

Making It Work

A Survey by The Fashion Studies Journal

FSJ

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*Lauren Downing Peters
Laura Snelgrove
Kimberly M. Jenkins
Tessa Maffucci*

SURVEY EDITORS

*Lauren Downing Peters
Laura Snelgrove
Sara Idacavage
Natalie Nudell
Olivia Warschaw
Anthony Palliparambil, Jr.
Rachael Noll*

DATA COMPILATION

Olivia Warschaw

LAYOUT DESIGN

Grace Toulotte

Foreword

Fashion studies and those who practice it are special. We are professors, curators, learners, costume designers, industry professionals, and so much more. We are resilient and trailblazing in our fight to legitimize and advance the study of dress. The Fashion Studies Journal team thanks you for sharing your experiences, and we are so excited to share the results of this survey with you.

This report tells stories of passion, hope, and frustration. Fashion studies is a young, global field with more than half of respondents reporting Masters degrees or higher. We are confident in our ability to perform our work and we are fulfilled by and proud of our accomplishments. But we are also undervalued, overworked, and not without bias. Fashion studies skews heavily female and white. 63% of respondents say that their salary does not cover their cost of living. And it is not without irony that the Fashion Studies Journal team and our authors donate their time, as 71% of respondents do not believe their ratio of labor to income is sustainable.

Despite the two-year gap between the release of this survey and the publication of its data, it is incredibly timely as we grapple with a pandemic, an unemployment crisis, and a civil rights movement. Some responses simply hit harder this year. Two years ago, 48% of respondents told us that they did not have emergency savings and 10% of respondents did not have health insurance; these numbers most likely rose over the past six months.

As our world and the spaces we work in change, so will fashion studies. Many of these changes are welcome; perhaps some, not as much. We hope that the information shared in this report allows us to shape the future of fashion studies into the field that we want — a sustainable, diverse wealth of opportunity powered by stories shared through dress. We cannot wait to create this future with you.

On Behalf of the FSJ Team,

Olivia Warschaw
Assistant Editor

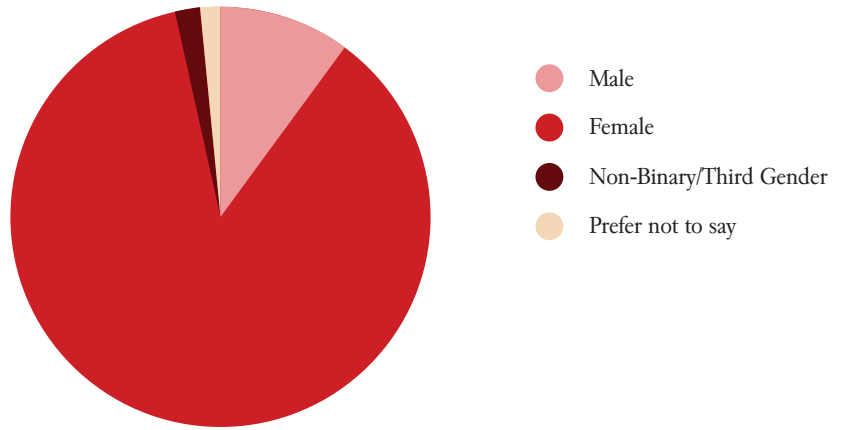
Section I:

Who We Are

What is your gender?

359 Responses

Male: 36 (10%)
Female: 311 (86.6%)
Non-Binary/Third Gender: 6 (1.7%)
Prefer Not To Say: 6 (1.7%)
Prefer to Self Describe: 0 (0%)



Do you identify as transgender?

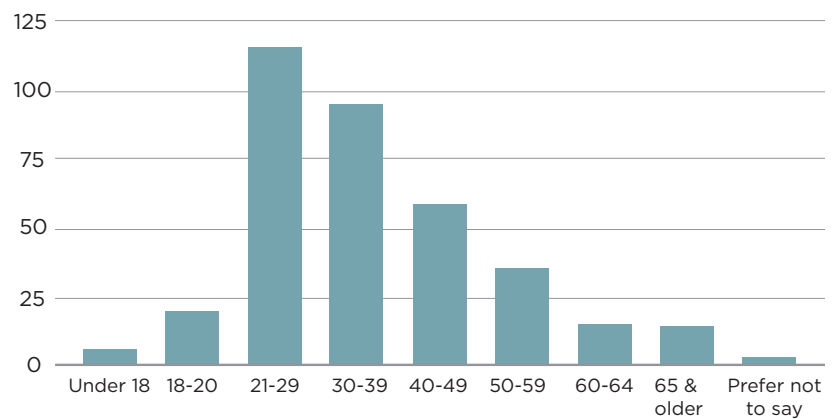
358 Responses

Yes: 4 (1.1%)
No: 347 (97%)
Prefer Not To Say: 7 (1.9%)

What is Your Age?

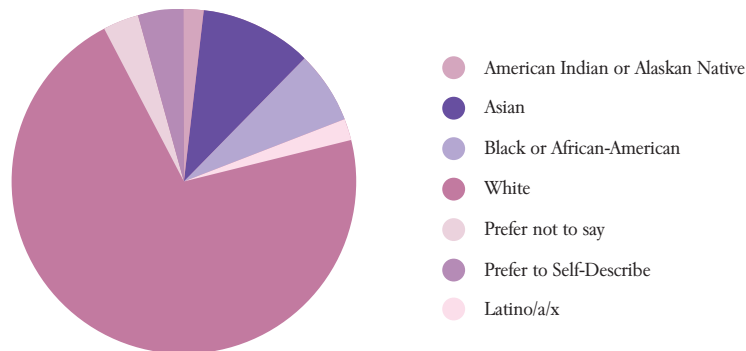
360 Responses

Under 18: 6 (1.7%)
18-20: 20 (5.6%)
21-29: 116 (32.3%)
30-39: 95 (26.4%)
40-49: 58 (16.2%)
50-59: 34 (9.4%)
60-64: 14 (3.8%)
65 & Older: 14 (3.8%)
Prefer Not To Say: 3 (.8%)



What is your race?

358 Responses



American Indian or Alaskan Native: 7 (2.0%)
Asian: 37 (10.3%)
Black or African American: 24 (6.7%)
Latino/a/x: 5 (6.7%)
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: 0 (0%)
White: 263 (73.5%)
Prefer Not To Say: 12 (3.3%)
Prefer to Self-Describe: 15 (4.2%)

SELF-DESCRIPTIONS INCLUDE:

Hispanic (5)
Mixed Race or Biracial (7)

“I would fall into the category of white. But it doesn't feel right to say that....My grandparents are from Turkey. I was born and raised in Germany. Today the word being white goes hand in hand with being privileged [sic]. But I don't feel privileged [sic], because my appearance [sic] is the reason people treat me differently, treat me like i dont [sic] belong.”

Where do you reside?

348 Responses; Open-Ended



Africa	1
Alabama, USA	2
Ames, IA, USA	1
Argentina	2
Australia	19
Belgium	2
Colombia	2
Boston, MA, USA	6
Brazil	4
Buffalo, NY, USA	1
California, USA	5
Canada	15
Chicago, USA	6
Copenhagen	2
Croatia	2
Delaware, USA	1
Dominican Republic	1
Douglasville, GA, USA	1
Europe	4
Finland	3
Florence, Italy	1
Florida, USA	1
France	1
Germany	6
Greece	2
Illinois, USA	1
India	5
Indiana, USA	1
Ireland	1
Italy	5
Ithaca, NY, USA	1
London, UK	19
Los Angeles, CA, USA	4
Madison, WI, USA	1
Maine	1
Malaysia	2
Maryland, USA	7
Massachusetts	6
Mexico	5

Michigan	2
Minnesota	1
Missouri	2
Montevideo, Uruguay	1
Montreal	6
Morgantown, WV, USA	1
Mumbai	1
Netherlands	3
New Jersey, USA	9
New Orleans, LA, USA	1
New York City, USA	75
North Carolina, USA	2
Ohio, USA	2
Nebraska, USA	1
Oslo, Norway	1
Paris	7
Pennsylvania, PA, USA	4
Poland	2
Portland, OR, USA	2
Portugal	2
Poughkeepsie, NY, USA	1
Prague, Czechia	1
Rhode Island, USA	1
Romania	1
San Diego, CA, USA	2

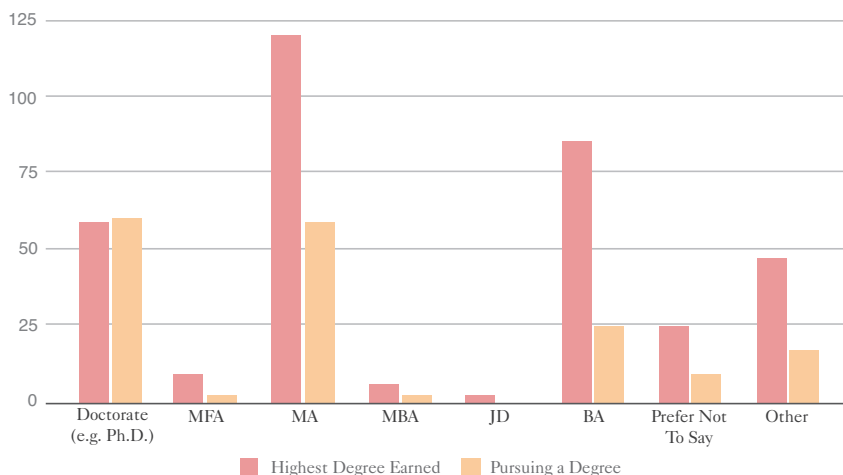
Saudi Arabia	1
Seattle, WA, USA	3
South Korea	1
Serbia	1
Singapore	1
South Africa	3
Spain	4
Sweden	8
Switzerland	1
Taiwan	2
Tennessee, USA	1
Texas, USA	1
UK, not London	21
Ukraine	1
USA, no state given	8
Utah, USA	1
Vietnam	2
Washington DC, USA	5
Washington, USA	1
Wisconsin, USA	1
Zimbabwe	1

Note:
New York City is such a heavy outlier that it significantly
skews the data & the map.

What is the highest degree you hold?

355 Responses

Doctorate (e.g. Ph.D.): 59 (16.6%)
 MFA: 10 (2.8%)
 MA: 121 (34.1%)
 MBA: 6 (1.7%)
 JD: 1 (0.3%)
 BA: 86 (24.2%)
 Prefer Not To Say: 25 (7.0%)
 Other: 47 (13.2%)



Are you currently pursuing a degree?

352 Responses

Doctorate (e.g. Ph.D.): 60 (17.0%)
 MFA: 2 (0.6%)
 MA: 59 (16.8%)
 MBA: 2 (0.6%)
 JD: 0 (0.0%)
 BA: 25 (7.1%)
 No: 176 (50.0%)
 Prefer Not To Say: 10 (2.8%)
 Other: 18 (5.1%)

Other Highest Degrees Earned

A-Levels
 Associates (3)
 BS/B.Sc (8)
 Baccalaureate/Bachelors
 BFA (4)
 B.Music
 Diploma (3)
 Graduate Certificate
 High School Diploma (6)
 HBO-Dutch
 M.Ed.
 Maîtrise ès arts
 MLIS/MSLIS (2)
 MS/MSc (10)
 MSW
 MTS

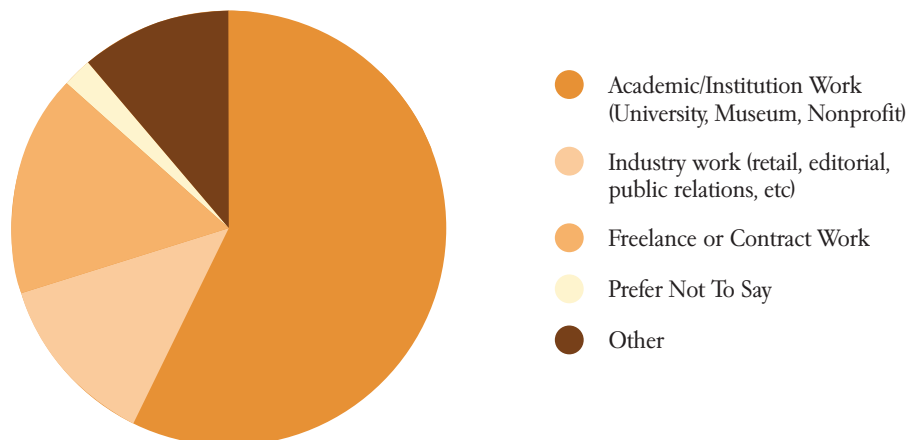
Other Degrees Currently Being Pursued

Application Process (4)
 Accepted to Ph.D.
 BBA
 BSc
 Diploma
 Leave of Absence
 MS (6)

Section 2:
Work

What is your primary job?

280 Responses



Academic/Institutional Work
(University, Museum, Nonprofit): 161 (57.5%)

Industry work
(retail, editorial, public relations, etc.): 36 (12.9%)

Freelance or Contract Work: 46 (16.4%)

Prefer Not To Say: 6 (2.1%)

Other: 31 (11.1%)

How many years have you been working in this field?

356 Responses

Less than One Year: 50 (14.0%)

1-5 Years: 132 (37.0%)

5-10 Years: 71 (19.9%)

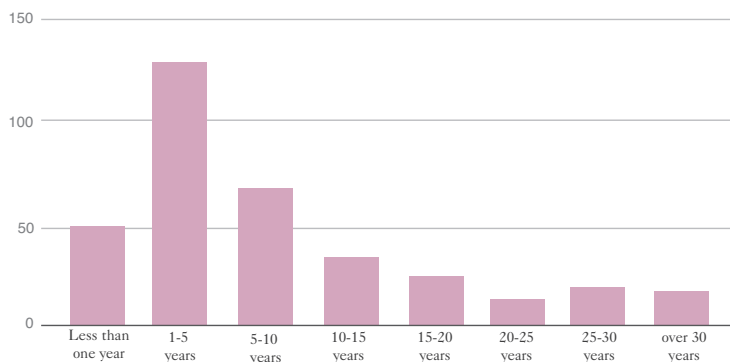
10-15 Years: 37 (10.5%)

15-20 Years: 21 (5.9%)

20-25 Years: 14 (3.9%)

25-30 Years: 16 (4.5%)

Over 30 Years: 15 (4.2%)



What is your job title?

544 Responses - Selections + Freelancers/Other
Percentages calculations are of 360 Responses & equal
more than 100%

Selections

Freelancers / Other: 111 (30.8%)	Associate/Assistant Professor (Non-Tenure Track): 6 (1.6%)
MA Student: 56 (15.5%)	Assistant Curator: 5 (1.4%)
Doctoral Student/Candidate: 44 (12.2%)	Conservator: 5 (1.4%)
Seeking Work: 39 (10.8%)	Collections Assistant: 4 (1.1%)
Adjunct/Part Time Faculty: 38 (10.5%)	Academic Advisor: 4 (1.1%)
Independent Scholar: 37 (10.5%)	Visiting Associate/Assistant Professor: 3 (0.8%)
Lecturer: 31 (8.6%)	Post-Doctoral Fellow: 3 (0.8%)
Associate/Assistant Professor (Tenure Track): 24 (6.6%)	Registrar: 2 (0.5%)
Curator: 24 (6.6%)	Professor Emeritus: 1 (.2%)
Not Currently Working: 22 (6.1%)	Visiting Researcher: 1 (.2%)
Archivist: 18 (5%)	Dean: 0 (0%)
Professor (Tenured): 17 (4.7%)	Chair: 0 (0%)
Editor: 16 (4.4%)	Assistant Chair: 0 (0%)
Administrator: 13 (3.6%)	
Research Assistant: 12 (3.3%)	
Director: 8 (2.2%)	

Freelance/Other Responses

Responses may be paraphrased

Advisory Researcher	Fashion Educator	Public Affairs (2)
Affiliated Scholar	Fashion Illustrator	Publisher (2)
Art/Artist (5)	Fashion Business, Marketing & Management (3)	Research Assistant
Archivist	Fashion Wholesale	Retail Design
Assistant Programs Officer	Freelance, Curator (3)	Retired
Associate Lecturer	Freelance, Editorial Assistant	Sales Assistant
Blogger	Freelance, Fashion Assistant	Social Media Manager
CAD Artist	Freelance, Research (2)	Software Engineer
Casual Academic Associate	Freelance, Writer	Stylist (2)
Chiropractor	Human Resources	Substitute Lecturer
Collaborator	Intern	Talent Management
Communications Assistant	Librarian (3)	Teaching Artist
Consulting (4)	Lighting Designer	Undergraduate Student (12)
Contributing Writer	Merchandiser	Wardrobe Manager
Copywriter (3)	Mental Health Therapist	Writer (7)
Costume Design/ Theater (6)	Museum Staff	
Curatorial Assistant	Non-Academic Teaching (4)	
Designer (5)	Non-Fashion Studies (5)	
Dressmaker (2)	Production Assistant	
Editor-in-Chief	Program Coordinator	
Ethical Stylist	Project Manager	
Executive Producer		

If you are in a non-academic position, is it related to fashion studies or the fashion industry?

173 Responses

Yes: 104 (60.1%)

No: 46 (26.6%)

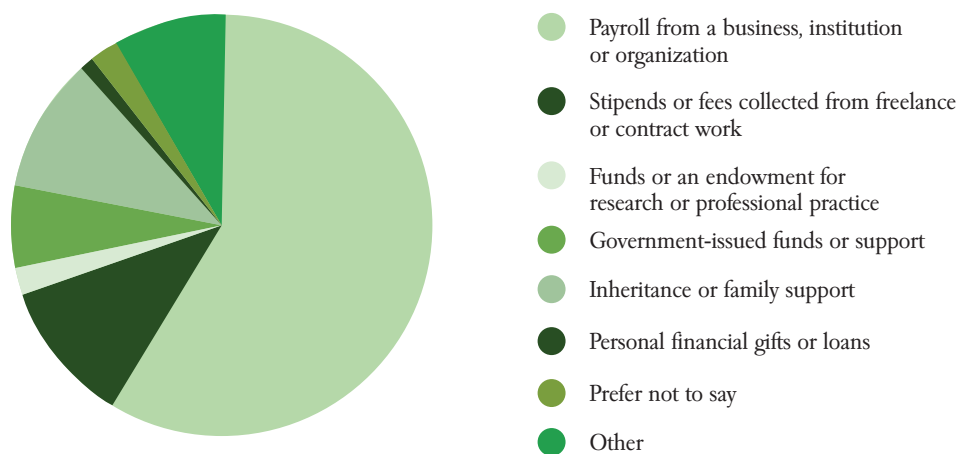
Prefer Not To Say: 4 (2.3%)

Other (Please Specify): 19 (11.0%)

7 'Other' respondents noted 'sometimes' or that their job may overlap with fashion studies

What is your primary source of income?

279 Responses



Payroll from a business, institution or organization: 164 (58.8%)

Stipends or fees collected from freelance or contract work: 31 (11.1%)

Funds or an endowment for research or professional practice: 5 (1.8%)

Government-issued funds or support: 18 (6.5%)

Inheritance or family support: 29 (10.4%)

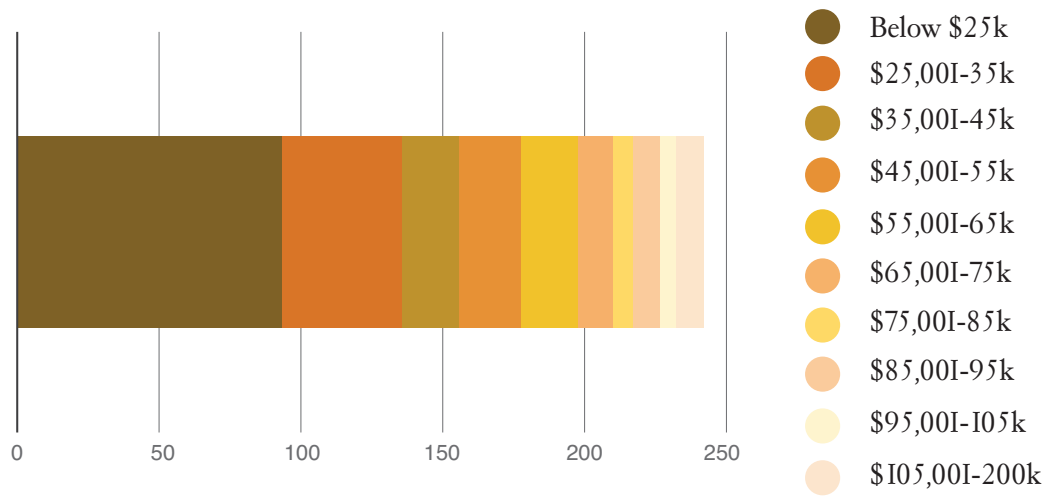
Personal financial gifts or loans: 2 (0.7%)

Prefer not to say: 6 (2.2%)

Other: 24 (8.5%)

What is your yearly salary (as reported on your taxes)?

277 Responses



Below \$25,000: 94 (33.9%)
 \$25,001 - \$35,000: 42 (15.2%)
 \$35,001 - \$45,000: 21 (7.6%)
 \$45,001 - \$55,000: 21 (7.6%)
 \$55,001 - \$65,000: 20 (7.2%)
 \$65,001 - \$75,000: 13 (4.7%)
 \$75,001 - \$85,000: 6 (2.2%)

\$85,001 - \$95,000: 10 (3.6%)
 \$95,001 - 105,000: 6 (2.2%)
 \$105,001 - 200,000: 9 (3.2%)
 Over \$200,000: 0 (0%)
 Prefer not to say: 27 (9.7%)
 Other (please specify): 8 (2.9%)
 Still Studying: 4; Unemployed (4)

How much do you earn for your freelance jobs/projects?

141 & 140 'Yes' Responses, respectively; Responses may be paraphrased

Adjunct Professor; \$2k/semester	Fashion & Luxury Brand Consulting; \$20k/year
AirBnB Apartment; Cost of Rent	Fashion Illustration
Artist; £3000/year	Filmmaking
Copywriting/Editing (2)	Graphic Design & Consultancy; \$200/project
\$20-60/hr	Graphic Design & Textile Classes; \$100-\$1k/project
\$150/day CAD Copywriting; \$20 CAD/week Editing	Graphic Design for Non-Profits; <\$500/project
"Copywriting; Also Teach Trapeze"; Varies	Hand-Painted Silk Scarves; Varies
Costume Design; \$1k/year	Lectures & Public Speaking; \$500/event
Costumer & Fabricator; Varies, >\$2k/year	Painting; Varies
Curatorial Consultant; \$10-15k/year	Pattern Cutting & Designing; -£100/project
Curatorial/Research Assistant/Editing; \$30/hr	Reselling Clothing; -\$50/month
Design Journalism & Consulting; \$20-500/project	Retail; <\$10k/year
Editing & Administrative Tasks; \$10/hr	Sewing & Patternmaking Lessons; \$20k/year
Editing, Proofreading, Copywriting; \$1.5k/month	Writing Art Reviews; Varies
Exclusively Freelance (4)	Writing (3); \$100-\$1k/article
Exhibition Research; \$2k/month	

Would you care to elaborate on any of your answers above?

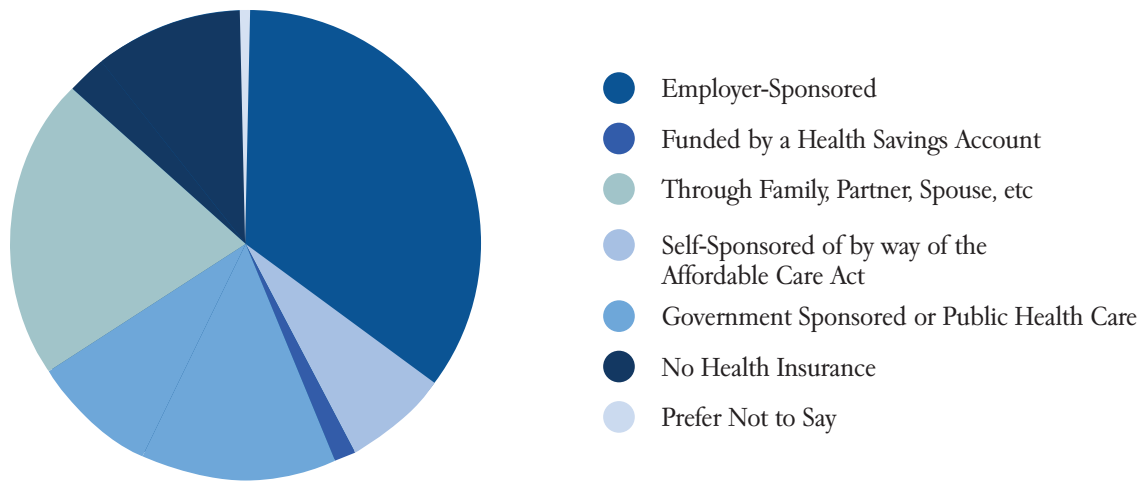
Selected Responses

“I completed my MA in 2014...and am currently working as a university administrator, trying to work out if there is any way to get into an academic role and still pay my mortgage! So far, it's looking impossible.”

“My title [is] Professor, but my rank is Instructor.”

Do you have health insurance? If yes, provided by whom?

272 Responses



Employer-Sponsored: 92 (33.8%)

Self-Sponsored or by way of the Affordable Care Act: 20 (7.4%)

Funded by a Health Savings Account: 3 (1.1%)

Government Sponsored or Public Health Care: 58 (21.3%)

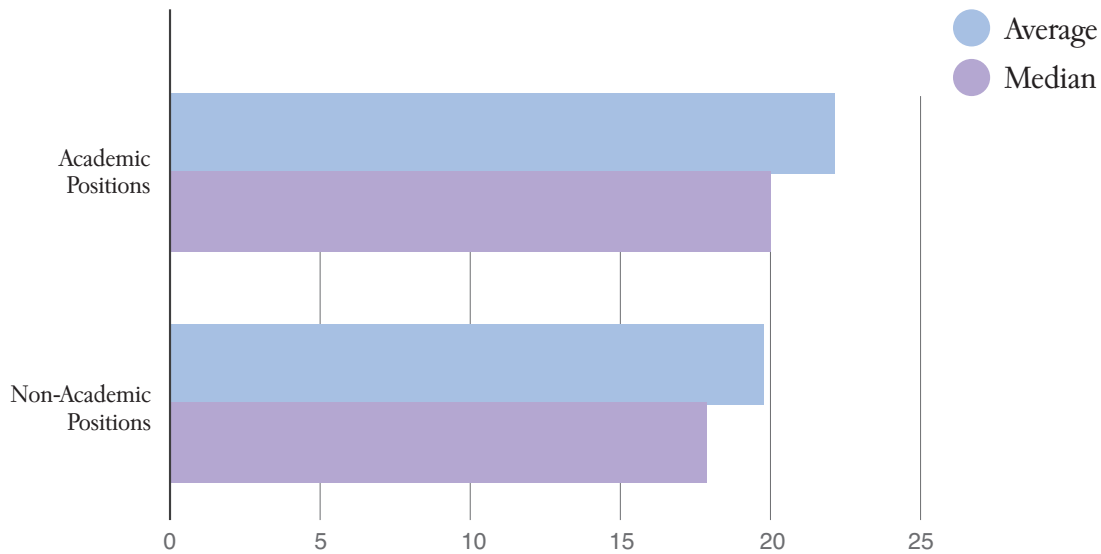
Through Family, Partner, Spouse, etc.: 61 (22.4%)

I do not have health insurance: 27 (10.0%)

Prefer Not To Say: 11 (4.0%)

Do you have paid vacation for your academic job? If so, how many days?

219 Respondents



Not Applicable: 28 (12.8%)
 Yes: 74 (33.8%)
 No: 116 (53.0%)
 Prefer Not To Say: 1 (0.4%)

'Summers Off' Recorded at 60 Days

Do you have research funding? If so, how much?

38 'Yes' Responses

- | | |
|---|---|
| \$180 / semester | £16,000 / year |
| \$500 / semester | £16,500 / year |
| \$1000 / year (2) | €15,000 - No time frame given |
| \$1200 / event | €1,800 / Research Trip |
| \$1300 / year | \$2000 / year |
| \$1500 / academic year | \$500 - No time frame given |
| \$1500 - No time frame given | \$3000 / year |
| \$2000 - No time frame given | "I have minimal conference funding (\$600), plus access to outside grants, and a one-time student funding package of \$2,500" |
| \$10,000 (2) - No time frame given | \$80,000 - Grant |
| \$15,000 - No time frame given | No specific number; depends on event (3) |
| \$20,000 lump sum at beginning of appointment | |
| \$40,000 / calendar year | |
| £14,000 / year | |
| £14,500 / year | |
| £15,000 / year | |

Are you a member of a union?

215 Responses

Not Applicable: 15 (7.0%)
Yes: 59 (27.4%)
No: 141 (65.6%)
Prefer Not To Say: 0 (0%)

Have you ever contacted your union rep?

212 Responses

Not Applicable: 70 (33.0%)
Yes: 41 (19.3%)
No: 101 (47.6%)
Prefer Not To Say: 0 (0%)

Was your union rep helpful?

210 Responses

Not Applicable: 155 (73.8%)
Yes: 28 (13.3%)
No: 24 (11.4%)
Prefer Not To Say: 3 (1.4%)

Do you have secure employment for the next academic semester?

217 Respondents

Not Applicable: 32 (14.7%)
Yes: 112 (51.6%)
No: 71 (32.7%)
Prefer Not To Say: 2 (0.9%)

Do you have secure employment for the next academic year?

217 Respondents

Not Applicable: 29 (13.4%)

Yes: 95 (43.8%)

No: 92 (42.4%)

Prefer Not To Say: 1 (0.4%)

On average, how many hours per week do you spend on academic work?

212 Responses; Open-Ended Responses Edited

Median: 32.5 hours

Average: 29.75 hours

On average, how many of these hours are unpaid (i.e., interviews, course prep, grant writing, working on abstracts, mentorship, emotional support for students, responding to email, etc.)?

208 Responses; Open-Ended Responses Edited

Median: 15 hours

Average: 16.48 hours

N/A, Students, or Salaried: 15 respondents

15 respondents replied 'All' & 3 replied 'Most'

'All' is calculated as the number recorded in the previous question.

'Most' is recorded at $\frac{3}{4}$ of the number in the previous question

On average, how many hours per week do you spend on non-academic work?

162 Responses; Open-Ended Responses Edited

Median: 20 hours

Average: 22.6 hours

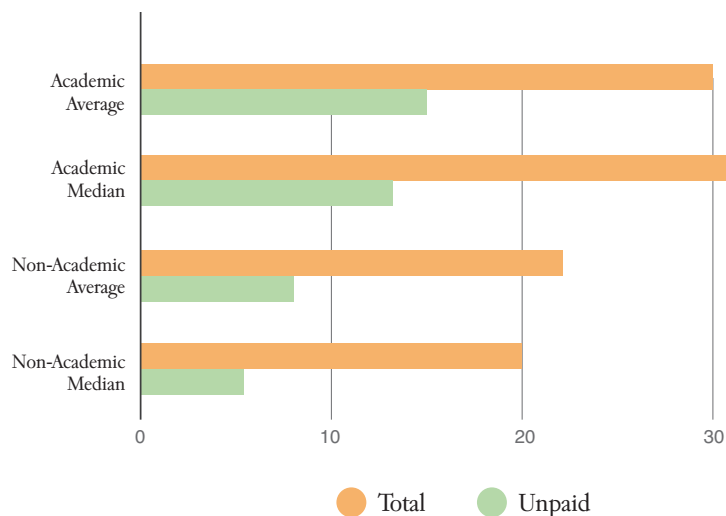
On average, how many of these hours are unpaid (i.e., looking for work, networking, commuting, responding to email, etc.)?

151 Responses: Open-Ended Responses Edited

Median: 5 hours

Average: 7.9 hours

4 respondents replied 'All,' which is calculated as the number recorded in the previous question.



Have you ever not received payment for academic work for which you expected to be compensated?

215 Responses

Not applicable: 31 (14.4%)

Yes: 63 (29.3%)

No: 120 (55.8%)

Prefer Not To Say: 1 (0.5%)

Have you ever not received payment for non-academic work for which you expected to be compensated?

166 Responses

Not applicable: 18 (10.8%)

Yes: 64 (38.6%)

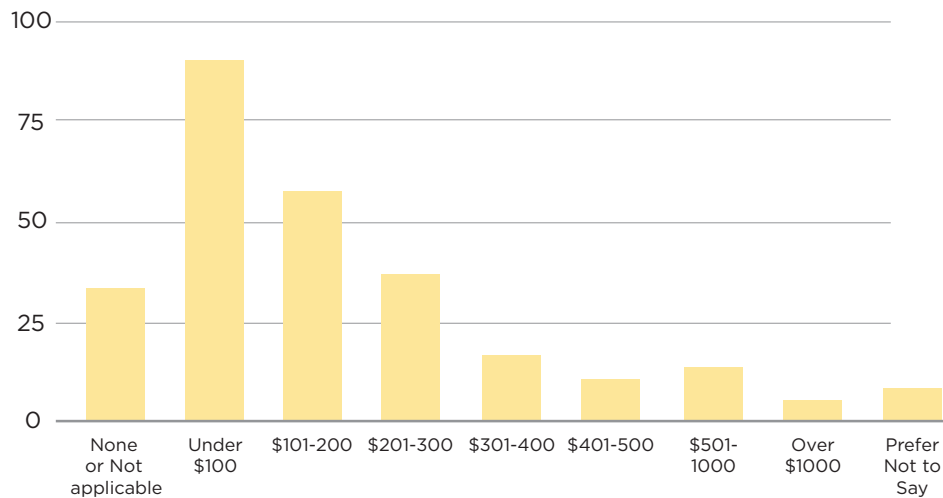
No: 81 (48.8%)

Prefer Not To Say: 3 (1.8%)

What is your monthly cost for work-related expenses (co-working space rent/membership, books, office supplies and furniture, conference and symposium fees, technology tools, trade subscriptions, travel, etc.)?

If some of these costs are annual or irregular, please average out the cost across 12 months.

273 Responses



None or Not Applicable: 34 (12.5%)

Below \$100: 90 (33.0%)

\$101-\$200: 58 (21.2%)

\$201-\$300: 34 (12.5%)

\$301-\$400: 16 (5.8%)

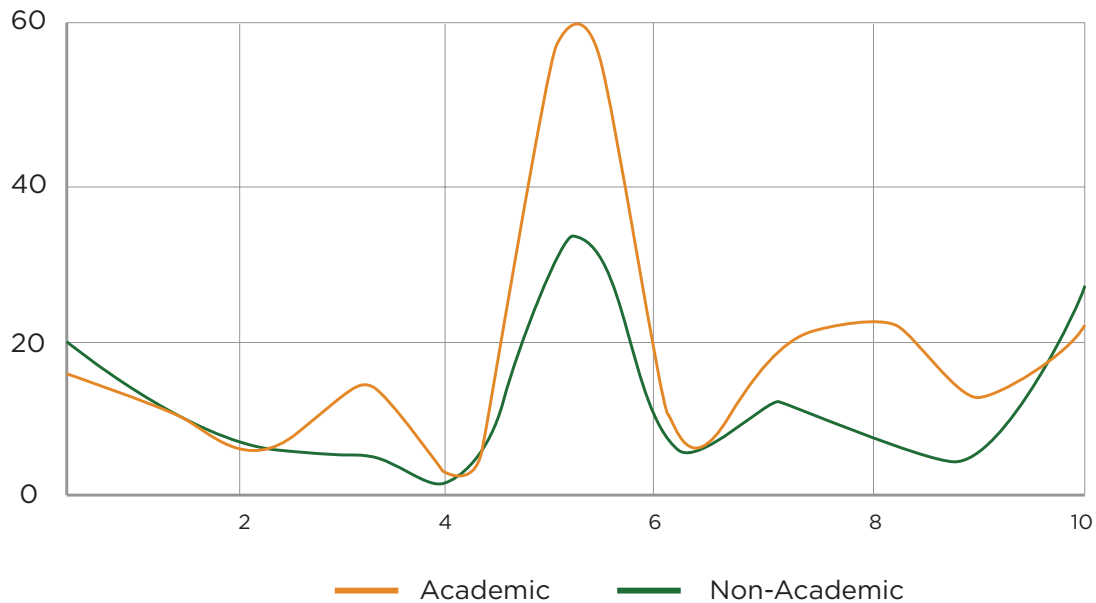
\$401-\$500: 11 (4.0%)

\$501-\$1000: 13 (4.7%)

Over \$1000: 7 (2.6%)

Prefer Not To Say: 10 (3.7%)

Would you feel comfortable raising an issue about a human resources concern in your workplace?

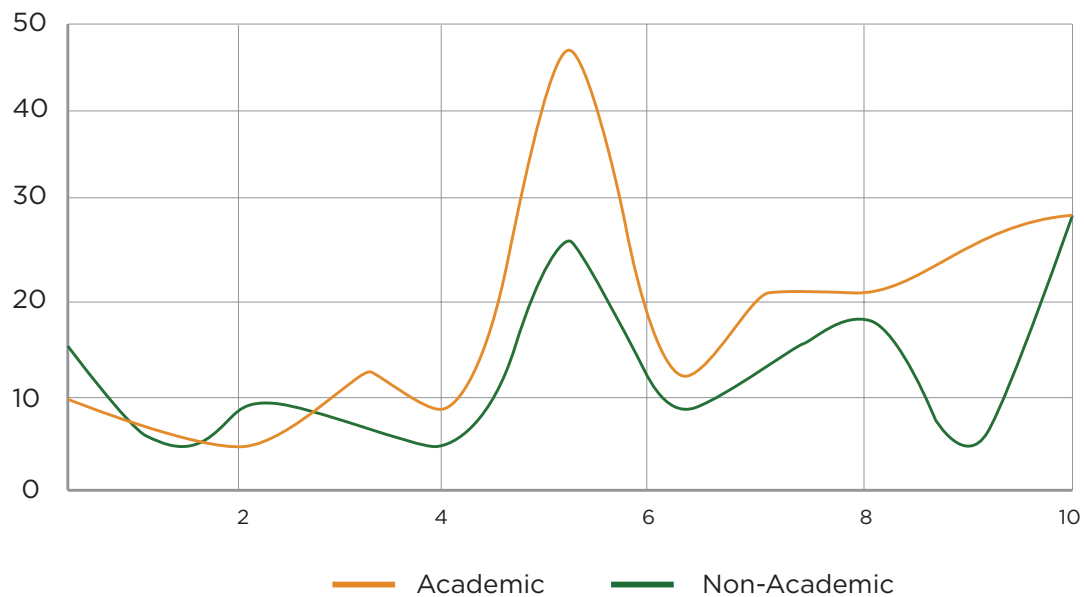


1 - Least; 10 - Most

Academic - 196 Responses

Non-Academic - 138 Responses

Do you feel safe & supported in your work environment?

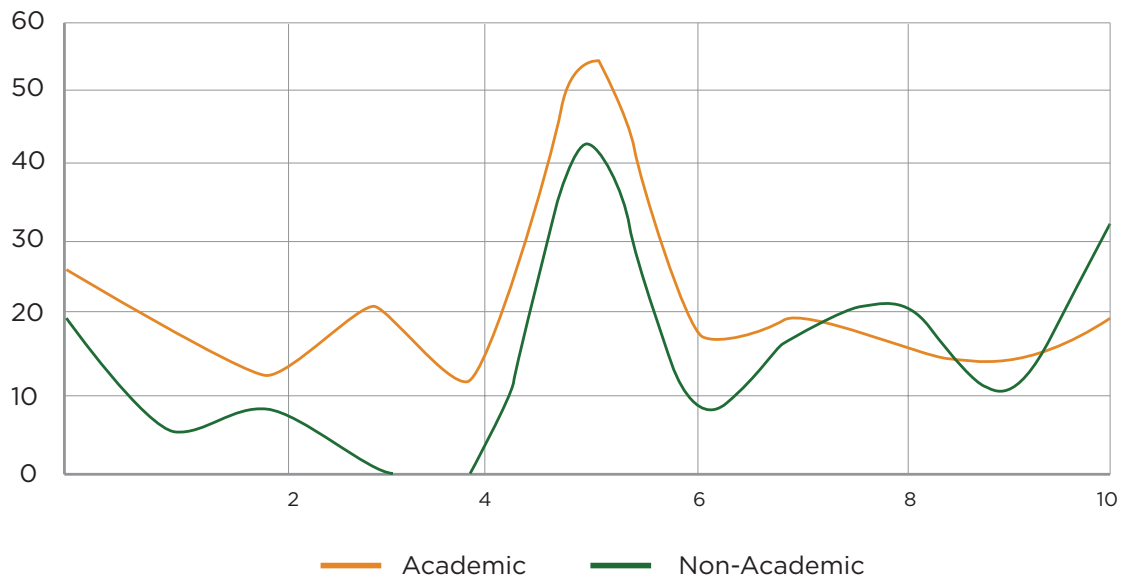


1 - Least; 10 - Most

Academic - 193 Responses

Non-Academic - 139 Responses

Do you ever feel overqualified for the work you are doing?

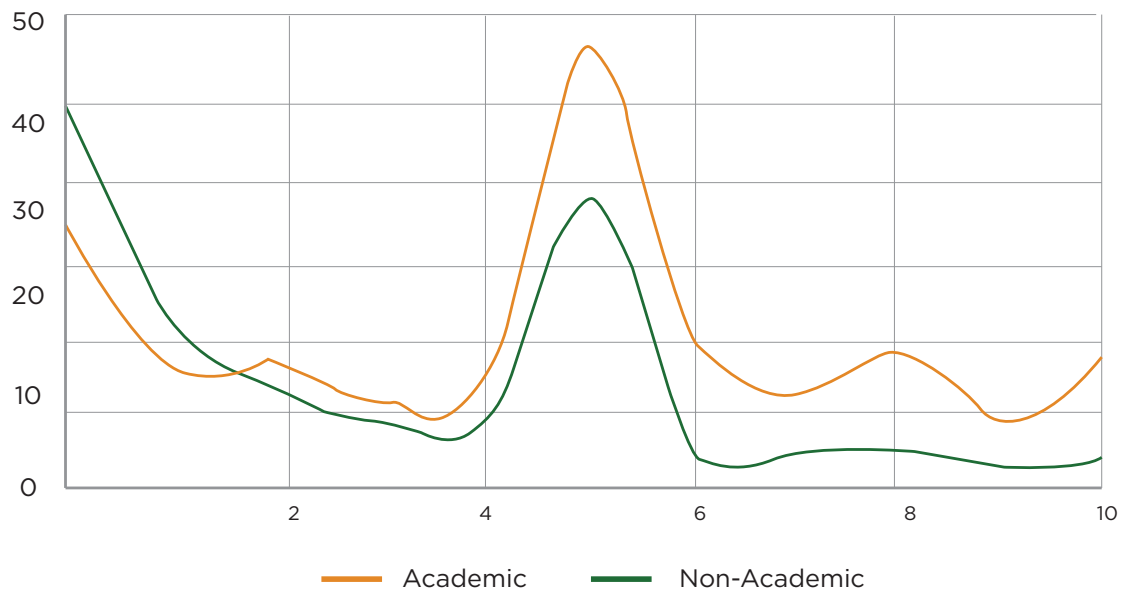


1 - Least; 10 - Most

Academic - 198 Responses

Non-Academic - 144 Responses

Do you ever feel underqualified or experience “imposter syndrome”?



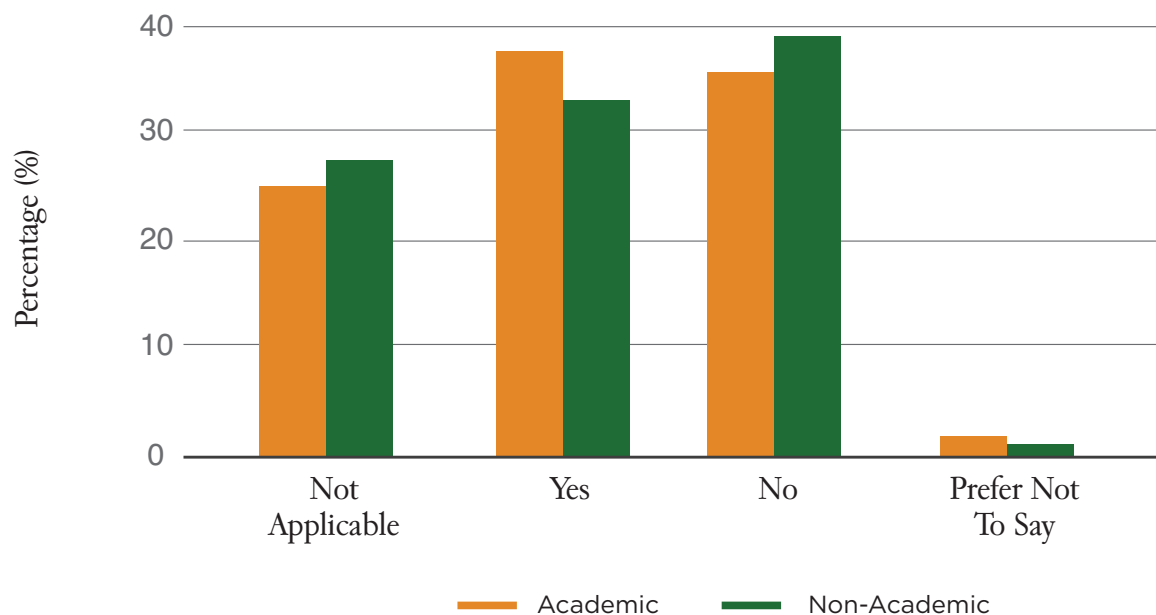
1 - Least; 10 - Most

Academic - 193 Responses

Non-Academic - 140 Responses

Do you feel there are adequate channels in your academic workplace to address issues around discrimination, unfair labor practices, dismissals, or other human resources-related concerns?

211 Responses



Not Applicable: 52 (24.6%)

Yes: 80 (37.9%)

No: 75 (35.5%)

Prefer Not To Say: 4 (1.9%)

Do you feel there are adequate channels in your non-academic workplace to address issues around discrimination, unfair labor practices, dismissals, or other human resources-related concerns?

163 Responses

Not Applicable: 44 (27.0%)

Yes: 53 (32.5%)

No: 64 (39.3%)

Prefer Not To Say: 2 (1.2%)

Have you ever felt discriminated against in the workplace?

188 Responses

Yes: 85 (45.2%)

No: 91 (48.4%)

Prefer Not To Answer: 12 (6.4%)

For what reason do you believe you were discriminated against?

Some responses provided more than one reason & have been tallied accordingly

Age: 11

Fashion Studies' Validity: 7

Gender: 23

Health / Injury: 5

Motherhood: 4

Race: 8

Sexual Orientation: 6

Please note that some of these numbers are low due to a lack of representation in Fashion Studies, not because it doesn't happen

Additional Comments

Selected Responses

“I was not given a role in the show organisation as I was recovering from an injury without my asking for concessions....I was unhappy in this and made myself available even though I was injured...I was torn between feelings of helplessness, anger, and appreciating people [who] thought they were being kind.”

“As an openly gay man I have occasionally encountered casual homophobia (e.g. people referring to me as “bitchy” for behaviour that heterosexual male colleagues would be called “assertive” for displaying) to active homophobia (e.g. name calling)”

“As [there are so few fashion scholars], i don't feel discriminated, but [I am] fearful for my jobs / taking time off / having children.”

“Because the field is overwhelmingly populated by women, I feel like the few men are held to a lesser standard than their female counterparts. Furthermore, I've observed how much faster male fashion historians are able to advance their careers.”

“I have always been out at work and have been denied, or know that colleagues attempted to deny me, opportunities and promotions because of that. However, I have also had colleagues who did the right thing in the circumstances when discriminatory colleagues attempted to deny me opportunity and advancement. Much depends on one's community of colleagues and their support or silence.”

“I was called ‘the fashion girl’ numerous times and also asked if I ‘thought that by myself’ because I was the youngest and a woman in a predominant male environment, also studying fashion rather than some other serious philosophical ‘existential’ issue. So since my subject was, in their eyes, childish, I was childish as well, ‘a girl’ not a woman, and a fashion-loving one - as in flimsy.”

“

“I’m Black” (2)

“I’m gay, and that is either a key or a wall.”

“I’m working class with the accent to prove it. Everyone who gets a permanent job in the UK is middle class. I did a PhD and ran face first into the iron fist of the great British class system.

I’ve been made fun of by my bosses for doing “ethnic” things or have been called “ghetto”

I’ve been touched repeatedly at work. I have been called “hon,” even though I have two Master’s degrees. I have been excluded from important conversations that impact my own work.”

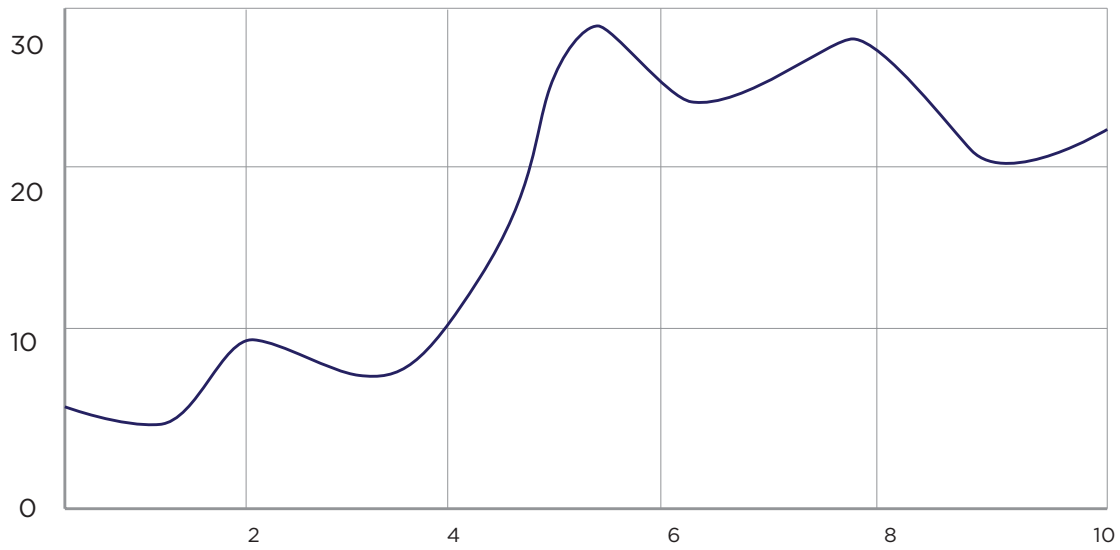
“fashion studies is not respected. One can’t highlight it as ones only research”

“My years of experience have been disregarded because I lack formal qualifications.”

”

Are you fulfilled in your work?

193 Responses



0 = Least & 10 = Most

With these questions in mind, are there any additional comments you would like to add?

Selected Responses

“Doing industry work allows me to dedicate time to non paid academic work, especially writing papers and attending conferences”

“Fashion studies has absolutely no credibility or worth in the general marketplace—I would have been much better off getting an MBA and subsidizing myself”

“Hard to quantify paid vs. unpaid hours of work when factoring [in] the pattern design business. Sometimes I work for weeks without direct income, but receive a steady stream of sales when I’m not working sometimes as well.”

“Ive been able to make adjuncting work because I am soooo [sic] privileged and stable in other regards. I am able-bodied and have [existing] networks to draw from in nyc to support me: my friend from my MA literally shares her bed w me one day a week when I come up to teach Thurs-Fri. Then my parents, because my Dad put my Mom through her BA-MA-PHD, understand and want to help will “loan” me money to get through the month but probably never expect to collect [because] they are both retired and doing well. My partner, abroad, will also paypal me money as I will also paypal him money when he runs low on money. A nice stable living in Philly renting a beautiful apartment with lovely community has also enabled me to take on precarious work adjuncting and commuting.”

“This only covers 2 of my 3 jobs....is there another section :)”

Fashion Studies is often described as a rapidly expanding field. From where you stand now, do you feel like there is room for you to advance in your career or area of work?

191 Responses

Yes: 138 (72.3%)

No: 44 (23.0%)

Prefer Not To Say: 9 (4.7%)

Additional Comments

Selected Responses

“ppl [sic] work for free to negotiate a better position, despite a strong union presence.”

“As a student who is graduating soon, I actually feel like there is less opportunity than what I expected going into grad school. I am pretty disenchanted with my career prospects.”

“I feel like the message I get most often is that if I’m entrepreneurial enough I can make a fulfilling future for myself, but it doesn’t feel like there’s much available to me as it stands.”

“I graduated two years ago and already feel that the degree is old fashioned”

“I think there are so many un-underexplored niches in fashion research that we shall continually have something to explore.”

“The only way is up! I am middle-aged, well-educated with no career to speak of. I am writing, publishing, presenting, trying to make a platform for my knowledge and skills. I don’t expect to have a career in academia, although I have never produced better work. Too old, too wrong.”

“There are very few jobs in this field. It might be expanding in terms of graduates and interest in the field but I don’t think it is growing in terms of paying positions.”

Section 3:
Life

What is your relationship status?

359 responses

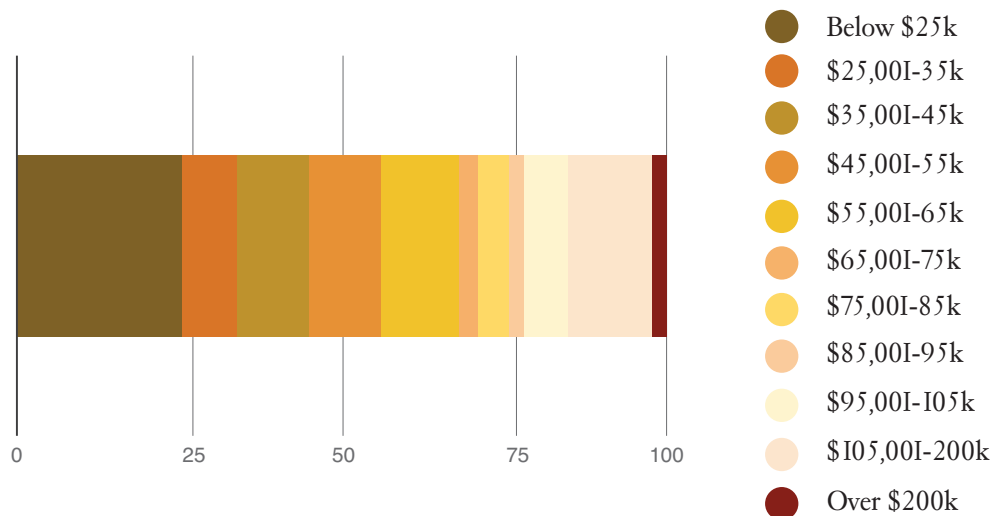
Married: 111 (31.0%)
Legal Partner: 19 (5.3%)
Single: 140 (39.0%)
Divorced: 12 (3.3%)
Dating: 53 (14.8%)
Prefer Not To Say: 12 (3.3%)
Prefer to Self-Describe: 12 (3.3%)

Self-Descriptions Include:

Polyamory (2)
Serious Relationship or Engaged (7)
Separated but not divorced (1)

What is your partner/spouse's yearly salary (as reported on their taxes)?

267 Responses



Not Applicable: 114 (42.7%)
Below \$25,000: 30 (11.2%)
\$25,001 - \$35,000: 13 (4.9%)
\$35,001 - \$45,000: 14 (5.2%)
\$45,001 - \$55,000: 13 (4.9%)
\$55,001 - \$65,000: 14 (5.2%)
\$65,001 - \$75,000: 3 (1.1%)
\$75,001 - \$85,000: 7 (2.6%)
\$85,001 - \$95,000: 3 (1.1%)
\$95,001 - 105,000: 8 (3.0%)
\$105,001 - 200,000: 19 (7.1%)
Over \$200,000: 3 (1.1%)
Prefer not to say: 26 (9.7%)
Other (please specify): 0 (0%)

How many dependents do you have?

273 Responses

Not Applicable or None: 212 (77.7%)

One: 29 (10.6%)

Two: 15 (5.5%)

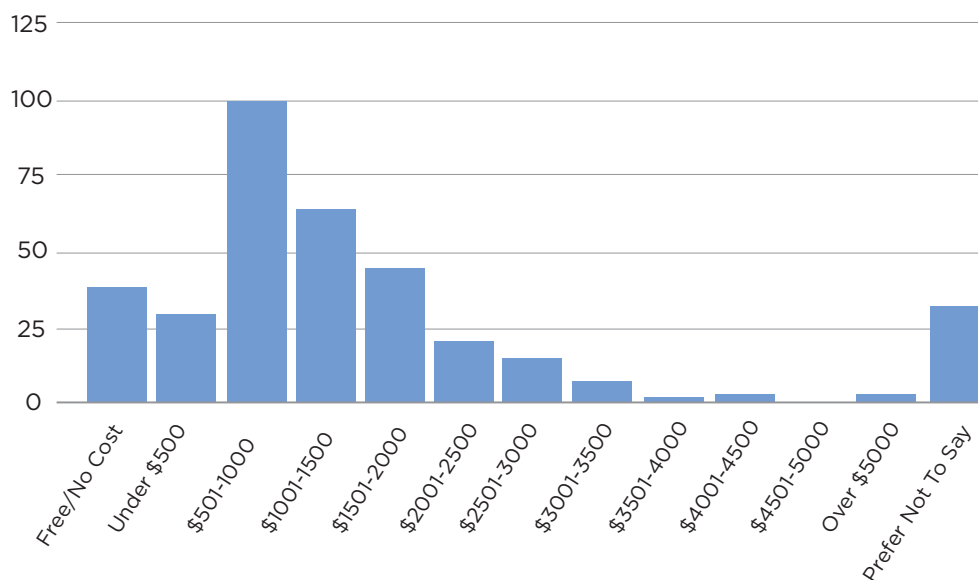
Three: 6 (2.2%)

Four or More: 5 (1.8%)

Prefer Not To Say: 6 (2.2%)

How much do you pay monthly for your living space?

357 Responses



Free/No Cost Associated with Housing: 40 (11.2%)

Under \$500 per month: 31 (8.7%)

\$501 - 1000 per month: 102 (28.9%)

\$1001 - 1500 per month: 64 (17.9%)

\$1501 - 2000 per month: 46 (12.8%)

\$2001 - 2500 per month: 19 (5.3%)

\$2501 - 3000 per month: 11 (3.0%)

\$3001 - 3500 per month: 5 (1.4%)

\$3501 - 4000 per month: 1 (0.3%)

\$4001 - 4500 per month: 2 (0.5%)

\$4501 - 5000 per month: 0 (0%)

Over \$5000 per month: 3 (0.8%)

Prefer Not To Say: 33 (9.2%)

Do you have roommates?

358 Responses

Yes: 73 (20.4%)

No: 96 (26.8%)

I live with my partner, spouse, family, etc.: 183 (51.1%)

N/A: 2 (0.6%)

Prefer Not To Say: 4 (1.1%)

If Yes, how many?

338 Responses

N/A: 150 (44.4%)

1: 91 (26.9%)

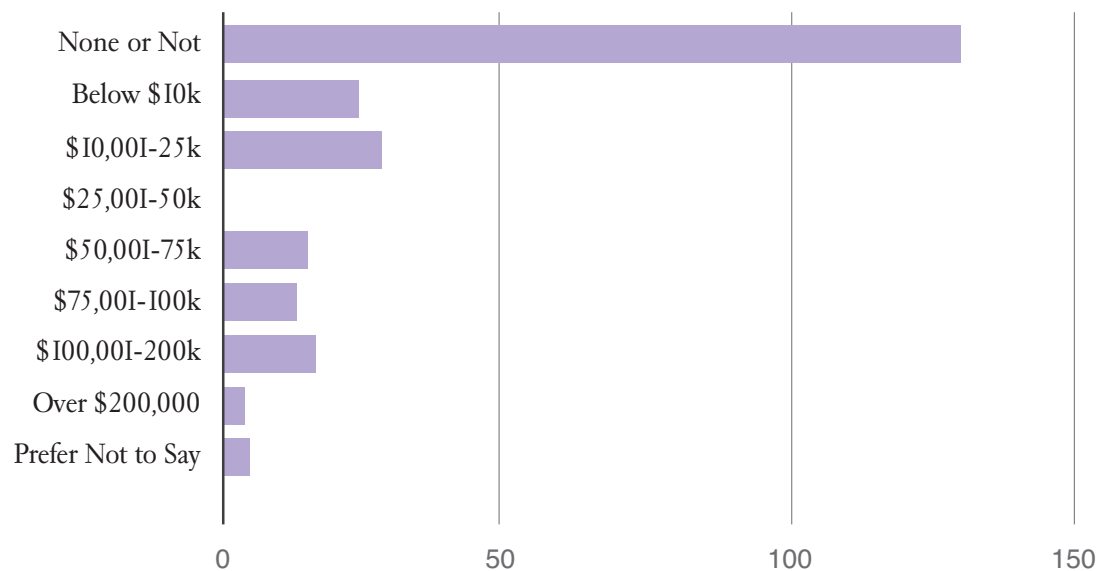
2: 39 (11.5%)

3: 29 (8.6%)

4 or more: 29 (8.6%)

What is your total student loan debt burden?

271 Responses



None or Not Applicable: 130 (47.9%)

Below \$10,000: 24 (8.9%)

\$10,001-\$25,000: 28 (10.3%)

\$25,001-\$50,000: 36 (13.3%)

\$50,001-\$75,000: 15 (5.5%)

\$75,001-\$100,000: 13 (4.8%)

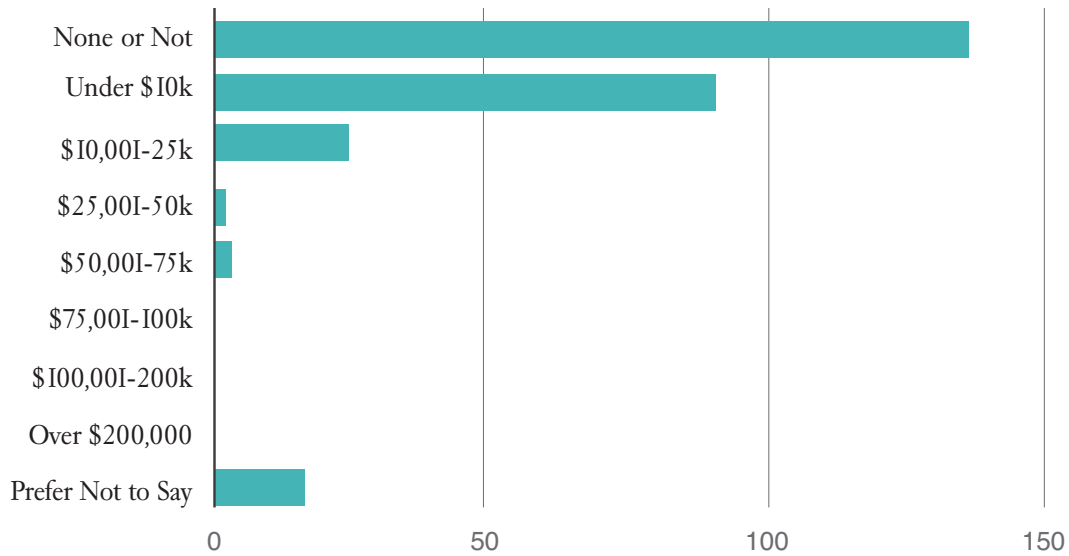
\$100,001-\$200,000: 16 (5.9%)

Over \$200,000: 4 (1.5%)

Prefer Not To Say: 5 (1.8%)

What is your total credit card debt/burden?

271 Responses



None or Not Applicable: 137 (50.5%)

Below \$10,000: 90 (33.2%)

\$10,001-\$25,000: 24 (8.9%)

\$25,001-\$50,000: 1 (0.4%)

\$50,001-\$75,000: 2 (0.7%)

\$75,001-\$100,000: 0 (0%)

\$100,001-\$200,000: 0 (0%)

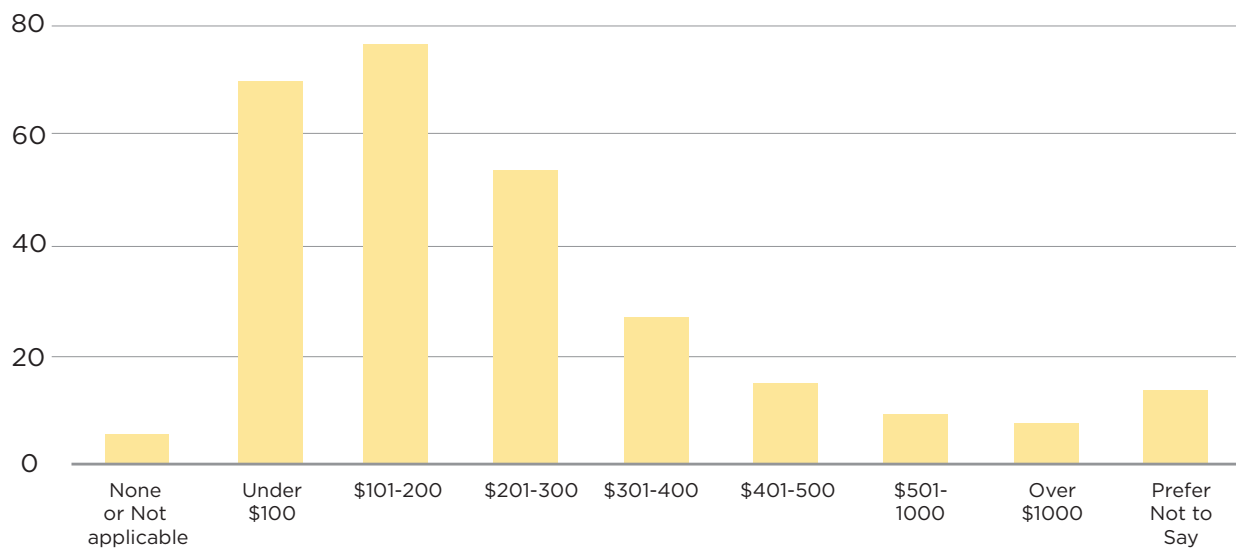
Over \$200,000: 0 (0%)

Prefer Not To Say: 17 (6.3%)

What is your monthly cost for personal appearance management (clothing and shoes, hairstyling and salon services, skincare and aesthetic treatments, gym memberships, cosmetics, etc.)?

If some of these costs are annual or irregular, please average out the cost across 12 months.

274 Responses



None or Not Applicable: 6 (2.2%)

Below \$100: 68 (24.8%)

\$101-\$200: 75 (27.4%)

\$201-\$300: 53 (19.3%)

\$301-\$400: 26 (9.5%)

\$401-\$500: 15 (5.5%)

\$501-\$1000: 10 (3.6%)

Over \$1000: 8 (2.9%)

Prefer Not To Say: 13 (4.7%)

Do you feel pressure to maintain a certain level of appearance/normativity/fashionability?

193 Responses

Yes: 154 (79.8%)

No: 38 (19.7%)

Prefer Not To Answer: 1 (0.5%)

Additional Comments Regarding Personal Appearance Management & Fashionability

Selected Responses

“As an older woman the pressure is enormous to remain ‘in fashion’ vs. being allowed to develop one’s own personal style”

“Participation in fashion is obviously dependent on personal economic situations...I’ve been wearing [the same clothes] for years: I wonder which is worse? Dull skin and wrinkles or wearing the same clothes all the time? Basically, because I can’t participate in fashion or skincare, I’m calling bullshit on them both. I’m like a kid wailing at the unfairness of being left out. Because I know that I want it too. I want to wear something new and cover myself in serums.”

“I feel the pressure but I no longer have the time or money to respond, which is depressing”

“I don’t necessarily think this is a standard perpetuated by the industry as much as it is a personal standard I hold for myself.”

“Being surrounded by fashion all the time has made me have an unhealthy relationship with fashion and with my finances. I oftentimes spend beyond my means, or simply shop to fill that aforementioned void when I have some downtime.”

Are you mostly financially independent?

275 Responses

Yes: 178 (64.7%)
No: 88 (32.0%)
Prefer Not To Say: 9 (3.3%)

Do you rely upon the financial support of a breadwinning spouse or partner?

274 Responses

Yes: 74 (27.0%)
No: 189 (69.0%)
Prefer Not To Say: 11 (4.0%)

Do you receive financial assistance from your parents or family?

277 Responses

Yes: 94 (33.9%)
No: 173 (62.5%)
Prefer Not To Say: 10 (3.6%)

Do you feel like your salary (without support or assistance) covers your cost of living?

276 Responses

Yes: 91 (33.0%)
No: 174 (63.0%)
Prefer Not To Say: 11 (4.0%)

Do you feel like you have disposable income?

275 Responses

Yes: 96 (34.9%)
No: 162 (58.9%)
Prefer Not To Say: 17 (6.2%)

Do you have retirement savings?

277 Responses

Yes: 127 (45.9%)
No: 140 (50.5%)
Prefer Not To Say: 10 (3.6%)

Do you have emergency savings?

277 Responses

Yes: 135 (48.7%)
No: 132 (47.7%)
Prefer Not To Say: 10 (3.6%)

Additional Comments Regarding Personal Finance

Selected Responses

“As a recent grad with a masters, I have found it difficult to continue to go to conferences, symposiums, and keep up with professional organization membership fees. I feel like I am missing opportunities because I cannot financially afford the costs of these things (which is why I’m doing another unpaid internship).

Asking if my salary covers my needs is tricky. Sure it pays for food and rent, but not for things like visiting my parents who live abroad occasionally or big purchases like buying a couch. That’s where my parents have to step in, or the day or two extra I work in the vintage shop.

Before a career in academia, I was the breadwinning spouse. I worked in the fashion industry on a great wage. During my first year of postgrad study I still worked to get that full time wage for a year to help with fees. Now I’m an unfunded doctoral student relying on my husband who is an artist with an unstable income. When we were grocery shopping the other day, he said, “Remember goat’s cheese? And salmon? Remember when we could buy any food we wanted?” The struggle is real but I’m so much happier and fulfilled.

I spend more than I make on childcare which allows me to keep my place in the work place

If I were not lucky enough to be married to someone who is able to support both of us, I would not be able to work in fashion studies at all.

Do you feel that your current ratio of labor to income is sustainable long-term?

188 Responses

Yes: 48 (25.5%)

No: 134 (71.3%)

Prefer Not To Say: 6 (3.2%)

Additional Comments

Selected Responses



“Absolutely not! My hope is that if I put in unpaid/precarious labor now, it will pay off in the long run.”

“For the past year, my focus has been almost entirely on getting a better job. As a result, I have neglected many of the things that I would rather be doing and that would likely benefit my career in the long run...It is absolutely not sustainable to feel so frustrated and hopeless in the field that I am so passionate about”

“HA!”

“I cannot keep up this pace (32ish hrs work + full PhD load) much longer. Especially not with my debt burden. Honestly, if someone offered me a 60,000\$ job today I would probably take it and quit.”

“If I ever want to own my own home AND retire comfortably, I will need to be paid more.”

“It’s not. I’m in a constant low grade panic about this. I don’t know how to get my kids braces, let alone college.”



Section 4:

Balance

Do you have a healthy work/life balance?

190 Responses

Yes: 89 (46.8%)

No: 100 (52.6%)

Prefer Not To Answer: 1 (0.5%)

Additional Comments

Selected Responses

“But I didn’t before coming into this field either, and at least doing research means I can work too much and be productive towards my own goals and not somebody [else’s].”

“I feel if I am not working or doing something related to my job that I am slacking”

“I’ve always been a workaholic, way before I joined academia (I came from industry). Work has always taken priority over absolutely everything else. This happened regardless of whether I was earning a lot or a little, could afford to relax or couldn’t. So, I’ve never had a healthy life-work balance, but it’s partly due to my own attitude, which stems from my childhood when succeeding at school was the only way to escape misery at home (and be offered any glimpse of respect at home).”

“My current academic schedule allows me the flexibility to engage in activities that enrich my mind and soul as well as my financial situation -- when I manage my time well. Inevitably, the academic work piles up despite my meticulous planning, and I have to do some extra work and put in long hours to make up for it, but right now at this stage, I feel like I have a very healthy balance.”

“My entire life is invested in my academic career. All of my time is spent in class, working as a program assistant, doing independent research, or attempting to get published by journals. I socialize almost exclusively with my coworkers/peers and find that academia is the main content we speak about.”

Do you have any self-care or coping strategies that aid in maintaining balance?

180 Responses

Yes: 120 (66.7%)

No: 48 (26.7%)

Prefer Not To Answer: 12 (6.6%)

Please Share!

108 Responses

Exercise	37	Gardening	2
Yoga	18	Hair Care	2
Alcohol	13	Museums	2
Friends / Socialization	12	Reading	2
Not Working at Home	12	Support Groups	2
Sleep	11	Acupuncture	1
Therapy	11	Art	1
Meditation	9	Candles	1
Positivity/Perspective	7	Cooking	1
Family Time	6	Incense	1
Skincare	6	Journaling	1
Crafting	5	Marijuana	1
Eating Healthy	5	Religion	1
Music	5	Saying No	1
Nature/Outdoors	5	Tarot / Oracle	1
Personal Style	5	Tea / Coffee	1
Pet Care	5	Travel	1
Self-Care Services (ex. Massage)	5	Unplugging	1
Shopping	4	Volunteering	1
Movies/TV	3	Waking Up Early	1
Nail Care	3	Working from Home	1
Organization	3	Struggling with Self Care	5
Quiet Time	3	Leaving the Field	2
Affirmations	2	Allowing Self to Burnout	1
Dance	2		

Any Final Thoughts To Share?

Selected Responses



“Do not forget that people over 50 have much to contribute.”

“Fashion theory and studies is rarely found in Spanish and that makes interest in the field complicated.”

“I am trusting that this will all be worth it. And in saying that, I guess I am trusting myself, my institution and my colleagues, that hard work will be rewarded. I’m doing this because I love it. I want to work in fashion studies for the rest of my life. And I’m still at point where I can reconcile the sacrifice with the dream.”

“I never imagined I would be doing this kind of work but I do love it, even on days when I’m ashamed at my income or hating my work schedule. I’m lucky to teach at an institution that has so many class offerings (and clearly has very hazy regulations on how many classes an adjunct can teach during one semester) or I might not have stuck with it this long.”

“I’m just so tired of being financially unstable.”

“On the note of feeling “fulfilled” by my work, overall, yes. But on a daily basis, it is hard. I feel fulfilled when something gets published, when I finish a project, when an exhibition opens. But the process is tough, and often feels discouraging “in the thick of it.” But, overall, I would not trade my position in the industry/academia. I feel as if I am on the right path and would overall describe myself as feeling professionally and academically fulfilled.”

