

QUFA BIPOC Caucus

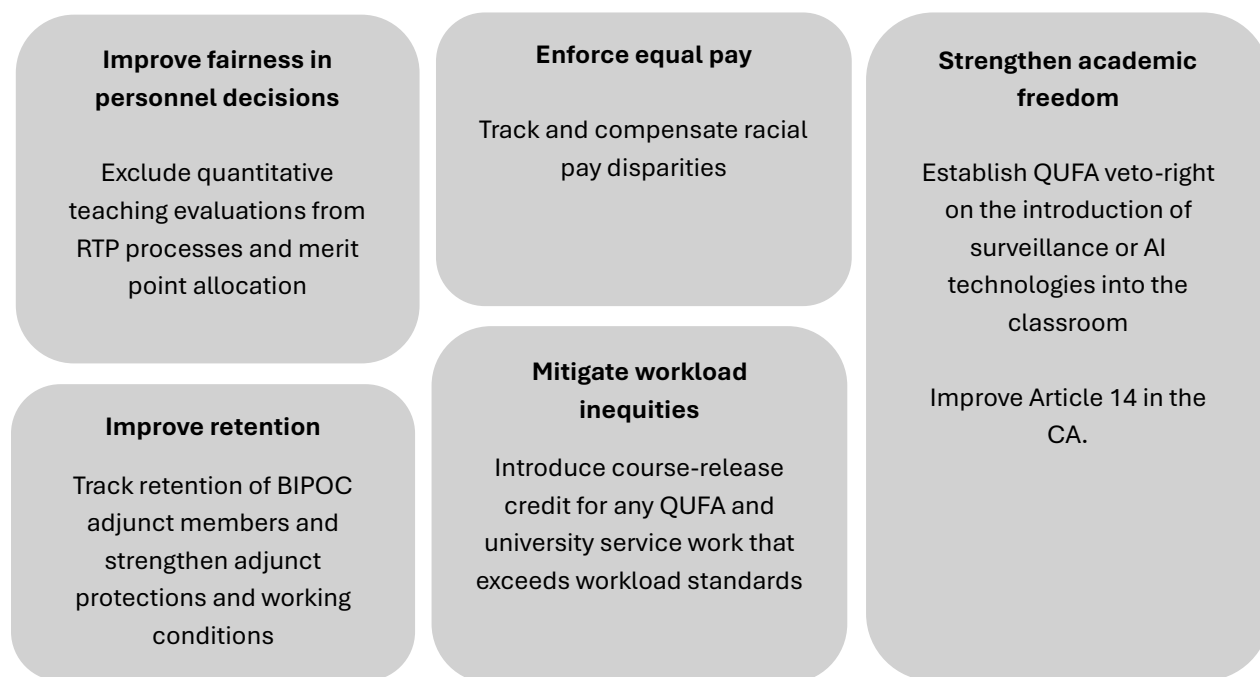
Report on Bargaining Priorities

2025

Overview of Bargaining Priorities

The QUFA BIPOC Caucus surveyed bargaining priorities and experiences of Black, Indigenous and racialized QUFA members to support the current bargaining team. We received 49 responses from BIPOC members, who represent 17.3% of Queen’s racialized or Indigenous QUFA members.¹ Notably, most of our respondents are multiply marginalized: 71% identified as women, 37% are precariously employed, 14% identified as gender and/or sexual minorities, and 8% as persons with disabilities.

We asked survey respondents to rank ten bargaining suggestions. Below are the bargaining priorities which received the highest relative scores. All but two suggestions would benefit all QUFA members, while also addressing some of the most salient issues for QUFA BIPOC members.



¹ The ICOUNT Queen’s Equity Census currently registers 283 BIPOC QUFA members.

1. Equal pay

The Caucus suggests tracking and mitigating racial pay disparities.

Rationale

Racial wage discrimination is illegal, yet racialized Canadians earn on average 81% of white Canadians.² In the Canadian higher education sector, white faculty earn approx. 10% more than BIPOC faculty (Figure 3).³ For women of color faculty – the majority of our respondents – and Indigenous women, the wage gap widens to 23-25%, greater than the national average (Figure 4 & Figure 5).⁴ Though Queen’s likely is no exception with respect to racial pay disparities, there is currently no mechanism to systematically track these pay gaps and no mechanism to address them.

To control for unintended pay disparities, Queen’s should track disparities between white and BIPOC QUFA members, as well as control for intersectional discrimination. If pay disparities are found beyond a margin to be negotiated, the university should mitigate them. There is already a mechanism in place to mitigate gender wage disparities – the Anomalies Side Table Fund – which could be expanded for this purpose.

The Standing Committee on Science and Research recommended in 2024 that Statistics Canada collect data on pay gaps at universities.⁵ The implementation of such a tracking mechanism would hence anticipate future data collection requirements by the federal government.

2. Fairness in personnel decisions and salary increases

The Caucus suggests abandoning teaching evaluations for personnel processes and merit point allocation.

Rationale

Respondents noted that although overtly racist comments in teaching evaluations are less common (see Figure 6), racism persists in more subtle ‘coded’ or systemic forms. As one respondent commented:

² Statistics Canada (n.d.): [Discrimination and hate crime statistics](#).

³ Canadian Association of University Teachers (2024): [Study on pay gaps for faculty at Canadian universities](#), p. 7.

⁴ Ibid., p. 8.

⁵ Standing Committee on Science and Research (2024): [Pay Gaps Among Faculty at Canadian Universities](#).

“I find course evaluations to be tremendously racist. As someone who has taught a course where another section was taught by a white colleague and used the same materials, our course evals differed significantly. When brought up to admin, there was an unwillingness to acknowledge why this may be the case.”

Such experiences are consistent with decades of research on racial and gender discrimination in quantitative teaching evaluations which has found that under the same conditions, racialized and female faculty are evaluated consistently lower than their white and male counterparts.⁶ This means that the empirical research is very clear that quantitative teaching evaluations are an inadequate instrument to judge the quality of teaching because they do not deliver an objective picture of a faculty members' instruction. Their use in personnel processes should be hence considered unfair because it tends to have a disparate impact on marginalized and multiply marginalized faculty for personnel decisions and decisions about salary increases.

To mitigate the effects of unfair use of quantitative evaluations of teaching while also ensuring a feedback mechanism exists for teaching, the caucus proposes to abandon quantitative evaluations altogether for personnel decisions and allocation of merit points. For personnel decisions, teaching effectiveness can instead be evaluated by a faculty members' peers based on their pedagogical concept as laid out in their teaching dossier. We recommend a side-table with QUFA and the management to discuss alternative and more equitable ways to assess teaching effectiveness. For instance, qualitative-only evaluations at the mid-term mark can serve as a feedback mechanism for the instructor to respond to student needs while they are teaching the course (as opposed to when the course is already over).

These issues join a number of other problems with teaching evaluations QUFA has been discussing, such as students' low response rates, or the influence of course times and

⁶ See e.g. Chávez, K. and Mitchell, K. (2020). Exploring Bias in Student Evaluations: Gender, Race, and Ethnicity. *Political Science & Politics*, 53.2, 270-274; Fan Y. et al. (2019). Gender and cultural bias in student evaluations: Why representation matters. *PLoS ONE* 14.2: e0209749; El Alayi, A. et al. (2018). Dancing Backwards in High Heels: Female Professors Experience More Work Demands and Special Favor Requests, Particularly from Academically Entitled Students. *Sex Roles* 79.3-4, 136-150; Mitchell, K. and Martin, J. (2018). Gender Bias in Student Evaluations. *Political Science & Politics*, 51.3, 648-652; Boring A. (2017) Gender biases in student evaluations of teaching, *Journal of Public Economics* 145, 27-41; Boring et al. (2016) Student evaluations of teaching (mostly) do not measure teaching effectiveness, *ScienceOpen Research* 2016; MacNell, L. et al. (2015). What's in a name: Exposing Gender Bias in Student Ratings of Teaching, *Innovative Higher Education*, 40.4, 291-303; Anderson, K. J. (2010) Students' stereotypes of professors: An exploration of the double violations of ethnicity and gender. *Social Psychology of Education: An International Journal*, 459-472; Pittman, C. (2010). Race and Gender Oppression in the Classroom: The Experience of Women Faculty of Color with White Male Students. *Teaching Sociology*; Reid, L. D. (2010). The role of perceived race and gender in the evaluation of college teaching on RateMyProfessors.Com. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 3.3, 137-152.

topics on evaluations. Following a precedent-setting case which directed TMU to not use teaching evaluations in tenure and promotion decisions, universities in Canada are already rethinking their use of teaching evaluations, so this change would also align Queen's more with broader trends in the higher education sector.⁷

3. Mitigating workload inequities

The Caucus proposes to introduce a course-release credit for QUFA and university service work which goes beyond a member's departmental workload standard.

Rationale

Equity work is often dependent on marginalized faculty members to carry it out, and because it is not typically counted towards a member's normal service load, many take on this work on top of their existing service load. Scholarship sometimes refers to this burden as a "hidden cultural tax" or "equity tax".⁸ Several respondents remarked that lack of diversity leads to a disproportionate burden on BIPOC members. As one respondent explains:

"BIPOC faculty have no choice but to agree to high service requests. If we were not present, the issues we bring forth would often not be dealt with."

However, issues related to service over-burdening are not limited to equity work but extend to reproductive or administrative labor in general. As one respondent explained:

"Women and racialized peers are expected to do more work in courses that are co-taught, being responsible for organizing field trips, managing the course content, students mentoring, final marking, among others, but will receive credits for the same workload."

The reported service burden among respondents strikes us as quite high, with 41% of respondents stating that their service load regularly exceeds their departmental workload standard (see Figure 8). Furthermore, BIPOC faculty often take on additional labor related to caring for and mentoring Indigenous and racialized students (Figure 7), and many of our respondents also engaging in community service or outreach outside of the university. This

⁷ Farr, Moira (2018): [Arbitration decision on student evaluations of teaching applauded by faculty](#). *University Affairs*; OCUFA (2018): [Significant arbitration decision on use of student questionnaires for teaching evaluation](#).

⁸ Padilla, A.M. (1994). [Ethnic Minority Scholars, Research, and Mentoring: Current and Future Issues](#). *Educational Researcher*, 23(4), 24–27. Also see, Sears, K. (2024). [Paying the cultural tax](#). *Smith Magazine*.

results in a situation in which racialized faculty members often have less time for teaching and research, which may have consequences for pay and personnel processes.

More generally, service work is critical to the functioning of the university – and especially QUFA work in times of austerity. Currently, only 12 units as per 7.1.1 is acknowledged with a course release, yet QUFA is dependent on Members donating their time to work on union issues. To mitigate at least part of these inequitable service burdens and to protect the functioning of QUFA work, we propose to allow Members who serve on QUFA committees or who exceed their departmental standard for service work to accumulate course release credit or equivalent compensation which after some time can be converted into a half-course or full course release.

4. Improving retention of racialized adjunct faculty

The Caucus proposes to track retention of racialized adjunct faculty, and to strengthen adjunct rights and protections. The Caucus also recommends supporting the HREO recommendation that suggests a direct communication from the Provost's Office to Department Heads and Managers.

Rationale

The most recent JCAA Employment Equity Compliance Report⁹ lists improving equity compliance for term adjuncts as their first recommendation. To quote the report, in 2023, 92.3% of QUFA hires were Term Adjuncts. Of these, 46.4% were hired with exceptions to posting requirements. This is exceptionally high considering the limits imposed on these hires in the last round of bargaining. 67.8% of the remaining hires followed the required employment equity process, which is below the minimum acceptable levels. The report specifies the Faculty of Health Sciences and Faculty of Law as the faculties with lowest compliance rates. Not coincidentally, they have the highest term adjunct hirings across the university.

5. Strengthening Academic Freedom

The Caucus proposes to strengthen academic freedom through two avenues: (1) establishing a QUFA veto right on surveillance and AI technology in the classroom and the

⁹ Queen's University Human Rights and Equity Office(2023): [JCAA Employment Equity Compliance Report](#).

workplace mor generally (e.g., bossware); and (2) by improving already the existing Article 14 in the CA.

Veto right on surveillance & AI technologies

Digitization in a union context raises urgent issues related to automation of labor and worker surveillance and control. While key issues around labor are partly covered by intellectual property protections, the introduction of AI tools in the classroom (such as GLEAN) also raise issues relevant to academic freedom. With 31% of our respondents reporting regular self-censorship for fear of repercussions (Figure 9), the introduction of more surveillance technology in the workplace ('bossware') or classroom ('ed-tech') will likely intensify the ongoing informal erosion of academic freedom.

Amidst ongoing austerity measures, the administration is likely to push for greater use of AI to cut labor costs, but the current CA language forces QUFA into a reactive position regarding technological change in the workplace. To address this issue, we propose to bargain for language which (a) establishes parameters of acceptable technology (e.g., technology must be free of racial, gender, or accent biases); and (b) establishes QUFA's right to vet and veto new technology for labor and equity issues (or conformity with the CA) *before* a new technology is introduced. There are already good existing resources for QUFA to draw on – for example the Digital Bargaining Hub which collects bargaining clauses, resources, and framework agreements for bargaining units.¹⁰

Protect and improve existing language in the CA

Caucus members repeatedly expressed their concerns that the management might open Article 14 to limit academic freedom rights of our members given the most recent policy and guideline impositions. Racialized faculty are already vulnerable to such arbitrary limitations or alterations of academic freedom and freedom of association. Thus, we recommend protecting Article 14 and opening that article only to further improve it.

¹⁰ Public Services International (n.d.): [Digital Bargaining Hub](#).

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Appendix A: Demographics

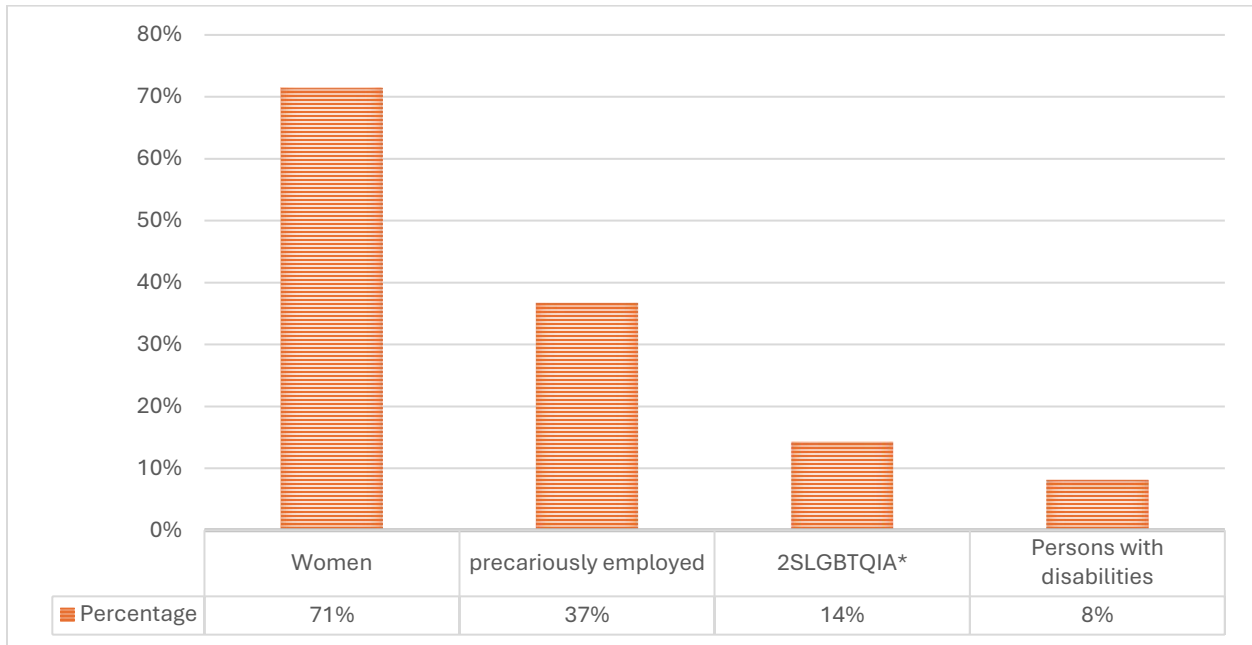


Figure 1: Multiple marginalization among Indigenous and racialized QUFA members

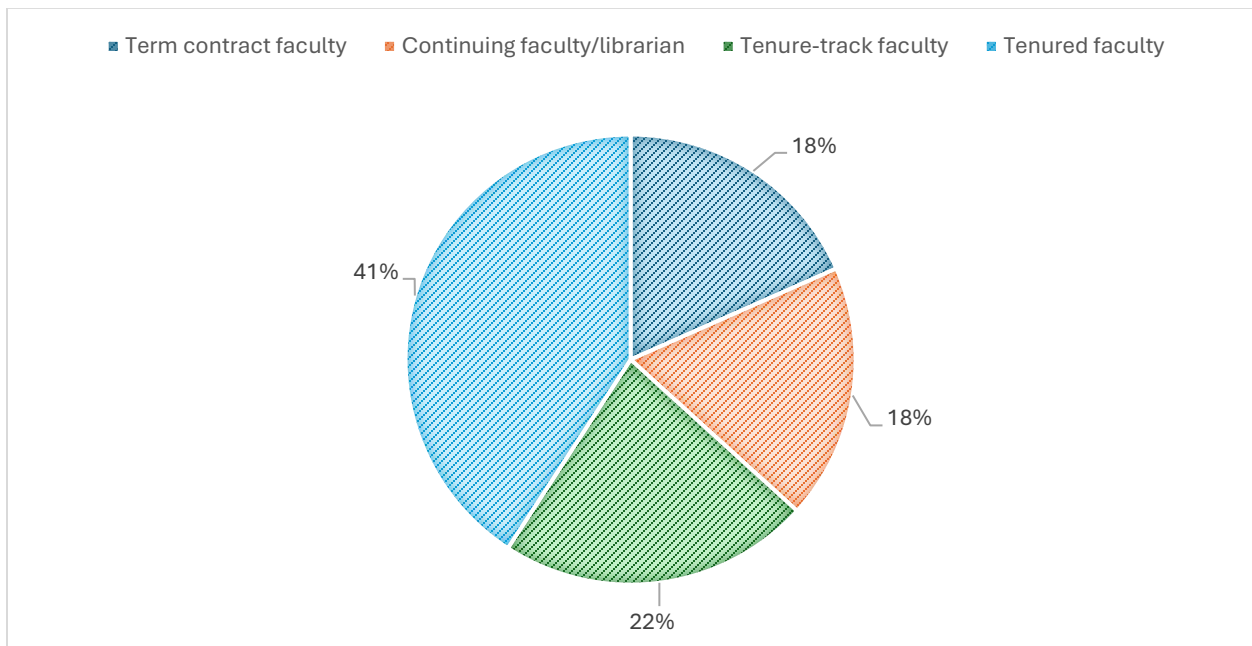


Figure 2: Employment status/precarity among respondents

Appendix B: Pay¹¹

	white	visible minorities	Difference
All University Teachers	\$119,200	\$106,800	-10.40%
All College Instructors	\$71,700	\$58,600	-18.30%

Figure 3: Racial pay gaps at Canadian universities and colleges

	Average earnings	Indigenous women's salaries in comparison to white men's salaries
University Teachers	\$98,800	-23.90%
College Instructors	\$67,800	-12.40%

Figure 4: Intersectional pay gaps: Indigenous women’s salaries in comparison to white men’s salaries

	Women of color’s salaries in comparison to white men’s salaries
University Teachers	-25.00%
College Instructors	-32.20%

Figure 5: Intersectional pay gaps: women of color's salaries in comparison to white men's salaries

¹¹ Tables adapted from CAUT (2024): [Study on pay gaps for faculty at Canadian universities](#), p. 7-8. Data source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census.

Appendix C: Teaching

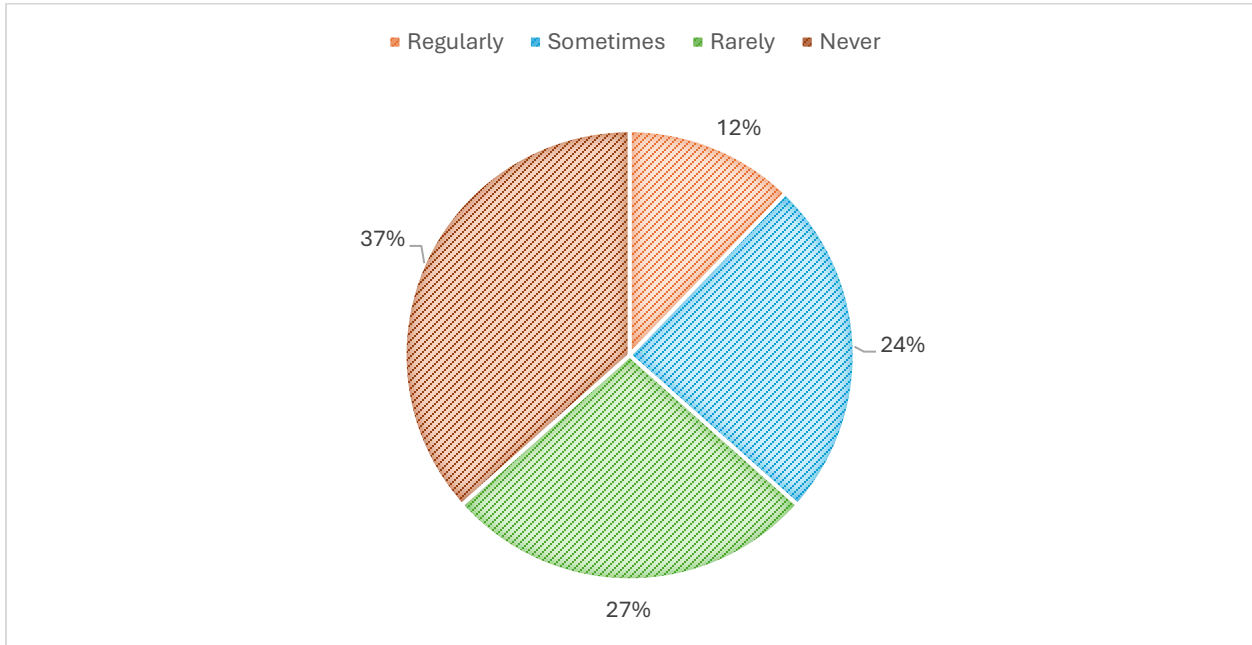


Figure 6: Respondents' experiences with racism in teaching evaluations

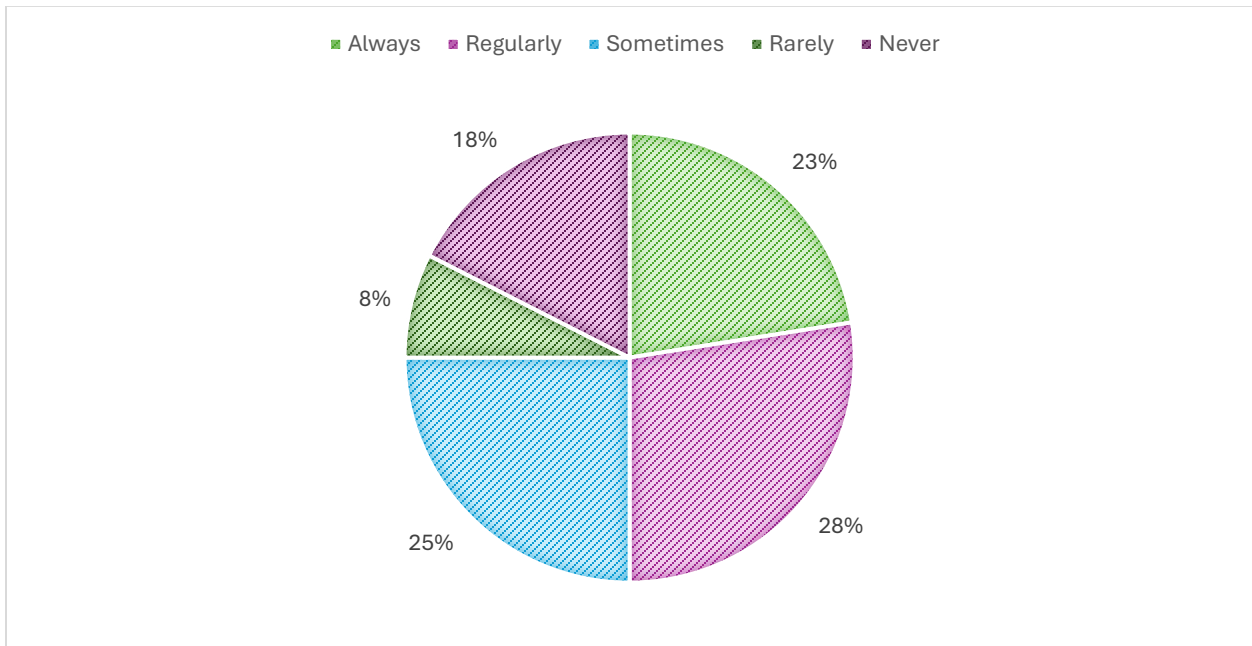


Figure 7: Prevalence of labor related to caring for racialized students among Indigenous and racialized QUFA members

Appendix D: Service Burden

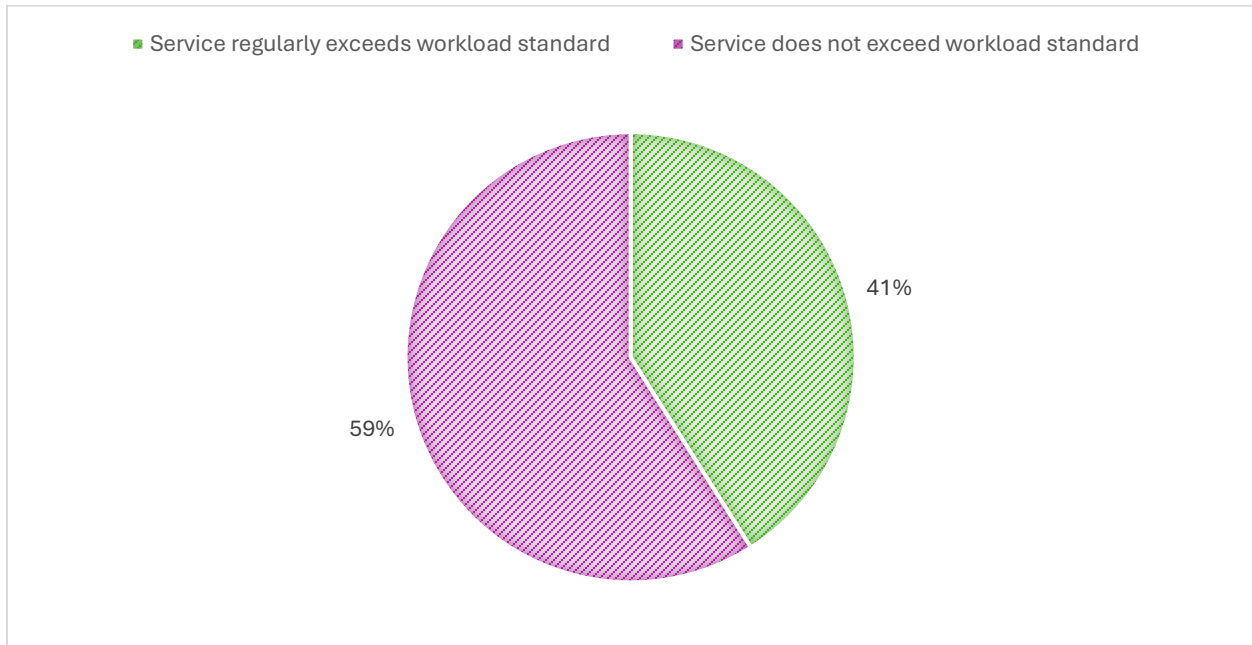


Figure 8: Prevalence of service over-burdening among Indigenous and racialized QUFA members

Appendix E: Academic Freedom

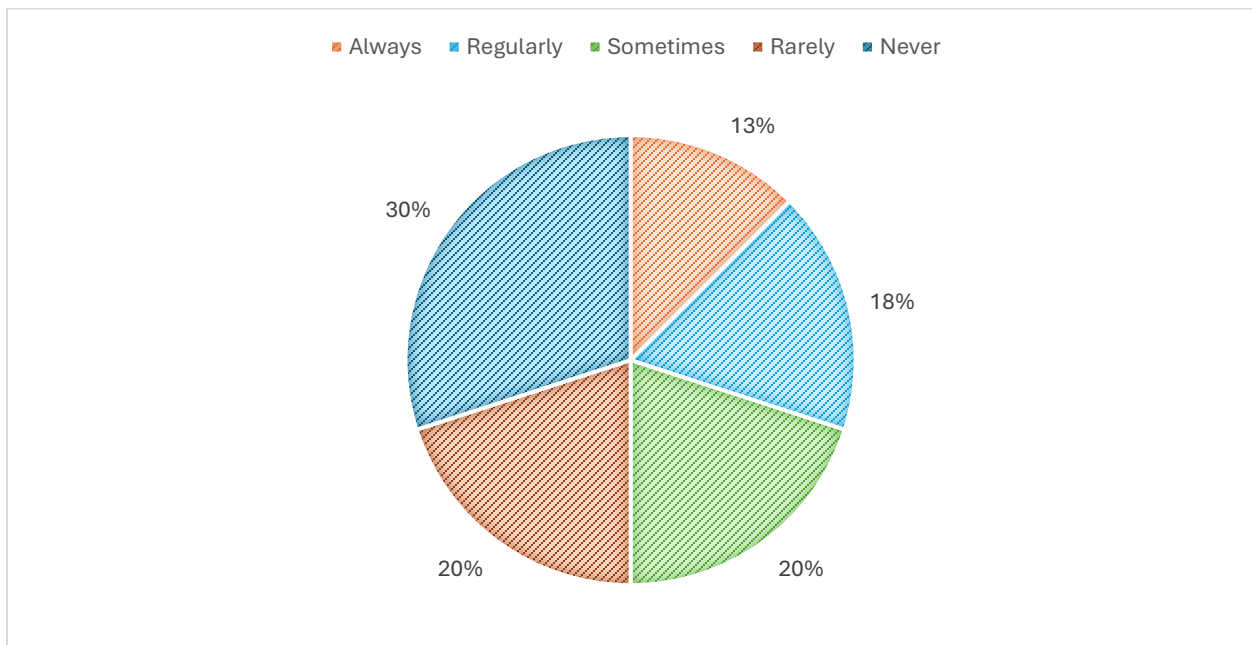


Figure 9: Reported prevalence of self-censorship among Indigenous and racialized QUFA members