



Academic Affairs Committee Meeting

SMCM Faculty/Staff Liaisons

Tuesday, September 10, 2024 at 12:00 PM EDT to Tuesday, September 10, 2024 at 2:00 PM EDT

Meeting Details: <https://smcm.zoom.us/j/82488660057>

Meeting ID: 824 8866 0057

Passcode: *&y(PERl

Agenda

I. Discussion Items

- A. Open Report Summary**
- B. Open Agenda**

II. Open Session

- A. Faculty Senate Report**
- B. VPAA Report**
- C. AY 23 Faculty Survey**

ST MARY'S

COLLEGE of MARYLAND

The National Public Honors College

BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

OPEN SESSION REPORT SUMMARY

Date of Meeting: September 10, 2024

Date of Next Meeting: TBD

Committee Chair: Peter Bruns

Committee Members: Paula Collins, Board Chair Susan Dyer, Judy Fillius '79, Elizabeth Graves '95, President Tuajuanda Jordan, Kim Kelley, Melanie Rosalez '92, Danielle Troyan '92

Executive Staff: Katie Gantz

Faculty Liaison: Todd Eberly

Staff Liaison: John Spinicchia

Dashboard Metrics: N/A

Executive Summary:

Discussion Items

Faculty Senate Report

Dean of Faculty Report

Information Items

Minutes of June 12, 2024 meeting

Action Items:

Vote to approve Performance Accountability Report

ST MARY'S
COLLEGE of MARYLAND

The National Public Honors College

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 10, 2024**

**OPEN SESSION
AGENDA**

- I. MOTION TO CLOSE THE OPEN SESSION**
 - A. Closing statement

- II. MOTION TO RECONVENE OPEN SESSION**

- III. DISCUSSION ITEMS**
 - A. Faculty Senate Report
 - B. Dean of Faculty Report

- IV. ACTION ITEM**
 - A. Approval of Performance Accountability Report

- V. INFORMATION ITEM**
 - A. Personnel
 - 1. Joe Lucchesi Retirement
 - 2. Elizabeth Charlebois Retirement
 - B. Minutes of June 12, 2024 meeting



BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT OF THE FACULTY SENATE'S REPORT
SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

Introduction

Compared to my May 2024 report to the Board, this September 2024 report will be mercifully short! I met with the Board in June so that work could continue on the Faculty Bylaws and there have been few other developments in the time since.

Bylaws Update

The Board met on Friday, June 14th, and approved the revised Faculty Bylaws as submitted with one exception - the revised standards for terminating tenure.

As a refresher, the 2019 Bylaws state:

"Tenure terminates with the retirement or resignation of the faculty member, or when the faculty member is dismissed for cause, or when the position is eliminated."

The faculty approved the following amendment to that language:

"Tenure terminates with the retirement or resignation of the faculty member, or when the faculty member is dismissed for cause after due process, or when the position is eliminated under extraordinary circumstances due to financial exigency. Termination of tenured faculty members because of financial exigency should be declared and demonstrably bona fide."

The proposed Bylaws were submitted in May to the Board. Although the Board was comfortable with nearly every change, a majority were uncomfortable with the revised language regarding termination of tenure. There was a sense that the language went from being too permissive to being too restrictive. So at the May meeting, the Board voted to table the Bylaws revisions until a compromise could be reached.

Following a meeting with Peter Bruns, Susan Dyer, Pres. Jordan, Katie Gantz, Geof Bowers and myself, it was agreed that the Board would move forward with the rest of the Bylaws in June while Bruns, Gantz, and I worked on compromise wording regarding the language on termination of tenure that would be submitted to the Senate and to the Faculty for approval in the Fall. Below is the compromise that we have reached with the new language (as compared to what the faculty had already approved) underlined:

"Tenure terminates with the retirement or resignation of the faculty member, when the

faculty member is dismissed for cause after due process, or when the position is eliminated under extraordinary circumstances such as financial exigency or discontinuance of a program or department of instruction. Termination of tenured faculty members because of financial exigency should be declared and demonstrably bona fide. The determination that it is in the best interest of the College to discontinue a program or department shall be made following a review by the faculty, via the Faculty Senate, the administration, via the President, and the Board of Trustees, via the Academic Affairs Committee. Any proposal to eliminate a program or department will require input from all three sectors. The final decision, however, is lodged in the Board of Trustees. Reasons for any decisions of the Board that are adverse to faculty recommendations shall be communicated to the faculty. Tenured faculty in academic programs that are discontinued may be offered an opportunity to fill positions available in other programs at the College if they qualify for those positions."

The new language is borrowed heavily from the Bylaws of peer institutions as well as the AAUP definition of tenure, \; it specifically acknowledges that the faculty are to be involved in any such decisions, and adds a provision on trying to find another position for any affected faculty. The reference to the Board having the final decision is drawn from the existing College Bylaws with the language taken from lines 192-195 of the Faculty Bylaws - which already acknowledge that the Board has the power of final decision.

The compromise language must move forward like any other amendment to the Bylaws. It must be approved by the Faculty Senate and then approved twice by the Faculty. So I will bring the proposed language to the Senate at our first meeting on September 4 and then to the Faculty on September 16 for discussion and, hopefully, an initial vote. The Senate has approved an additional faculty meeting for September 30 so that we can hold a 2nd vote. It will then go to Pres. Jordan and the Board. Pres. Jordan and Peter Bruns have already agreed to the language. So if the Faculty does approve it, it is my hope that it will move forward.

Attached to this report is a copy of the Bylaws as approved by the Board (lines 803-809 contain the 2019 language) as well as a copy of the Bylaws with the proposed amendment that the Senate and Faculty must approve (lines 808-820) of that document.

I think the compromise language is far better than the 2019 language and I want to add that I found the collaboration between myself and VPAA Gantz and Academic Affairs Board Chair Peter Bruns to be incredibly productive and positive and I'm thankful to President Jordan's office for keeping this process moving forward through the Summer.

Presidential Search

The faculty are eager to assist in the search for a new College President. I have been asked to serve on the Search Committee and the Senate was tasked with providing names for additional faculty members to serve on the Committee. A call for nominations was sent and the names will be forwarded to the Board.

Shared Governance

The faculty looks forward to learning more about the next steps in the college's shared governance review. We recognize that the search for a new College President is likely to influence the timeline of that review as the Board may want to plan a review that includes the perspective of an incoming president.

Transition to Anthology Student

Faculty have known for some time that our current ERP system was going to be discontinued and there would be a transition to a new ERP - Anthology Student. We understand why this needs to happen and most of us likely will not miss the old system. That being said, faculty were caught off guard by the recent announcement that the transition would take place in the middle of the Fall semester. As a result of the transition, Fall advising has been moved ahead by 5 weeks and the original Advising Day scheduled for October 29 was moved to September 17. Given the amount of work that goes into planning a semester and setting dates on a course syllabus (especially given the emphasis on Engaged Learning), this change will cause real disruptions for faculty and students (as well as staff). We understand that, given the decision to implement the transition in the middle of a semester, this was viewed as the least disruptive option. Still, we are concerned by the fact that the faculty were not made a part of the discussion regarding the timing of the transition. Rather we learned during the second week of classes that it was happening and were asked to make it work. Although the college's ERP system is not necessarily under the purview of Academic Affairs, it has a significant impact on faculty work and consultation would've been appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,



Todd Eberly, Ph.D.
President, Faculty Senate

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

**VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
AND DEAN OF FACULTY REPORT**

Academic Affairs has worked diligently to serve the goals of a compelling and innovative curriculum, as outlined in the Rising Tide strategic plan.

Hiring update

As we move into the fall semester, we will conduct a total of 15 searches for 11 tenure-track faculty and four termed lecturers. These positions include the following:

- Chemistry (bioanalytical chemistry): assistant professor
- Biology (microbiologist): assistant professor
- Biology (molecular biology): assistant professor
- English (Latinx focus): assistant professor
- English (professional writing): assistant professor
- Environmental Studies: assistant professor
- Library (archivist): assistant librarian
- Performing Arts (scenographer): assistant professor
- Psychology: assistant professor
- Sociology: assistant professor
- Women, Gender, and Sexuality studies: assistant professor
- Chinese: lecturer
- Educational Studies: lecturer
- Marine Science: lecturer
- Psychology: lecturer

We began the individual searches early this fall to reach the most qualified and competitive candidates. Hiring will continue through the academic year; the committee will be updated on our progress at each meeting.

Cluster hire initiative: Biology and Chemistry

Over the past three years, five faculty members from the Biology and Chemistry/Biochemistry (CBC) departments have either retired from the College or relocated to administrative positions, leaving both programs unexpectedly down a total of 28 course offerings per academic year. The loss of these courses and reliance on visitors with no service or scholarly expectations has wide-ranging and deleterious effects, impacting students in numerous programs (Biology, Chemistry, Biochemistry, Marine Science, Neuroscience, and Environmental Studies), and many courses critical to the College's pre-health students. The thin staffing also means that Biology and CBC are unable to consistently contribute to the LEAD curriculum. However, this faculty shortfall has provided a unique opportunity for both departments to coordinate their hiring strategy (without adding any new lines) through a biochemical/biomolecular/systems biology-themed cluster hire

initiative. Five hires have been approved over a two-year cycle: a developmental biologist, a molecular biologist, a microbiologist, a bioanalytical chemist, and a biosynthetic chemist. The advantages of such an initiative over the equivalent individual faculty searches are many; there is excellent alignment with Pillar One of the Strategic Plan to attract and retain outstanding students, faculty, and staff. Cohort-specific mentoring and community-building provides an unprecedented opportunity to align the programmatic goals of the Biology and CBC departments. In addition, the success of the Ross Fellows cluster hire has provided a clear blueprint for how a cluster hire can not only fill curricular gaps but take on a shared project that supports College goals. This cluster hire will support our pre-health curriculum.

A long-standing trend in the CBC department has been an underrepresentation of biochemists to serve student course demand. The new biochemistry laboratory facilities in Goodpaster make this an ideal time to recruit new biochemistry hires. The cluster hire solidifies the College's ability to maintain accreditation from the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.

New program proposals

As scheduled and in response to the Strategic Plan, proposals for new programs were solicited last spring. All four were approved for further development over the summer and underwent market analysis to gauge student interest and relevant job growth. The market analysis has recently been returned, and the proposals are presently being evaluated to determine which could be attractive, sustainable additions to our program array. Any proposal(s) approved will then go through shared governance, culminating in board review and approval.

Faculty Survey on effectiveness of Academic Affairs administrators

As promised to the faculty, Academic Affairs distributed an anonymous survey to all faculty last May to ask about their interactions with a) their own associate dean; b) the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs; and c) the Vice President for Academic Affairs. With 30% of all faculty (total full- and part-time) and 79% of the department chairs represented here, the survey provides a meaningful picture of how the Academic Affairs team performed in its first full year. The survey has been a great tool for developmental feedback, and the unit devoted a substantial part of the summer to reviewing processes and planning for the coming year.

The outcome of the survey has been both gratifying and instructive. As evident from the [survey quantitative data](#) provided in the supplementary materials, the faculty have overwhelmingly “agreed/strongly agreed” that the different Academic Affairs administrators are helpful, open and accessible, fair, and productive. The quantitative data has been shared with the faculty for their review. Also, as part of our checks and balances to assure that the survey is being fairly and fully reported, Senate President Todd Eberly has reviewed both the quantitative and qualitative data.

A few points I'd like to highlight about the qualitative data:

We received a total of 102 narrative responses from 55 unique respondents. The majority of feedback on the performance of Academic Affairs was positive.

Looking specifically at the comments related to the Associate Deans' effectiveness:

- 24 responses referenced concerns with the chair's workload.
- Those 24 responses were submitted by 16 unique respondents: 6 chairs/coordinators, 10 non-chairs/coordinators
- A few responses expressed confusion about how faculty should be seeking out Academic Affairs administrators, and who should be the point of contact for particular needs.

While the comments lauding the effectiveness of the different administrative positions are energizing, the data is clear that we should improve articulating how the different positions within the structure work together. I agree wholeheartedly with the faculty that more clarity is warranted after year one, and we can now better outline a) the work that the three associate deans have taken on from chairs and coordinators, and b) a more cohesive description of each of the roles in ACAF in support of academic excellence. We will be discussing these at length with the chairs/coordinators this fall.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**SEPTEMBER 10, 2024
OPEN SESSION**

FACULTY SURVEY ON ACAF EFFECTIVENESS - MAY 2024

N=56 respondents

- 53 faculty (30% response rate from 177 total full-time and adjunct faculty)
 - 19 faculty chairs/coordinators (79% response rate)
- 2 ACAF staff (non-teaching directors, either faculty or staff)
- 1 Non-ACAF administrator

[ACAF: General](#)

[ASSOCIATE DEANS](#)

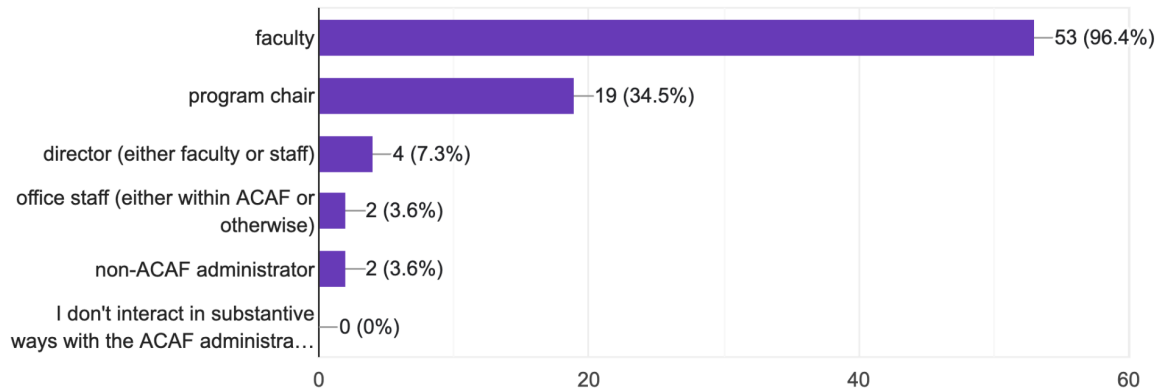
[AVPAA](#)

[VPAA](#)

ACAF: General

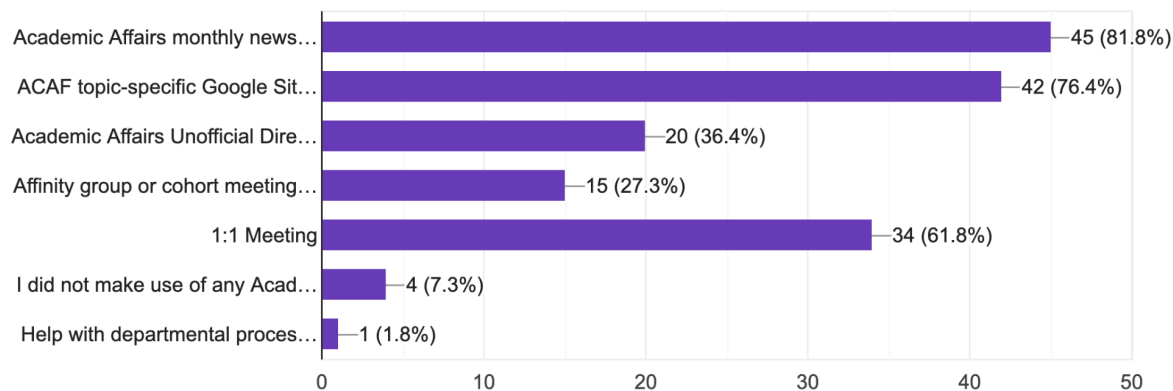
I interact with the ACAF administrators in the following capacity (check all that apply)

55 responses



What resources available to faculty from Academic Affairs did you make use of this year? Check all that apply.

55 responses

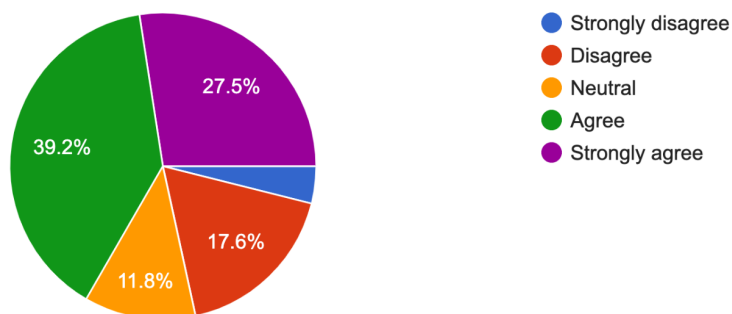


Associate Deans

(NB: respondents were directed to provide feedback on their experiences with their own AD, and not to the ADs as a unit)

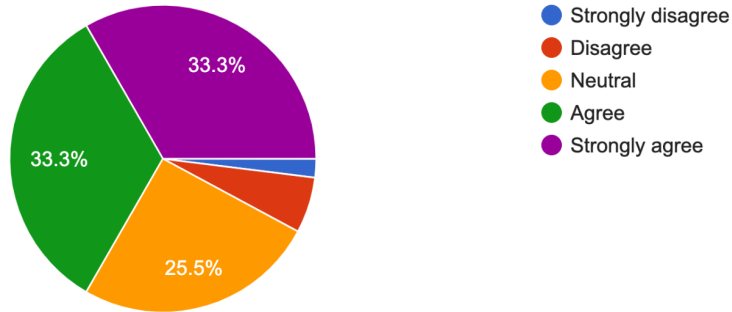
Communications (email or in person) with my AD were useful and correct.

51 responses



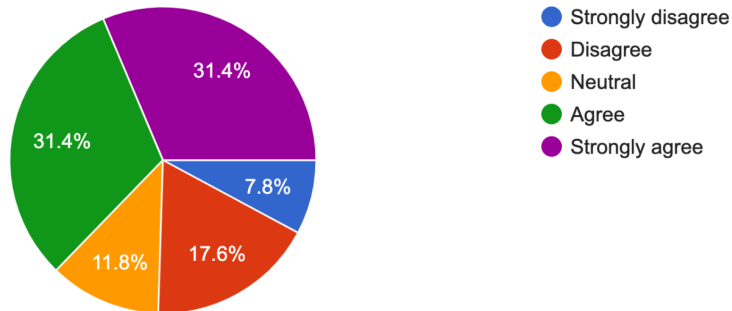
My AD was open to my ideas/questions/concerns.

51 responses



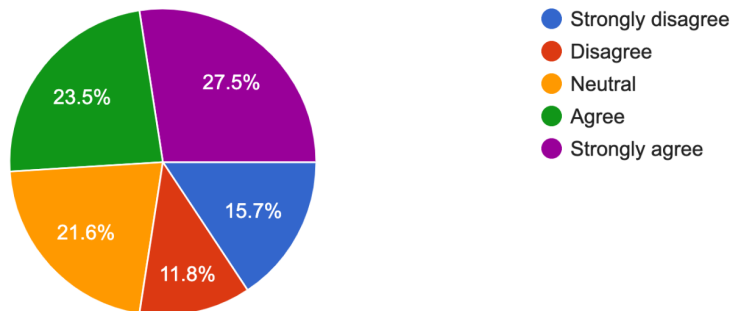
My AD worked to build an understanding of my needs/needs of my program.

51 responses



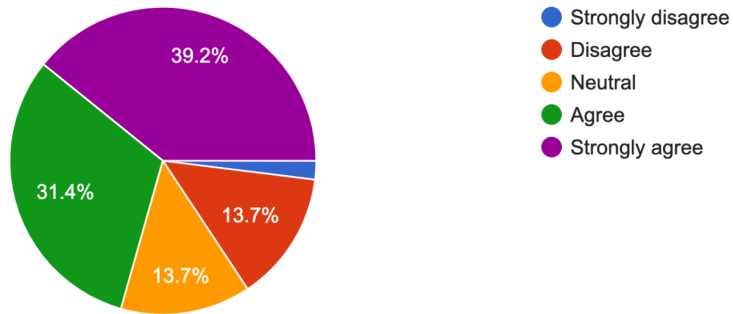
My AD was effective in advocating for my program and/or me.

51 responses



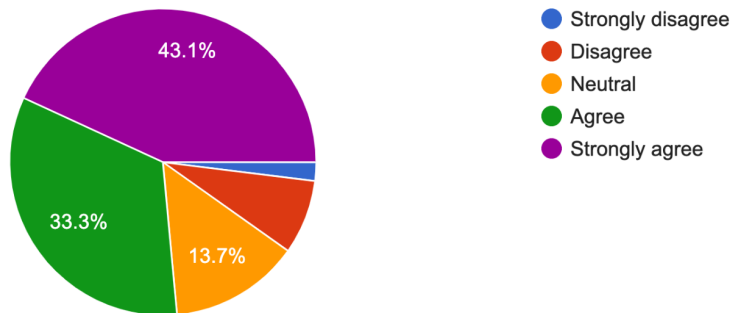
My AD was accessible and available.

51 responses



When I reached out to my AD with questions, I received a timely response.

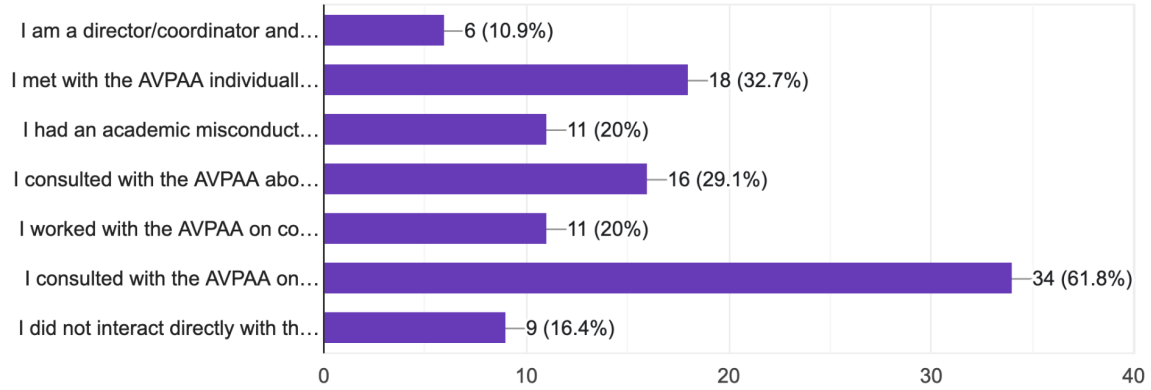
51 responses



AVPAA

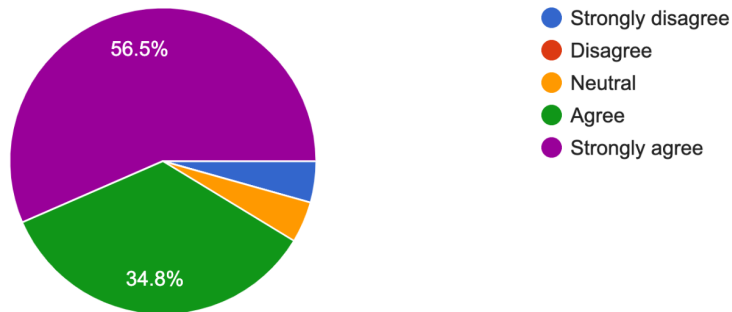
In what capacity did you interact with the AVPAA last year? Check all that apply.

55 responses



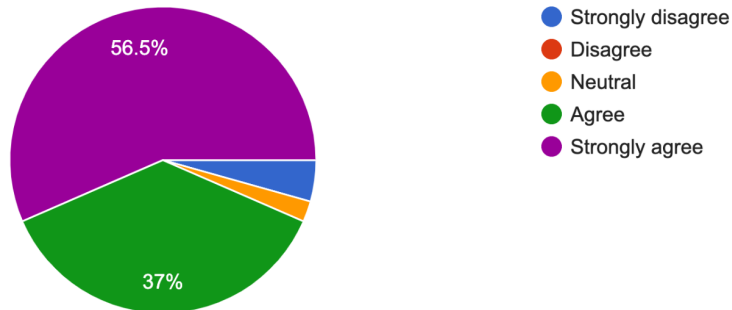
The AVPAA understood the needs/unique issues that I conveyed.

46 responses



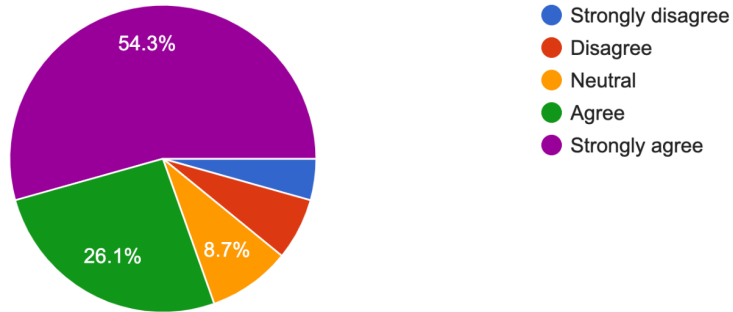
The AVPAA was accessible and available.

46 responses



The advice/feedback/actions of the AVPAA addressed the needs/concerns fairly.

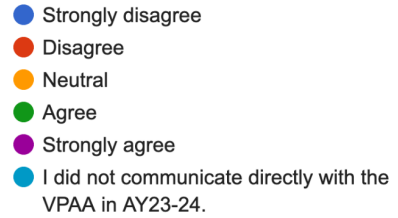
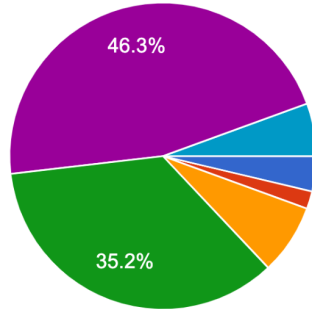
46 responses



VPAA

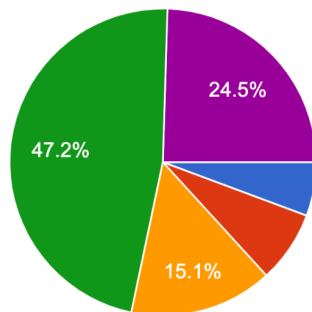
The VPAA listened to my ideas/questions/concerns.

54 responses



When the VPAA has implemented changes and made decisions, the reasoning has been made clear to the faculty.

53 responses



I can clearly see the ways in which the VPAA works together with the ADs and AVPAA as a team in Academic Affairs.

52 responses

