

University of Alaska Southeast Fall 2020 Staff Check-in

Survey Results, Analysis and Recommendations

October 2020

Staff Council Members

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Overview & Objectives

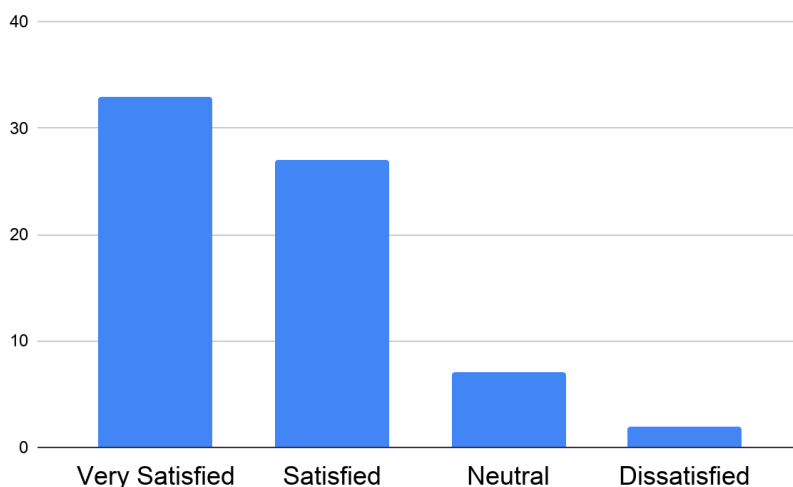
In March 2020 the majority of the University of Alaska Southeast staff began working from home in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In September, six months into the modified work environment, Staff Council administered a survey to its membership to gauge satisfaction, look for areas of concern, and learn more about success in communication and managing our workloads. The survey was open between Tuesday, September 22 and Tuesday, September 29. A total of 70 staff members completed the survey: 55 from Juneau, six from Ketchikan, and six from Sitka. Three people did not indicate their campus. There are 140 total exempt and classified staff members at UAS: 109 at Juneau, 16 at Ketchikan and 15 at Sitka.

Heightened Concerns Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

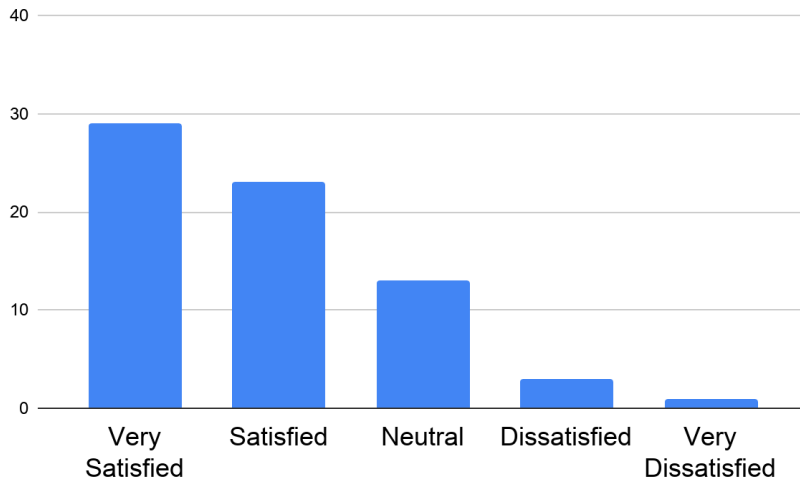
The survey asked respondents to rate their level of satisfaction with UAS about the communication they've received with respect to its ongoing responses to COVID-19:

- Timeliness of the communication
- Clarity of communication

Timeliness of the communication you've received from UAS about its ongoing responses to COVID-19



Clarity of communication you've received from UAS about its ongoing responses to COVID-19



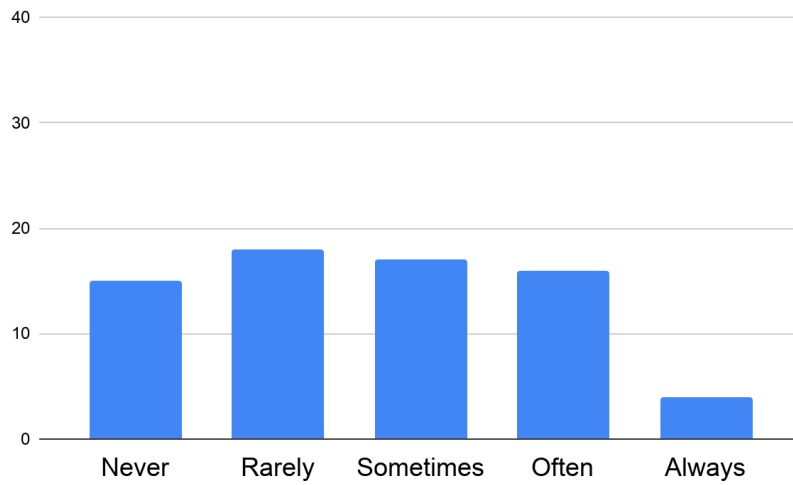
Heightened

Concerns Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

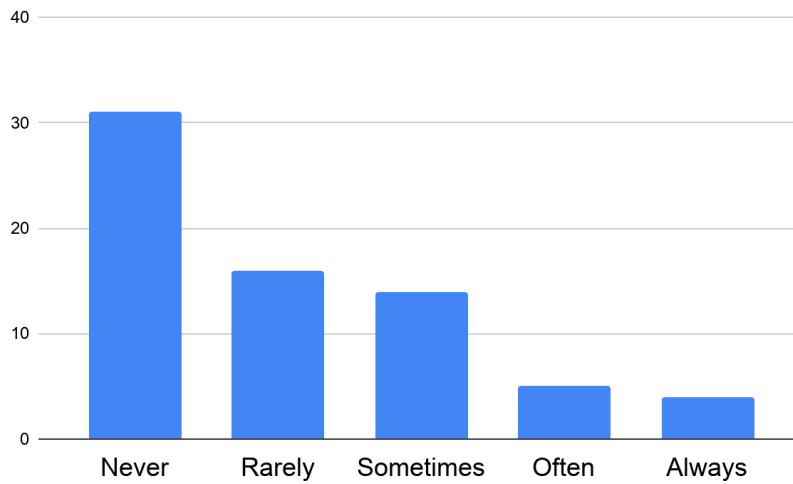
Respondents were asked how often, given changes caused by COVID-19, they worry about the the following:

- Doing their job effectively despite the changes in their work environment.
- Feeling pressure to come to your place of work.
- Losing connections with your colleagues at UAS.
- Losing your job.

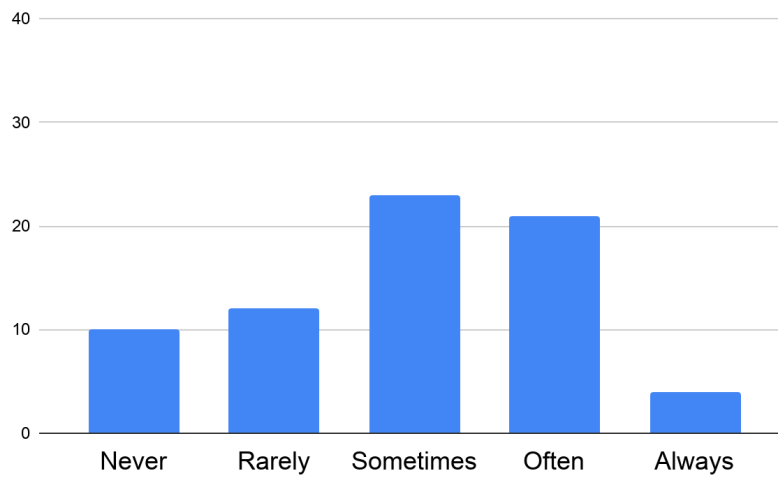
Doing their job effectively despite the changes in their work environment



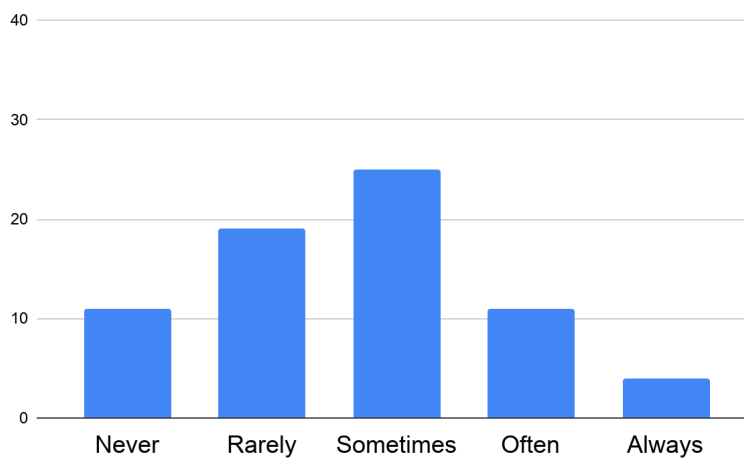
Feeling pressure to come to work your place of work



Losing connections with your colleagues at UAS



Losing your job



Summary of Short Answer Responses

Staff Council identified themes in the responses to six questions. Overarching themes from each question are italicized, followed by examples of these themes in the responses. If numerous respondents shared a themed response, we highlighted the response in bolded text.

What have you appreciated most about UAS's response to COVID-19? What is working?

- **Workplace flexibility: Providing flexibility with how staff are able to work including schedule and location.**
- *Communication:* Timely and consistent communication.
- *Subject Matter Experts:* Following guidance from subject matter experts.

Specific to UAS and COVID what, if anything, is not working for you right now?

- **Work from home challenges: access to equipment, isolation, balancing work and schooling for children, home office set-up.**
- *Staffing challenges:* responsiveness (lack thereof), maintaining on-campus staffing, adherence to policies (mask).
- *Communication:* future planning, tracking (dashboard), status of campus services.

What, if anything, could UAS leadership improve upon related to COVID?

- *Communication:* increase live forums for Q&A, be more proactive in decision making, share budgetary impacts, messaging to students that we are still here and will be here, share planning - e.g. what the plan is for an outbreak.
- *Policy:* enforcement of mask policy, ensure that outside contractors are aware of UAS policy and are adhering to them.

Things have changed with how we approach work since March 2020. Post-pandemic, what, if any, of those changes do you hope will remain in place?

- **Flexibility with work location and schedule (more than 50% of respondents)**
- *Processes:* improved utilization of digital work processes (DocuSign, Zoom, cashless), increased campus representation from across the university (all three campuses).
- *Outcomes-oriented:* employees evaluated and valued by the work completed rather than numbers of hours spent at the desk, more efficient with fewer distractions.
- *Communication:* maintain increased communication between three campuses.

Is there a particular issue that you would like to see the Staff Council advocate for or take action on?

- *COVID:* comparable input from staff working directly with students as to faculty in decision making.
- *Employee satisfaction:* continued work schedule/location flexibility, increased social interaction, salary equity for workload, adequate home office setups, childcare.
- *Continuous improvement:* future term planning; spring is more of the same - what can we improve upon, evaluate work need and workforce present and consider redistribution of workload, more diversity in hiring practices.

Anything we didn't ask about that you want to share?

- *Commitment to UAS*: When will we resume our chancellor search?
- *Governance divide*: faculty/staff divide exasperated by COVID — especially salient in another stressful budget year.
- *Communication*: single source of communications to alleviate confusion, increase communication about student life to folks who don't work in student life.
- *Students*: how are we checking in with our students both on- and off-campus.

Recommendations

- Evaluate staff [telework policies](#) and practices. Staff Council strongly advocates for the continuation and normalization of flexible work arrangements. UAS should remain a leader in this space.
- Facilities, IT and supervisors conduct a work from home needs and/or resource list to share with employees.
- Maintain communication with staff, increase communication via Zoom-based meetings — perhaps establish an every other month townhall.
 - Outbreak plan.
 - Budget — impacts due to COVID, meeting compact agreement, enrollment.
 - Leadership plan — Interim Chancellor and Provost — what is our path forward?
- Speak to compensation opportunities:
 - People feel that they are taking on more responsibilities without additional compensation.
 - Implementation of [the Total Compensation Review](#) has been delayed.
 - If monetary compensation is not a possibility what other alternative means can we develop to improve employee satisfaction?
- Reinforcement of mask policy. Provide the procedure that should be followed if people are in violation of the mask policy.

Appendix

- Short Answer Responses Attached (Grouping of all Short Answer Responses)