

SUMMER SCHEDULE SURVEY

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

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Background & Methodology:

In the summer of 2023, Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) launched a pilot Summer Schedule where all campus facilities were closed on Fridays. Staff and faculty were allowed to work extended hours Monday through Thursday or remotely on Fridays. The transition included extended hours for campus facilities Monday through Thursday and most employees transitioned to four 10-hour workdays (4x10). SLCC resumed its normal schedule on July 24, 2023.

A survey was administered to faculty and staff to gather feedback and measure satisfaction and challenges due to the Summer Schedule. The survey was sent out to 3540 faculty and staff members and received 843 (23.8%) responses. The survey included questions about their role at the college; whether faculty and staff transitioned to Monday to Thursday (4x10) or chose to work remotely on Fridays; a question matrix to assess workload, productivity, and satisfaction; and an open-ended field for comments and feedback.

Findings:

Overall, 65% of respondents transitioned to 4x10. Most staff members (69%) transitioned to 4x10, while only 41% of faculty did. When asked about their overall satisfaction with their schedule of choice, 79.8% reported favorably (Strongly agree, Agree, and Somewhat agree). Each of the 8 questions asked in the matrix shows that 60-80% of respondents have favorable responses toward the summer schedule.

The qualitative analysis of the open-ended field supported the overall favor towards the summer schedule. The general sentiment of the free responses was 58.1% positive and only 26.0% negative. The positive comments cited a general improvement in work-life balance and increased productivity. However, negative remarks highlighted the lack of flexibility for all employees, the potential impact on students, and areas to improve if implemented in the future.

FULL REPORT: SUMMER SCHEDULE SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

On May 12, 2023, Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) launched a pilot Summer Schedule where all campus facilities were closed on Fridays, and SLCC resumed its normal schedule on July 24, 2023. The transition included extended hours for campus facilities Monday through Thursday. Staff and faculty were allowed to work extended hours Monday through Thursday or work remotely on Fridays, and most employees transitioned to four 10-hour workdays (4x10). The overall purpose of the summer schedule change was to 1) increase the morale and well-being of employees and 2) implement some efficiency protocols to reduce energy and water usage.

METHODS

A survey was administered to faculty and staff to gather feedback and measure satisfaction and challenges due to the Summer Schedule. The survey was sent out to 3540 faculty and staff members and received 843 (23.8%) responses. The survey included questions about employees' roles at the college and whether they transitioned to a 4x10 schedule or chose to work remotely on Fridays. Several questions were asked in a question matrix to assess workload, productivity, and satisfaction. An open-ended field for comments and feedback was then provided to gather qualitative information.

The open-ended text was analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. The responses were systematically reviewed and coded. Through an iterative process, recurring themes and patterns within the data were identified, allowing us to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' perspectives and experiences.

RESULTS

Schedule Choice

All individuals were asked if they switched to a 4x10 schedule. Overall, 65% of respondents transitioned to 4x10. A further stratification by job position shows that most staff members (69%) transitioned to 4x10, while only 41% of faculty did, **Figure 1**.

Further information was gathered about schedule choice in the open-ended question. The type of schedule was recorded if it was clearly stated in an individual comment (n=214). From the comments, most individuals worked 4x10 (75.2%) with 5x8 (15.9%) as the second option. Others transitioned to 4x9 with a half day or used paid time

Figure 1. Percentage of Individuals Who Switched to a 4x10 Schedule by Role.

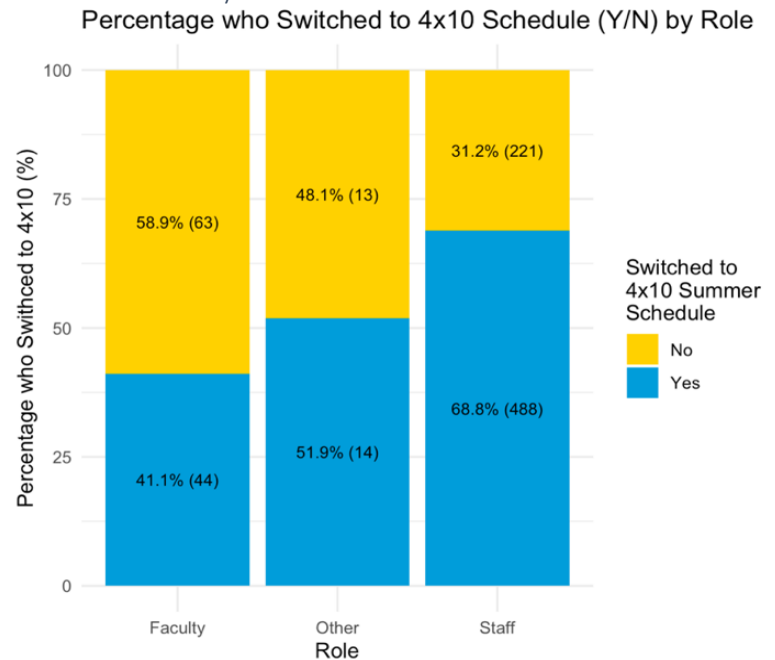


Figure 1. The number of Faculty n=107, Other n=27, Staff n=719. Other included individuals who reported part-time staff, administrators, and adjunct faculty.

off (PTO) on Fridays (5.1%), while a small percentage of individuals chose to work 4x8 and used PTO or sick leave to make up the difference (3.7%).

With various schedule options and flexibility, 35 individuals expressed gratitude for the flexibility and being able to choose or adjust their schedules. However, the feeling of flexibility was not unanimous. The qualitative analysis flagged comments that highlighted either the ability to choose or the inability to choose their schedule. Comments like, “*We were not given much of a choice as far as the 4 X 10 schedule.*” appeared 35 times. However, 37 individuals mentioned the ability to choose with comments similar to, “*I choose to stay on 4 days of 8 hours in the office and then 1 day at home for 8 hours. I loved every second of it...*” These comments highlight the variability between positions, departments, and managers, and show that not every position had the opportunity to choose.

Perception

When asked about their overall satisfaction with their schedule of choice, 79.8% reported favorably (either Strongly agree, Agree, or Somewhat agree), **Figure 2**.

Figure 2. Overall Schedule Satisfaction

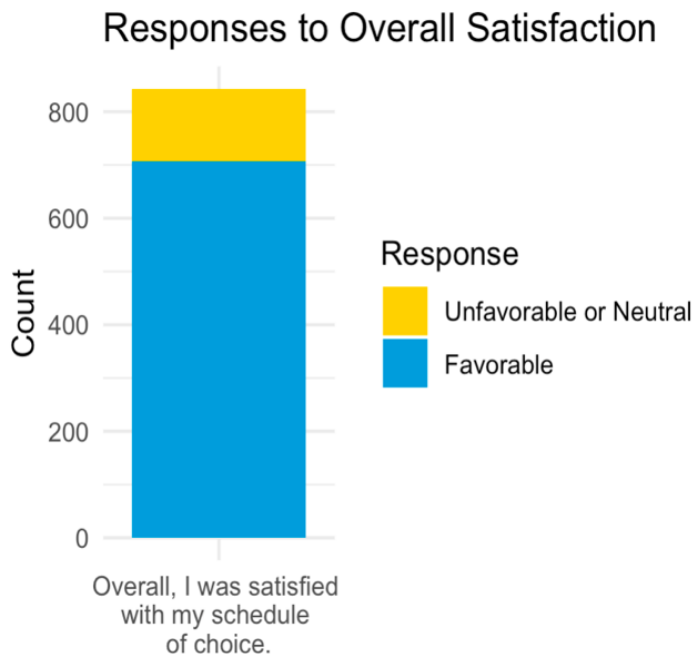


Figure 2. Respondents were asked their overall satisfaction with their schedule of choice. Strongly agree n=405, Agree n=198, Somewhat agree n=70, Neither agree nor disagree n=64, Somewhat disagree n=24, Disagree n=21, Strongly disagree n=28, missing n=33.

Further analysis of the eight questions asked in the question matrix shows that 60-80% of respondents have favorable responses toward the summer schedule, **Figure 3**. When respondents were filtered to only those that transitioned to a 4x10 schedule the responses were slightly more favorable.

Figure 3. Question Matrix

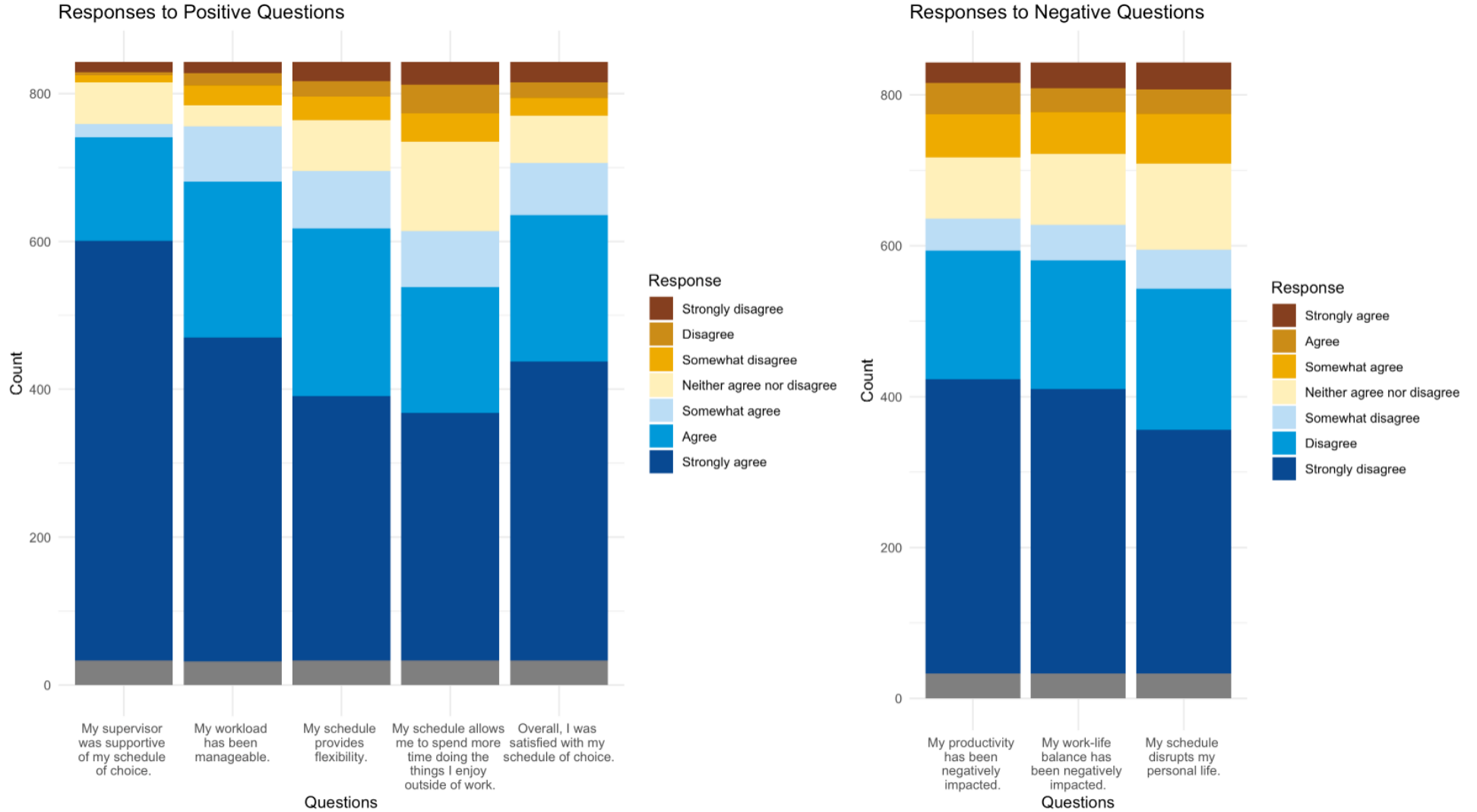


Figure 3. The question matrix was a series of questions with responses, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Approximately 4% of respondents did not answer these questions and appear as missing in gray.

From the open-ended responses (n=485) a qualitative analysis supports overall satisfaction with the summer schedule. The general sentiment of each comment was coded as positive, negative, mixed, or neutral, **Table 1**. From the general sentiment, 58.1% of comments were positive with many individuals relaying messages such as “*I would love the chance to make the 4/10 schedule permanent.*” However, 26.0% of all free responses were negative. Additionally, several individuals provided mixed responses. Furthermore, 115 individuals made comments asking to either continue, extend, or do the summer schedule in future years; compare this to the 11 individuals who asked not to do it again, and 5 individuals whose comments reflected mixed feelings about doing it again.

Table 1. General Sentiment of the Free Responses.

General Sentiment	
Sentiment	Example
Positive (n=282)	“I love it I wish we could do the same year round it balanced my life and work.” “Love it! Let’s do it again next summer :)”
Mixed (n=37)	“It was nice having Fridays off for personal life over the summer, but it was hard working that late into the evening” “It was nice for the summer; I enjoyed having three-day weekends. I was looking forward to going back to a 5/8 schedule though. 10-hour days felt draining, so I needed the weekend more. Next time I would try a 9/9 schedule instead.”
Negative (n=126)	“Hated the schedule” “I found it difficult for students when they couldn't get help or resources on Fridays.”
Neutral (n=31)	“I chose to maintain M-F schedule to provide coverage for my team on Fridays.” “As faculty teaching all online classes this change for administration didn't affect me too much.”

Table 1. Shows the number of responses with a positive, mixed, negative, or neutral sentiment. Two comments were chosen to provide an example of the comments. A total of 485 individuals answered the free-response question, n=9 were comments that did not apply to the summer schedule.

Work-life balance

Overall, both the survey and open-ended text show very favorable responses to work-life balance. Three questions in the question matrix focused on work-life balance. When asked if their work-life balance was negatively impacted by the summer schedule 70.6% disagreed (either Strongly disagree, Disagree, or Somewhat disagree) and only 14.4% agreed (either Strongly agree, Agree, or Somewhat agree). Additionally, the two questions with the largest negative responses both dealt with work-life balance, with 15.9% reporting that their schedule disrupted their personal life, and 12.8% reporting it didn’t allow them to spend time doing things they enjoy outside of work, **Figure 3**.

Work-life balance was also reflected in the qualitative analysis; it was referenced by 163 individuals, with 22.7% of those responses reporting a negative impact, **Table 2**.

Table 2. Summer Schedule Impact on Work-life Balance

Work-life balance	
Sentiment	Example
Positive (n=114)	<p>“The 4 x 10 schedule for the summer was great! It helped both my productivity and work/life balance.”</p> <p>“I enjoyed having an extra day on the weekend to get things done. It also allowed me to spend more time with my family and gave me more flexibility to schedule events.”</p>
Mixed (n=12)	<p>“I LOVED having Fridays open, but going home and cooking dinner at 7:00 at night was awful! I’m not sure if having Friday off made up for all of the evenings I lost.”</p> <p>“There were definitely pro’s and con’s. I have a new baby at home and at times it was great to have Friday’s off and spend time and help my wife with my baby son. At other times when my son was waking up super early the 10 hour work days were difficult and long.”</p>
Negative (n=37)	<p>“Between commuting to and from work... It made my work-life balance worse.”</p> <p>“I agree and understand that 4 10s would be a nice option for most people, but the mandatory summer schedule severely impacted some of us with children. I was forced to use many vacation hours to meet childcare obligations.”</p>

Table 2. Shows the number of responses with positive, mixed, or negative comments that were about work-life balance. Two comments were chosen to help illustrate the impact.

The most common theme throughout work-life balance was that everyone loved the extended weekend and having Fridays off. This was mentioned 90 times for both individuals who liked and disliked the summer schedule. For those with a positive work-life balance, this was mentioned 70 times. This was also mentioned 12 times by those who had mixed feelings, and 8 times by those who did not like the summer schedule. These comments were typically in conjunction with the complaint of the days being long. Long days were mentioned 36 times, 8 times by people who liked the schedule, 16 times by people who did not, and 12 times by people who had mixed feelings toward the schedule. Of those 36 individuals who mentioned long days, 28 of them said so in conjunction with enjoying the long weekend. Those who liked the schedule typically said having Friday off was worth working long days, while those with mixed feelings didn’t know if it was worth it. However, those with negative feelings said that it was not worth it.

An additional subtopic that appeared 10 times was the negative impact of the summer schedule on kids and childcare. Parents had to adjust schedules and childcare if they switched to a 4x10 schedule; additionally, the SLCC childcare centers were closed on Fridays, impacting parents who chose to maintain a 5x8 schedule.

Execution and implementation

The free-response text was coded and highlighted responses concerning execution, implementation, and efficiency. One survey question did assess the impact of the summer schedule on productivity, with 14.9% of respondents saying their productivity was negatively impacted, **Figure 3**. In the open-ended question, productivity was mentioned by 52 individuals with 29 of them mentioning an increase in productivity and 19 individuals mentioning a decrease in productivity. Additional negative comments included poor execution, poor communication, and a lack of resources being available to students, faculty, and staff on Fridays, **Table 3**.

Table 3. Execution of the Summer Schedule

Execution			
Sentiment	Parent code	Child Code	Example
Positive (n=38)	Efficiency (n=35)	Productive (n=29)	“The 4 x 10 schedule for the summer was great! It helped both my productivity and work/life balance.”
		Not busy on Fridays (n=6)	“It is so slow on Fridays year round, it would be great to see it continue.”
Negative (n=105)	Efficiency (n=66)	Productive (n=19)	“I was not given a choice, but rather told that I must participate in the four tens schedule. This schedule was hard on my body physically and mentally. I also noticed a significant drop in productivity in my office. I did not like it.”
		Impact on students (n=32)	“Whenever we took calls on the day when most offices were closed, we found that we had more frustrated students who couldn't get the help they needed. It was especially frustrating for them when it turned out that on occasion the following Monday the campus would also be closed and they would have to wait even longer to speak with a specific department about the issue they were having.”
		Facilities closed (n=44) - Gym (n=4) - IT department (n=4) - Testing center (n=9)	“Having the testing center closed on Fridays has been hard in allowing students some flexibility in when to take tests. It made it hard to time covering the class material and scheduling exams.”
	Implementation (n=30)	Communication (n=12)	“The communication of the schedule change was not clear and cause[d] a lot of problems in my area of work. Many answers didn't come until the 4-10 schedule began.”
		Inconsistent (n=18)	“... I did have concerns about potentially limiting services to our community with being closed on Fridays. Having some areas available online on Fridays while the campus being closed was confusing to students, employers, and community partners.”
Neutral (n=5)	Efficiency (n=5)	Productive (n=4)	“... I did allow my team members to select a 4x10 schedule if they wanted to try it. Only 2 individuals (out of 9) chose to have a 4x10 schedule and from my perspective the change was not disruptive to their work output.”

Table 3. Summarizes the qualitative analysis comments that referred to the execution and impact of the summer schedule. A comment could have been given multiple parent and child codes based on the content of the response. If a comment had multiple child codes within a parent code, it was only counted in the parent code once but counted once for each child code. It should be noted that not all comments are summarized or fit into parent and child codes.

Suggestions and Additional Concerns

From the open text, all suggestions were recorded and summarized, **Table 4**. The most common suggestions included 1) providing a shorter work week during the summer (n=15) and 2) providing more flexibility to work remotely or hybrid (n=12). An additional theme that was seen throughout the qualitative analysis was the frustration of using two hours of PTO on each holiday (n=11).

Table 4. Suggestions Summary

Suggestion
Shorter work week (n=15) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 38 hr/wk 4x9.5 (n=2) - 36 hr/wk, 4x9 or 4x8 + ½ Fri (n=3) - 35 hr/wk (n=1) - 32 hr/wk, 4x8 (n=9)
More alternative schedules (n=8) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4x9 + ½ Fri (n=3) - 9x9 every other Friday off (n=5)
More flexibility/hybrid options (n=12)
Summer schedule until the end of the term (n=5)
Clearer rules (lunch and wellness hours) (n=4)
4x10 from Tues – Fri (n=2)
More signage (n=2)
Rotating schedules, i.e. A person works Mon-Thurs another person Tues-Fri (n=1)
Not mandatory (n=1)
Sample schedule (n=1)

CONCLUSION

Overall, the responses to the survey from faculty and staff showed very positive sentiments towards the summer schedule. The summer schedule provided employees with opportunities to adjust their schedules. As a result, most employees reported better work-life balance, improved productivity, and greater flexibility.

Unfortunately, a small minority (12-16% of respondents) reported some negative feedback towards the summer schedule. Due to the diversity of positions throughout the college, some departments were not given the opportunity to work from home on Fridays and were required to transition to a 4x10 schedule. For some who did transition to 4x10, a common complaint was long workdays which negatively affected work-life balance during the week. Additionally, due to campus closures limited facilities and resources were available to students, faculty, and staff who were seeking help on Fridays.

Several limitations are present. First, this survey only examined the impact of the summer schedule on faculty and staff. While open-ended responses highlighted a potential impact on students, the perception of students was not measured. Furthermore, only 23.8% of faculty and staff responded to the survey; thus, these findings may not accurately represent all faculty and staff members, as survey respondents may be biased toward strong feelings, either good or bad.