

# **2020 Survey for Non-Tenure Track Faculty in the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences and the Whiting School of Engineering at Johns Hopkins University**

**submitted by the  
Non-Tenure Track Faculty  
Homewood Faculty Assembly (HFA) Subcommittee**

## **Summary and Report**

### **I. Executive Summary**

In the late Spring of 2020, the HFA created a new standing committee to focus on the issues and concerns facing full-time faculty who hold positions outside the tenure-line of Assistant, Associate and Full Professorial ranks at Homewood.

To better understand this constituency, the committee's first act was to conduct a survey of non-tenure track (NTT) faculty, culled from the on-line Faculty Directories maintained by the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences (KSAS), its Advanced Academic Program (AAP), and the Whiting School of Engineering (WSE).

The purpose of this first-of-its-kind survey was to document the status of this demographic within their respective departments and programs, assess working conditions, and their overall contributions to the educational and research mission of the university.

From our analysis of the survey responses we generated a number of findings on issues of concern: 1) Job security; 2) Mission Creep in Responsibilities; 3) Inconsistent Application of Promotional Standards; 4) Lack of Access to Professional Resources; and 5) Lack of Voting Power in Department/Program Affairs.

Here we offer background on the subcommittee charter, a demographic breakdown of NTT faculty with respect to the entirety of the JHU faculty contingent, a description of the survey questionnaire, and our findings.

The focus of our committee now turns to making the concerns of the NTT faculty known to the broader Homewood Community and initiate dialog towards their resolution.

### **II. Background on the HFA Subcommittee for Non-Tenure Track Faculty**

#### **Members**

The HFA Standing Committee for Non-Tenure Track faculty is a subcommittee created by the Homewood Faculty Assembly in May of 2020 with a charter to address constituencies that "might

require or benefit from focused engagement that historically has not always been provided at HFA meetings”. The subcommittee is currently comprised of eight members from the Whiting School of Engineering (WSE), the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences (KSAS), and the Advanced Academic Programs (AAP). Table 1 lists the current membership of the subcommittee.

*Table 1. Members of the Subcommittee for Non-Tenure Track Faculty of the Homewood Faculty Assembly.*

Hedy Alavi	alavi@jhu.edu	Program Chair Environmental Engineering, Program Chair Environmental Engineering and Science, Program Chair Environmental Planning and Management Associate Teaching Professor	Department of Environmental Health and Engineering
Richard Brown	brown@math.jhu.edu	Director of Undergraduate Studies Teaching Professor	Department of Mathematics
Jerry L. Burgess	jerry.burgess@jhu.edu	Director of the MS in Environmental Sciences and Policy Director of the MS in Geographic Information Systems Senior Lecturer	AAP Energy Policy, GIS, and the Environment Program
Kristin Cook-Gailloud	kacg@jhu.edu	Director of French Language Associate Teaching Professor	Department of Modern Languages and Literatures
Taylor Hahn	thahn@jhu.edu	Director, Communication Program Senior Lecturer	AAP Communication Program
Stephan McCandliss	smccand1@jhu.edu	Director, Center for Astrophysical Sciences Research Professor	Department of Physics and Astronomy
Maria Procopio	mprocop2@jhu.edu	Lecturer Associate Research Scientist	Department of Biophysics
Karina Wizevich	kwizevi1@jhu.edu	Assistant Program Director Senior Lecturer	AAP Museum Studies Graduate Program

## **Mission**

To (1) articulate the contributions of, understand the conditions and status of employment of, and advocate for, Non-Tenure Track faculty (designated herein as “NTT”) within the overall community of the university and (2) establish a mechanism for career stability and security. We believe that Johns Hopkins’ commitment to diversity, inclusion and excellence at all levels, leadership, administration, faculty, staff and students, is critical to attaining the best research, scholarship, and teaching. We show below that the NTT form a significant component of the JHU faculty contingent and serve vital, fundamental, and integral roles in carrying out the educational and research mission of the university.

## **III. Methodology**

### **Non-Tenure Track Faculty Demographics**

For the purposes of this committee and this report, we characterized full-time non-tenure track faculty as faculty members with full-time positions who are not part of the tenure line faculty. The Titles Table of the JHU Description of Academic Titles<sup>1</sup> lists two main NTT career tracks: a teaching track and a research track.<sup>2</sup>

The career progression of the teaching track proceeds from Junior Lecturer, Lecturer, Senior Lecturer to Associate and Full Teaching Professor. These individuals are contracted by a Department or Center to for the purpose of teaching undergraduate and/or graduate level courses. The Titles Table indicates that everyone above the rank of Junior Lecturers may serve as the Principal Investigator on Educational Grants and Contracts, without graduate student involvement. None of these ranks are entitled to salary stabilization.

Research track faculty can be either Scholars, Scientists or Engineers. The career progression of the research track proceeds from Assistant Researcher, Associate Researcher, Researcher, Principal Researcher, to Assistant, Associate and Full Research Professor. Individuals in all these ranks can serve as Principal Investigators on Sponsored Grants and Contracts; indeed, their support is primarily derived through these mechanisms and their continued employment at the university is contingent on the continued availability of these (soft money) sources of support. The Titles Table indicates that salary stabilization is available to all forms of Research Professor (accrued at 1 day per month of JHU service) and to Principal Researchers on a case-by-case basis. Research track faculty are not required to formally teach classes however, they often serve as mentors to graduate and under-graduate students in informal laboratory and research settings, providing critical guidance to students in pursuit of their research goals.

These formal ranks and titles notwithstanding, we discovered that in fact NTT faculty often assume a wide range of positions and duties that vary significantly between the different departments, schools, and programs.

This committee’s first task was to obtain an exhaustive list of what is generally designated as “Non-Tenure Track faculty.” We discovered it is in fact made up of a wide range of positions that vary significantly between the different departments, schools, and programs.

To compile a complete a list of NTT Faculty, this subcommittee, with the aid of Sunita Thyagarajan, Chair of the HFA Steering Committee, queried Aubrey Poysa, Academic Council Coordinator of

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<sup>1</sup> [https://sites.krieger.jhu.edu/academic-council/files/2018/11/Academic-Titles\\_2018-11-07.pdf](https://sites.krieger.jhu.edu/academic-council/files/2018/11/Academic-Titles_2018-11-07.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> The term Non-Tenure Track faculty is not used by the Homewood Academic Council (HAC). It is our intent to change our use of this term to Teaching and Research Track faculty in future correspondence on these matters.

the Krieger /Whiting Office of Human Resources. The resulting list, valid as of December 2020, is as follows:

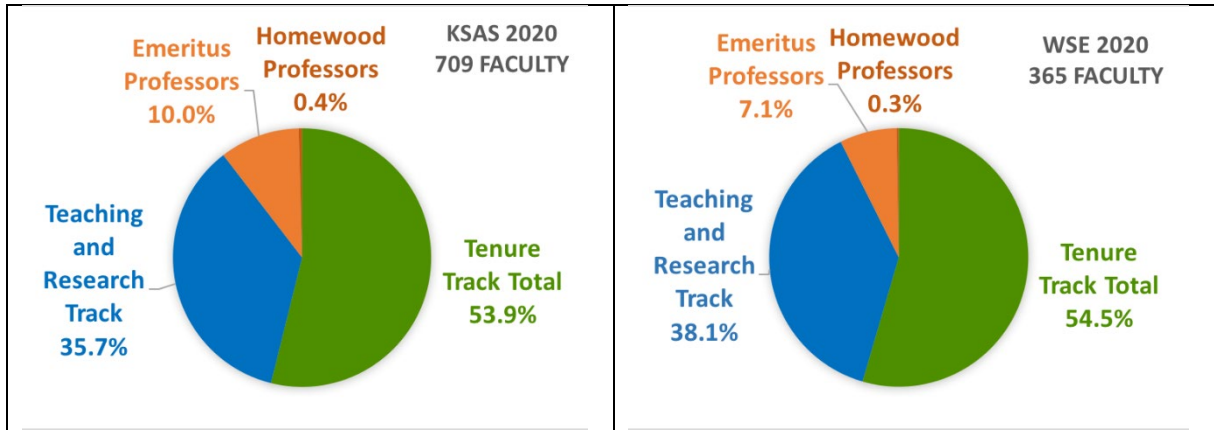


Figure 1. Full-time faculty demographics. Note that (1) AAP faculty are included in KSAS, and Tenure-line faculty include secondary appointments.

- Krieger School of Arts and Sciences: 709 faculty
  - Tenure-line: 324 (46% of total in KSAS)
  - NTT: 242 (34% of total in KSAS)
    - NTT Teaching – 152 (includes 46 AAP faculty)
    - NTT Research – 90
  - Emeritus: 70 (10% of total in KSAS)
  - Homewood Professors: 3
  - Secondary Appointments: 70 (10% of total in KSAS)
    - Tenure-line: 58
    - NTT Teaching: 1
    - NTT Research: 10
    - Emeritus: 1
- Whiting School of Engineering: 366 faculty
  - Tenure-line: 162 (44% of total in WSE)
  - NTT: 140 (38% of total in WSE)
    - NTT Teaching: 42 (includes 1 APP NTT faculty)
    - NTT Research: 98
  - Emeritus: 25 (7% of total in WSE)
  - Homewood Professors: 1
  - Secondary Appointments: 38 (10% of total in WSE)
    - Tenure-line: 37
    - Emeritus: 1

## The survey

This committee designed and administered, in September 2020, a survey of all full-time NTT faculty on the Johns Hopkins Homewood campus, which includes The Krieger School of Arts and Sciences (KSAS), the Whiting School of Engineering (WSE), as well as the programs they administer: Advanced Academic Programs (KSAS) and Engineering for Professionals (WSE). This survey was designed:

- To help us to identify a constituency from which we can act as a collective voice.
- To help identify issues of concern common to this constituency.

The questions we asked were a general attempt to understand the titles and functions that make up full time faculty that are not part of the tenure line. More specifically, we wanted to assess:

- The nature and diversity of NTT titles, roles, and duties.
- The length of NTT contracts in relation to the period of time they have served as faculty.
- Terms of reappointments and performance evaluation criteria and procedures.
- Workplace environment and culture.
- Satisfaction levels within the Homewood faculty community, both pre- and COVID-based.

The survey generated 136 responses, for a  $136/382 = 36\%$  response rate.

What follows here is a general synopsis of the results of this survey. We often asked responders a brief yes/no question, and then asked them to elaborate on their answer. We note that responders often provided very specific examples documenting the details of their positions. In this report, we are withholding all specific responses due to confidentiality.

## IV. Results

Five major areas of concern emerged from NTT faculty's answers to the survey: job security, mission creep in responsibilities, inconsistent application of promotional standards, lack of access to professional development resources, and lack of voting power in department or program affairs.

### 1) Job Security

One of the key issues affecting the role of full-time faculty in non-tenure track positions is the distinct lack of a sense of security regarding the continuance of their position. Non-tenure track faculty, by definition, do not have an explicit guard in their limited-appointment employment contract from termination, either for cause, or simply from non-reappointment. To better understand the debilitating role that the lack of job security can present, we asked responders to identify the length of their current contract with the university, as well as the actual length of employment in the same institution. We also asked whether they feel secure in their positions. We also inquired whether they held positions that benefit from institutional memory and longevity, such as directorships and other managerial roles. Finally, we asked whether what the effect of the COVID pandemic has been on their sense of security in their position.

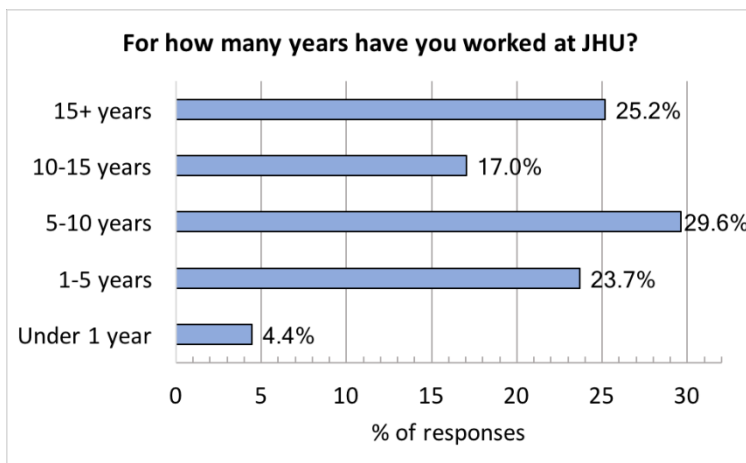
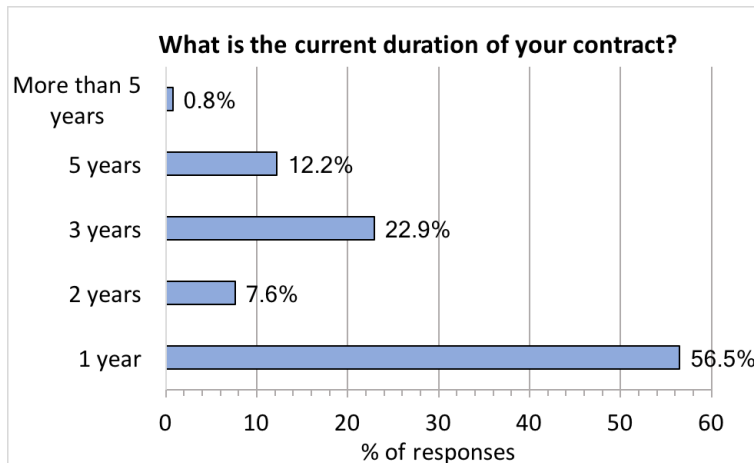


Figure 2 shows that 43% of respondents have been in their positions for at least 10 years, 25% have been faculty members of the for more than 15 years, and 70% have been faculty at Hopkins for at least 5 years. This suggests that NTT faculty members consider their positions as a career, and not temporary employment.

Figure 2.

If we couple this information with Figure 3, on current contract length, we can see that over half of respondents (56%) are currently on a year-to-year contract, and 80% have contracts limited to 3 years or less. One NTT faculty member has even been serving the university since 1994 on a 1-year contract.

Figure 3.



In response to the question of whether responders felt secure in their job, more than 55% said that they did not (see Figure 4). We followed this question with an offer to detail the reasons why responders answered no to the question of whether they felt secure on their position. The general themes of these responses included that the:

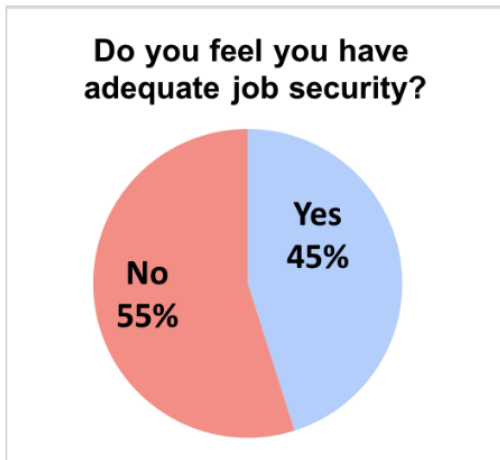


Figure 4.

- Position is considered temporary by department/program supervisors.
- Position is partly/wholly subject to grant funding.
- Position depends on department or university conditions and needs, which change often.

We then asked about the direct responsibilities of NTT faculty in their positions beyond their primary duties as teachers and researchers and centered this question on their roles as managers or directors of programs. These responsibilities rely heavily on institutional memory and require a multi-year commitment to design, implement, monitor, and assess the effectiveness of the programs in which students have chosen to participate. Positions of management and mentorship held by NTT faculty include:

- Directing an undergraduate or graduate program.
- Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) position.
- Principle Investigator for a multi-year grant.
- Research advisor for PhD students.
- Program manager of a graduate program.
- Director of a Hopkins Institute or Center.
- Membership (sometimes leadership) in a university-wide standing committee.
- Faculty advisor for undergraduate students.
- Teaching mentor/research mentor for graduate students and for new faculty members.

Lastly, we asked NTT faculty if the effect of the COVID-pandemic intensified their sense of a lack job security in their position. A majority (58%) of respondents said that they do feel an increased job insecurity due to COVID. See Figure 5.

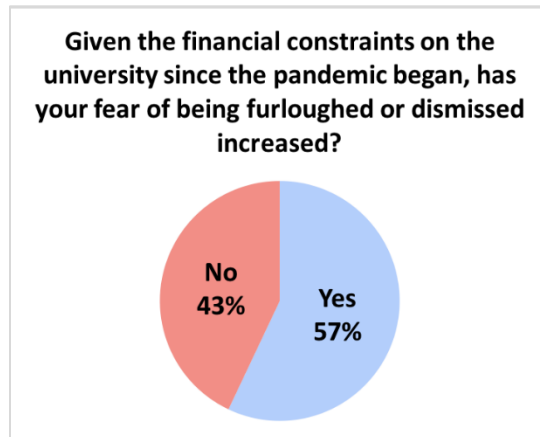
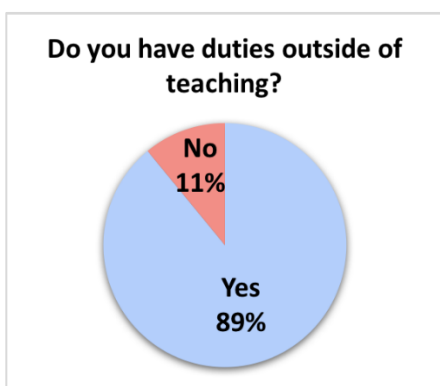


Figure 5.

## 2) Mission Creep in Responsibilities



When asked whether responders perform roles and duties that are not considered part of their primary duties as teachers, restricted to teaching faculty, we found that 89% answered “yes” (See Figure 6).

Figure 6.

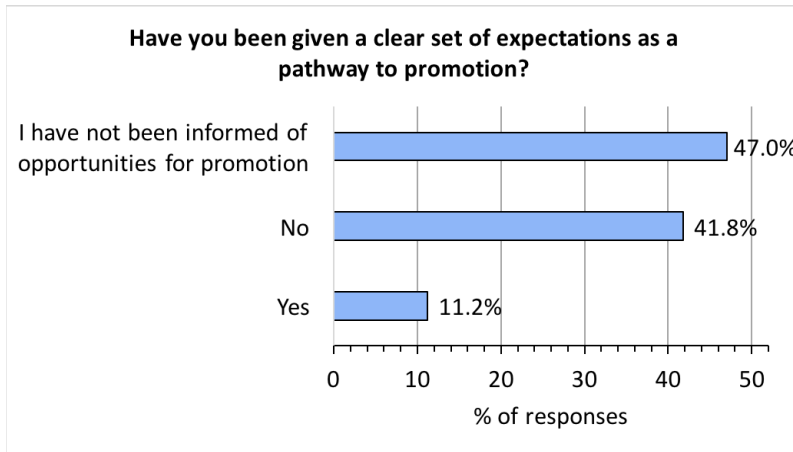
We asked responders to elaborate on these supplementary roles and duties. These are some of the answers we received:

- Advising students
- Serving on department, program, or institutional committees (60% of responders indicated this.)
- Admissions outreach
- Teaching duties not included in their job contract
- Mentoring students via independent study, Capstone, or research-related activities
- Program directorship
- Mentoring of new faculty and/or graduate students in teaching
- Unpaid summer work
- Research/Grant writing

Almost a third (31%) do not think that their appointment adequately reflects their professional responsibilities, and a 37% do not believe that their current salary and benefits package is reasonable.

Responders also expressed that they cannot safely decline duties that lie outside of their regular job description.

### 3) Inconsistent Application of Promotional Standards



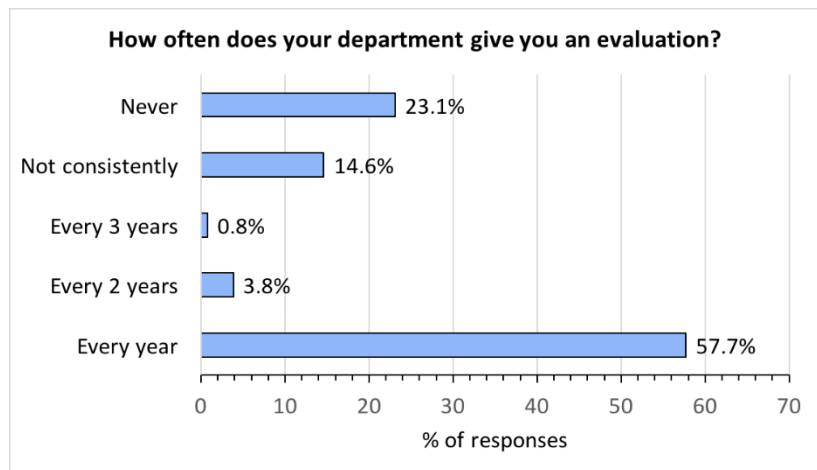
We also queried responders as to whether they were informed on possible promotion opportunities, and if so, whether they were given clear expectations in this regard. Here, only 11% of responders indicated that they received clear expectations and guidance on promotions.

Figure 7.

Of the almost 9 out of 10 (89%) of responders who indicated that they received either little or no guidance concerning opportunities for promotion, we found the following (See Figure 7):

- 41% have not received any information on promotions.
- 47% have not received any clear guidance on expectations.

Figure 8.



Investigating a bit further into what constitutes adequate criteria for a promotion, we queried NTT faculty on their service and performance evaluations (See Figure 8).

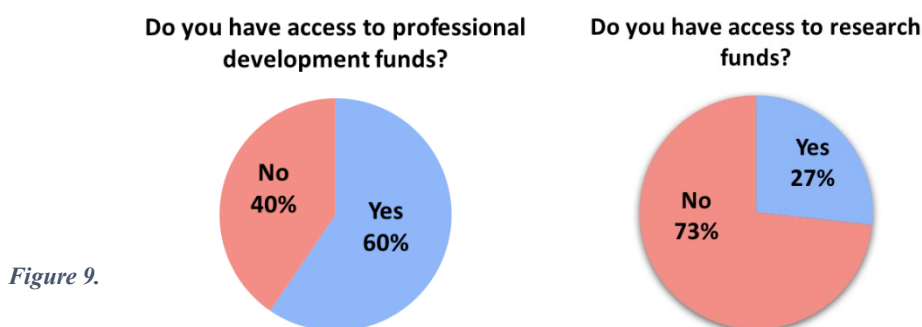
- 59% have no idea whether serving on department/institutional committees is an important aspect of a promotion.
- 58% are evaluated yearly by the department.
- 23% are never evaluated at all.
- 60% of those who are evaluated do not receive a written report on that evaluation.

We see in this data a complete lack of uniform standards for promotion, assessment strategies, and proper oversight on the conditions and terms of employment regarding professional development and promotional opportunities for NTT faculty.



#### 4) Lack of Access to Professional Development Resources

In any academic career, resources for professional research, development and advancement are paramount to the success and teaching mission of the university.



We asked responders if they were provided funds for professional development and/or other opportunities, whether general, research-oriented, or time-oriented (sabbaticals or shorter breaks from main duties). Over 40% of responders stated that they have no access to any sort of professional development funds, and 74% have no access to research funds (See Figure 9).

Additionally, 90% responded that they had not been informed on opportunities to take a sabbatical leave. When further queried on what they would do if they were provided such an opportunity, NTT faculty answered:

- Conduct research (35%)
- publish/write (textbook, policy papers, other) (18%)
- pursue training or study in pedagogy (13%)
- Visit another institution to learn and collaborate on innovative practice (14%)
- course/curriculum development/creation/design (7%)

The small percentage (10%) who answered that they had been informed on sabbatical leave knew they were excluded from this opportunity.

We see this deficiency in providing resources for faculty research, development, and advancement opportunities as unquestionably a troubling aspect of a long-term career position at a university with the stature of Hopkins.

#### 5) Lack of Voting Power in Department/Program Affairs

When asked whether they were included in decision-making in their department or program, a full 63% (See Figure 10) of responders said they had no voting rights in departmental decisions of any kind, even though 43% of them had held their position for at least 10 years.

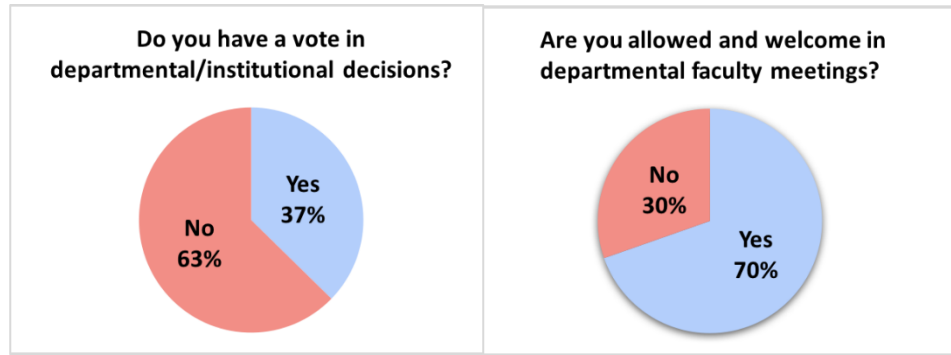


Figure 10.

Furthermore, as shown in Figure 10, answers revealed that close to 30% of NTT faculty are not even included in departmental meetings, despite the fact that 60% of responders serve on departmental/institutional committees.

We also asked whether NTT faculty felt valued within their community, and discovered that (See Figure 11):

- 36% feel of little to no value within their department.
- 58% feel of little or no value within the university.

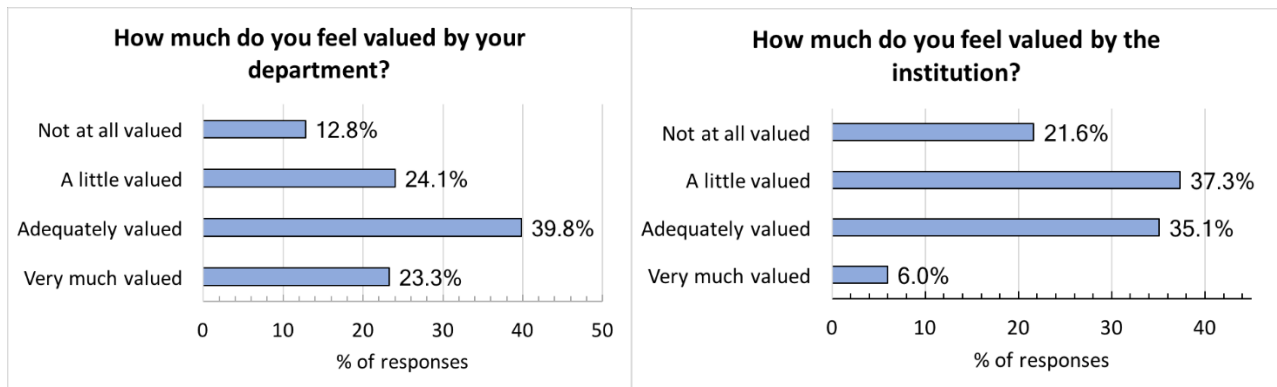


Figure 11.

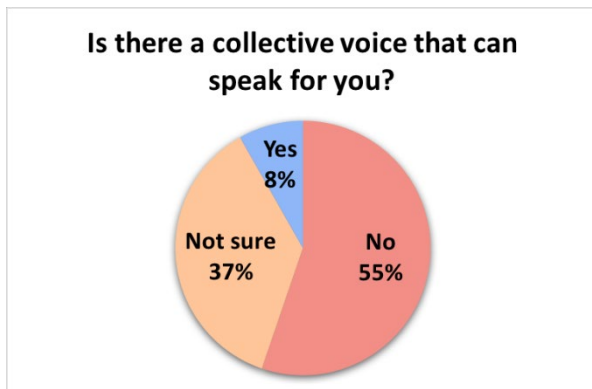


Figure 12.

Furthermore, over 90% of NTT faculty do not confidently believe that there exists a collective voice within Homewood where concerns of similar importance can be expressed (Figure 12).

Departments and programs within universities form communities in which decisions regarding curriculum development and educational

improvement result from shared deliberation and consultation of every member of that community. Decision-making in an academic institution should strive to promote not what best serves a fraction of the community involved, but the university's two-fold mission: to provide excellence and foster

creativity in both research and education. This two-fold purpose, however, can be achieved through a solid and trusting collaboration between representatives from both sectors at stake: research and education. Finally, to ensure that its mission can be sustained in the long-term, the academic community must also include participation from members who hold institutional memory, disregarding their rank. When decision-making lies only in the hands of a small subset of the community, it narrows down opportunities for group collaboration, institutional improvement, and creativity, and hence erases its democratic aspirations.

## **IV. Conclusion**

This survey was originally conceived to better understand the status of NTT faculty within their respective departments and programs, as well as in the general university community. What we discovered, however, greatly surpassed our initial expectations. The survey unveiled the existence of a group of faculty clearly neglected within the framework of faculty governance, and generally relegated to a second class position within the academic institution. Additionally, the absence of a platform where the NTT faculty can bring these concerns to public attention propagates both the inequity of their employment and their essential contribution to the university mission.

Based on the stark results of this survey, the HFA Standing Committee for NTT faculty has decided to seek a deeper exploration of each of the five areas of concern mentioned in this report (Job Security; Mission Creep in Responsibilities; Inconsistent Application of Promotional Standards; Lack of Access to Professional Development Resources; Lack of Voting Power in Department/Program Affairs) and submit each of them to careful and impartial examination. To this end, a sequence of meetings centered on each of the five areas of concern will be held to better identify:

- 1) How each one has affected and continues to affect the status of full-time faculty in non-tenure track positions.
- 2) How, more generally, this inequity affects the well-being of the entire KSAS and WSE community, as well as the overall educational and research mission of the university.

In an era where shared governance and equity in access is highly valued, we hope to generate a better awareness of the importance of all voices to the success of the university.