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Equity-Minded Faculty Workloads

What We Can and Should Do Now

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One Dupont Circle NW
Washington, DC 20036

EQUITY-MINDED FACULTY WORKLOADS: WHAT WE CAN AND SHOULD DO NOW

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Acknowledgments

The Faculty Workload and Rewards Project work is funded by the National Science Foundation, ADVANCE-IHE *[1463898].* We thank Elizabeth Beise, associate provost for academic planning and programs at the University of Maryland, and research associates Courtney Lennartz, Alexandra Kuvaeva, Gudrun Nyunt, Sarah Kilmer, and Lindsey Templeton for their critical contributions to this work.

Executive Summary

Recent social movements have revealed the systemic ways that racism and sexism remain entrenched in academic cultures. Faculty workload is taken up, assigned, and rewarded in patterns, and these patterns show important yet overlooked areas where inequity manifests in academe. Faculty from historically minoritized groups are disproportionately called upon to do diversity work and mentoring, while women faculty do more teaching and service. These activities are vital to the functioning of the university, yet are often invisible and unrewarded, leading to lower productivity and decreased retention. The COVID-19 pandemic, which has disproportionately affected the lives and careers of women and faculty from historically minoritized groups, makes calls for equity-minded workload reform critical.

This report summarizes the authors' findings and insights learned from the **Faculty Workload and Rewards Project** (FWRP), a National Science Foundation ADVANCE-funded action research project. The FWRP worked with 51 departments and academic units to promote equity in how faculty work is taken up, assigned, and rewarded, drawing from theories of behavioral economics and the principles of equity-mindedness. Using a randomized experiment with treatment and control groups, we found that there are actions that academic units can take to promote workload equity. The treatment groups participated in a four-part workload intervention that included training on workload inequity, creating a faculty work activity dashboard, developing an equity action plan, and individual faculty professional development on managing time-use.

Based on this research, this report then makes recommendations for how academic units can promote workload equity. We identify six conditions linked to equitable workloads:

- **Transparency:** Departments have widely visible information about faculty work activities available for department members to see.
- **Clarity:** Departments have clearly identified and well-understood benchmarks for faculty work activities.
- **Credit:** Departments recognize and reward faculty members who are expending more effort in certain areas.
- **Norms:** Departments have a commitment to ensuring faculty workload is fair and have put systems in place that reinforce these norms.
- **Context:** Departments acknowledge that different faculty members have different strengths, interests, and demands that shape their workloads and offer workload flexibility to recognize this context.
- **Accountability:** Departments have mechanisms in place to ensure that faculty members fulfill their work obligations and receive credit for their labor.

We provide examples of policies and practices that promote these conditions. We summarize these recommendations and provide tools, such as the Equity-Minded Faculty Workload Audit, for academic leaders, department chairs, faculty workload commissions, and individual faculty members who want to reform faculty workloads with equity in mind.

Introduction

Recent calls for racial justice have brought a spotlight to the sustained marginalization of faculty from historically minoritized groups, while social movements like #MeToo reveal entrenched gender inequities, all of which undermine a diverse and inclusive professoriate. The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent financial fallout in higher education have exacerbated these issues (Amano-Patiño et al. 2020; Gonzales and Griffin 2020; Malisch et al. 2020), making calls for equity-minded reform all the more critical.

One of the most important, but often overlooked, areas in which inequity can arise is within the distribution of faculty labor. Faculty from historically minoritized groups are disproportionately called upon to do diversity work and mentoring (Griffin and Reddick 2011; Turner, González, and Wong (Lau) 2011; Wood, Hilton, and Nevarez 2015), while women faculty do more teaching and service (O'Meara et al. 2017; Winslow 2010). These activities are vital to the functioning of the university, yet they are often invisible and unrewarded (Hanasono et al. 2019; Griffin et al. 2011; O'Meara 2011). Faculty workload systems are also not strategically designed. There are few benchmarks or standards to acknowledge exemplary performance or to hold faculty members accountable when they do not perform. Academic leaders and individual faculty members often do not have the tools or systems in place to make data-driven workload decisions. Said another way, the context that surrounds faculty workload reinforces and perpetuates workload inequities, and these inequities have the potential to undermine productivity, satisfaction, and retention (Eagan and Garvey 2015; Griffin et al. 2011; Misra, Lundquist, and Templer 2012; O'Meara, Bennett, and Neihaus 2016).

It may seem challenging to address the realities of the existing faculty work environment, but academic leaders, departments, and faculty members *can* take action to create better, fairer, equity-minded workloads. New policies and practices can be put in place to "script," or guide, faculty and their institutions toward more equitable outcomes, especially for women faculty members and faculty members from historically minoritized identity groups. Academic leaders and departments can be more accountable for fair divisions of labor.

In our National Science Foundation ADVANCE-funded Faculty Workload and Rewards Project (FWRP), we took on this problem, working with academic units to consider ways that they could reform faculty workload with equity in mind. Through a randomized experiment with treatment and control groups, we collected evidence that showed that following these steps led to greater workload equity and faculty satisfaction. Specifically, we worked with academic units to:

1. Improve workload transparency and clarity for all faculty members, which is especially helpful to women and faculty from historically minoritized groups.
2. Make visible the core department and university work that is often invisible (e.g., faculty members who mentored more, served on more search committees, or chaired more dissertations).
3. Recognize differences in contexts (e.g., only woman of color in a department asked to be mentor for many students of color) and effort and performance (e.g., faculty members who lead committees versus serving as members).
4. Encourage departments or institutions to examine data on faculty workload and disaggregate by categories like appointment type, rank, race, and gender, as relevant.
5. Help departments or institutions to identify any workload imbalances through this data, and incorporate policy and practice reforms aimed at equalizing their faculty workload.

Our work was guided by the concept of equity-mindedness (Bensimon 2007; Bensimon, Dowd, and Witham 2016), which refers to a mode of thinking and action practitioners use to enhance educational outcomes for individuals from different groups. Equity-mindedness focuses our attention on the socio-historical context of exclusionary practices in higher education, and in this case within faculty careers and academe more generally. Equity-mindedness asks all of us to take ownership and responsibility for equity in workload process and outcomes. In this report, we draw from our experiences with the FWRP to discuss how academic units can use equity-minded practices to enhance faculty workload.

SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

We begin this report with a summary of why faculty workload inequity matters and why departments and institutions should take action. We then discuss how and why faculty workloads become unfair and synthesize the latest social science research on disparities between women and men, and between white faculty and faculty from historically minoritized groups, in campus service and mentoring work. We then present the conditions that we have found support equitable workloads, citing our own experimental work, as well as other research and practice. We pair discussion of the conditions that facilitate equitable workloads with policy and practice reforms (see Appendix C) that can be put in place to enact these conditions, including measures we used in our randomized experiment. We synthesize our recommendations in an audit tool that we have created (see Appendix B). We encourage department chairs, faculty leaders, workload commissions, and provosts to use this audit tool to evaluate whether they have the policy and practice scaffolding necessary to support equitable workloads.

Opening the Can of Worms: Why Faculty Workload Equity Matters

As a result of the pandemic, higher education faces an existential crisis wherein enrollment, financial viability, and the future of in-person education are threatened. These issues are critical, with relatively more importance to considering whether full-time faculty members experience their workloads as equitable. Even before the pandemic, we, as researchers, sometimes encountered skepticism when we broached the topic of workload reform with academic leaders and faculty. There were colleagues who advised us not to "open that can of worms" (O'Meara 2018b). Some argued that reform was not needed—they suggested that workload differences between individual faculty members were small and department members were productive and generally happy with their workloads. In contrast, others argued that even the most well-intentioned efforts at reforming faculty workloads would create more conflict or magnify existing tensions within departments.

In response to these critiques of faculty workload conversations, we offer three main reasons why academic leaders and departments need to open the can of worms associated with faculty workload:

- **As a result of the pandemic, faculty workloads are growing, and growing more inequitable.** Reductions in faculty capacity mean that many faculty members are being asked to "pick up" additional work (e.g., teaching extra classes, serving on return to work committees, establishing laboratory staffing plans). Most faculty workload systems are not designed to recognize or reward this "extra" effort, even though this work is more critical than ever. It is also reasonable to expect that faculty members who were already seen as "good citizens" on their campus because of their service work—who are more likely to be women and faculty from historically minoritized racial groups—will be asked more often to participate in these kinds of assignments. Thus, the pandemic is exacerbating existing workload inequities that already undermine diversity and equity goals. As institutions re-prioritize strategic goals and re-allocate faculty work, there is a need to balance equity with the basic functioning of the academic

enterprise. The workload strategies contained in this report offer flexible, creative ways to foster workload equity, even in times of resource constraint.

- **Workload inequities lower productivity, increase burnout, and decrease retention.** Faculty workload satisfaction is one of the key factors in both faculty productivity (Eagan and Garvey 2015; Misra, Lundquist, and Templer 2012) and faculty retention (Daly and Dee 2006; Gardner 2013; Griffin et al. 2011; O'Meara, Bennett, and Neihaus 2016). Faculty members who are retained, but feel unrecognized and unrewarded for their many years of "above level" service will inevitably experience disengagement and burn out. In higher education, our goals and missions are accomplished by people, not machines. We count on faculty engagement and energy, and thus cannot have sizable portions of that resource diminished. The workload reform efforts we used in the FWRP help promote workload satisfaction in ways that contribute to the achievement of institutional and departmental goals.
- **Workload inequities accrue over time.** Past studies of faculty workload have found relatively small yet meaningful differences in the ways faculty members spend their time. For example, studies show women faculty spend 0.6 hours more per week on service activities (Guarino and Borden 2017). Other studies show that on average, women faculty spend about 3 percent less time on research and 5 percent more time on teaching compared to men (Carrigan, Quinn, and Riskin 2011). While it may be tempting to assume that so-called small differences should not impact an individual's career over time, such differences, when measured over weeks and years, accrue and have real consequences for advancement and promotion (Valian 2005). Misra, Lundquist, and Templer (2012) found that the extra time spent by women associate professors in service roles (e.g., undergraduate director) resulted in important delays in promotion to full professor for women faculty. We are also aware of lecturers and research scientists frustrated by non-tenure track workloads that require extensive service while their reward systems emphasize teaching and research. As such, many languish for years without promotion. As Virginia Valian (2005) argues that "in the long run, a molehill of bias creates a mountain of disadvantage" (Valian 2005, 204), in ways that significantly contribute to a less diverse and excellent professoriate. This report contains practices and policies for ensuring better alignment of workloads and rewards in ways that promote equity.

We concede that opening the can of worms related to faculty workload may cause short-term discomfort as patterns of inequity emerge. Yet, addressing workload inequities now offers the long-term potential to creatively address some pandemic-related workload demands, mitigate losses of faculty productivity, increase retention, and overall promote a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive academy.

Why and How Faculty Workload Becomes Inequitable

The research on faculty workloads is voluminous and consistently finds that:

Gendered and Racialized Distribution of Faculty Labor	Studies
Women spend more time on teaching and service than men.	Eagan and Garvey 2015; Griffin and Reddick 2011; Guarino and Borden 2017; Hanasano et al. 2019; Link, Swann, and Bozeman 2008; Misra, Lundquist, and Templer 2012; O'Meara 2016; O'Meara, Kuvaeva, and Nyunt 2017; O'Meara et al. 2017; Winslow 2010
Women spend less time on research than men.	Bozeman and Gaughan 2011; Link, Swann, and Bozeman 2008; O'Meara et al. 2017; Winslow 2010
Faculty from historically minoritized racial groups spend more time on mentoring and diversity-related work than faculty who are white.	Antonio 2002; Griffin and Reddick 2011; Jimenez et al. 2019; Joseph and Hirshfield 2011; Turner, González, and Wong (Lau) 2011; Wood, Hilton, and Nevarez 2015
Women are asked more often to engage in less promotable or career-advancing tasks.	Acker and Armenti 2004; Babcock et al. 2017; El-Alayli, Hansen-Brown, and Ceynar 2018; Hanasano et al. 2019; Hurtado et al. 2012; Misra, Lundquist, and Templer 2012; Mitchell and Hesli 2013; O'Meara et al. 2017

ASKED MORE OFTEN: PATTERNS IN FACULTY WORKLOAD AND EQUITY ISSUES THAT EMERGE

Our analysis of the workload literature and experience working with academic departments suggests that faculty workloads often become unfair as a result of the following patterns in how work is taken up, assigned, and rewarded:

- Some faculty members are more likely to be asked.
- Some faculty members are asked to do certain kinds of work activities.
- Some faculty members are more likely to volunteer.
- Some faculty members are more likely to say yes when they are asked.
- Some faculty members are more likely to negotiate for other resources when they are asked.
- Some faculty members engage in social loafing—signing up for a commitment, but not carrying it out.

Underlying each of these issues is the fact that members of the department are more likely to notice when some colleagues do more and when others do less—there are differing levels of surveillance and "noticing" for faculty members from different groups (Griffin and Reddick 2011).

As a result of these patterns, faculty workloads become inequitable, and the structures, cultures, and design of faculty work reproduce and normalize the inequity. Specific kinds of equity issues emerge:

- **Faculty members engage in different amounts of teaching, research, and service.** Different faculty members participate in different numbers of work activities with different time demands (e.g., individual faculty members serve on different numbers of committees, and each committee requires a different amount of effort). Moreover, although some faculty work is assigned, it is often done so haphazardly, without data or understanding of the workload demands of individual faculty members relative to the workload needs of the entire department. There is a lack of *transparency*.
- **Faculty members do not know how much work is expected, in what areas, and what happens if the work is not completed.** Faculty members are not sure how much is required of them or what the consequences will be if they do not meet certain expectations (e.g., it is not clear how many committees they should serve on as assistant professors versus associate professors). They do not know how to benchmark their performance against others. There is a lack of *clarity*.
- **Faculty members are not rewarded for the work that they do.** Faculty members participate in work activities (e.g., diversity and inclusion or mentoring) that are important but not recognized within unit rewards systems. There is a lack of *credit*.
- **Faculty members are expected to regulate and manage their own workloads.** Much faculty work is discretionary and unregulated, and rests upon the assumption that each faculty member will make decisions in their own self-interest (O'Meara 2016). This discretion makes it seem as though workload inequities occur naturally or are the fault of individual faculty members. There are a lack of *equity norms* guiding workload decisions.
- **Faculty members have workloads that do not account for context.** Often, workload systems assume that "one size fits all" and fail to recognize that different faculty members have different preferences and values when it comes to the kinds of roles and tasks they enjoy or find painful. There is a lack of *context* considered in workload decisions and rewards structures.
- **Faculty members engage in social loafing and slacking.** Not all faculty members within the unit complete the tasks they are asked to do or do not complete their tasks at a quality level, and other faculty members pick up their slack for the good of the unit. There is a lack of *accountability* for fulfilling or not fulfilling work demands.

With these issues in mind, it is clear that for faculty workloads to be equitable, they must be created with intent and by deliberate design.

The Faculty Workload and Rewards Project

How do we redesign faculty workloads to be more equitable? First, we foster certain conditions known to be associated with perceived and real equity in workload. Then, we put policies and practices in place as default settings, to ensure that these conditions prime interactions and behaviors to result in equitable outcomes. In the Faculty Workloads and Rewards Project (FWRP), a National Science Foundation–ADVANCE-funded, action research project, we, the authors of this report, worked with 51 academic units to establish equity-minded workload reform. From 2015 to 2020, we (in addition to colleagues Courtney Lennartz, Elisabeth Beise, and Alexandra Kuveava) considered strategies for improving how faculty workload is taken up, assigned, and/or rewarded.

We began our project with a synthesis of the social science and practice research to diagnose the different ways in which workload becomes unfair. We drew on work from behavioral economics to try to understand the choice architecture around how work was taken up, assigned, and rewarded.

We next recruited departments to participate in the project and the interventions associated with it. In total, we worked with 51 departments or academic units located within 20 public universities. The majority of participating departments represented STEM and social science fields or disciplines, while a handful of departments were in the humanities and professional fields. Based upon Carnegie Classifications, institutions represented both doctoral universities and master's colleges and universities, including some Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The website for the project is: **https://facultyworkloadandrewardsproject.umd.edu/**.

A short video was created to help increase awareness about how this happens which can be found **here**.

The initial round was set up as an experiment; half the departments that applied to participate in the experiment were provided with the interventions, while the other half were not; we conducted both pre-test and post-test surveys with faculty members in both treatment and control departments, to determine whether the interventions were effective. We asked treatment departments to assemble teams of three to five faculty members who would participate in the intervention over the course of 12–18 months. Members of our FWRP team also provided ongoing resources and support for department teams as they worked toward workload reform.

GUIDING FRAMEWORKS

The work of Thaler and Sunstein (2008) and Kahneman (2011) in behavioral economics and nudges were influential in the design of our interventions. Behavioral economists study why individuals make irrational decisions and suggest that often, our poor decision-making is driven by cognitive and social bias (Kahneman 2011). Certain conditions, including many of those present in the faculty work environment, exacerbate our bias. For example, in most faculty workload systems, work is taken up and assigned (a) without unit priorities in mind, (b) without data on what faculty members within the unit are doing, and (c) by decision-makers who are rushed or stressed. Moreover, there are few decision rubrics, or ways to differentiate effort, and much of the work critical to departments is invisible. To sum, the context that surrounds decisions in faculty workload—what behavioral economists refer to as the "choice architecture"—is primed for bias to undermine effective decision-making (Kahneman 2011; Thaler and Sunstein 2008). Nudges, or changes to the decision-making context, can promote better outcomes (Thaler and Sunstein 2008). Thus, an important part of designing equity-minded workloads is using nudges (e.g., slowing the process down, being intentional, and using data and tools) to reshape the choice architecture surrounding workload decisions.

CREATING EQUITY-MINDED FACULTY WORKLOAD

The FWRP was composed of four interventions (Figure 1), intended to help departments and other units improve equity in their workload policies and practices.

Figure 1. FWRP Interventions

First, we designed a workshop to share the social science research on workload inequities and strategies to mitigate them with departments. This lasted two to three hours and included several exercises and resources. Some of the exercises shared in this workshop are summarized in Appendix A.

Second, departments developed work activity dashboards, or simple, easy-to-read displays of different faculty work activities (e.g., service, teaching, and research). Departments developed these dashboards based upon existing faculty work activity data and analyzed data to understand potential equity issues in their units (e.g., women associate professors taking on more high-effort service or faculty from historically minoritized groups having more advisees). Examples of work activity dashboards are described in Handout #1.

FWRP FINDINGS

We have published the results from the FWRP in peer-reviewed articles, scholarly magazines, and op-eds. We describe the results presented in these articles below.

- Exploration of the conditions most important to equity workload (O'Meara, Lennartz, et al. 2019).
- Results from the randomized control trial that examine the efficacy of the four workload interventions (O'Meara et al. 2018).
- Guidance on how to create faculty work activity dashboards (O'Meara et al. 2020).
- Advice for academic leaders and faculty members on how and why to facilitate workload reform (O'Meara 2018a; O'Meara 2018b; O'Meara, Misra, et al. 2019).
- Results from the faculty development workshop on aligning time and priorities (Culpepper et al. 2020).

Third, we helped departments develop department equity action plans to address equity issues they discovered based on their work activity dashboards, and identified relevant policies and practices they would put in place to address them. We collected equitable workload policies into a workbook, which we shared with departments, and we helped them think through relevant options given their local contexts. This was critical, since top-down approaches to workload equity issues are not effective. Policy and practice reforms need to be connected to the actual workload equity issues, and the specific local context at the departmental level.

These first three efforts were systemic approaches to the problem of structural inequity, intended to make meaningful change in the mechanisms by which the work was taken up. This way, no matter who was department chair, or how equity-minded faculty already were, the new system would help guide workload equity moving forward. However, we also realized that there was an individual, professional development aspect to how work is taken up, assigned, and rewarded. That is, some faculty members, particularly women and those from historically minoritized groups, would be asked to do more in teaching, mentoring, and service areas and need to take strategic action to better align their time and priorities (El-Alayli, Hansen-Brown, and Ceynar 2018; O'Meara, Kuvaeva, and Nyunt 2017). As such, the fourth intervention was a four-week professional development workshop (The Terrapin Time Initiative) for individual faculty members on aligning time and priorities (Culpepper et al. 2020). The workshop included modules on keeping track of where one was spending time, avoiding time saboteurs, saying yes and no strategically to new requests, and time-use strategies.

Through this project we were able to create empirical evidence as well as practical significance for the position that certain conditions, policies, and practices support equitable faculty workloads. These are system solutions—ways of revising the choice architecture of how faculty work is assigned, taken up, and rewarded.

How to Promote Equitable Faculty Workloads

We have found in our own empirical and practical work with faculty (O'Meara et al. 2018; O'Meara, Lennartz, et al. 2019), as well as synthesizing the work of others in this and related areas, that the following conditions support equitable workloads:

- Transparency
- Clarity
- Credit
- Norms
- Context
- Accountability

In particular, we found that the more faculty members agreed that these six equitable conditions were present in their department, the more likely they were to be satisfied with their teaching and service loads and the more likely they were to agree that their workload was fair (O'Meara, Lennartz, et al. 2019).

Found on ACE Engage

In this section we discuss each one of these conditions and why they are important for workload equity, and list resources for implementing specific policies and practices that can be used to foster these conditions within faculty workload. The policies and practices are listed in Appendix C. The corresponding worksheets are available on ACE Engage® at engage.acenet.edu.

TRANSPARENCY

Transparency increases trust between members and leaders, increases sense of accountability, facilitates perceptions of procedural and distributive justice, and leads to greater organizational commitment (Bilimoria, Joy, and Liang 2008; Daly and Dee 2006; Leibbrandt and List 2015; Neyland 2007; Norman, Avolio, and Luthans 2010).

We identified two key ways to enhance transparency in faculty workload. First, departments can create **faculty work activity dashboards**, so that faculty members have a sense of the range of effort in teaching, mentoring, and service by relevant appointment or career stage. When academic units present data showing inequities in workload, awareness of those inequities can sensitize faculty members to the reality that some faculty members are called upon more than others to do certain tasks.

EQUITY-MINDED FACULTY WORKLOAD AUDIT

Based upon the research on equity-minded work practices and our experiences with academic units in the Faculty Workloads and Rewards Project, we created a tool, the Equity-Minded Faculty Workload Audit, located in Appendix B. The audit is intended for academic leaders, department chairs, workload commissions, and faculty members who are interested in promoting equitable faculty workloads. The audit asks users to consider the kinds of workload goals they hope to achieve (e.g., promote transparency, enhance clarity). Based upon those goals, the audit then asks questions about existing workload data, processes, and procedures. Users then assess the extent to which these data, processes, or procedures are present within their institution or department, and guides users toward specific policies and practice handouts (see Appendix C) that would help users achieve their goal.

Evidence from the FWRP and previous studies shows that creating faculty work activity dashboards helps departments enhance transparency, promote greater clarity, and increase accountability—all necessary conditions for workload equity (Athena Forum 2018; O'Meara et al. 2020; O'Meara et al. 2018; O'Meara, Lennartz, et al. 2019). Faculty work activity dashboards, described in Handout #1, add greater transparency by providing faculty members with department data on aggregate work accomplishments in teaching and service. Dashboards provide context and benchmarks for current faculty members to see their effort, allow members to review data to identify equity concerns, and show the relationship between individual faculty effort and department collective effort. Faculty work activity dashboards can show inequities, but also dispel myths or narratives that surround faculty workload.

Second, departments can create transparent, published policies and practices for service, advising, and teaching assignments. For example, chairs create transparency by conducting a **service audit**, which asks faculty members what they want to do over the next three years in areas like teaching and/or service roles. Handout #2 offers a template of a service audit.

Practices and Policies That Promote Transparency

- Faculty Work Activity Dashboard Examples (Handout #1)
- Faculty Service Audit (Handout #2)

CLARITY

Clarity is also critical to equitable workloads. Clearly understood benchmarks or expectations, rather than subjective guessing, mitigate the operation of prejudices (Fox et al. 2007; Heilman 2001). Research shows that when policies are "foggy"—vague, unclear, or ambiguous—they disproportionately disadvantage women and faculty from historically minoritized groups (Banerjee and Pawley 2013; Beddoes, Schimpf, and Pawley 2014). For example, research indicates that department and campus guidelines often do not explicitly indicate how much service is expected for faculty members at different ranks (Banerjee and Pawley 2013; Beddoes, Schimpf, and Pawley 2014). Thus, individual faculty members often do not know if they should say yes or no to certain service asks, because they do not know if their current service loads are higher or lower than what is expected.

As such, an important strategy that departments or colleges might enact to increase clarity is to create **faculty expectations guidelines**, described in Handout #3. Faculty expectations guidelines identify the amount of teaching, research, and service expected for faculty members at different ranks (e.g., assistant, associate, full) and in different employment categories (e.g., tenure eligible versus instructional or clinical faculty). Such guidelines should be created collaboratively, balancing university and department needs with faculty needs and recognizing different appointment types and career stages. Our results indicated that faculty members within departments that had clearly identified benchmarks for service and advising were more likely to be satisfied with their workloads (O'Meara, Lennartz, et al. 2019).

Another example of the benefits of clarity are related to compensation negotiation. Foggy climates can make it unclear when faculty members should negotiate (Beddoes, Schimpf, and Pawley 2014), and research shows that in ambiguous negotiation contexts, women negotiate less often than men (Crothers et al. 2010; Babcock and Laschever 2003; Leibbrandt and List 2015). For instance, many faculty serve in administrative roles like undergraduate or graduate program director (Misra, Lundquist, and Templer 2012). Within departments, it may be unclear whether there is compensation associated with taking this role and/or what the compensation range could or should be. Individual faculty members who serve in these roles may therefore be paid different amounts or not receive compensation at all.

Departments can enhance clarity in negotiation by creating policies that clarify which roles are compensated, which are not, and how faculty members can indicate their interest in compensated roles. Often, these policies are incorporated into department plans of organizations. Results from the FWRP indicated faculty who said their departments had clear information on compensation for key roles were more satisfied with their workloads (O'Meara, Lennartz, et al. 2019). In Handout #4, we provide an example of a process a department might use to give clarity around **compensation for key roles**.

Practices and Policies that Promote Clarity

- Faculty Expectations Guidelines (Handout #3)
- Compensation for Key Roles (Handout #4)

CREDIT

We have placed transparency and clarity before credit because it is very hard to give faculty members credit for doing more work in one area, if the department has not first accounted for what faculty members are *actually* doing (e.g., dashboards) and provided clarity on what faculty members *should* be doing (e.g., faculty expectations policies). Once these are in place, it is possible for departments to provide differential credit for work of higher or lower effort.

Research shows faculty members become dissatisfied when they experience a significant mismatch between the amount of time they want to spend on a certain work activity and the time they actually spend on that work activity (Misra, Lundquist, and Templer 2012; Winslow 2010). A faculty member may feel that their dissatisfaction is magnified if they see others experience less of a mismatch between desired and required work activities. Faculty members may feel additionally dissatisfied if their own mismatch impacts their advancement (Misra, Lundquist, and Templer 2012; Winslow 2010). Thus, finding even small ways to give credit to faculty members such that they can spend time on their preferred work activities makes faculty members feel as though their contributions are valued.

For example, departments might create a credit system that grants a faculty member who chairs a dissertation more credit than a faculty member who serves on a dissertation committee or more teaching credits for teaching a large, writing-intensive class compared to a small graduate elective course. If a faculty member teaches the only service-learning course in the department and supervises 200 students in placements in the community, this may arguably take more time than teaching a lecture course with two teaching assistants grading papers. If a faculty member is supervising three very large grants with five full-time employees, they most likely spend more time in administrative and mentoring work than colleagues without such grants.

There are several strategies to provide credit for performance that is considered above expected effort. One way is to allow the faculty member to "bank" their work in one area in order to do less in another. In Handout #5, we describe a **credit systems**

policy that illustrates this practice. Likewise, departments may create **teaching credit swap systems** that define the teaching workload expectations for all faculty, and offer different pathways for faculty to meet their instructional workloads, which is another variation of giving credit for doing work in different areas. We describe a teaching credit swap system in Handout #6.

Policies and Practices That Give Credit

- Credit Systems (Handout #5)
- Teaching Credit Swaps (Handout #6)

NORMS

One of the key challenges in how faculty work is taken up and assigned is that it is often haphazard. The same faculty members are asked, or volunteer, to do work that is important, but less desirable or not career enhancing. At the same time, some faculty members take advantage of haphazard workload decision-making to ensure that they hold onto more desirable service or teaching assignments (e.g., teaching at 11:00 a.m. versus teaching at 8:00 a.m.). This "opt-in" system for assigning work causes burnout and resentment. Over time, the system can create an underclass of workers who support a small number of privileged faculty members who are not asked to share the burden of maintaining their "academic home."

Everyone doing their fair share and having access to the same opportunities within a group's collective work facilitates equity norms, social responsibility norms, and norms of reciprocity (Erez, Lepine, and Elms 2002). For instance, our results from the FWRP showed that faculty members who agreed that there was a strong commitment to the workload being fair in their department experienced greater satisfaction with their workload (O'Meara, Lennartz, et al. 2019).

Ideally, the system for assigning work that is less career-enhancing or less desirable shifts from an "opt-in" system to an "opt-out" system. In an opt-out system, it is assumed that all department members will at some point participate in various administrative and service tasks. Opt-out systems reduce the burden of people in vulnerable positions with colleagues (Williams 1999) and are consistent with social psychology research showing we can be steered into better behaviors by changing "default settings" surrounding decision-making processes (Vedantam 2010). Opt-out systems can change the conversation from "why would I agree to do that" to "what is my argument for why I alone should *not* have to do this."

One way to enact an opt-out system is by putting in place planned rotations, wherein there is an agreed upon plan for how service or teaching assignments will be rotated among department members. Planned rotations avoid the same people being asked repeatedly to do the same tasks and having to turn them down, while others are never asked (Mitchell and Hesli 2013). Planned rotations send the message everyone has to chip in. They can help avoid "social loafing" and "free-riding," wherein certain group members fail to do their fair share of the work and others overcompensate to complete the task (Curcio and Lynch 2016; Maiden and Perry 2011). Even so, opt-out systems can be designed to recognize that individuals within a department have different strengths (e.g., some faculty are good at administrative and management tasks while others excel at teaching). Thus, planned rotation systems should be designed with some degree of flexibility. In Handout #7, we describe a **planned service rotation** system, and in Handout #8, we describe a policy that establishes the **planned rotation of preferred teaching times**.

Policies and Practices That Promote Equity Norms

- Planned Service Rotations (Handout #7)
- Planned Teaching Time Rotations (Handout #8)

CONTEXT

Equitable systems acknowledge differences in the context of individual faculty work (Bensimon, Dowd, and Witham 2016). While uniformity in evaluation can add to perceptions of fairness (Mallard, Lamont, and Guetzkow 2009), there are structural, social, and cultural contexts that make an individual faculty member's workload distinct from the workload of another member of their department.

The goal here is to recognize that different faculty members have different strengths and interests, while also assuring that every faculty member puts in a similar amount of effort toward shared departmental goals. Reward systems can be set up to recognize differences or to make some work invisible (O'Meara 2011). Our results indicated that faculty members are more likely to be retained, productive, and satisfied when they feel their work, and the context around it, is recognized by colleagues (O'Meara, Lennartz, et al. 2019).

Some small context differences can be balanced through strategies like the credit systems mentioned in the Credit section above—for example, a single-semester difference between teaching a large class and a small elective. However, there are also larger differences in context that can shape workload. These include differences like career stage and appointment type, which can be addressed through strategies like the faculty expectations guidelines mentioned in the Clarity section above.

Another important strategy is **differentiated workload** policies. Differentiated workload policies might be thought of as personalized employment arrangements negotiated between individual workers and employers intended to benefit them both (Rousseau 2005). Research shows these arrangements can be an important part of equity and acknowledging difference. Furthermore, studies show employees accept personalized employment arrangements when they believe they will have access to the same accommodations under reasonable circumstances in the future (if needed) (Lai, Rousseau, and Chang 2009). In Handout #9, we describe a differentiated workload policy that lays out several different kinds of legitimate pathways for faculty to meet their work expectations (e.g., teaching focused, research focused). The policy includes *negotiated deviations* from the traditional percentages of effort (in teaching, research, and service), such that an individual faculty member will engage in a new, negotiated percentage of effort and be evaluated against those expectations at the end of the year.

Another way departments can recognize differences in context is by creating individualized appointment, promotion, and tenure agreements for faculty members who are hired to do different kinds of faculty work (e.g., administratively focused) or whose scholarship is interdisciplinary or community-engaged and thus more difficult to evaluate by traditional standards like counting peer-reviewed journal articles. Such agreements outline the specific ways and metrics by which faculty members in these roles will be evaluated and can be approved by the unit head and provost. In Handout #10, we describe three kinds of **modified promotion and tenure criteria**, including criteria for administratively-focused faculty members and faculty members who do engaged scholarship.

Policy and Practices That Recognize Differences in Context

- Differentiated Workload Policy (Handout #9)
- Modified Criteria for Promotion and Tenure (Handout #10)

ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability is also important to improving workload equity, in that it ensures all faculty members are taking responsibility for the work that needs to be done. Accountability is enhanced when work is visible, as noted in the above sections on Transparency and Clarity. However, accountability is also a matter of changing the structures around the work. For example, research suggests when we reduce the size of committees to a few members (e.g., three members) "social loafing" is reduced and the committee members become more accountable for completing their part of the work (Curcio and Lynch 2016).

As such, an important strategy to improve accountability is **restructuring and reducing committees** so that it is clear who will do what on which committees. For instance, departments might perform an audit of all the departmental committees,

reviewing the number of members each committee has and the roles of the members, each committee's purpose, and how many times the committee meets. The department can then determine which committees are redundant, have too few or too many members, and outline the specific expectations of each committee member (e.g., on a promotion and tenure committee, one member will focus on service, one on research, etc.) Likewise, committees can be required to make presentations back to departments with what they accomplished so that it is harder to "slack" or hide. In Handout #11, we describe the process a department could use to evaluate and restructure their committees to promote greater accountability.

Greater accountability also serves a normative function, as individuals who care about their colleagues' opinion will want to perform better if they understand their performance is being observed and/or evaluated (Curcio and Lynch 2016; Dominick, Reilly, and Mcgourty 1997; Stewart, Houghton, and Rodgers 2012). Thus, another strategy for increasing accountability is creating **statements of mutual expectations**, which are described in Handout #12. Statement of mutual expectations outline the obligations faculty members have to one another and to the department. Such statements can hold faculty accountable to the agreed upon behaviors (e.g., answering emails in a timely manner, attending committee meetings) that foster the completion of departmental work. Upon hire, new faculty members will sign the statement, and department chairs can refer to the statement during annual reviews if faculty members are not meeting one of the expectations.

Policies and Practices That Promote Accountability

- Restructuring and Reducing Committees (Handout #11)
- Statement of Mutual Expectations (Handout #12)

DEVELOPING AN EQUITY ACTION PLAN

A final step in promoting equitable faculty workloads is creating a plan for action, which we describe in Handout #13. Department Equity Action Plans use data from the faculty work activity dashboard to diagnose and identify the most pressing equity issue or issues a department faces. Depending on the equity issue present, departments can then assess the policy or practice that is best suited to meet their needs. They identify concrete actions they will use to implement the policy or practice, including gaining consensus and support from department members and timeline for implementation. Departments also identify concrete outcomes by which they will evaluate their progress toward their equity goals.

Conclusion

Over the last five years we have done a "deep dive" into the social science literature informing faculty workloads, careers, and reward systems. We conducted a randomized control trial and worked with over 50 departments and colleges on enacting equity-minded workload reform. We have provided an audit tool to help faculty leaders and academic administrators work together to engender conditions of transparency, clarity, credit, awareness of context, equity norms and the sharing of work, and accountability. We have also offered concrete policies and practices such as the creation of faculty work activity dashboards, faculty expectation guidelines, planned rotations, and credit systems. We hope that you find the handouts that accompany this report as useful as our departments did in illustrating concretely how these policies might be adopted by departments, colleges and universities to support equity-minded workloads.

One of the strengths of the policies and practices we propose is that they are adaptable. The strategies we consider go beyond traditional workload modifications (e.g., course releases), and many can be offered at relatively low cost, which is increasingly important in today's fiscal landscape. Likewise, some departments and institutions may determine that revising rewards structures to better recognize the critical diversity-related work of faculty from historically minoritized groups should be prioritized over efforts to improve equity in how work is assigned. The tools, practices, and policies we discuss allows actors to assess needs and take action where equity-minded reform is most critical.

In all, there are many compelling reasons why institutions, departments, and academic leaders should act to enhance faculty workload equity, including increasing satisfaction, productivity, and retention. We hope the suggestions offered in this report illuminate a path for equity-minded workload reform might be realized.

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Appendix A: Exercises That Illustrate How Workloads Become Inequitable

To help academic leaders and faculty members consider how and why workload gets taken up, assigned, and rewarded in inequitable ways, even in departments with equity-minded intentions, we provide two thought experiments. We used both of these thought experiments during the FWRP workshops to illustrate the subtle yet important ways that workload inequities emerge within an academic unit. In each exercise, the user is asked to imagine they are a faculty member tasked with making certain kinds of workload decisions. In this Appendix, we describe each exercise and the insights the FWRP participants gained from completing it, based on the discussion that followed each exercise.

EXERCISE 1: TUESDAY'S INBOX

Imagine you are a faculty member, checking your email on a Tuesday morning. In your inbox, you have emails from students, department, campus, and disciplinary colleagues, your department chair, campus leaders, and government agencies. Each contains a request that will add to your workload. The requests are:

- Review an article for a top journal at the request of an influential colleague. You have done this before.
- Serve on a review panel for an agency that funds many grants in your discipline.
- Write a recommendation letter for a promotion case. A colleague on campus is trying to move up the ranks from assistant to associate clinical (non-tenure track) professor.
- Provide feedback on a paper for a junior colleague who has done this for you.
- Act as faculty advisor for a newly formed student group affiliated with and serving the Black Lives Matter movement.
- Serve as chair of a committee revising merit pay policies for non-tenure track faculty.
- Write two letters of recommendation for a student with whom you have worked closely.
- Chair the promotion and tenure subcommittee for a junior colleague who has been your mentee.
- Chair an undergraduate research project for a student.
- Join the Senate Executive Committee of the University Senate. This is the steering committee of the university and thus provides a voice on key issues facing the campus. A senior leader of the university has asked you to serve in this role.
- Meet with an administrator, who has been an advocate for you, and now is facing a challenging climate in her department. She needs strategies to deal with colleagues creating a negative work environment.
- Serve on a thesis committee for a student at another institution where they do not have her research topic, which you study, represented.
- Participate in a living learning community luncheon. The living learning community is geared toward undergraduate women students in your field.

You determine that you can realistically complete **three activities from this list**. Which three activities would you choose?

INSIGHTS GAINED FROM COMPLETING TUESDAY'S INBOX

After FWRP participants completed this exercise, we asked them to reflect upon their choices and consider the principles that guided their selections. There were four main themes that came out of these discussions:

- **Individual values influence choices:** Inevitably, when we asked participants which activities they would choose, and why, the participants recognized their choices reflect their values. Faculty members reported that they said "yes" to certain activities because they were committed to their students or junior colleagues, valued shared governance to the institution, believed that scholarship should be connected to community engagement and social justice, or wanted to be a good departmental citizen.
- **Requests and responses reflect individual identities:** A faculty member's identities, career stage, prior experience, and perceptions of greatest need also contributed to their choices. Faculty from historically minoritized groups often selected issues related to supporting minority student groups. Women faculty often indicated a strong commitment to fulfilling asks related to their students. Moreover, responses often depended on who the request came from, with faculty members more hesitant to say no to asks from close colleagues or mentees, or those with much more relative power/influence on their careers. On the other hand, individual faculty members indicated that it was more or less realistic that they would receive certain kinds of asks in the first place. Senior faculty were more likely to be asked to serve as chair of the promotion and tenure committee, on a research panel, or serve on the faculty senate. A Black faculty member would be more likely asked to serve as the advisor for the Black Lives Matter Movement. A woman in science would be more likely than a man to receive a speaking request from the living learning community that is focused on women in the field.
- **Responses to one request influence future requests:** Participants also indicated that there is sometimes a cumulative effect to their responses. The more certain faculty members are asked to engage in certain activities, and then succeed in those activities, the more they will be asked to do in that area again. For example, faculty members were sometimes hesitant to write letters of recommendation because they knew they would be asked to do so again but were eager to say yes to serving on a review panel because they wanted to be asked again in the future.
- **Certain asks are more or less career-enhancing:** Finally, participants sometimes considered the extent to which saying yes to certain activities would help further their career goals. Faculty members of color and women in some STEM fields indicated that they are often asked to do activities that are less career-enhancing though critical (e.g., speaking at the living learning community luncheon, serving as the advisor to the Black Lives Matter undergraduate group). Still, other tasks provide more career visibility or networking opportunities and may thus be more coveted, even if the benefits are not immediate (e.g., serving on Faculty Senate).

Overall, the Tuesday's Inbox exercise was designed to show that workload inequities are not only the result of individual discretion and choices, but patterns in who gets asked to do what and why (El Alayli, Hansen-Brown, and Ceynar 2018; Mitchell and Hesli 2013; O'Meara, Kuvaeva, and Nyunt 2017). Rather than assuming that all faculty will have the same list of priorities and activities, we need faculty activities to be distributed across the larger faculty to accomplish the many missions of most higher education institutions.

EXERCISE 2: THE HALLWAY ASK

Imagine you are a department head who has just found out that you need to identify a new chair of undergraduate studies. The position needs to be filled immediately. You walk down the hallway of your department, and you see the office doors of six faculty members.

The doors of the first three offices are open. These offices belong to the following faculty members with the associated characteristics:

- Dan is an associate professor who does good research but tends to say "no" to protect his time for research when he is asked to take on additional teaching or service tasks.
- Amanda is a full professor who has a strong research agenda. She is known as an abrasive teacher and committee member but is also detailed and good at getting things done.
- Elizabeth is an associate professor with strong research who everyone likes. She will likely say yes and complete the work well.

The other three doors, which belong to faculty members Marian, Damian, and Josh, are closed. You do not know if these faculty members are in their offices or not.

As a department head, who of these six faculty members would you ask to be the new chair of undergraduate studies?

INSIGHTS GAINED FROM COMPLETING THE HALLWAY ASK

After FWRP participants completed this exercise, we asked them to indicate who they chose to be the chair of undergraduate studies. Knowing it was not fair, almost all FWRP participants reluctantly indicated that they would ask Elizabeth. They explained that choosing Elizabeth makes the decision easy: she was present in her office, likely to say yes, and would complete the job at a high-quality level.

We then asked the group to consider the operating principles for this decision (e.g., would they describe the system as strategic? Are some faculty benefiting more than others, and if so, why and how?). The themes from this discussion were as follows:

- **Workload Decisions Occur in "Foggy" Contexts:** We discussed the fact that the "hallway ask" described here[1] occurs in a situation that is "unscripted" (Ridgeway and Correll 2004) and "foggy" (Banerjee and Pawley 2013; Beddoes, Schimpf, and Pawley 2014). That is, participants chose Elizabeth in this case (and will probably choose Elizabeth for other work activities in the future) because they are rushed in deciding, want the decision to be simple and easy, and they lack information on what the other members of the department are doing. In other words, this is both a common occurrence and a perfect storm situation in which bias shapes our decisions.
- **Lack of Tools Needed to Make Workload Decisions:** We also discussed with participants the tools that a department head could use to ensure that a chair was selected in a fair and equitable manner. For example, the department head lacked data. They did not know how much service Elizabeth or the other faculty members were already doing. The department head also did not have a process or guidelines to rely upon in making the decision. Perhaps some of the faculty members with their door closed would be interested in the position but had never been given the opportunity to indicate their interest. Finally, there was a lack of consensus and commitment to equity in the distribution of work. The department head did not pause to consider if Elizabeth was being asked over and over again.

In summary, the goal of The Hallway Ask exercise was to reveal the ways workload inequity emerges because there is a lack of strategy underlying workload decisions. Yet, the goal of the exercise is also to illustrate that there are equity-minded policies and practices that can help administrators and faculty be more strategic in their workload systems.

1 Also described in O'Meara 2018a.

By participating in these exercises, faculty began to consider how they, as individuals, made decisions about their own workload, but also how the overall system of workload decisions within their department or unit lacked strategy or structure. Thus, these two exercises illustrated the complexity and nuances of how inequities occur in how faculty work is taken up, assigned, and rewarded in unintentional, unscripted ways that often go unseen.

Appendix B: Equity-Minded Faculty Workload Audit

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

This audit was created based on the research on equity-minded work practices and lessons learned from the Faculty Workload and Rewards Project. To use this tool, users should first consider what some of the main issues or goals your unit has for enhancing workload equity listed in **Column 1 (Orange).** For example, units may want to be more transparent in who is doing what within the department or encourage faculty members to be more accountable to completing the work they have been asked to do. Once users determine their workload goals(s), they should pose the questions listed in the **Column 2 (Green)**, regarding their unit's existing workload data, processes, and procedures. If users answer "no" to the questions in Column 2, **Column 3 (Blue)** guides users toward the relevant FWRP Policy & Practice Handouts that may help them achieve their workload goals. All handouts are available on ACE Engage at engage.acenet.edu.

Our Unit Would Like To	Questions to Consider	Relevant Policies and Practices to Consider if Answer Is No, or Not Enough
Promote Transparency Let faculty members see the range of effort in teaching, mentoring, and service by relevant appointment type or career stage and show the relationship between individual faculty effort and overall department effort.	1. Are data on faculty workload published and transparent (e.g. teaching and advising loads, committee service, advising) a. Are they presented in ways that faculty can benchmark their teaching, research, and service against department averages by relevant career stages and apt. types? b. Are there way to make the often invisible work of historically minoritized faculty and women visible in the representation and credit of workload? 2. Are the processes through which routine service assignments, advising assignments, and teaching assignments are made fair and transparent? Do faculty have voice and agency within them?	#1 Faculty Work Activity Dashboard Examples #2 Faculty Service Audit

Our Unit Would Like To	Questions to Consider	Relevant Policies and Practices to Consider if Answer Is No, or Not Enough
Enhance Clarity Ensure faculty members clearly understand what is expected of them.	1. Are expectations for faculty labor in teaching, advising and service clear? a. Are the clear benchmarks for performance, relevant to faculty in different ranks and apt. types?	#3 Faculty Expectations Guidelines #4 Compensation for Key Roles
Provide Credit Recognize that some faculty members do more work in certain areas than others and that certain tasks require more effort than others.	1. Do policy and practice differentiate the amount of work completed in such a way to allow differential credit and reward? (e.g., chairing versus serving, 500-person class with no TA vs. five-person class) 2. Can faculty members bank, or otherwise do more of one work activity, and get credit to do less of another?	#5 Credit Systems #6 Teaching Credit Swaps
Promote Equity Norms Make sure that all departments are doing their fair share and that less desirable and/or less career-enhancing tasks are not disproportionately being assigned to the same faculty members.	1. Are there planned rotations for time-intensive administrative, service, or teaching assignments, as possible?	#7 Planned Service Rotations #8 Planning Teaching Time Rotations
Give Context Acknowledge that faculty members have different strengths and interests.	1. Do policies and practices appropriately acknowledge differences in work contexts and effort levels? a. (e.g., apt. type, career stage, administrative role, differential role in supporting underrepresented students) b. Are there ways to formally recognize faculty whose workload differs from the norm within the department?	#9 Differentiated Workload Policy #10 Modified Criteria for Promotion and Tenure

Our Unit Would Like To	Questions to Consider	Relevant Policies and Practices to Consider if Answer Is No, or Not Enough
Encourage Accountability Encourage faculty members to complete the work they have been assigned to do and reduce the extent to which faculty members "free-ride" off the work of others.	1. Is there accountability built into the system such that when a faculty member does not complete minimal expectations for work, or completes more than their share, there is a consequence? 2. Are committee sizes and roles sufficiently defined as to reduce social loafing and free riding? 3. Is there alignment between workload policies and practices and the evaluation system? (e.g., annual review or merit, post-tenure review, promotion and tenure, contract renewal)	#11 Restructuring and Reducing Committees #12 Statement of Mutual Expectations

Appendix C: Policy and Practices to Promote Equitable Faculty Workloads

All worksheets can be found on ACE Engage at engage.acenet.edu.

Transparency

1. Faculty Work Activity Dashboard Examples
2. Faculty Service Audit

Clarity

3. Faculty Expectation Guidelines
4. Compensation for Key Roles

Credit

5. Credit Systems
6. Teaching Credit Swaps

Norms

7. Planned Service Rotations
8. Planned Teaching Time Rotations

Context

9. Differentiated Workloads
10. Modified Criteria for Promotion and Tenure

Accountability

11. Restructuring and Reducing Committee Size
12. Statement of Mutual Expectations

Developing a Plan for Action

13. Developing a Department Equity Action Plan (Template and Example)


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