

UT Faculty Workloads in the Age of COVID-19

(Executive Summary)

The Tennessee University Faculty Senates (TUFS), in collaboration with its member institution Faculty Senates and the Center for Organizational and Human Resource Effectiveness (COHRE) at Middle Tennessee State University, conducted a survey in Fall 2020 to assess faculty workloads across the state universities in Tennessee. The results shed light on faculty workloads and the particular pressure COVID-19 put on the work of university faculty in Tennessee. The following is a summary of the results for UT campuses.

Key Findings

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, all UT faculty members are working more hours.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic UT faculty members are spending more time teaching and less time doing research.
- Each summer 9-month UT faculty work nearly full-time without summer pay.

Implications & Recommendations

This survey shows that all faculty did additional work during the pandemic, while most research faculty were left with less time for research.

The additional work conducted by all faculty needs to be fully documented in annual reviews and taken into account when faculty are considered for raises, promotion, tenure, and post-tenure review.

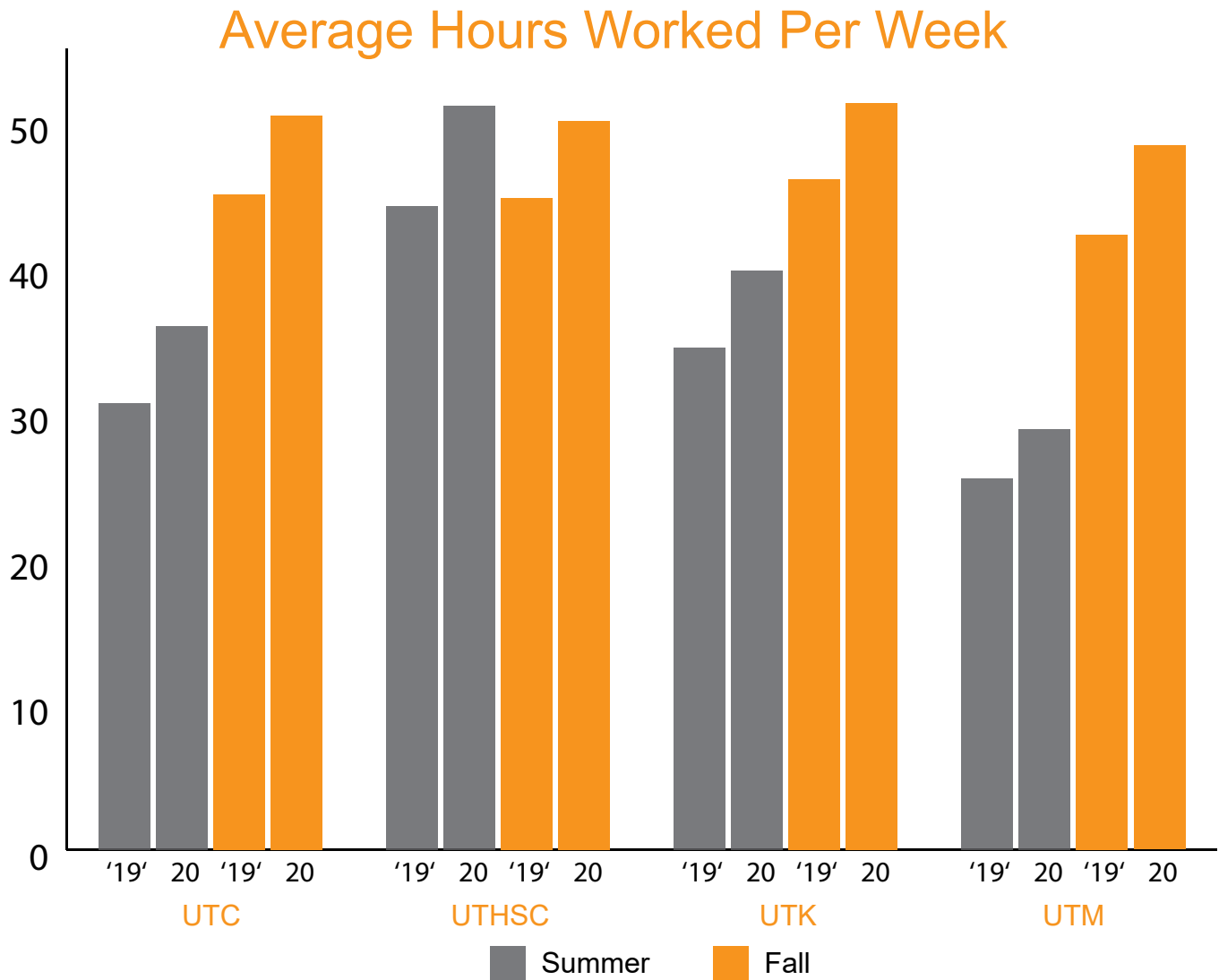
Preparing to teach classes online takes additional time. Workloads for faculty teaching online classes should be adjusted to take into account the additional time needed to prepare and teach online.

The impact of time lost on research productivity will have a long-term impact that spans well beyond 2020 and 2021. Declines in research productivity will have adverse impact for assistant professors seeking tenure and promotion, for associate professors seeking promotion, and for tenured professors undergoing post-tenure review.

Each summer UTC, UTK and UTM benefit from the unpaid labor of its 9-month faculty. This work needs to be acknowledged by these campuses.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, all faculty are working more hours.

In Summer and Fall 2020 faculty reported working 4-7 more hours each week than in 2019. In Fall 2020, many faculty worked more than 50 hours per week.

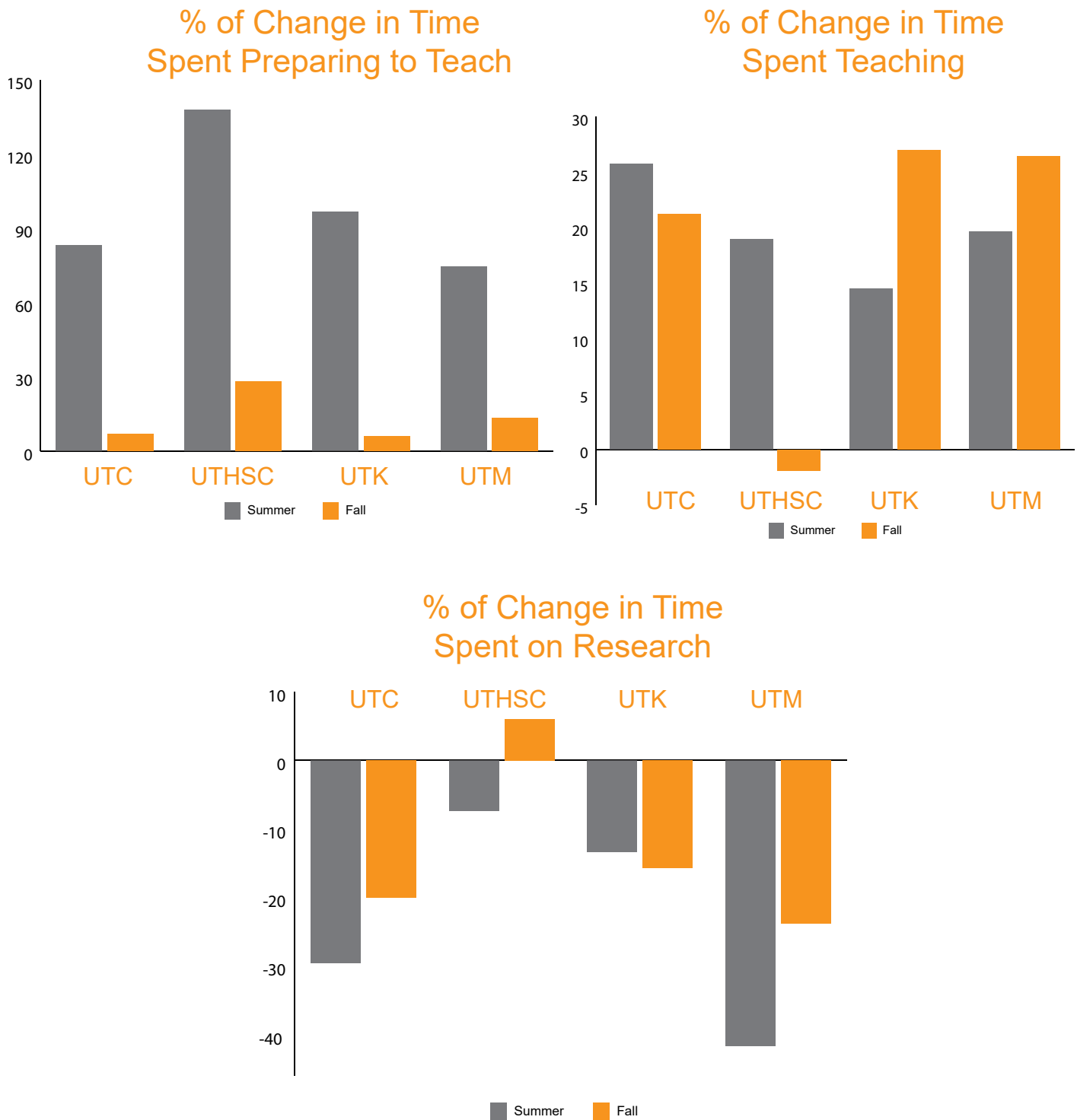


While all faculty experienced increased work hours, some faculty experienced significantly higher increases:

- At UT Martin in summer 2020, non-tenure-track faculty saw the greatest increase in work, reporting 8.4 more hours worked each week than in 2019. In Fall 2020, tenure-track faculty at UT Martin saw the greatest increase in work, reporting 10.7 more hours worked each week than in 2019.
- At UT Chattanooga in both summer and fall 2020, tenured faculty saw the greatest increase in work, reporting 7.5 more hours worked in the summer and 6.31 more hours worked in the fall than in 2019.
- At UT Knoxville, in both summer and fall 2020, tenure-track faculty saw the greatest increase in work, reporting 9.7 more hours worked in the summer and 7.9 more hours worked in the fall than in 2019.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, faculty are spending more time teaching and less time doing research.

With faculty dedicating more hours to teaching in 2020, faculty have had less time to dedicate to research.



In Fall 2020, at the three undergraduate campuses the total “teaching effort,” which includes time spent teaching in the fall as well as time preparing to teach both in the summer and fall, was a weekly average of 39.19 – 46.5 hours. This number reflects time spent related to teaching and does not include additional hours faculty spent each week on research, service, or administrative tasks.

Each summer 9-month faculty work nearly full-time without summer pay.

9-month faculty regularly work throughout the summer, with most of their work uncompensated. During the COVID-19 pandemic the number of summer hours worked increased, while the work remained largely unpaid.

9-month faculty reported working, on average, 23-34 hours in summer 2019 and 25-40 hours in summer 2020.

While teaching done in the summer is largely compensated, 9-month faculty's work related to preparing for the next semester, doing research, providing service to the university, and completing administrative work is largely uncompensated.

Summer Work by UT 9-month Faculty

	UTC-S19	UTC-20	UTK-S19	UTK-S20	UTM-S19	UTM-S20
Preparing for classes	6.29	12.31	5.55	10.43	5.8	8.53
Teaching	6.4	8.02	3.84	5.1	8.33	10.05
Research	12.68	9.38	19.02	16.05	4.2	2.47
Service	2.9	3.35	3.93	5.59	2.52	3.38
Administration	0.99	1.28	15.7	2.53	2.1	0.86
Total average hours worked per week	29.26	34.34	33.91	39.7	23.05	25.59

