



UAT Survey Summary Report

Feb. 17 2022



“Our team went from eight people to just me.

I now report to three people, none of whom have any familiarity with the work of the faculty/dept. I am now responsible for covering off the portfolios of the four NASA team members they let go, with no additional pay or relief from other duties.

I am so stressed, but if I leave, there is NO ONE to take care of the students.”

RESPONSE RATE



Members raised serious and significant issues with the restructuring. The responses were overwhelmingly negative and we have provided only a small sample here.

25.1% of ASSUA members responded.



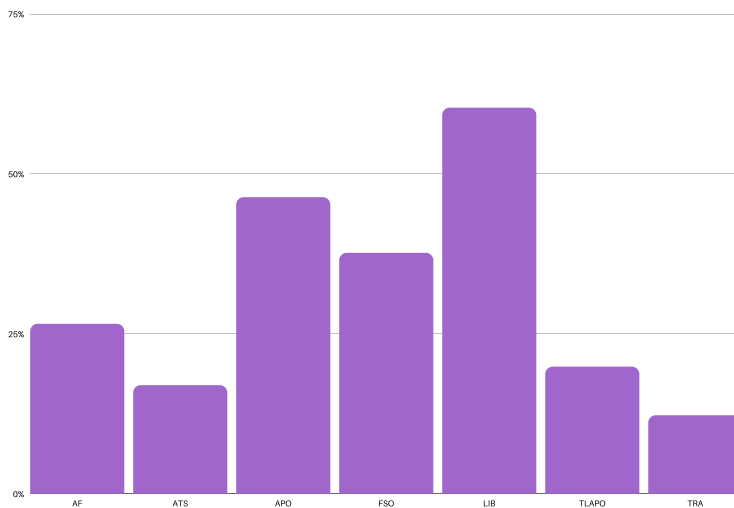
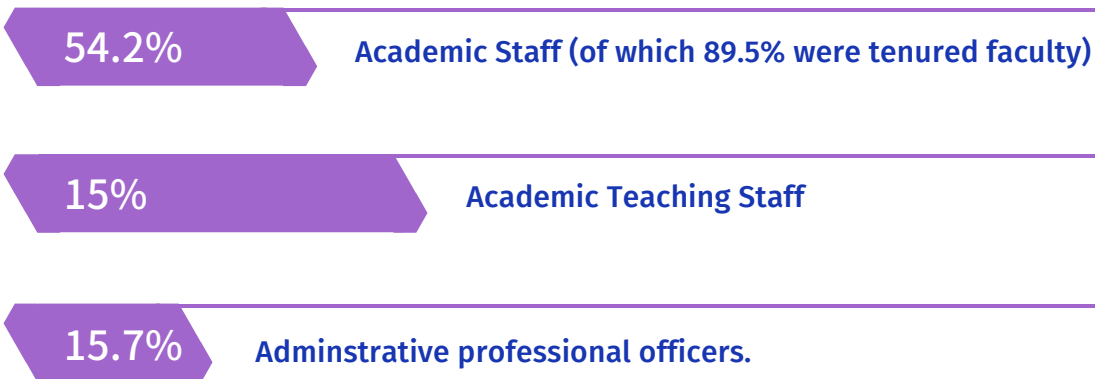
947

Members responded with concrete examples & comments of work being downloaded due to UAT restructuring.



564

RESPONSE BREAKDOWN



Survey Response Rate

Survey Response Rate	%	#
Academic Faculty Members (AF)	26.5%	513/1939
Academic Teaching Staff (ATS)	16.9%	142/840
Administrative and Professional Officers (APO)	46.3%	149/322
Faculty Service Officers (FSO)	37.6%	35/93
Librarians (LIB)	60.3%	35/58
Temporary Librarians and Administrative Professional Officers (TLAPO)	19.8%	22/111
Trust Research Academics (TRA)	12.2%	51/417

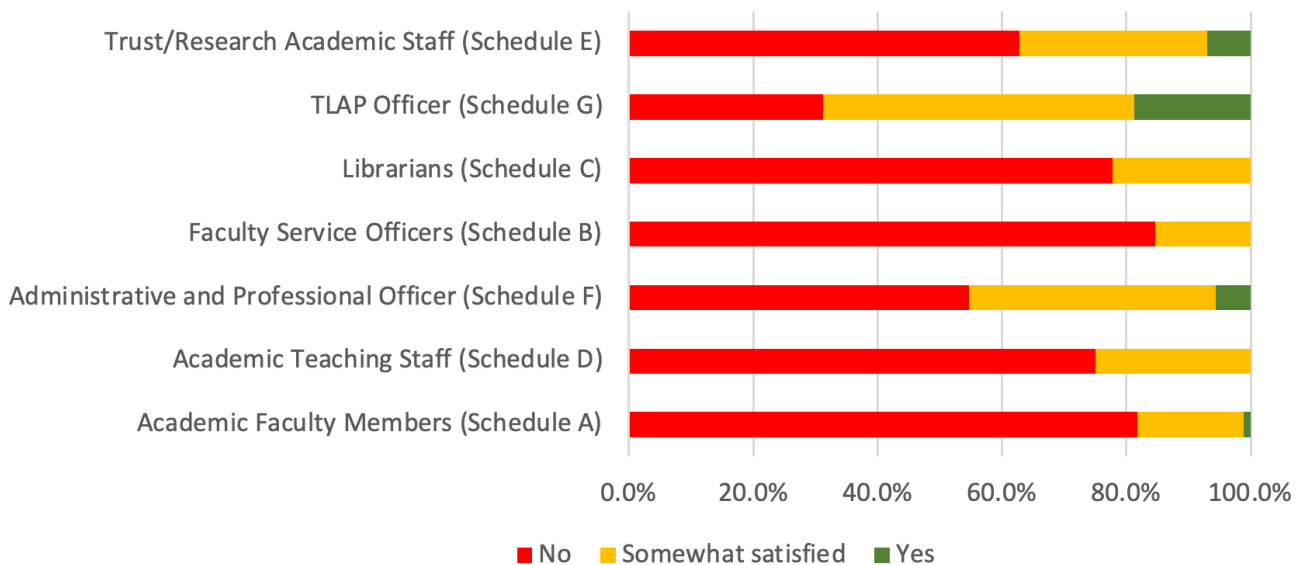
SATISFACTION



We asked these AASUA members their opinion about the current restructuring at the U of A. 75% indicated they were not satisfied with the restructuring, 22.9% were somewhat satisfied and 2.2 % were satisfied with the restructuring.

The group with the highest satisfaction for how the University is restructuring are the Temporary Librarian and Administrative Professionals with 68.8% somewhat or fully satisfied. Faculty Service Officers and Academic Faculty Members are the least satisfied with the restructuring with 15.4% and 18.2% somewhat or fully satisfied.

Overall, are you satisfied with the restructuring at the U of A?



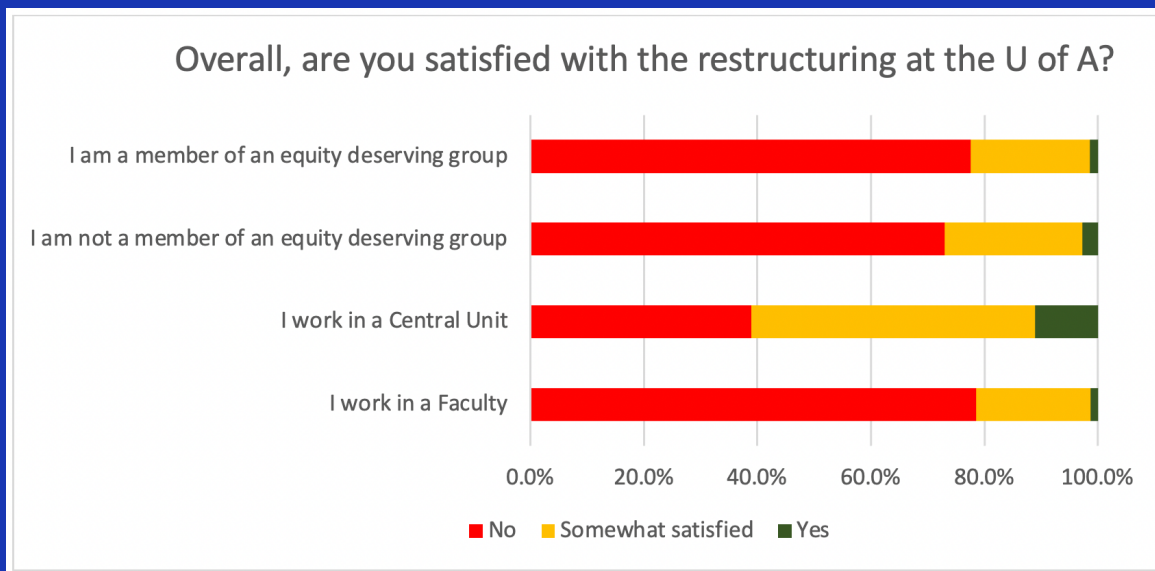
"The SET process has found efficiencies in one place but I never imagined how quickly they could completely destroy our unit. They've gutted a team recognized across Canada's academic libraries as a leader in innovative technical implementation and development, and reduced it to the equivalent of a community college."

"My experiences when trying to navigate the financial aspects of our work have also not been positive, particularly since the move to the new college model. One example is that paperwork was submitted for honorarium payment to an Elder which he did not receive until 2 months later."

We also looked at this question based on the **member's inclusion in an equity deserving group**. [1]

Members of equity deserving groups are slightly less satisfied (22.5% somewhat or fully satisfied) than our other members (27.1% somewhat or fully satisfied).

It is interesting to note the **large difference in satisfaction based on where the member works**. Members working in a Faculty were only 21.4% somewhat or fully satisfied with the restructuring, while members working in central units were 61.1% somewhat or fully satisfied.



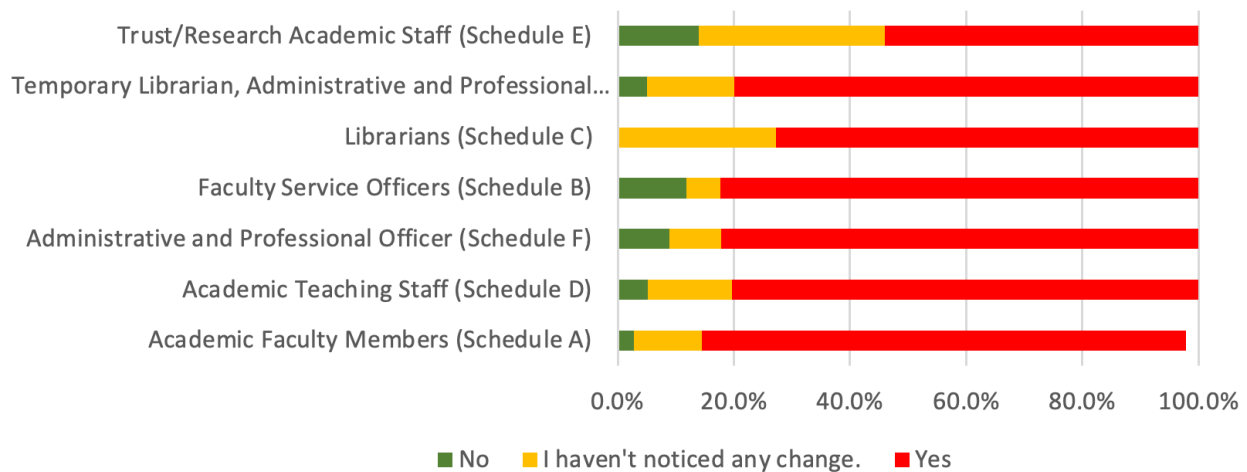
[1] Equity deserving groups are communities that experience significant collective barriers in participating in society. This could include attitudinal, historic, social, and environmental barriers based on age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, gender, nationality, race, sexual orientation, and transgender status, tec. Equity-seeking groups are those that identify barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination and actively seek social justice and reparations (Canada Council for the Arts definition)

IMPACT



We also asked our members if they were directly impacted by UAT or SET initiatives. 4.9% indicated they were not impacted and 11.7% indicated they have not noticed any change in the organization. However, overall 83.3 % of our members have been impacted by UAT or SET. The least impacted group is the Trust Research Academics with only 54% reporting an impact.

Have you been impacted by UAT or SET?

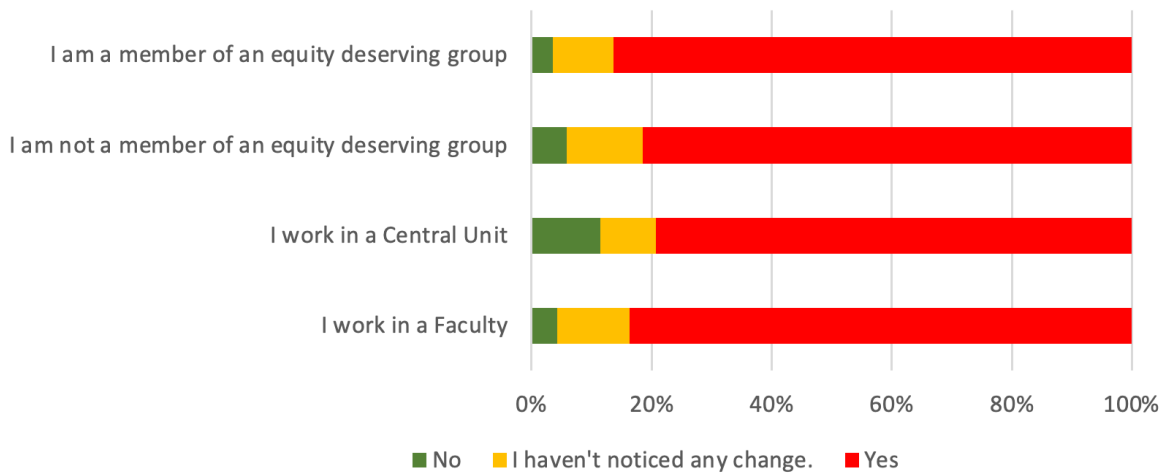


"I had to make changes to my marital status and benefits plan with Human Resources. Pre-UAT, this would have taken less than 30 minutes to pick up a phone and talk to my Faculty's designated person (emphasis on this loss). Under UAT, this took several hours of trying to navigate a badly designed webpage, getting locked out of said webpage, and then interfacing through email with two different levels of support."

"I have been trying to add research assistants to my shared drive for over a month. I have not been successful. I keep getting passed from one IT person to another. There is no continuity of service. It has taken me and my team much time. It has also delayed our tri council funded projects. It also exposes us to data security breaches."

"Credit card reconciliation, aspects of hiring and making claims from research grants are now in my inbox. I don't do these frequently enough and I feel like half my time is spent relearning how to do this all over again every time I have to do it for myself."

Have you been impacted by UAT or SET?



86.3% of our Equity deserving members report they are impacted by UAT or SET, as have 84% of our members working in Faculties.

"I am attempting to hire a PDF from outside of Canada, and the entire process is DIY. I received a folder of documents from HR that I can fill out and manage myself. There is no explanation of the process. I am not sure how to answer the candidate's questions. I am having to learn a lot about immigration, Visas, etc. just to hire a single person. This is very inefficient."

"I have had to take on extra duties re timetabling, course management, etc. that were done by an APO in the past. Now I have 1/6 of a dept manager to help. The central administration wishes to get rid of Associate Chair positions. I have one for undergrad programs, another for grad programs. Each gets 1 or 2 HCE course releases for their service in these roles. Who will do this work, if we are told we cannot have an Associate Chair?"

"F&O Safety group has been eliminated and Central HRHSE is supposed to do the same function. This has not happened. HRHSE is acting as "consultants" and "police" but not doing the work that was done by F&O Safety. This has left significant holes in our safety program and culture that we are attempting to fill and has impacted me specifically by adding safety policy creation, maintenance and additional duties in safety incident investigations."

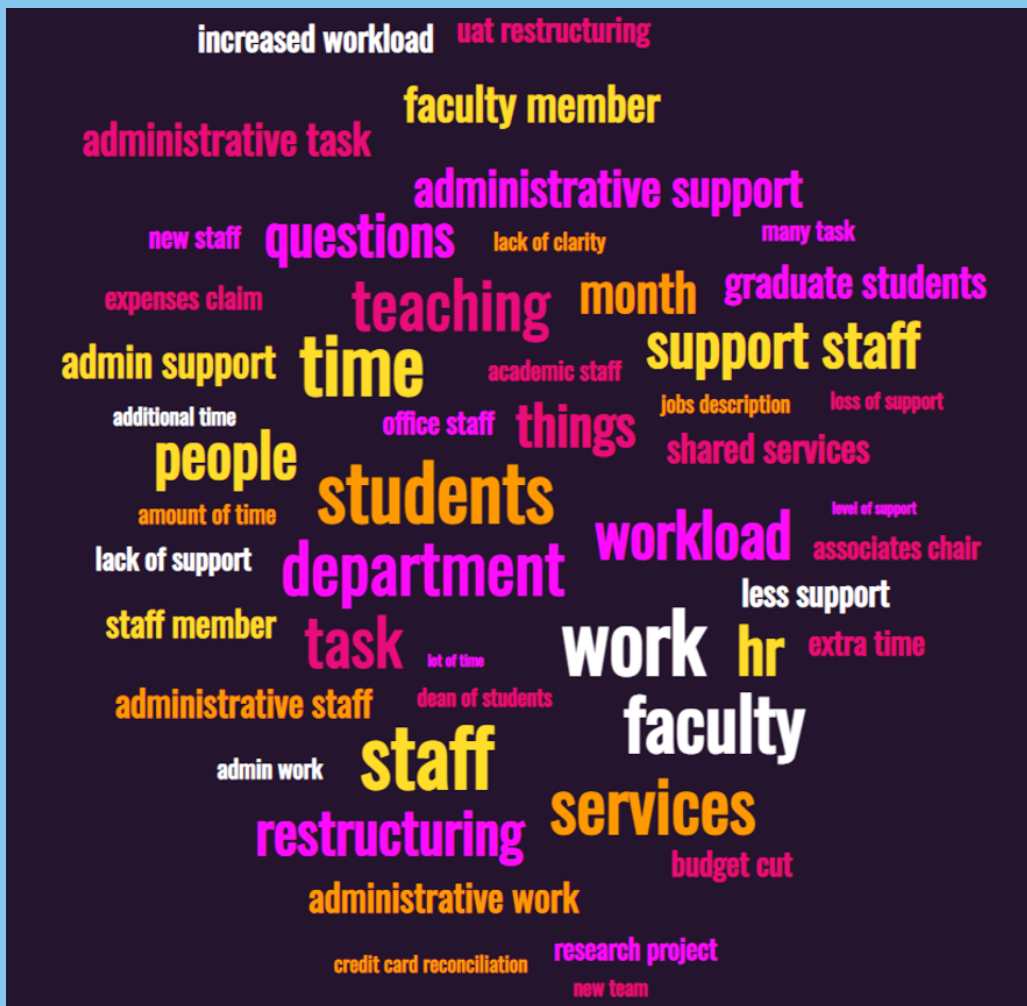
YOUR STORIES



These are just a few of the 564 stories our members have told us of how their workload has changed as a result of the UAT restructuring activities:



- As a new assistant professor, I have found the onboarding process to be very difficult, long, and confusing. Unfortunately, it set back key meetings and understandings that would have helped me start my research and service to the university quicker.
- My ability to communicate easily with undergrad advisors has decreased substantially. The few who weren't laid off now are tasked with supervising as many as half a dozen busy departments. They can't easily respond to questions, nor can they be expected to. On a related note, students are asking me for more and more degree-related advising because they can't easily access human consultation through their Faculty offices. Students are also requesting more and more mental health help because they can't easily access the services provided by the university. I am not trained to provide this sort of assistance.
- There aren't enough people to do the day today work that needs to be done. This has been most apparent in FEC and hiring processes.
- I'm currently completing tasks outside of my scope as I've had several different "supervisors" due to the restructuring and displacement.



- The UAT restructuring has added ~8 hrs per week to handle activities / reports / paperwork / financials / hiring / pay / grant reporting / logistic nightmares / etc. that were previously handled. This added workload has greatly affected my research and teaching abilities in the fact that my time and distractions to address once routine actions are no longer routine. I have also lost funding due to the restructuring and lack of oversight or inaction by various levels.
- There's been a redistribution of necessary work, a paring away of "unnecessary" but valuable work, and we have decided this year to put our research speaker series on indefinite hiatus – a real loss to our junior researchers and students who would normally benefit from the experiences.

- The office of the Dean of Students got rid of proctoring services in the fall for students with accommodations. I now have to come up with two versions of exams, one to be administered in person and the other online.
- Additionally, nothing is ever announced to anyone so it takes at times weeks to figure out how a service has changed. This is an utter waste of time that could be avoided if any senior administrators actually did their jobs, visited classrooms, or conducted research.
- I will need to manage a team of 18 teaching assistants, need to make sure all lab machines are running properly, and often need to physically reboot the down machines due to various reasons.
- I don't have a printer anymore,
- I have to schedule an appointment with the Tech in Ed group so that I can visit their office in another building so that I can use their printer. What used to take me 3 minutes now takes me 1-3 days, given the waiting and response time for the appointment, plus having to go to a literal other building to where the centralized printers have moved. It's the little things like this that significantly disrupt a workday.
- Academic advising responsibilities have significantly increased. Previously admin staff handled many advising issues, especially around process information questions such as adding and dropping classes. Now, not only is it very difficult to know what are the answers to many admin questions, but because of restructuring it is very difficult to get support to address the many advising issues that are falling to faculty members to answer.

- There are no longer research office staff who could be quickly consulted for clarification and direction. Now everything is online, items such as the instructions for starting a new project are outdated and one just does the best possible to fill out online forms and send them in for review by the first available person who does not know your research history and program of research.
- The SET experience has been a nightmare. A number of our highly trained technical staff (eg system administrators) have been “centralized” into IT services, leaving our technical team completely stripped of staff. However, the labour performed by these individuals has not gone away, and the new central IT unit is not providing these services back to our unit.
- A formerly stable and highly popular service provided to the university community is suddenly under threat of complete disintegration because the technical support is no longer there. Decisions related to SET are primarily undertaken by the assigned project managers with NO expertise (technical or otherwise) in highly complex library systems and programs.
- I have made the policy decision not to apply for any new grants until the dust has settled on research support services reorganization. This has been another giant mess, and no one has any idea who to turn to for help with grant-writing or even just getting the grant through the university’s byzantine processes (entirely designed for admin comfort, not to encourage faculty to apply). Nobody wants to be a part of an institution that is so obviously intent on degrading itself, and doing so with such mindless boosterism from the top. When things don’t work, faculty walk away.

- Loss of glassblower – facility closed – none at UA now. Huge delays in repairs – sometimes no elevators in a building with seven floors. Repair of cold room took six months. Cutbacks in cleaning and storerooms.
- Having to rewrite and redesign website content. Having to develop promotional/communication material for new programming. (Academic Faculty member)
- I now have to do multitude of clerical tasks that I had previously delegated to office staff. Even before UAT I was doing far too many things that are clerical, due to the volume of work and restrictions on resources over the past few years. Now UAT has made it worse. With my specialized skillset, knowledge and salary scale it is ridiculous for me to have to spend hours copying and transcribing reports and data and filing them, emailing people to schedule meetings, transcribing meeting minutes, distributing agendas, etc. Critical, necessary duties that we used to have support staff to do, I now have to do myself, or they won't get done. Some of these are tasks that the University as an institution is required to do as regulatory requirements, so there's no choice but to get them done. But it is a waste of resources to have highly paid people with extremely specialized knowledge do these necessary, time-consuming but relatively simple tasks that we used to have administrative support staff to do!
- Technology support has been severely diminished as a result of SET which has placed professors—in the midst of a pandemic—with online delivery in very difficult positions, sourcing and purchasing equipment that should be available through the university.

- I had industry partners lined up to help launch my new course. I was not informed that most of the support staff had been laid off and follow up meetings did not happen. I lost valuable time and trust with industry.
- I have noticed a significant slowing effect on the services around campus that I try to access. There is also less personalized service, where I am often communicating solely via email and being sent links, without opportunity for a phone call or meeting.
- Student accessibility services and eClass supports are considerably leaner than they were before the restructuring.
- When I try to order liquid nitrogen, nobody answers the phone, and nobody seems to check the answering machine because no liquid nitrogen has come... in fact, my lab has been without liquid nitrogen for more than a month, making rendering of our instruments unusable.
- The distribution of lab materials has been completely messed up – we were “consulted,” we told them it was a bad idea and wouldn’t work, they did it anyway, and now students simply go elsewhere as the excellent existing departmental hub for purchase and distribution has been completely broken in a clueless middle management project to re-organize. SET caused not only tremendous anxiety (of the “will I lose my job” variety), but transformed loyal, dedicated workers’ view of how the university values them. We now have even fewer people doing the same amount of work. I don’t know how this is even possible, but morale is very low. It hurts to see such excellent colleagues treated this way.

- In my role as project manager for a large research project, I've noticed that a lot of work related to finances and human resources are being downloaded onto myself and also onto the professor who I work under. I have had to set up Purchase Orders in SupplyNet (with little or no training). We used to have financial people who assisted with this. In fact, I was told by a financial person that this was the responsibility of the PI now. This is ridiculous that a PI should have to set up a PO. There are many things that I, who am not trained in the HR system at our university, should have to fill out a form to hire someone. I'm sure the number of errors associated with this request only makes things worse and slows things down even more. I would definitely say that the changes have downloaded many things onto the shoulders of PIs and myself, as a project manager.
- There is less support for budgeting when preparing grant applications. The transition has also led to the loss of three highly skilled administrators that I used to work with directly, in at least one case causing a project that I was responsible for, but did not have the rights to monitor myself, to go over budget, since nobody actually monitored it during the transition. The overage was also calculated incorrectly and I spent the larger part of two workdays requesting expenditure spreadsheets, asking for clarifications and calculating the actual budget status of the project.
- I cannot even communicate the many, many hours spent online trying to figure out how to do stuff. Uni services are a big black hole and there are NEVER emails or phone numbers for someone to contact with a question. I estimate I spend at least 2-3 hours per week trying to find my way around stuff online, only to never get an answer.

- As a consequence of re-structuring, appointments of staff (graduate students, visiting students, postdoctoral fellows) that used to take two or three working days from request to completion now take up to three or four weeks. Issuing CCIDs and OneCards also has become an issue – CCIDs are essential for working in my laboratory because they are needed for online training courses which, in turn, are required for lab access. Obtaining a CCID and OneCard now takes up to four weeks, which is a significant proportion e.g. for a 6 month visiting student or scientist.
- IST services have been less personalized and prompt. When I was on campus in the fall and experiencing difficulty, I was not able to get service (was estimated to be one week wait).
- Out of the blue, I was admonished by Shared Services to get a PCard and not submit expense claims for research. My department APO and the Assistant Dean of my Faculty had absolutely no awareness of this. It is a lot of work to get a PCard and wait for it to come and to activate it. This is more work. And, then to learn a new system to enter expenses (not that long ago, we had support staff in our department to enter our expenses). And, then the person approving doesn't know our work.
- From my perspective it's hard to disentangle the effects of UAT from those of other administrative changes taking place at the university. The "storeroom" in my department (Biological Sciences) used to take care of ordering special supplies and equipment for researchers, and no longer does so. We're now required to either go through the cumbersome SupplyNet system or use a UofA MasterCard.

- The Service Excellence Transformation has brought plenty of new managers at the expense of people who actually do something. Just one example highlighting where this is going: Immigration Services used to be a very helpful place where one could turn with problems related to visas for international students. Their email address is now discontinued and the user is referred to a general university services webpage that has absolutely nothing to do with this particular service, where one can leave an email in a general services mailbox. Absolutely pathetic. I will not get foreign grad students from non-1st world countries any more, as I cannot navigate the immigration hurdles alone.
- Work that would have normally been done by administrative staff in our department has been transferred to academic staff through committees. In my case, the main change is in the terms of the departmental research committee, as we are now asked to help our colleagues with grants (previously done by an administrative staff person who is no longer there).
- We've had significant disruptions to educational admin with impact to grad studies, medical students and residents.
- Research grant deadlines have not been met due to admin staff moves or deficiencies leading to missed funding opportunities. A lot of admin burden has fallen to faculty and chairs impacting our ability to fulfil the academic mission. I am organizing meetings, getting accreditation for events, doing meeting minutes, organizing zoom meetings, typing reference letters, doing CV and CCV updates for me and trainees (previously would have had some admin support), spending hours navigating new processes of which changes were not well communicated.

- With the loss of our Strategic Communications Manager, I'm required to provide more detail, putting my own communications plan together, and respond to the questions coming from various people working on our communications and outreach team. It was a lot easier and manageable when I worked with one contact who took responsibility for the communications plan. This means that communications work has slowed and I assume this will be more work for me in the long run, but currently we simply have lost our head of comms.
- Universities services that I could have used previously, I now often have to do entirely myself. I have research funds (i.e. SSHRC) which I longer have any idea how to access and use for research.
- I no longer know who to contact with questions about payment of invoices, Graduate Research Assistantship appointments and pay queries, and journal voucher transfers between accounts. The time needed to complete these straightforward administrative tasks has tripled!
- I have received access to PeopleSoft to support my PI in managing research accounts. I have had more than triple the number of meetings related to accounting and approvals since UAT restructuring began.
- Centralization of units leading to larger workloads/demands on remaining staff. Current staff are taking on the tasks of empty positions and/or tasks that have not yet been taken on by the new centralized support teams. Lack of communication around future model of CE/ Faculty of Ext structure is significantly impacting future planning and new business initiatives.

- My inbox gets more and more messages about situations and issues students face that have NOTHING to do with me, but the students have NO IDEA who they are actually supposed to contact anymore. Neither do we for that matter- with the new rearrangements of “support” and services it is impossible to determine who we should ask for help on anything.
- When the restructuring of the student awards (bursaries, scholarships) processes was implemented, it took all selection procedures out of academic hands entirely- until the RO realized that they could not possibly adjudicate all the application they had so proudly solicited. We were then asked to find time in our normal workload to review literally hundreds of applications for students we did not know.
- My ATS contracts have been substantially delayed by the restructuring, and its disruption to relevant HR processes. This includes a short-term contract, as well as a longer-term contract for which funding has been available for a year.
- The administrative staff in my department has been significantly depleted, we are corresponding with people who are often faceless and nameless. And my September paycheque was delayed for 2 months because it was stuck at Shared Services.
- Building maintenance has been all out sourced and service slowed to a crawl. Cleaning was out sourced and we were told they would be “trained” and safe. They are not trained, they are not safe, we have to designate areas off limits and clean them ourselves. I can’t remember the last time my office saw a vacuum and I have to mop myself to keep the dust under control.

- I no longer have confidence that I'd know who to reach out to, at the Department or Faculty level, with questions or concerns. There seems to be a lot of turnover and shuffle into many roles with unfamiliar titles. Organization seems poor.
- Position disruptions due to budget cuts, and staff transferred to Shared Services causing serious staff shortage in all departments on campus. People left behind have to do all the work on top of their own jobs. I have to spend time interviewing and mentoring three temp staff to cover the gaps created by SET (Shared Services are not ready yet but staff in departments have already left). All the temps are from off campus as no internal candidates are interested in few months employment. This results in them asking a lot of questions and I have to explain and show them how things work at UofA.
- We've lost much of our previous inhouse supports for eClass, internet/ computer/ tech, administrative support for organizing mtgs/taking minutes/scheduling, classroom support, etc.
- To keep up with the workload I work Sunday to Friday. I work from 8 am to 9 pm or later regularly. I have no work/life balance. I cannot keep up this schedule. My physical and mental health is suffering. I am the ADM for multiple academic departments with 18 direct reports. This is double the recommended direct reports for optimal span of control. I cannot continue to adequately manage and support staff under this model.

- Because of cuts at ETT, I cannot choose my classrooms anymore – they’re just assigned to me. My disability makes it difficult to walk far, and yet I have a class that’s over a kilometre away from my office. It will take me at least 20 minutes to walk there, one way (assuming good weather/not slippery conditions). That’s about an hour of wasted time every day.
- Classroom setup was done for us before. If we wanted the desks or tables in a particular position someone would do it for us when requested. This is no longer the case, so often I and my students are moving furniture.
- The carefully constructed “service catalogues” in which we spent many hours (again a workload issue) documenting our technical environments don’t seem to have been consulted at all, and every decision has been made exclusively in the name of “efficiency.” You just can’t separate libraries and their associated technology without serious consequences.
- Imagine if a researcher who led a team that created and managed highly specialized research equipment and processes (like a mass spectrometer) was told by a Project Manager at SET that all the people who supported and created the software and hardware to run the equipment were being “centralized” to do other unrelated jobs at the institution in the name of efficiency. But the research team was still expected to run a mass spectrometer. That’s what this is. They’ve essentially made hugely impactful decisions about what programs and services we can engage in, decisions that are rightfully and appropriately librarian decisions, by eliminating all of our technical positions.