading emotion is *neutral*, followed by *fear*, *disgust*, *surprise*, *anger*, *joy*, and *sadness*. The emotion distribution is: neutral (66.09%), fear (11.67%), disgust (10.75%), surprise (6.36%), anger (6.61%), joy (5.90%), and sadness (2.63%). Forum Participants-12

Transcript 8 (Forum 8_otter_ai.txt): The overall sentiment is *negative*. The emotional tone is predominantly *neutral*, followed by *surprise*, *fear*, *joy*, *anger*, *disgust*, and *sadness*. The emotion

distribution is: neutral (60.88%), surprise (10.83%), fear (9.42%), joy (7.14%), anger (6.89%), disgust (6.15%), and sadness (4.69%). Forum Participants-9

Transcript 9 (Forum 9_otter_ai.txt): The overall sentiment is *positive*. The dominant emotional tone is *neutral*, followed by *joy*, *fear*, *sadness*, *surprise*, *disgust*, and *anger*. The emotion distribution is: neutral (57.03%), joy (9.02%), fear (9.21%), sadness (4.95%), surprise (5.62%), disgust (5.15%), and anger (4.02%). Forum Participants-6

Transcript 10 (Forum 10_otter_ai.txt): The overall sentiment is *negative*. The emotional tone is predominantly *neutral*, followed by *surprise*, *joy*, *disgust*, *fear*, *anger*, and *sadness*. The emotion distribution is: neutral (69.53%), surprise (9.17%), joy (7.88%), disgust (6.56%), fear (5.72%), anger (3.90%), and sadness (2.24%). Forum Participants-9

Appendix C-Supporting Documents

Faculty Insight Forums Memo-Distributed to all faculty invited to contribute to the forums.

Faculty Insight Forums

Hosted by: Manya Whitaker, Interim President

Co-hosted by: Emily Chan, Dean of Faculty

PURPOSE

Determine faculty interest in/desire to reimagine professional responsibilities in an effort to ensure faculty can do the work they came to CC to do.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. Reflecting on Priorities

- “How do you currently balance teaching, research, and service responsibilities? What aspects of these roles do you see as most vital to fulfilling our mission and which feel most challenging or burdensome?”

2. Exploring Flexibility

5. “If you could reimagine your professional responsibilities, what changes would allow you to devote more time to what you find most impactful for students, whether that’s teaching, research, or service?”
3. Research Integration and Continuity
 6. “What strategies or structural changes could help you engage more deeply with research, especially in the context of maintaining continuity during busy teaching or service periods?”
4. Support Systems
 7. “What kinds of support, resources, or institutional changes would help reduce strain and enhance your sense of accomplishment and impact in your professional role?”

PROPOSED FORMAT

- In-person, one-hour small group (~15) discussion in blocks 6 and 7 (totaling 8 sessions)
- Two, one-hour small group (~12) zoom discussions per block in blocks 6 and 7 (totaling 4 sessions) for faculty not on campus
- Each meeting will be staffed by a member of the president’s office. Nothing will be recorded, and no attributions will be made to individual faculty members.
- *Each session will begin with a contextual overview by Ryan Simmons, VP for People and Workplace Culture
- A report with aggregated findings will be available in summer 2025

POTENTIAL STARTING POINTS

- Class size
- Sabbatical timing
- Major requirements
- Course components
- Course assessments
- Faculty governance structure
- Advising loads
- External partnerships
- Technology utilization/digitization
- Cross-departmental collaborations
- Course scheduling

RATIONALE

- 1) Faculty desire to be more intentional about, and have flexibility within, their teaching
- 2) Faculty desire/need for continuous research time (i.e. uninterrupted by teaching blocks)
- 3) Evolving student needs
- 4) Shifts in the higher education landscape

Appendix A

Supporting Research

EXTERNAL DATA & THEMES

- Generational shifts in learning needs and college expectations
 - Gen Alpha (2012-2026)
 - Technology savants (AI)
 - Customization
 - Equity and empowerment
 - Collective values-driven
 - Collective development
 - Socially overwhelmed
 - Gen Z (1997-2012)
 - Technology residents
 - Personalization
 - Inclusivity
 - Values-driven
 - Personal development
 - Social isolation

INTERNAL DATA & THEMES

- Skip-Levels (2024)
 - *disproportionate administrative work for specific committees (e.g., personnel review) and positions (department chair)*
 - *not enough resources to support research initiatives (sabbaticals, fellowships, research assistants, travel, equipment, grant support)*
 - *not enough time to develop, teach, and assess courses, especially co-taught and interdisciplinary courses*
 - *inequitable departmental participation in FYP and across Gen Eds*
 - *inequitable teaching requirements within departments*
- Project2024 (2021-2024)
 - *align resources and structures with priorities*
 - *more flexibility in teaching formats*
 - *more unscheduled TIME*
 - *reviews focused on quality and impact (not quantity)*
- LACRELA (2023)
 - *not enough support for growth/professional development*
 - *don't feel supported by supervisor*
- ModernThink (2013, 2015, 2021)
 - *some faculty want more time with students*
 - *pedagogical innovation is highly valued*
 - *facilities are inadequate for science research*
 - *unreasonable workload*

- *department chairs need more training and support*
- *job expectations lack clarity*
- *inconsistent job feedback*
- *review processes are not perceived to accurately measure performance*

Appendix D-Tools and Technical Background

The following tools were used to aid writing this report and conducting analysis.

AI models like ChatGPT and Gemini were employed for spell and grammar checking. Python code was utilized in PyCharm to develop traditional and machine learning analysis algorithms, organize data, and facilitate overall data science tasks.

Technical Background

To assess sentiment and emotional tone across faculty interview transcripts, I developed and implemented custom computational scripts in Python. These scripts leveraged natural language processing (NLP) techniques to automate the analysis of qualitative data and align emotional patterns with key thematic elements

Sentiment Analysis

In Python, sentiment and emotion classification were performed using pretrained transformer-based models from the Hugging Face transformers library. Sentiment analysis was conducted using `distilbert-base-uncased-finetuned-sst-2-english`, a lightweight model fine-tuned on binary sentiment classification (positive/negative). Emotion detection utilized `j-hartmann/emotion-english-distilroberta-base`, a multi-label model trained to identify a range of emotional states (e.g., joy, sadness, anger, fear). The analysis pipeline was designed to process batches of plain-text transcript files (.txt). Each transcript was:

1. Read from a specified directory using Python's `os` and `pandas` libraries.

2. Chunked into 512-token segments, ensuring compatibility with the input limits of transformer models.
3. Individually passed through the sentiment and emotion models. For each chunk, a sentiment prediction (positive or negative) and a full distribution of emotion probabilities were returned.
4. Aggregated across all chunks for a given transcript to determine:
 - The majority sentiment label (via simple mode)
 - The dominant emotion, based on the highest cumulative score across chunks
 - A full distribution of emotion scores, providing a richer emotional profile for each document.

Finally, results were compiled into a structured .csv output, summarizing Filename, Overall sentiment classification, Top emotion label, Emotion distribution (as a dictionary of label-score pairs).