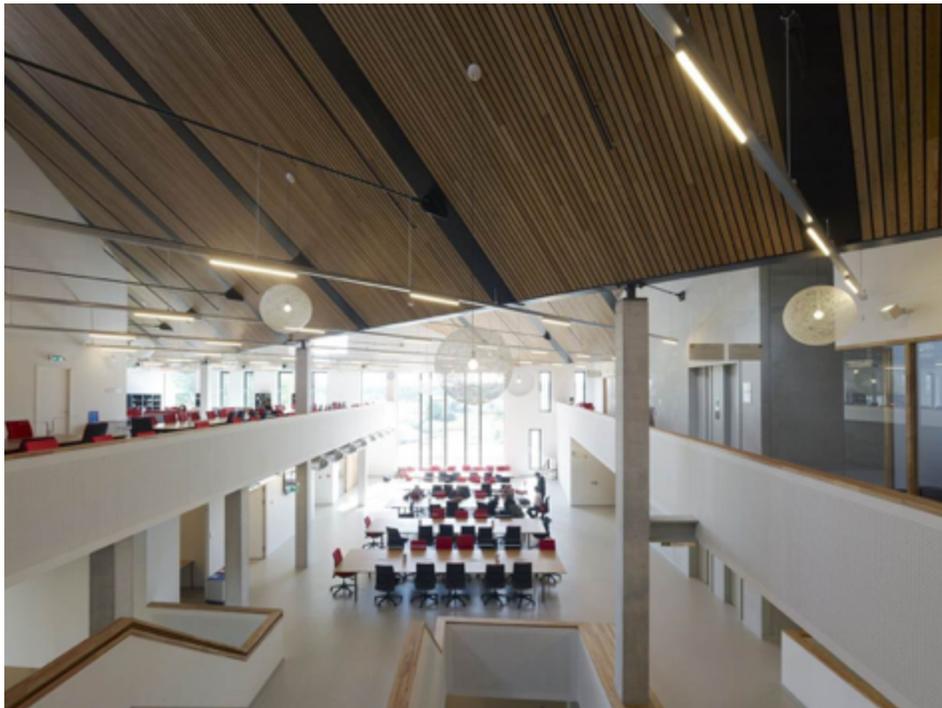


Amsterdam University College, Winter 2015-16

# STAFF SPEAKS

Results from a survey of AUC staff

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## Introduction

For many AUC staff, issues surrounding work pressure have been a continual challenge. Just over a year ago, these issues played a large role in the formation of an FNV union chapter, the AUC Bedrijfsledengroep (BLG). In the calendar year 2015, many AUC staff attended open meetings that were organized by the BLG as a platform for AUC employees to discuss concerns and ideas for improving working conditions. During these meetings, issues of work pressure were highlighted as a specifically pressing matter.

Over the past calendar year, the BLG met with the AUC Extended Management Team (EMT) to discuss work pressure. This resulted in the recognition on behalf of the EMT that work pressure at AUC is a broadly shared experience that demands attention. In addition, the EMT announced that the UvA is in the process of setting up a working group, to take stock of and propose ways to address this and other concerns which were exposed in last spring's annual medewerkersmonitor.

In response to signals that work pressure is too high at AUC, the BLG prepared a questionnaire that was specifically tailored to AUC staff to further clarify the scope and causes, and also to solicit input towards possible solutions. The questionnaire is largely based on employee satisfaction surveys of educational workers in the Netherlands and the U.K., honing in on staff needs and core issues: what we all want and need to succeed and to continue to develop as professionals, be it as tutors, academics, administrators, or coordinators. The survey pays special attention to the impact of work pressure on staff's health and wellbeing.

AUC's bedrijfsledengroep has striven to conduct this staff questionnaire and summarize the results in an unbiased and objective manner. By also publishing the raw data from the questionnaire's open questions, we invite our colleagues and supervisors to begin an informed and broader dialogue on work pressure.

More than forty AUC staff members responded to the request to complete the survey. The combined quantitative and qualitative data provide a comprehensive picture of the experience of staff at AUC and the challenges ahead. We would like to thank our colleagues for their contributions and we hope that this input can be utilized to strengthen AUC via improving

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working conditions and helping managers, lecturers, and administrators to better understand each other's challenges and concerns.

## part 1 - survey questionnaire data

### Participants

The questionnaire was sent to 56 core faculty and administrative staff members, comprising the non-management team employees on the available AUC contact list. Forty one AUC employees participated, of whom 33 faculty and 8 admin team members. According to the AUC contact list from fall term 2015, 72% of the core faculty participated in the questionnaire and 53% of the admin team. These high participation rates suggest that the results are broadly representative. Note that the data reported here refer to sample values, not population values (=all employees).

### Data

#### 1. Overtime

The questionnaire asked participants to identify the size of their contract and also the amount of time they spend working each week. On average, AUC employees in this sample work 30 hours a week, according to their contract. In reality, the average hours worked is 42,5. This means that on average, AUC employees who filled out the questionnaire work 41% overtime (12 hours more than stated in their contracts on average, weekly). For an employee with a 1.0 fte (full time) contract, this average overtime is equivalent to two extra full days, thus a seven day work week.

#### 2. Stress levels and factors

Given the choices of "low, mild, moderate, high, or extreme", 56% of the AUC employees who filled out the questionnaire indicated their stress levels as "high", and 37% indicated their stress levels as "moderate". As the leading cause, 'Volume of the work' was ticked by 86% of the respondents as a reason for their moderate to high stress levels (see Table 1 below).

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<b>Reason for stress</b>	<b>Number affected (N = 41)</b>		<b>Percent</b>
Volume of work		32	86%
Nature of the job and its responsibilities		22	59%
Physical work environment		8	22%
Personal health issue		3	8%
Problems at home		2	5%
interaction with certain colleagues		5	14%
interaction with certain superiors		17	46%
interaction with certain students		3	8%
Other		4	11%

Table 1. Sources of stress

Specific job-related factors that contribute to stress are listed below in Table 2, ordered here by the number of people who indicated them as 'stressful' or 'very stressful'.

	<i>Occasionally stressful</i>	<i>Stressful</i>	<i>Very stressful</i>	<i>Total number of responses</i>
Having to neglect some tasks because I have too much to do	9	15	15	39
Continuous high work load	10	9	18	37
Lack of career development opportunities	8	10	17	35
Insufficient time for scholarship and/or research	3	10	16	29
Long working hours	9	14	12	35
Need to hit targets/deadlines	12	15	11	38
Teaching new courses	6	11	14	31
Lack of promotion prospects	9	12	12	33
Lack of regular breaks	7	14	9	30
Dealing with competing demands – unable to plan working day	14	14	9	37
Administration	13	16	7	36
Increased workload	14	8	13	35
Work interferes with my family and social obligations, or personal needs.	12	8	13	33
Lack of participation in decision making	11	10	11	32
Work linked to deadlines & targets	17	15	6	38
Lack of participation in decision making	8	9	11	28
Lack of management support	14	13	7	34
Work environment: shared office space	17	9	10	36

<i>continued from previous page</i>	<i>Occasionally stressful</i>	<i>Stressful</i>	<i>Very stressful</i>	<i>Total number of responses</i>
Lack of management support	11	10	9	30
Not able to exert control over demands made	14	10	8	32
Lack of funds/resources/ support to do the job	8	10	8	26
Efforts not valued	8	10	7	25
Lack of support in job role	9	8	8	25
Feeling that your work is not valued	10	6	9	25
Given responsibility without the authority to take decisions	11	8	7	26
Feeling work not valued	8	8	7	23
Dealing with new policies/standards/procedures	19	13	2	34
Insufficient admin support	16	6	8	30
Presenteeism – feeling unable to take time-off sick	15	7	7	29
Lack of information about what is going on	11	4	9	24
Conflicting demands in job role	14	8	5	27
Limited or no access to training	14	5	7	26
Job changes without consultation	11	7	5	23
Lack of communication with staff	9	7	5	21
Lack of funds/resources to do the job	9	7	5	21
Staff appraisal	17	6	4	27
Bullying behavior from manager(s)	13	7	3	23
Unclear job description	13	3	6	22

<i>continued from previous page</i>	<i>Occasionally stressful</i>	<i>Stressful</i>	<i>Very stressful</i>	<i>Total number of responses</i>
Over competitive/ confrontational institutional culture	12	5	4	21
Inspection/auditing processes	14	7	2	23
Dealing with conflictual situations	19	3	3	25
Feeling isolated	9	3	2	14
Poor pay prospects due to temporary contract status	1	2	2	5
Dealing with aggressive/violent behavior	4	2	1	7
Lack of facilities, eg photocopiers	7	2	1	10
I am the subject of discrimination	5	3	0	8
Dealing with student behavior	27	2	0	29
I am the subject of harassment/bullying	6	2	0	8
Bullying behavior from student(s)	8	0	1	9
Bullying behavior from colleague(s)	5	0	1	6
Lack of facilities and support due to temporary/part-time contract status	4	0	0	4
Poor pay prospects due to temporary contract status	1	2	2	5

Table 2. Factors that create work-related stress in order of importance. Data reflects the number of people in the sample who identified each factor as 'occasionally stressful', 'stressful' or 'very stressful'.

### 3. Mental Health

Of the respondents in the sample, 55% report feeling over tired while working (see Table 3) either '*often*' or '*all of the time*'. Data are listed below in Table 3 in order of importance as indicated by the number of people who checked the item as '*often*' or '*all of the time*'.

	<i>Never</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>All of the time</i>	<i>Total number of responses</i>
Over tired	1	7	10	14	8	40
Frustrated	1	7	16	13	3	40
Anxious	9	5	11	10	5	40
Unable to concentrate	4	8	17	8	3	40
Irritated	1	9	20	9	1	40
Helpless	10	10	10	10	0	40
Angry	3	18	12	6	0	39
Depressed	13	13	9	5	0	40

Table 3. Mental health complaints listed in order of importance, with the number of respondents who report experiencing feeling irritated, angry, frustrated etc 'never', 'rarely', 'sometimes', 'often', or 'all of the time'.

#### 4. Stress-related psychosomatic health problems

The most important stress-related psychosomatic problems identified by the respondents were exhaustion, inability to concentrate, and poor sleep patterns. Data are listed below in Table 4 in order of importance as indicated by the number of people who checked the item as 'often' or 'all of the time'.

	<i>Never</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>All the time</i>	<i>Total number of responses</i>
Exhaustion	4	7	12	12	6	41
Inability to concentrate	5	8	14	11	2	40
Poor sleep patterns	3	7	18	6	6	40
Low self-esteem/confidence	16	10	7	6	1	40
Erratic moods	14	8	12	5	1	40
Headaches/migraine	13	12	10	4	1	40
Aches and pains	16	5	13	4	1	39

<i>continued from previous page</i>	<i>Never</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>All the time</i>	<i>Total number of responses</i>
Anxiety	13	10	12	3	2	40
Burnout	15	11	9	4	1	40
Indigestion	28	6	3	1	2	40
Depression	15	11	11	3	0	40
Changes in appetite	26	2	9	3	0	40
Increased consumption of tobacco	34	2	2	1	1	40
High blood pressure	29	5	4	1	0	39
Asthma	36	0	3	1	0	40
Heart disease	40	0	0	0	0	40

Table 4. Health complaints listed in order of importance with the number of respondents who report stress related health complaints such as poor sleep patterns, exhaustion, or inability to concentrate.

## 5. Career prospects

The questionnaire also asked about support for career development and career ambitions. The career development opportunities offered by AUC are perceived as insufficient by 79% of the respondents (see Table 5a). Five years down the road, 27% of respondents can envision themselves working in their current post at AUC, whereas 64% see themselves working at another establishment (see Table 5b).

<i>Has AUC offered you adequate opportunities to develop your career (beyond AUC)?</i>			
Yes		8	21%
No		31	79%

Table 5a. Career development at AUC

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<i>What do you see yourself doing five years from now? (multiple answers possible)</i>			
Working in the same post		11	27%
Working in a promoted post		13	32%
Working for another establishment in a similar post		6	15%
Working for another establishment in a promoted post		20	49%
Change career – eg. no longer teaching		12	29%
Retired		1	2%
other		4	10%

Table 5b. Career ambitions of AUC staff (multiple answers possible)

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## part 2 - raw data: responses to open questions in the questionnaire

**Question: *Work pressure: Solutions. What are the two things, which would make a significant difference to the stress concerns identified above?***

**answers:**

fulltime work for fulltime pay (being paid for all the work I do) career opportunities

More hours per course, research/development time built into the contract

professionalisation of management or rotation of management positions.

Increased certainty towards career progression and professional development opportunities.

Reduction in responsibilities while remaining at full-time status (e.g., fewer tutees).  
Scheduled holidays during the fall semester.

More considerate treatment of staff and faculty members - in terms of valuing their work, hiring more qualified support staff, giving them clear instructions, creating a safe place to meet and discuss like a faculty/staff lounge. Equal treatment should also occur in terms of pay since there seem to be (gender?) inequalities when it comes to salaries - which is very disheartening and demotivating (e.g., when you find out that someone who started later, has less credentials, and less responsibilities (e.g., no extra committee or coordinating work) still earns the same what you are earning - of course you are happy for them, but it feels quite unfair that one does not earn more than them and one's hard work does not seem to be appreciated). Moreover, it would be great if everyone had their own office or at least if smaller offices with a max. of four people were created (which would enhance concentration tremendously) with enough space for their folders, books etc. and attached to it, these rooms should have their own meeting room, so tutees, colleagues, and students can easily find a lecturer/tutor and the faculty and staff do not have to move all the time with all their things, trying to find an available meeting room (which is also stressful). For instance, for enrollment, you can already put everything you need into that meeting room (placemats, timetables, course catalogues, certain forms etc.).

More breaks, co-teaching, more time for research and academic development

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Flexible work hours/allowed to work from home (also considering the busy office spaces); different semester system (8 weeks periods; so we can have time without teaching)

Increased internal communication/support, ability to take time off on short notice

Make sure that everyone can be replaced by a colleague, as a support staff member if you don't have a backup you feel constant stress due to the fact that you cannot take holidays without having to make up for the work yourself.

1. Review of hours allocated, especially for teaching tasks and course development. Among others, a more accurate allocation of hours system would need to be mindful of the following: the number of students one actually has per group or per year, the amount of prep work that goes into a course, and the question whether a course is new or not. Designing a new course needs to be supported with extra hours -- it adds heavily to the workload if a course is new! 2. The introduction of a serious and more robust professional/faculty development programme, that takes career perspective/career needs as a starting point. Also, on a related note, please start thinking about acknowledging levels of juniority/seniority, among others by abolishing that heinous (and profoundly inept!) nomenclature according to which we're all "teachers." On the model of other UC's in the Netherlands, AUC ought to give its permanent lecturers Assistant Professor rank, in acknowledgment that we are working on the same level as UD's. The teacher label is disrespectful and suggests we're working in some kind of academic back-kitchen. It makes me feel undervalued.

A somewhat slower work pace

1. 'Flex hours' or some acknowledgement in workload to cope with the extensive hidden demands around admin, student emailing/meeting, department meetings etc. 2. More admin support and less bureaucratic workload (filing reports, checking enrolment in SIS etc)

don't know; to some extent I find it acceptable that there is work-related stress.

I need to feel ownership over my tasks. My opinion is taken into account and my contribution to the team is valued. The constant negative mood and cynicism of my superior does not only signal a lack of leadership skills, in fact it actively discourages me to reach my (and AUC's) full potential.

Go to bed earlier and read less at night.

I don't have many, but the thing that would help me most is the time to develop as an academic.

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A strong source of leadership, with defined goals and (fair) metrics measured that accurately represent the tasks which we perform. A more defined working space where it's not always acceptable to be interrupted.

1. time in our contracts to compensate the admin and institutional and professional development work that we do 2. realistic hours (50% more) given for teaching tasks (and capstone supervision)

Less teaching/tutoring, more research time, significantly increased pay.

0.2 fte per course, like at UvA and other universities we are paid per work done, hence:  
- additional time (fte's) for developing new courses - additional time for curriculum analysis and development (e.g. track analysis) Official reading week during the Fall semester

-More individual professional development time  
-An office of my own

At least a doubling of %fte for lecturing a course. Lecturing a course twice = 2 x %fte of lecturing a course once.

Pay according to the hours spent on the work i.e. pay that also accounts for administration hours and course development and design. Reorganization of tasks (e.g. assignment requirements) to make for less time spent grading. Eradication of the intensive period.

More qualified colleagues that together form a team: [...*personally identifying details deleted*...] Need senior colleagues with expertise in specific areas of communication.

1. Acknowledgment of the amount of work and contribution 2. More time allotted to tasks

1.) More accurate estimation of workload (account for administration, course preparation, time required to keep up-to-date with one's field, participation in not directly teaching or tutoring but often mandatory activities) 2.) Respect for and consultation of staff in decision-making and development of institution's policies (for example: curriculum development, hiring, managerial rotation system)

More support from the supervisor

Clear and realistic expectations about job tasks (on both sides) A sense that the work I do is appreciated/ recognised and sometimes (when appropriate) rewarded (not necessarily through salary)

Breaks in semester (16 weeks without breaks is too long and not family-friendly) and smaller shared offices.

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Extra time for professionalisation, and transparent hours allocation system

Extra support (i.e. paid time) to invest in course development  
Extra support (i.e. paid time) to invest in scholarly research connected with the courses taught  
More sharing of best practices amongst teachers  
More flexibility regarding continuous assessment  
Official reading week in Fall Semester  
More input of teachers into curriculum development & structure

1) close gap between core staff and management (how? talk to each other! for example in a staff room (see 3) or in staff meetings, a monthly meeting to discuss how things are going and to exchange thoughts would be helpful (twice a year is not enough), 2) we need more separate offices for staff to work/to grade 3) we need teacher's/staff room to take pressure off offices and to encourage contact between staff of different departments

Clearer, positive consultation and mentoring, identifying opportunities for growth and concrete goals. Tasks and responsibilities that speak to my strengths and interests, recognised by a manager who takes time to get to know me.

More hours for teaching. Opportunities for career development.

1) Reduce the number of assessments - [...*personally identifying details deleted*...] 2) Increase transparency in terms of task allocation, docent level, and address what feels like blatant favoritism. It's so obvious it's painful (but somehow many seem to think this is invisible). Create a management culture that listens and actually addresses problems rather than sweeps them under the rug. 3) get rid of midterm reports. It's really difficult to gain back lost marking time here.

- Realistic objectives re teaching activities (in terms of workload - i.e. if a teacher works twice as hard, a student does not learn twice as much; we need to find a balance here)
- Support by management for these objectives

Because of lack of research opportunities, I have to take up multiple contracts which leads to a stressful situation.

Improvements in the administration department. Better communication from senior management.

More hours for teaching Reduction in assessments (2 or 3 assessments instead of 4)

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**Question: *How do you feel about career progression opportunities within AUC?***

**answers:**

This team is a graveyard for ambition.

Well, the only way to further my career would entail a huge loss in freedom, so this is not really an option (but also, not really a problem either)

They are very limited. I don't so much care about the career, but more about academic development. I am an academic and I want to keep on learning, and I expect a university to value and promote that.

I feel that the roles are defined, as it's a small organisation, and especially to truly advance, extra training or time away from the company would be necessary (i.e. move to a company for a promoted post and return once achieved).

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Poor.

I think we need to develop a clear promotion trajectory analogous to the one that exists in research universities: Lecturer (perhaps, A and B), Senior Lecturer, something like full Professor, with the focus on teaching. Of course, the procedures of promotion should be fully transparent. The requirements for promotion should be either fully compatible with UvA requirements (they are not at the moment) or negotiated within AUC in an open and public manner.

I like AUC and I don't feel the need to have a different title or higher stature in the institution. That said I do need to feel like I'm progressing in other ways (Investment in my development, expertise, et cetera).

Career progression is non-existent if one doesn't want management tasks.

I am mostly unaware of any career opportunity developments within AUC if there are any. The Principal Educatorship is the only example I can think of, but it is temporary and not oriented towards a research career. It is also no longer offered at the current time.

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There are almost no career opportunities for admin staff.

I will not be able to grow at AUC, and another university will profit from my expertise and experience I gained here.

My above expectation that I might be working at a promoted post at AUC is based on an optimism that things can change at our institution, that current and future management will realize the current situation is untenable and exploitative. However, if the current situation would remain unchanged, AUC's employment comes down to the destruction of academic "intellectual" capital (burning up talented academics with a love for teaching, relatively early on in their career), by which the institution also jeopardizes its own ambition of academic excellence: first of all, word will get around that AUC is a dead-end job, making it harder to hire talented staff in the future; secondly, instead of deluding itself that the current situation is "good enough", AUC should have the ambition of improving its programme, level of teaching -- and the only way to achieve this, is by investing in its own staff.

It is unclear whether I'm able to progress in my AUC career or whether it would be necessary to leave the institution.

There aren't any.

No different from other unis

Career opportunities at AUC are limited to a teaching-only career, or a combination of teaching and management. I love teaching, but feel that to teach properly for the longer term I need to also invest in research. That combination (teaching and research, but with the focus on teaching) is unfortunately not possible at AUC.

I think it is improving (research time, plans for SKO, principal educator, internal vacancies for posts such as outreach coordinator, senior tutor)

Non-existent.

Very limited.

There are none. This should also be considered more broadly -- not only in terms of advancement through administrative tasks, but through forging research connections within this liberal arts and sciences context. We are totally isolated from both the VU and UvA. Also it feels very much as though anyone working under a .8 (or even a .6 in 'theory' because in practice we are all probably working a .8) is excluded from promotion prospects at AUC.

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For me personally they are quite limited; for starting teachers there are more opportunities.

Due to the fact that there is no research time included in my position at AUC, I feel forced to work with multiple contracts. This leads to stress. In the long run, if I find a position that allows me to combine research and teaching I will take it and leave AUC.

This issue should be taken much more seriously.

Extremely limited-- all senior positions are fixed, so there is no opportunity to be promoted.

**Question: *Please use the space below to provide any other information or comments you wish to make about your workload and factors affecting levels of stress.***

**answers:**

We work in an office space that seems designed for telemarketers, not academics. The work environment is symptomatic for the way in which our position as academic is devalued.

Suffering since [...*personally identifying details deleted*...] which debilitate my ability to [...*personally identifying details deleted*...]

Clear career paths and transparent allocation of career opportunities would help a lot. Also, rotation of management positions is common practice at regular faculties and should become a possibility in order to create career opportunities and in order to prevent management amateurism.

I maintain relatively low levels of stress because I work efficiently. But it would be better if I didn't have to take on as many additional responsibilities on top of teaching in order to maintain full-time status. I don't mind it that much, though, since that is what I was informed I would need to do before I signed my contract.

Some of the support staff who have been hired in the past years have taken on jobs that were initially considered part of jobs such as 'Director of Institutional Development'. However, now these tasks have been taken up by staff who are payscale 7 or 8. That of course automatically results in stress, as one would not expect so many responsibilities for such a low pay. In other words: If you get paid on a high salary scale you can and

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should expect many more responsibilities, and you accept them because of the seniority of your job.

See above. Many thanks for this initiative. First questionnaire I've seen in a long time that asks the right questions. Next step would be to abolish or boycott that official bi-annual medewerkersmonitor (is that the name?) which is much, much less attuned to our actual condition, problems, and needs.

None

General culture of work overload actively suppresses expressing levels of stress. Some acknowledgement or legitimation of the real overload in work every employee is asked to manage would at least reduce the culture of suppression in this regard, let alone taking steps to compensate or adjust for that workload.

Sometimes different tasks peak, which then creates stress. Those peaks are inherent to how we organized AUC (e.g. course enrolment).

I have found the first years at AUC extremely stressful, but currently I am allowed to teach courses I have taught before, so that significantly brings down stress levels. The type of subjects I teach are not very labour-intensive.

One of the largest sources of stress is the uncertainty that I feel from top management. I understand that the new Dean is not yet present, but the resulting lack of leadership in defining goals, both short and long term, creates stressful situations in which action is taken urgently instead of being planned. Without this base planning, it's difficult to predict tasks, plan workdays, or address long-term goals.

Structurally speaking, I don't have the feeling that our managers understand what drives us as teachers and what sorts of continuing professional development is necessary to teach successfully at the university level. The impossible workload and stress derived from it stems partly, IMO, from exploitative contract terms.

I'm actively looking into other jobs. AUC seems unclear as to whether they want to simply drain my battery or whether they are also interested in recharging and maintaining my battery.

Negotiating with the UvA/VU faculties and officially affiliating AUC faculty members with relevant faculties. This will not cost them anything because we are not paid by them and we do not need their office spaces or facilities. Faculties will just have to list us on their websites and add our names to their mailing lists. The benefit to them is that our publications, or grants received, are added to the list of these faculties' achievements; this is a win-win game for both university faculties and AUC!

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In general I don't mind working over the number of hours I receive, but I feel more resentful about doing this when the institution isn't investing in my development. There needs to be a consistent mechanism for each faculty member's professional development.

Teaching at AUC should be rewarded the same number of hours as teaching at VU or Uva.

The marketing & communication department did not have a proper manager for a long period of time after the burnout of its manager. While currently there is a 'team-leader' appointed, this does not fill the gap of a well qualified senior manager with commercial insights.

Ironically, if I wasn't suffering from a workload overload right now (i.e. today, with a pile of grading and classes to prepare) I would be able to expend the mental energy to evaluate the workload and possible solutions. Unfortunately there is the sense of being on a rollercoaster and not being to get off it until January and that AUC work takes priority over all other tasks (whether work-related or personal). I would like to achieve a realistic sense of work-life balance, but I feel that I need the support and not the judgement (i.e. that it's not about an inability to manage) of the institution in order to do that in a positive way.

Continuous assessment: one assignment should be able to count for more than 25% of final grade, so that we can have fewer assignments. More hours for courses, especially academic core courses. Smaller groups for writing courses.

It make a huge difference for workload and thus stress whether you are teaching a course for the first time or for the umptieth time. During the first year of teaching the workload was insanely high, almost double the official hours. I have since made sacrifices to the quality of teaching in order to keep the workload manageable. One consequence of that is lower teaching quality (though still excellent of course); another consequence is less job satisfaction.

Thank you for the initiative.

1) Hours should be allocated for designing a new course and for improving / developing existing courses. If the whole point of the BKO is that we shouldn't mechanically give the same lectures year after year (a sort of slow steady decline in quality), but reflect current research in our subject areas and pedagogical development, it seems ridiculous to assume that the initial investment in the course 'pays back' at some point. I've heard so often that 'the first time you teach it it's really tough, but it gets much easier later'. This is a myth fixed firmly in that old 'same lecture year after year' system that should be addressed. 2) Hours should be allocated for administrative tasks (I think most of us have been doing this 'for free') 3) Professional development -- there should be space for this

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and it should be rewarded in ways that matter. There should also be some acknowledgement that research takes many different forms (whether it is for developing a new class; keeping up with trends in your own subject area; publishing and attending conferences) so this artificial divide between 'teaching/tutoring' and 'research' should be adjusted to reflect the reality of what it is to be an engaged teacher and academic. 4) The assessment structure should be addressed. 5) Allow faculty the opportunity to give feedback on management culture/ style -- management should also be evaluated more locally rather than under the UvA scheme.

I have [...*personally identifying details deleted*...] contracts at the moment. AUC is the best employer of these [...*personally identifying details deleted*...]. This is not to say that there are no problems, but all things considered, I find the most stressful factor not the institutional structure at AUC, but the fact that there are no options to develop research/scholarship. As a result, I, and other colleagues, have to balance multiple jobs. This can lead to a stressful situation and the feeling that one is not 'at home' in any single institution.

**Question: *Has AUC offered you adequate opportunities to develop your career (beyond AUC)? Please elaborate your answer***

**answers:**

no opportunities were offered

No time for networking, working on grants or participating in career building conferences or academic events. AUC structurally tends to build our isolation from academic life which is becoming more extreme with every passing year.

I have been awarded research time. This was a long and tedious process (management needs to take responsibility for a transparent process, where managers not only make but also apply the rules - also to themselves, and communication needs to be improved!!). Research time so far is a tremendous benefit to my development.

I answered yes because I have no interest whatsoever in developing my career beyond AUC, so I don't need any opportunities.

They have allowed me to pursue a postdoc position next to my job in the past.

Well, I guess I was lucky with coordinatorships, committee work, new courses....

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In theory, the UvA offers ample opportunities to develop your career further. I think that with a clear plan and request it would be possible to take up all sorts of training opportunities. However, due to the high workload there is simply no time for me to participate in any sort of training.

1. The PE system needs to be rethought. 2. there needs to be more time for research (beyond a 0.2 appointment, beyond a three year term, and most importantly, extended to most permanent faculty or to all who are research active).

No.

AUC may be, or may not be, my last position - difficult to say right now. However, I would not want to prepare for a different kind of job so I find this question less relevant to me.

There was absolutely no training at the start of my professional engagement here. I can't take best practices concerning team management or the specific contents of my role with me to a next job since there is no policy or clearly defined practice.

yes, I have been asked to be in charge of other duties, but as mentioned above, this would lead to serious curtailment of freedom time-wise and timetable-wise.

There are possibilities to improve teaching skills, and that's great, but I would like the ability to develop academically.

No, and this is a bit of a pity. Being situated between the UvA and VU should present ample opportunities for career training and advancement, especially internally.

no, simply because there's no time or energy left in my body at the end of the day...

Part-time contracts can be defended, but it would help if teachers and tutors had an input in how their work would be divided across the year. This would allow for a much more efficient use of time.

No

I don't keep up with my field anymore. I'd like to have time to invest in my expertise. Even a .1/.2 would make a difference.

No, no funding for conferences for non-teaching purposes, no possibility of hiring doctoral students.

The BKO is a certificate that I can put on my CV for future teaching positions. However I learned little from the actual process and found it marginally useful in practice. This is limited to teaching, of course. There has been no career development opportunity

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towards research positions. In fact, the high workload contributes to making conducting quality research basically impossible.

It was stated that admin members can apply for funding to do a training or course for personal and career development purposes.

It has been suggested by management that if we want to develop in our careers, we should leave AUC.

Getting research time or a Principal Educatorship is made incredibly difficult and quasi-competitive, while all staff deserves time for research (to maintain their status as good researchers, which is also good for AUC's reputation; but also to keep up-to-date with one's field, so one can keep teaching courses that are up-to-date) and for professional development as teachers or managers (becoming better teachers, developing new skills, but also professionalisation with regard to Heads of Studies jobs, BoE position or other more "managerial" tasks). Right now, it is even the case, as a result of the inadequate compensation of hours for teaching, that staff are not just not offered any explicit opportunities via AUC to develop themselves, but they are in practice robbed of their time in which they could undertake these things themselves, as their teaching takes up most of their "free time", in which they would otherwise work on, for example, their research.

I have been offered training, but it's not clear how this will realistically equip me for a career beyond AUC.

Yes

No, but I don't necessarily expect AUC to help me developing a career \*outside\* AUC. There are (limited) opportunities for e.g. conference visits, and these can be very relevant for outside career development.

Some, have enrolled in one course to develop skills outside of AUC.

No. I am not a particularly good administrator, but am stronger in research and in using this to help students realize projects that they would like to take on voluntarily. Working on undergraduate research opportunities would be great; being given space to create better links with UvA and VU departments would be great -- but it's unclear how any of this could fit into any advancement structure (because there isn't any). When we have taken the initiative to help students pursue projects that they are interested in, it has always been on our own time and is largely unacknowledged.

Probably SKO

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No. This is understandable, as AUC is not a research university, but it means a limit on what staff can do with their careers at AUC. This also means that staff will not be high level researchers at AUC.

My student guidance work has been consistently undervalued or sabotaged by management. Tutors get insufficient opportunities for professional development and/or peer review.

**Question: *Is there anything else not covered by this questionnaire which you feel is contributing to your work-related stress? Please comment.***

**answers:**

AUC is a great place, but with further professionalisation of management and staff it can become even greater and more excellent!

It is a bit stressful filling out a questionnaire that asks the exact same things multiple times, as in Q6.

Yes, filling out this questionnaire.... Just kidding! Good work!

Simply put, I think the issue at hand is that AUC does everything a 'normal' university does, from timetabling, events, marketing, HR to communications, finances, admissions etc. etc. But simply due to the small scale of AUC that means that some people have to do multiple tasks with conflicting deadlines. I, for example, have similar deadlines for [...*personally identifying details deleted*...] etc. etc. as those cycles very much overlap each other. In a 'normal' university, each of these tasks would be with one taskholder, therefore that would be less stressful. So the solution is definitely not that simple for the support team.

Thanks for the initiative!

Would just like to add that the questions regarding management/supervision work pressure have been answered with respect to management on the whole, not with regard to my immediate supervisor.

To a large extent work pressure is something that is an individual experience. So if one feels the pressure is very high, I think it's good to look into other factors that might contribute. The desire of some colleagues to do research may be an important contributor to the experiences work load. However, they accepted knowingly a teaching-only job, and I find this criticism that AUC offers no research position particularly unfair to AUC. Furthermore, although I filled out the questionnaire honestly, I feel the right way to approach the issue of workload would be via the college council; I

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object against there being an unofficial organisation that ignores the formal possibilities. This is not conducive to making AUC a better place to work.

No. Thanks for this initiative.

I think it's great that this is being addressed.

I have filled in the questionnaire for my position last year in the [...*personally identifying details deleted*...].

AUC's only real claim to excellence (the teaching quality of its core faculty, the general dedication of its staff) is built on the free time of its employees. This is unfair and should stop.

It's hard to disentangle different sources of stress. Not all my stress issues are AUC related.

Thank you for making the questionnaire!