

UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

UWT Staff Association

# Winter Quarter Micro Survey Report

---

January 2022

***BE BOUNDLESS***



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

## Section One

### Briefing

Introduction

Purpose

### Process

Methodology

Survey Results

Key Findings

### Action

Recommendations

Conclusion

## Section Two

### Appendices

Appendix A

Appendix B

Appendix C

Appendix D

Appendix E

Appendix F

Appendix G

Appendix H

# Section One

---

## Briefing

**Introduction** In September of 2021, the UW Tacoma Staff Association distributed a survey to campus staff that sought their feedback on a range of issues, including a return to in-person work, whether they felt safe on campus and their overall job satisfaction. These [results](#) were published and subsequently shared with campus leadership and our campus community on September 29, 2021. Since then—while University leadership has hosted multiple town hall meetings and has sent several emails to the UW community over time—there has been no direct feedback solicitation from staff.

**Purpose** Given the current increase in the number of positive COVID-19 cases due to the Omicron variant both on campus and in the region (see [Department of Health epidemiologic curve](#); see also the University of Washington [Virology COVID-19 Dashboard](#)), the UW Tacoma Staff Association wanted to follow up and see how staff were doing mentally, emotionally, and physically. Additionally, the UW Tacoma Staff Association wanted to assess the impact of a quarter of being back on campus and the ramifications of the Omicron variant.

## Process

**Methodology** We received a total of 171 responses from when the survey opened on Wednesday, January 5, 2022, to when it closed on Monday, January 10, 2022. The Executive Board pushed the survey out through the staff email distribution list and the Staff Association Microsoft Teams' Channel. The survey was conducted using Qualtrics.

The survey consisted of five questions: two multiple-choice questions and three short answer questions. The survey was anonymous, and questions were optional. This helps explain why the number of responses to individual questions varies. The survey was conducted this way to encourage staff to answer questions according to their level of comfort.

**Survey Results** Question one asked respondents if they were concerned about contracting COVID-19 while at work. A total of 165 people responded to this question. Of those, 13%

said they were not concerned about contracting COVID-19 while at work, while 39% said they were concerned and 48% said they were very concerned.

A follow-up question was asked of those who said they were “concerned” or “very concerned” about contracting COVID-19 while on campus. The responses typically involved some level of worry about getting infected while at work and subsequently infecting their young children still ineligible for vaccination or infecting an immunosuppressed person who lives with them. Several respondents also questioned safety protocols on campus, specifically around masks and whether people are wearing them.

Question two asked respondents to describe their level of concern about contracting COVID-19 while at work. The question also asked respondents in what capacity—in-person, hybrid, fully remote—they could best serve students. We received a total of 138 responses to this question.

- 9% of respondents said they could best serve students in-person and were concerned about contracting COVID-19 while at work.
- 6% of respondents said they could best serve students in-person and were not concerned about contracting COVID-19 while at work.
- 42% of respondents said they could best serve students while working a hybrid schedule and were concerned about contracting COVID-19 while at work.
- 9% of respondents said they could best serve students while working a hybrid schedule and were not concerned about contracting COVID-19 while at work.
- 32% of respondents said they could best serve students while working a fully remote schedule and were concerned about contracting COVID-19 while at work.
- 2% of respondents said they could best serve students while working a fully remote schedule and were not concerned about contracting COVID-19 while at work.

Question 3 asked staff how they are holding up mentally, emotionally, and physically as we enter year three of the pandemic. Their responses paint a picture of a tired, anxious, depressed, and worn-out workforce. Morale seems to be low and multiple respondents expressed concern about their mental and emotional well-being.

Question 4 asked staff how the pandemic has impacted their lives outside of work. Staff reported issues finding childcare or having to balance an ever-shifting school schedule for their children. In some instances, staff reported stress around a partner losing their job. Several respondents noted they have friends or family who have gotten sick with COVID-19, some of whom died.

The Staff Association understands this is a challenging situation for all involved. The work of guiding a university through this constantly changing crisis is difficult and we recognize that many in leadership positions at the university may very well be struggling with some of the issues we have outlined. Nevertheless, there is a disconnect between those making the decisions and those who are impacted by the decisions.

**Key Findings** A majority of respondents are concerned about contracting COVID-19 while at work. Of those who responded to the survey, most feel they can best serve students while either working a hybrid schedule or working a fully remote schedule. There appears to be a widespread feeling among staff that the university prioritizes the health of students and faculty over staff. We cannot say for certain how widespread this feeling is, but it was mentioned frequently in respondents' comments (see appendices). There were several consistent themes in the written responses. Respondents indicated they were experiencing challenges with childcare including long waitlists, closures due to COVID-19 outbreaks, and not being able to find childcare that can accommodate their work schedules. Some respondents indicated they were concerned about money due to a partner who lost their job. We also heard from respondents that they were worried about contracting COVID-19 and subsequently infecting their young children still ineligible for vaccination or infecting an immunosuppressed person who lives with them. Concerns about masking policy and a perceived lack of enforcement also came up repeatedly. The most common refrain we heard from respondents was a deterioration in their physical, mental, and emotional health. Respondents indicated they were anxious, depressed, lonely and burned out. A few indicated they were considering leaving UW Tacoma to find work elsewhere.

## Action

**Recommendations** The Staff Association feels that autonomy, or lack thereof, is at the core of the issues facing our campus. We understand we are one of three campuses, but nevertheless question if UW Seattle understands the unique needs of our campus, which is urban-serving and commuter-based. The decisions being made about the students, faculty and staff at UW Tacoma are being made by the administration up north. We strongly feel that UW Tacoma should have more say when it comes to making decisions about the health and safety of this campus. These decisions may work for Seattle, but they don't work for our campus. We feel this lack of autonomy fuels the perception that UW Tacoma administration cares more for the well-being of students and faculty than it does for the well-being of staff. UW Tacoma is built on relationships. This individual connection leads to more informed decisions on sensitive issues like working remotely.

We cannot expect an outside entity like UW Seattle to make informed decisions about our campus community. *This inability to personalize our approach to this crisis hurts morale and undermines our mission as an urban-serving university.*

With this in mind, *the Staff Association believes UW Tacoma should continue with either remote or hybrid learning and work until the Omicron wave subsides.* Any decisions about future operations should include staff from different units and various levels of seniority. The experience and insight of a dean may be quite different than that of someone in a position with less authority. It is important to get as much feedback as possible before reaching a conclusion that impacts so many. When a decision has been made it is important to convey the message to the campus community sooner rather than later. The last announcement from President Cauce came at the last minute and upended peoples' lives. We need to take steps to prevent this from happening again.

Finally, *the Staff Association calls on campus leadership to clarify hybrid work agreements.* There appears to be confusion about these agreements (mentioned by survey respondents as well as in conversation with staff over Teams and in listening sessions), including who is responsible for creating them, who is responsible for approving them as well as where staff can turn to if they have issues in their units about getting their agreements approved. These are important documents and staff need to be given correct information. Failure to do so risks further complicating the lives of staff, many of whom are already juggling too much.

**Conclusion** We received hundreds of comments from respondents. The main takeaway is clear: staff at UW Tacoma are hurting. Many respondents reported feeling that the university does not value them or their experiences. Several noted that staff are expected to be on campus even though most classes are not being offered in-person at this time.

The insistence on an in-person experience for students does not match the current reality. The number of positive COVID-19 cases has skyrocketed both nationally and locally. Hospitalizations are on the rise. Omicron may be milder, but the impact of this disease on any one individual is unpredictable. As an institution of higher learning, we should be in the business of protecting our community and doing our part to slow the spread of this disease. We can do this by continuing with remote learning. Returning to in-person learning and work should not happen until the Omicron wave subsides. Also, a return timeline should be communicated well ahead of time and should include staff input.

Protecting each other also means encouraging and allowing staff the flexibility to work remotely as much as they deem necessary. To do otherwise is to ignore the lived realities and hardships of staff that are likely to come as individual schools and childcare centers close in response to outbreaks. The university needs to understand that each staff member (indeed each student and faculty member) has their own understanding of risk and what is acceptable.

Insisting that staff be in-person during this wave also threatens the physical, mental, and emotional health of all those who told us they were struggling. It will further exacerbate the perception that the well-being of staff is not held to the same standard as the health of students and faculty.

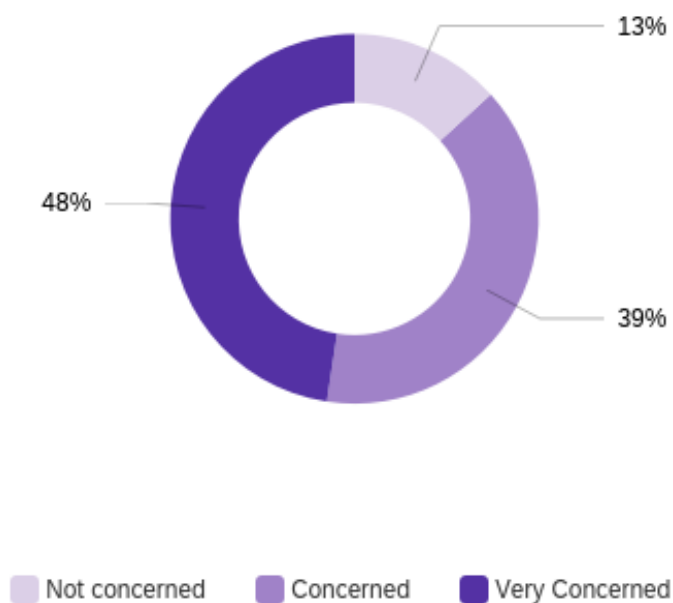
Finally, the Staff Association wants leadership to know that all staff are committed to helping students succeed and achieve their dreams. The situation these past few years has impacted our students and their ability to learn. We understand this, but we are also cognizant of the fact that a part of our job is to keep students safe. Right now, that means limiting the frequency and quantity of in-person interactions.

## Section Two

### Appendices

#### Appendix A: Question 1

How concerned are you about contracting COVID at work?



#### Takeaways

An overwhelming number of staff – 87% of staff who responded - are concerned about contracting COVID at work.



**Appendix B: Question 1a** [for those who indicated they were Concerned or Very Concerned in Question 1]

What are you concerned about?

**Responses** (redacted for clarity and personally identifying information):

---

Being around others that are not as safe as myself.

---

Being around others who may be asymptomatic. Many who are vaccinated and boosted have returned to pre-COVID behavior and getting the virus.

---

Being in close contact with others in an office with cubicles. In our office, we are all required to eat at our desk, aka we sometimes have masks off.

---

Breakthrough cases are on the rise. Faculty and students were told to switch to remote learning, but staff are still required to be on site. It's not equitable.

---

Breakthrough infections, catching COVID at work and spreading it to family at home.

---

Bringing it home to my under 5 [year old] children who cannot yet be vaccinated.

---

Close quarters and contact with students.

---

Concerned that staff and faculty in my unit have shown up to work while they are waiting for their COVID test results.

---

Contracting COVID and passing it along to my 2 unvaccinated (ineligible) children, or passing it along to someone else in my community.

---

Contracting covid and spreading it to my family, long term health implications of covid (which are unknown for this variant).

---

Contracting COVID, particularly from students and from coworkers who do not wear proper masks or who move them off when they get too hot.

---

Contracting it and bringing it home - not having the full flexibility to take care of myself/family if it does arise.

---

Death, time lost, disability.

---

Dying.

---

Getting covid.

---

Getting COVID and bringing it back to my kid who is not eligible to get vaccinated yet.

---

Given that the UW Covid dashboard has a positive rate of nearly 14% today, it seems like not having people on campus this week would have been preferable. While students and faculty are remote, staff have to remain in-person.

---

Highly transmissible Omicron variant and having to meet with students in-person.

---

---

I work in an open workspace (no personal office), and we are all in one room, removing our mask to sip water, take a bite to each, etc.

---

I'm asked to advise students face-to-face in a very small office for 30-40 minutes.

---

I'm concerned about getting the virus and the increased mental health issues stemming from the ongoing pandemic.

---

I'm not so much concerned for myself, but for faculty, staff, and students that may have kids or elderly at home.

---

In-person work for shared spaces. Those with doors can take off their masks. Those of us in open shared spaces have to be masked the entire time we are in the office, etc.

---

I've already had 3 Covid exposure emails about our building. Students sometimes will still come to campus even if they are not feeling well.

---

Lack of appropriate UW provided or required mitigation strategies (require and/or provide N95 masks instead of cloth).

---

Leadership requests to minimize risks as much as possible but then expect the presence of staff on campus, even those who don't interact with students.

---

Main concern is an infant at home who cannot yet be vaccinated.

---

Mainly eating at vendors around campus and exposure from employees/customers.

---

Omicron Variant. Although Leadership is seeing things in Washington State, some staff have traveled to places where there may have been less restrictions (i.e. Idaho)

---

People who are vaccinated believing they are immune from Covid-19 and acting in a way that spreads the virus.

---

Returning to campus so soon after a holiday where people traditionally gather amid rising outbreaks.

---

Rising cases, misinformation, lack of accountability, new variants.

---

That staff were still asked to come to campus, while students and faculty did not. We visited family just the same.

---

The omicron variant is so incredibly contagious, it seems almost inevitable if you leave your house.

---

Ummm...getting Covid at work.

---

Well, I guess it would be contracting a potentially fatal disease.

---

Why [are] staff required to be on campus when faculty rarely show up? Students want to see their professors in-person.

---

With new variants it would be nice to have KN95s available, not just surgical masks. Are individuals responsible for bearing costs of masks?

---

[W]ith the rise in cases, it seems that staff should be able to be part of the risk mitigation and stay home.

---

---

Working in learning commons with direct contact with large number of students.

---

There are unvaccinated students attending classes. Although the official policy is to require proof of vaccination or weekly testing, students are being allowed to register without proof of both vaccine do[s]es and there is no "real" enforcement of testing for those with exemptions. I personally tried to access on campus testing on 12/21 and found out the site was closed until 1/3. Not sure how weekly tested was supposed to happen at a closed site.

---

The transmission of Covid through high traffic surfaces.

---

The surge of cases with the new variant (first Delta, now Omicron) with the number being the same or worse than last year. Booster shots are not as readily available. Students are not wearing masks at all times in the building even when not eating. Students demanding for more online/remote classes than offered.

---

Bringing covid home to my child who is too young to receive a vaccine.

---

Exposure to those who may not know they are contagious, those who feel they must be on campus, those who are not wearing good quality masks or are not wearing the properly, etc. There is so much stress that our immune systems are compromised making us more susceptible to catching illnesses. I am not convinced the ventilation systems are up to date. The water bottle filling stations are very few and far between, meaning one has to expose themselves to illnesses just to access clean drinking water.

---

Omicron evades masks. If classes are remote for safety reasons, why are staff spaces not similarly protected? This is a glaring equity issue, and it shows that UWT sees staff as collateral.

---

This seems like the worst time in the entire course of the pandemic to return to in-person school and work due to the case rates.

---

Omicron variant has higher transmission rate.

---

Getting the new variant since it's so infectious.

---

I'm concerned about how contagious the omicron variant is, and the rising number of infections in Tacoma/Pierce county. I'm also concerned that the university does not appear to be taking any additional steps to mitigate the spread of the virus for staff who are on campus while students/faculty are remote.

---

Contracting covid at work and bringing it home to my family.

---

How contagious the omicron variant is, even with masks and cleaning.

---

Others not wearing masks.

---

Asymptomatic coworkers, faculty, students who don't want to get tested and are in close contact with me

---

The flexibility of remote work going away or being so restrictive that it takes away the work/life balance that we gained.

---

---

Meetings with groups that I'm not sure of their status.

---

In general? COVID is proven to be a severely disabling illness in a lot of people who catch it, even if they're asymptomatic. Staff shortages in all sectors due to death and disability so far throughout this pandemic are forcing more people to sacrifice their health and lives for some bottom line for higher-ups who continue to work from home. ONE MILLION PEOPLE were NEWLY DIAGNOSED WITH COVID just a couple days ago. And that's a MASSIVE UNDERCOUNT because the US has bungled the pandemic response.

---

I'm worried about contracting the new variant on campus. I'm pregnant and concerned about how catching COVID could impact my maternal health and my unborn child's health. The CDC website on COVID infection during pregnancy is pretty scary. And I don't know how exactly employees with different health conditions are being met in an equitable place. Yet, I understand the need to serve our students. It's a very tricky situation to navigate.

---

Being exposed to COVID and bringing it back home to my family and my 4-year-old.

---

Bringing it home to my one-year-old child.

---

That I will contract COVID from another person who is unaware that they have it or that I might pass COVID onto someone else because I didn't know I was sick.

---

The contagiousness of the Omicron variant, the fact that people don't wear their masks properly. I live with my mother, who is 85 and severely immunocompromised, I do not want to bring anything home to her.

---

I am exposed to more people at work on a day-to-day basis than I am in any other part of my life. Campus and university administrators have shown a lukewarm commitment to staff safety at best.

---

Unvaccinated students. Omicron and other variants that are vaccine resistant.

---

I'm not too concerned about contracting covid because I do not see many people in person. But, when I do attend events or have 1:1 meetings I do sometimes question safety, especially not knowing if I or the person I'm with have unknowingly been exposed or are asymptomatic.

---

I don't work with students and worked remotely 4 days/week prior to pandemic. I'm worried that new telework policies will change pre-pandemic schedules.

---

Contracting covid, spreading covid to others, UWTs obvious lack of care for staff health- we.are.not.front.line.workers.

---

Requirement to see students face-to-face in small office environments.

---

Contracting covid?

---

The university is prioritizing being a 'brick and mortar' institution over the health and safety of their staff.

---

---

Getting Covid while in person at work or along the commute to work.

---

How easily transmittable Omicron is.

---

The safety for staff to be on campus, when everyone else is encouraged to work from home or virtual courses.

---

I previously completed this survey, but felt the need to respond after the announcement about January operations. As staff, I feel that we are not being given the same care and option for remote work that faculty and students are. They can work and learn remotely, but we are being told to keep the doors open. It doesn't sit well with me.

---

I see students walking in the halls without masks regularly. No one is enforcing masks. I know that the testing for unvaccinated students takes at least 4 days to get results. I know that the student vaccination proof is easy to get around.

---

I live with my son who take[s] immunosuppressive medications for two auto-immune diseases.

---

Omicron is highly contagious. I feel that we need to take steps to minimize exposure to keep students, faculty and staff safe. We have an obligation to protect each other. I fear that what I'm hearing is about the "student experience." What kind of experience is truly possible right now? UWT has long struggled to create a traditional college experience because we self-identify as a commuter campus. If we go this route, then getting COVID will be part of the student experience.

---

I am concerned about myself and my family getting sick because of decisions that the campus is making. Additionally, being forced to be on campus when we have shown that the work can be done remotely.

---

[I] work in a cubicle w/no doors and several directors will take their mask off in meeting[s] that are in-person.

---

Omicron transmission and breakthrough cases of the fully vaccinated.

---

My position has me code applications on a computer. I do not meet with staff or students. Work the same on a computer at home than I do with a computer at work.

---

I don't have an office; rather, my workstation is situated in an open suite with no physical barrier from my peers. Regardless of vaccination status we know that COVID still spreads, and I intend to minimize exposure to my children for as long as possible. I also see my work satisfaction decreasing significantly if asked to go back; the lack of nearby parking, commuting costs, wearing a mask all day and designated eating areas are things I haven't had to worry about the last 22 months.

---

I am concerned about exposing myself to covid and then bringing it home to my family, several of which cannot be vaccinated and/or are immunocompromised.

---

---

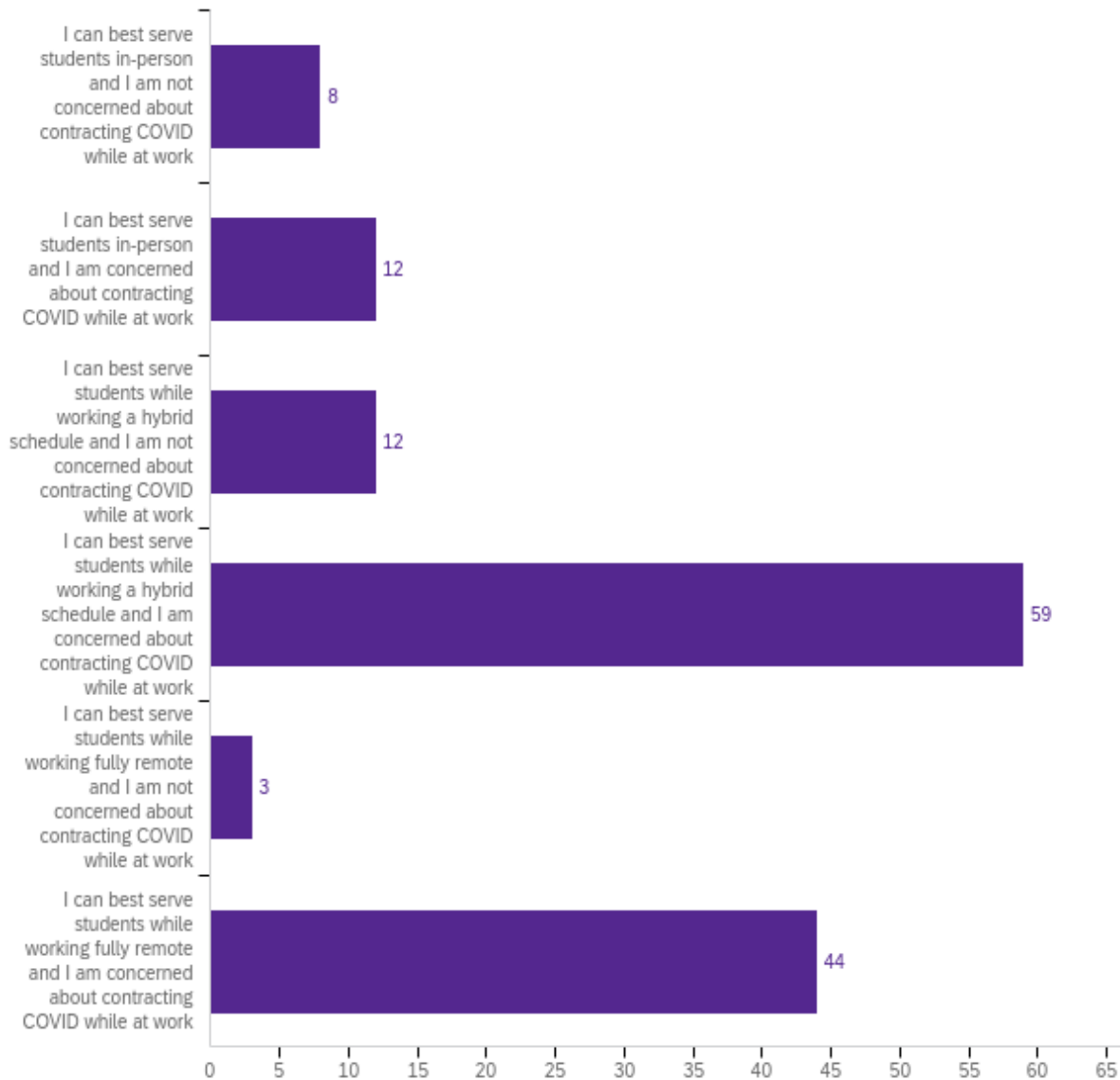
Generally, catching covid AND transmitting it to my family, which consists of two children who cannot be vaccinated. UW expects me to allow them to determine what level of risk is acceptable for me and my family. You can have all the experts in the world tell me the risk is low, but there is no acceptable risk when it comes to my kids. ESPECIALLY when we can and did work fully remote before.

**Appendix C: Word cloud visualization for Question 1a**



## Appendix D: Question 2

Select the statement that best describes your ability to serve students during this phase of the pandemic:



### Takeaways

Of the 138 staff who responded to this question, 85% felt they could best serve students in a hybrid or fully remote format; only 15% felt they needed to be in-person to best serve students. Regardless of the modality of service, a substantial number of staff are concerned about contracting COVID while at work (83%) while a much smaller number are not concerned (17%).

## Appendix E: Question 3

We are starting year three of the pandemic. This has been a challenging time for a lot of people. How are you holding up mentally, emotionally, and physically?

**Responses** (redacted for clarity and personally identifying information):

---

Autumn was really hard with workloads, which was exacerbated by disruptions in the schedules of student and full-time staff, staff turnovers and HR processes/timelines that impeded our ability to fill vacant positions. I was already burned out at the start of Autumn but got a good chance to rest over the winter break (which still contained a lot of work!) and am feeling like I've built some endurance for the continuous disruptions and uncertainties.

---

Burned out.

---

Definitely feeling burned out on the pandemic and not positive about the state of the U.S./world.

---

Doing great. Have all three shots.

---

Drained, tired, and feel equity is so overlooked for staff in many regards.

---

Exhausted; mentally, emotionally, and physically.

---

Feeling burnt out.

---

Getting tired

---

Great on all fronts

---

Hanging by a thread. Too much happening at once. I have developed anxiety and am not sure how much longer I can do this. Not sure that the university fully understands what people are going through. Flexibility is a huge concern for me and I'm not sure that moving forward I will get that from the university. I need flexibility to keep working.

---

I acknowledge I am under some stress. I worry and have angst.

---

I am doing fairly well, but I cannot say that UW leadership, locally or UW-wide, has had that much to do with it.

---

I am exhausted. I view UWT as making decisions based on enrollment/money and no longer on staff safety.

---

I am okay. Frustrated sums it up pretty well.

---

I don't think I'll be getting a PTSD diagnosis, but these have not been my best years.

---

I feel like I'm at a breaking point. I am very supported by colleagues and supervisors, but DO NOT feel supported by administration.



---

I feel very scared and sad.

---

I find my capacity for work much lower than it used to be. My ability to balance a large workload has been diminished.

---

I'm feeling very tired and disconnected from the community.

---

I'm fine. Just frustrated in some of these leadership decisions.

---

I'm fine. But I'd like to see leaders on campus wear their masks. They are not above the rules.

---

I'm OK.

---

I'm over it. UW Seattle and UWT leadership has shown their preference to prioritize profits instead of health of staff specifically. Approach not equitable.

---

I'm probably running at 80% of optimum. Could be better but could also be a lot worse.

---

I'm tired. I'm always worried about getting sick and getting my young kids sick all because the university is pushing for in-person.

---

It has been an emotional rollercoaster. A lot of the mental challenges I face are mainly driven by the requirement of being on campus.

---

It has been really challenging to stay positive. I want to have a positive attitude at work, but I can't say that most days I do.

---

It is disheartening to see the discrepancies in how faculty are treated differently than staff in regard to being on campus.

---

It is tough mentally sometimes; it feels like the campus is dead and it is "groundhog day"

---

It's hard. Admin is quick to change modality for teaching but it's business as usual for staff that work in frontline offices that serve students.

---

Just tired

---

Mentally - not well. Emotionally - not well. Physically - fine.

---

Mentally I meet with my therapist bi-weekly to process through things. Emotionally - I'm burnt out and irritable

---

Mentally, I've been better. The anxiety about COVID at work (when I know I could be doing everything safely and efficiently from home) is overwhelming.

---

Mentally: I am better than most but doing my best to advocate for mental health. Emotionally, struggling, as my position requires me to be an advocate for best practices on mental health. Physically, I am struggling, however I am doing my best to manage.

---

Mostly just exhausted. And tired of trying to stay upbeat and positive.

---

---

My mental health is impacted and have recently begun to self-medicate (on occasion) to help cope. I'm also an empath, which has exhausted me.

---

My mental, physical, and emotional health has taken a toll over the past two years. I am lucky to have an understanding unit with supportive leadership, but I continue to be disappointed in how our efforts to serve the university (and our success in doing so remotely) go unacknowledged. Furthermore--the lack of merit raises, and inflation means that I have worked with a pay cut in an already extremely underpaid position.

---

Not good. Morale is awful at the university. People are leaving, there is no one out there to replace some talent that we currently have.

---

Not great!

---

Not great.

---

Not well at all. Project setbacks/complications have severely impacted my mental health to the point I'm thinking about resigning from my job.

---

Not well! My work performance is impacted by my brain fog. I am overwhelmed and my body is tired of being on alert.

---

OK.

---

OK.

---

OK, but what is stressful is the fact that staff are left behind. This week the classes were online, but staff were expected to be on campus.

---

Okay - just wish we prioritize science over \$ sometimes.

---

Physically I am fine and stay healthy. Mentally/emotionally, this has taken its toll for sure. I'm exhausted.

---

Pretty poorly - not able to see friends/enjoy leisure activities for "me time", stress and worry with my children, no empathy from work, overburdened with work responsibilities, no time to take breaks/exercise.

---

Pretty well on all fronts.

---

Struggling with COVID anxiety (worried about getting sick and/or spreading to others).

---

That's a huge question. Overall, I feel that I have adapted and am doing the best that I can with support from my manager. It's still stressful.

---

Tired and frustrated with push to be in-person.

---

TIREDD! The hardest part has been the transition back into a commuting life.

---

I feel powerless. I also feel there is an emphasis on enrollment numbers over public safety. Students were being advised, by staff at the university, on how to work around the registration restrictions for non-compliance. It angers and frustrates me. I also am on the receiving end of student frustrations but have no power or influence to change

anything. It is also very disheartening to be told I must report to in-person work when there are no classes & then show up to find the doors locked.

---

Some days are better than others. I feel as though many of us have lots of pressures as family members and staff to be supportive, engaged, and present at all times while also trying to keep ourselves and those around us healthy. Yet, this comes at a cost and many times others are at the forefront despite the fact that everyone is going through the pandemic.

---

Mentally, emotionally, and physically drained and withdrawn, and starting to become paranoid due to the amount of people I know personally that have contracted COVID.

---

I am mentally, emotionally, and physically exhausted. I need to refocus several times a day now when I only needed to do it once or twice. I am burnt out with stress and my workload.

---

I'm not. I developed a stress induced illness, am caregiving for two kids who regularly get sent home to quarantine, and this campus then decides that our previous telework agreements aren't good enough and we need to give more?

---

Returning to fully in-person operations at this time stresses me out.

---

Not good because of uncertainty.

---

I am weary of constantly adjusting to changing rules, even as I appreciate that the caution shown in this region is keeping us healthier than other areas. I am tired of feeling angry at those who do not acknowledge scientific evidence.

---

Life is a bit stressful because of the pandemic and returning to campus in the midst of a surge in cases feels ill-advised and unsafe. I work directly with students and can still easily do my job from home. Right now, working from home seems like a much better idea, not just for me, but for the students I work with as well.

---

I have had Covid once and it took its toll. I also work in a suite with 5 other people, so one gets it, we all get it. So mentally a bit on edge!

---

I am doing well and don't feel much concern regarding COVID due to my schedule and working primarily from home.

---

I cry at or about work at least 3 times a week.

---

This whole experience has been mentally and emotionally taxing, but I am managing well, as I am fortunate to have strong support systems.

---

Surviving working towards thriving

---

I have decided this is going to be normal, so I am doing much better. I've stopped expecting COVID to be over. It will be with us just like the flu forever.

---

Overall, I think I am fine. I am mostly exhausted with the number of changes that keep happening, in my position, the university, and the world.

---

It has taken a mental toll. I have had a very hard winter and hate the gray. Physically I am in better shape than when it began. Emotionally, I am usually an optimist but have lost some of that luster.

---

It's a rollercoaster. Some days are worse than others.

---

Fine except for the politics and false information I am receiving from our government.

---

I am tired of the mixed messaging that we receive as staff to take care of ourselves mixed with the pressure of being an "in-person" institution. In-person seems to only be true of the staff, as faculty are not required to meet with students in their offices during office hours. The requirement that we work only 16 hours from home does not provide me with the true flexibility I need for childcare and work/life balance.

Restricting remote work requirements each quarter has been very stressful.

---

It's been emotionally challenging because I have family/friends and I have not seen them since 2019.

---

Varies, sometimes overwhelmed and sometimes keep going.

---

Terribly. I am doing worse with my mental health and outlook for the future and humanity than I have in years.

---

Exhausted on all fronts, especially as a pregnant employee who has a long commute to work.

---

Ok. Wishing the university was offering more opportunities to continue fully-remote work.

---

I lament what life was like before the pandemic. I'm also tired from being constantly on alert and worried. But I am grateful that narratives of work are being challenged and work from home is more widely accepted.

---

It's been hard. Work stress is very high and it's taking a toll on my health. I'm looking for less stressful work even though I love UW Tacoma.

---

This past year has been harder than the beginning of the pandemic. There is more to balance. The university doesn't care about my mental health, all they want is for me to show up to work. I'm dealing with a lot of anxiety, I'm considering leaving the university, I don't see another way. It's time for staff to make demands and for our leadership to respond and take responsibility.

---

I am blessed in my life, but the pandemic is hard mentally - is it a cold or COVID? Will daycare be shut down? Should we see family over the holidays?

---

This year is rough and is taking a toll on all three of those fronts.

---

Stressed about ever changing policies and lack of concern for staff health by being forced to work on campus during this time.

---

Rough on all counts.

---

Not very well.

---

---

I am doing as well as anyone could hope in a time like this. I feel really lucky to have a job that is this flexible, where I can stay relatively safe, and continue to do meaningful work.

---

The constant need to remain flexible and shift events, activities, policies, is stressful and my anxiety has worsened. It would be great if there were free, easily accessible mental health counselors available on site for staff and not just students.

---

Poorly.

---

Mentally and emotionally, I miss the team connection and camaraderie. Zoom meetings help some, but it's not the same and often get cut short or cancelled.

---

Okay.

---

I just started therapy to deal with stress and anxiety.

---

Depends on the day.

---

Not great. I'm feeling completely depleted on all 3 fronts. Burnout is real. I don't agree with how the safety/health of our community is handled.

---

Holding up fairly well, considering the circumstances. I am fortunate to have a good support system and have not had any financial hardships as a result of the pandemic. I am grateful. However, the ongoing nature of this situation wears me down, mentally. I see the toll it is taking on other staff. I would advocate for continued patience, support, and flexibility by managers and campus leadership whilst still holding us accountable for performing our professional responsibilities.

---

Good not great. I am lonely and the winter has been hard mentally.

---

Honestly, this has been a challenge. I thought working remote was the hardest I had ever worked, but now that I'm back on campus I'm even more physically and mentally exhausted; working longer hours and am more stressed.

---

Ok, but feeling the exhaustion of more cancelled plans, concern about my family getting Covid, missing community activities. Students are really struggling still, which impacts each day of my work.

---

Worse since I have been forced back to campus.

---

Drained and feeling like everyone else is drained too. Many projects are on pause because so many people are unable or are unmotivated to do their jobs

---

Not well emotionally and mentally.

---

I feel fine. I appreciate how flexible my supervisor has been for those times when I had to work from home as I also take care of a parent, and for those times when my kiddos are out of school

---

So so. Tired, is the best way to describe all three.

---

---

Mentally, I feel overwhelmed with uncertainty. As things change and updates are made, it shifts my whole workload. It's very exhausting to balance the abnormalities of the pandemic, while also trying to do my actual job.

---

Burned out, high blood pressure, stressed, spend time on campus behind locked door.

---

Mentally and emotionally drained. Campus support continues to be in flux as leadership changes are made

---

As this goes on, I am finding it more difficult. I don't like seeing the school take steps that explicitly protect faculty and students, but expect staff to risk their health with in-person services. It's a very stressful and confusing time.

---

I am more easily off task, tired and anxious.

---

I am angry at the inept response that leadership on our and UW Seattle campus are showing about protecting staff. I am depressed because I feel like all I ever do is work. The realistic fear of getting sick causes me to have constant low-level anxiety.

---

This is a tough time.

---

The constant flux has worn me down. I love this place and I love the people but question the decision making and how long it takes to actually communicate what is going on. UW Seattle made the decision to go remote the first week of winter quarter out of concern for Omicron but if they were so concerned why did they wait to make the decision about extending remote operations? UW's own models predicted the caseload would only increase dramatically. Why did it take so long to announce?

---

I am struggling. Big time. I don't feel like I am being paid enough to be put through the conditions that I have.

---

Okay I take time as needed.

---

It depends on the day and the recent news (COVID, political, etc.).

---

Miserable. Very miserable.

---

I have always felt that if I contracted covid that with my health conditions, I would most likely be one who goes into the hospital. I feel better since I am vaccinated, but still am worried about contracting covid.

---

Better, now that I have an established routine. However, every announcement tied to COVID affects me mentally. Every email has too much info; every large decision is made at the last minute. I wish leadership would acknowledge that this is the new normal; we can't go back to fully in-person.

---

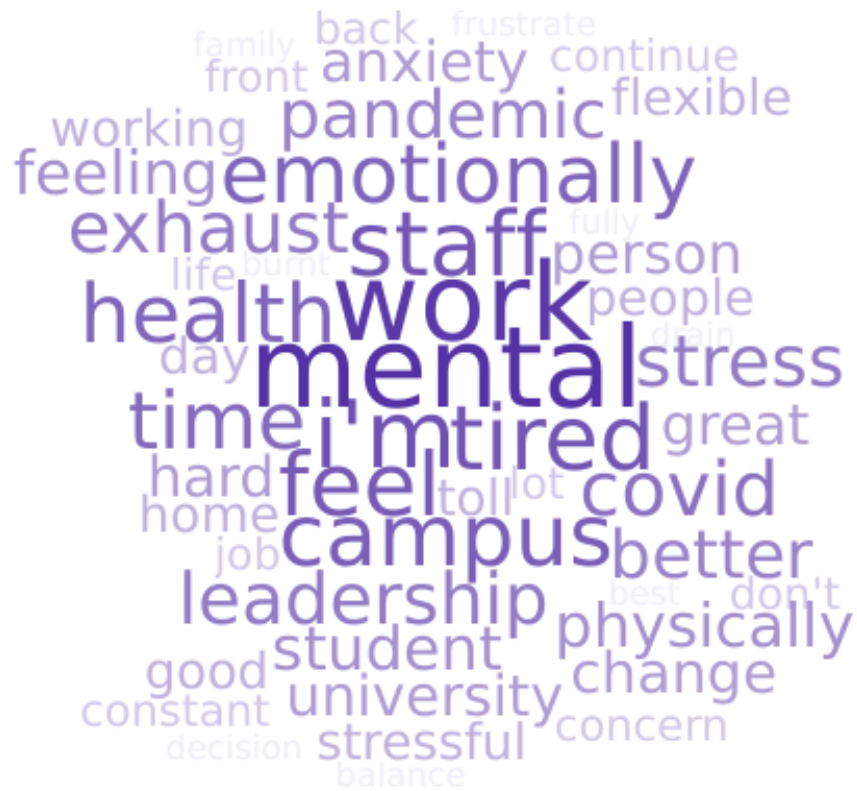
I am tired. I am mostly tired because there seems to be an expectation or messaging that things are "heading back to normal" or that they are "back to normal". None of this is normal, and our students are also not back to normal. We are all dealing with many of the same things we were 6 months into the pandemic. Exhaustion is my new normal.

---

---

I'm more tired, anxious, and depressed than I've ever been. I have nothing left for myself. Sadly, I dream of work. I work on weekends. Other people working remotely, including students, creates an expectation of unbridled access to my time and labor. I'm not okay, and it is because the UW will not allow it. Let me be very clear: UW leadership, not our students.

### Appendix F: Word cloud visualization for Question 3



## Appendix G: Question 4

Has the pandemic impacted your life outside of work? If so, how? (are you struggling with childcare, have you been able to travel, has a partner lost a job, etc.)

**Responses** (redacted for clarity and personally identifying information):

---

Yes. It's made it difficult to see my support network and to travel to visit family and for pleasure. It's also made it difficult to stay physically healthy in some ways without access to gym facilities in the winter.

---

Yes. Being a full-time working parent is much harder than [anyone] could even imagine during this pandemic.

---

Yes. [I am] struggling with relationships, [and] struggling to have hope.

---

Yes.

---

Yes, just like most people.

---

Yes, I've had less ability to participate in activities that help me recharge because of my caution about limiting exposure

---

Yes, I lost a close relative and another dear friend. I do not travel or socialize as I am high risk.

---

Yes, family concerns about transmission are just not mellowing with time.

---

Yes, [my] roommates have lost jobs, [they] have not been able to travel to see family, [and I have] little to no social time.

---

YES - Omicron is upending my childcare plans again. [M]y family lives out of state and my spouses' lives in another country, so we feel very alone.

---

We still are not going out to eat, [or] socializing, [or] traveling, etc. It's stressful.

---

We haven't traveled to the east coast (hometown/family) in over two years.

---

Travel and vacation have been wildly reduced. My wife lost 2/3 of her training hours (she's an exercise trainer). The lost income isn't helping.

---

The pandemic does not make things easy. My partner [lives out of the country] and it has been a struggle to not see them for quite some time. My partner also has trauma and psychological problems where it requires me to practice mental health positivity.

---

The limitation of social interaction has made it mentally challenging.

---

Social interaction and childcare [have been impacted by the pandemic].

---

Primarily in interruptions to, and delays and issues with mental and physical health services.



---

Other than the mental, emotional, and physical aspects of my life, the pandemic hasn't impacted our finances, family, or family activities.

---

Of course. Everything just takes so much longer to do. I also have a child who is potentially vulnerable. It's all just a mess.

---

Not really. I have a good home office and my home life is decent.

---

No.

---

No major issues outside of work aside from less in-person interaction with friends.

---

No

---

My partner was furloughed at the beginning of the pandemic. Over half of my family members have contracted Covid-19, including one (my brother in his 20s) who had serious health complications and needed surgery.

---

My partner lost a job, which means I am forced to do everything (i.e., work in-person even though I'm not comfortable) to keep us financially afloat.

---

My partner and I have been mostly fine at home (minus some early pandemic unemployment issues for my partner).

---

My life has been turned upside down financially and I am really struggling to pay bills etc.

---

I'm fine at home.

---

I tested positive for covid this week which disrupts all aspects of my life, including work. I am vaccinated and received my booster two weeks ago.

---

I miss seeing friends and gathering socially; that is how I relax, rejuvenate, and rebuild my energy. I feel very disconnected from my community.

---

I just don't go places as much anymore.

---

I have a daughter going to preschool and I'm having hard time to accommodate last minute school closures and finding [a] temporary care giver.

---

I find it harder to balance work and home life. As a manager, I see the same struggles in my employees.

---

I don't have childcare full time. Waitlisting lists are a joke and on top of that, the cost of childcare is going up.

---

I am [s]truggling with childcare; [my] partner is an essential worker, so I need flexibility (which I don't always have). [Things are] tighter financially.

---

I [h]ave not seen immediate family since summer 2019. They are in Europe

---

Having elementary school aged children and juggling all their challenges hasn't been easy.

---

Everything is okay here.

---

---

Elder care! I miss the personal things but the additional task of elder care due to staff shortages in the elder care service industry has been stress[ful].

---

Absolutely. I live with my elderly parent. We have to be very careful about exposure.

---

[There is] no travel and [I experienced the] loss of a parent.

---

[There has been] no impact.

---

[There are] less opportunities to engage in self-care, making work life balance much harder.

---

[The impact of the pandemic at home has been] childcare and school closures due to COVID, [and] not able to connect socially with friends anymore.

---

[My] partner lost [their] job. It took a year before they felt safe enough to apply for a new job.

---

[My] partner lost [their] job in 2020 at the start, but fortunately [they have] found a new job.

---

[I deal with] elder care and trying to make time amid covid to take parents to appointments. It is just more stress.

---

[I am] unable to travel - unable to feel like I can "live" freely.

---

[I am] struggling with isolation at home.

---

[I [h]ave lived alone, [I] haven't traveled, [I have] not seen my families, [and] the commute is dark and stressful.

---

[Because of the pandemic, I spend] reduced time out of the house.

---

I have been fortunate in this regard.

---

I have been blessed throughout this time, but I know that this can't be said for everyone. Single parents know the struggle and hardships that the pandemic has now highlighted very nicely for everyone (childcare, financial insecurity, job insecurity) The pandemic has provided options for me through this time to work from home when an emergency comes up and I don't feel overwhelmed as a single parent by losing money when my child is sick. Keeping everyone holistically healthy is my impact.

---

[Some of the impacts include: the] inability to socialize with friends and family on a regular basis, traveling to be with family who reside outside the country, the fear of gathering and completing other mundane tasks that involves being around others (ex: grocery shopping).

---

Struggling with childcare as our child is now staying home for virtual learning. Travel has been limited to see family after everyone had been vaccinated.

---

The pandemic has impacted every aspect of my life. I count my blessings that I have not lost a loved one to COVID-19 and that my partner and I still have our jobs. I see the most impact with my child, and, when something negatively impacts my child, all my

focus and energy goes into that until it's resolved. The amount of stress is too much to articulate properly.

---

Yes, I wasn't able to travel back home to visit my family and care for family who were sick.

---

My spouse's workplace (public school) is not supporting staff with adequate PPE and support, and he feels trapped in his job.

---

I have not been able to travel much, although I did get a chance to see my elderly father last spring. I don't see many people otherwise.

---

Everything is okay outside of work.

---

No, luckily, I feel that the pandemic has not impacted my life outside of work anymore so than just the typical limitations.

---

Childcare options are minimal and scary. Constant change has me in fight or flight mode way too much. I [am] on a 7 month waitlist for counseling. Will not be able to celebrate a milestone birthday.

---

Through this pandemic, I have had to play a significant role in the education of my younger family members

---

I have been unable to see members of my family, it has caused me to lose track of friends, and I have been unable to do many of the things I love

---

Not particularly. My husband works from home now. And we have been able to see family a little less.

---

Dynamics in the family are rougher based on differing levels of concern. We are all aware and safe but some of us have gotten too concerned.

---

Yes. I have friends and family who contracted COVID and passed away.

---

Fine.

---

I have not been able to plan well for my family and our needs for childcare, and especially summer care, because I never know if we will still have remote options for work from one quarter to the next, and what type of remote work flexibility we will have.

---

[I] cannot travel internationally/ out of state easily and [I face] polarizing view on vaccination with spouse/partner/close friends

---

[I have] concerns about going out in public, or even shopping when people do not wear their masks.

---

I have very little life outside of work because I am committed to keeping myself and others safe by not going anywhere. But yes, our household has lost income, I am not able to pursue jobs I want, my friends are constantly in danger, I know many people who have been sick, etc.

---

I [w]as unable to travel and see our families who live internationally, causing us to feel very isolated without a support system. Also, [I am] struggling to find childcare for after I deliver.

---

[I have] anxiety about sending young children to daycare.

---

[My] partner lost their job.

---

Childcare is a big issue, [as] I only have part time childcare. Waitlists in the area are not advancing, therefore I can't be in the office full time. I need flexibility, and without it, I will be forced to quit.

---

Yes, we don't see as many people as before. In the last six months, however, after receiving vaccinations, we did start to travel more to see friends and family. Childcare closed for three weeks due to COVID.

---

I have lost a lot of wonderful opportunities and my schooling was put on hold.

---

Yes, but I'm just glad to be alive. I can forgo long distance travel and events with large crowds if it means my family and I are safe.

---

Other than canceled travel plans, I've been very fortunate to not experience many challenges outside of work.

---

I have experienced personal losses of loved ones and the loss of a lot of activities and experiences I used to enjoy. It is hard to give up things I did to recharge so that I can keep myself healthy to be exposed at work. It is hard that our leadership does not acknowledge this disease has killed many.

---

I am immunocompromised and so is another member of my household. So, we have been as safe as possible. This means we have not been as connected to our community as much as we'd like.

---

The hybrid schedule option has had a net positive effect on my life. I would not want to go back to full time in person.

---

Yes, but it's been manageable. I haven't been able to travel, and I do more online shopping than in-person for things like groceries because I live with elderly relatives and want to keep them safe.

---

No, my husband is not travelling for work, so I actually have more parenting support.

---

It has been challenging to manage childcare.

---

We can't ignore that the pandemic has affected all parts of life. [I have done] no travel in order to keep myself and other vulnerable populations safe.

---

As mentioned in my response above, I am fortunate enough to have been minimally impacted, financially. I've been able to take some mental and physical time away from work to rest and recharge. In some ways it has affected my family relationships for the better and some for the worse. I help my neighbors and my community whenever I can, because that is all I can do.

---

I [c]anceled my wedding, [and I was] not able to travel to see family.

---

My husband is not working at this time and it is challenging for our family.

---

While my kids are in elementary school, there is still no childcare offered before or after school at their locations. I am concerned that the university will not continue to support parents dropping off/picking up kids at school times even though we don't have options back that we used to pre-Covid. [I] have had to cancel many travel plans and limit family gatherings. Am concerned about long-term impact on my kids not being able to participate in group sports and extracurricular activities.

---

[Impacts include] childcare, [and the] ability to travel.

---

Yes, I am watching the people around me contract COVID while being as safe as possible.

---

Childcare has been a challenge - but only for those times when school is not in session. There is very limited summer care/camps. And before and after school care has also been impacted, but we have found a way to manage these pieces

---

[I am] rying to keep two high risk family members safe and a son who cannot be vaccinated because of medical issues.

---

My spouse is immunocompromised, and my adult daughter is third term pregnant. I've been voluntarily testing at least once each week

---

Yes, my life has changed greatly over the past two years. Life is not like 2019 with meals out, movies or travel. [I have] set up a home office and moved to working hybrid, [and my] co-workers have no boundaries on what time they contact me about work related stuff!

---

I'm currently seeking mental health care due to the trauma I've been dealing with.

---

My sibling/roommate lost their job and is still not working so I am supporting both of us and have been for over a year. I have had so much trouble sleeping due to anxiety that I am constantly tired.

---

[Impacts at home include:] no travel, [and the] kids are struggling.

---

I'm thankful that my spouse and I have jobs and that our children have childcare and school. Even so, we struggle to adjust when, say, my son's school closed for two weeks due to an outbreak or one of the kids gets a cold then we have to scramble to find a test. Stuff like this has been a regular feature of the past few years and makes for a chaotic and highly stressful life. I know this is true for others in the UWT community, but our experiences don't seem to factor into decision making.

---

Yes. I need to support my in laws who (because of the pandemic lost their jobs/retired). My husband has to be at work, because they are considered essential, and it has placed a large burden on him.

---

The constant school disruptions for my kids have been difficult to manage.

---

---

No.

---

I am generally only socializing with close family (bubbled). Like everyone, COVID is now a consideration which makes you calculate your possible exposure in any social interaction or interaction in the public sphere.

---

[I have] mentally and physically deteriorated.

---

I have really stopped going out to the store or restaurants. Luckily my wife is willing to go, but I would say I may have been to an outside business maybe a dozen times over the last couple of years.

---

My childcare was definitely impacted. My family and I have not traveled since 2019. We are feeling the rising costs of living.

---

[It is] safe to assume there is not a single person on the planet who has not been impacted by the pandemic. All areas have been impacted: finances, mental health, and physical health....

---

There is no life outside of work. I exist purely to work. There is increased labor in my house to keep it safe for my young children. There's increased labor because one of my children does not have childcare, so we provide full time care while also working full time outside of the home. I haven't seen my family in over three years. I'm the primary breadwinner. I didn't get maternity leave because my partner lost his job.

#### Appendix H: Word cloud visualization for Question 4

