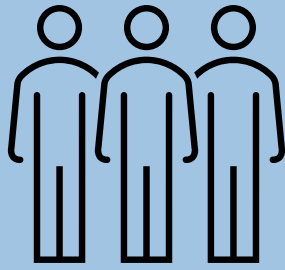


2024 MEMBER SURVEY

For our members, active retirement is the rule not the exception

October 2024

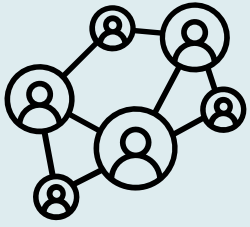


Respondents

265 Emeritus College members responded to this survey

93% were UBC emeriti

92% are happy with retirement



Continuing Professional Activities (138)

32% Teaching

36% Doing research

30% Committee work

70% involved in professional activities external to UBC

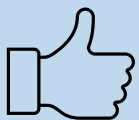
Community Volunteering (43%)



- Local, Provincial, National, International
- Involved with all ages
- Great diversity of causes, nature of activities, and services provided



Feedback



56% value the speaker programs

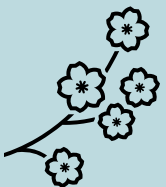


75% value the Newsletter



68% interested in a program on aging & health

Active Retirements



209 people gave 1490 responses about regular leisure activities

133 have authored written works since January 2021

60 have “encore careers”

40 fundraising for UBC

Introduction

To better understand our members – how they are spending their time, their interests and activities – we put together a long list of survey questions and invited comments.

It was heartening to learn that most respondents reported being happy or extremely happy with their post-retirement experience, and that active retirement is the rule not the exception.

This survey asked more about on-going professional activities than previous surveys because this helps us emphasize the importance of emeriti to the university. We added sections on involvement in community volunteering and leisure activities of members as this helps people planning to retire realize there is “life after retirement” and presents opportunities to members.

We did not ask questions about the special interest groups as we know who has engaged in these and how they are working. Since our last survey in 2021, new special interest groups joined Travel, Photography, and Poetic Odysseys, and included Community Volunteering, Cycling, the Okanagan Outdoor Enthusiasts Group, Sports, Wine Appreciation, Reading, and VEG (Vegan Enthusiasts Group).

We hope that you will appreciate that the information in this report contributes to the growing view that "Retirement may be an ending, a closing, but it is also a new beginning."¹

¹ www.wisesayings.com/authors/catherine-pulsifer-quotes/#4030

Table of Contents

Highlights	1
Introduction	2
The Survey	3
What People are Doing	
Professional Activities	4
Writing	5
Encore Careers	5
Fundraising	5
Community Volunteering	6
Leisure Activities	7
Caring for Others	7
Feedback to the College	
Programs	8
Communications	8
Final Comments	9

The Survey

This survey used an on-line questionnaire developed in Qualtrics, a cloud-based service provider contracted by UBC, and which meets UBC privacy and security requirements. Survey information collected using this tool is stored in Toronto ON and backed up in Montreal QC. Survey sections and questions drawn from previous surveys conducted in 2017 and 2021 allow results to be compared. Questions were reviewed and additional fields of inquiry were suggested by relevant committees within the college including Communications, Programs, Transitions to Retirement and Continuing Scholarly Activities. Content for community volunteering and leisure activities sections was borrowed from the 2017-2020 University of California Retiree survey questionnaire published on-line.

The survey was opened May 27th and closed August 16th. Notice with an embedded link was sent via email on 6 occasions (May 27th, June 4th, June 19th, July 3rd, July 10th and July 17th) and posted in the May e-newsletter.

Of 1877 individuals in the 2024 College registry the survey was sent to 1360 members for whom there was a current email address. The response rate of 265/1360 (19%) compares to the 2021 results of 456/1257 (37%) and 2017 results of 317/1048 (30%).

Not everyone answered every question, hence there are varying denominators throughout this report.

93% of respondents were UBC emeriti and reflected the distribution of the College's membership with 81% of respondents from Medicine (n=65, 28%), Arts (n=54, 23%), Sciences (n=29, 13%), Applied Sciences (n=21, 9%), or Education (n=18, 8%). 7 UBCO faculty responded.

93% (138)

Of survey respondents
were UBC emeriti

81% (187)

Of survey respondents
were from Medicine,
Arts, Sciences, Applied
Sciences or Education

What people are doing

Professional Activity

Emeriti represent 20% of UBC academics. They founded and led programs, schools, institutes, centers, and faculties. They recruited current UBC leaders and rising stars. They trained and mentored thousands of individuals who are now based at institutions around the world, further enhancing UBC's international reputation. With their vast institutional knowledge and professional expertise, emeriti have much to offer the University, and many continue to contribute to the academic work and reputation of UBC through on-going local, national and international professional activities. 138/213 (65%) respondents indicated they continue to be involved in professional activities at UBC or beyond.

Those continuing to teach were mostly involved with graduate students (29 respondents) and undergraduate students (17 respondents). Others included post-doctoral fellows (7), clinical trainees (8), faculty (11) and administrators (5).

Sixty percent of on-going research is unfunded work but 42% of individuals are supported by external grants or contracts.

Committee work included department (9), grad student (9), faculty (4), and UBC administration (4) committees.

Professional activities external to UBC included work as reviewer or editor for professional journals, involvement in organizing and presenting at society meetings, having a leadership role with professional societies, providing public education, talks and interviews, being an external reviewer at other academic sites for faculty tenure or promotion and PhD candidates, and acting as advisor to government committees and commissions or global NGOs.



65% (138)

With on-going
professional activities

32% (44)

Teaching & mentoring

36% (50)

Doing research

30% (41)

Involved in committee
work

70% (97)

Involved in professional
activities external to
UBC

Writing

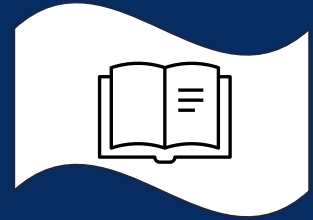
Fifty percent of respondents (133/265) indicated they had authored written works since January 2021, with 105 (79%) producing professional publications and 34 (22%) writing nonfiction, history, memoirs, biographies or autobiographies. Other responses included poetry, journalism, and fiction.

Encore Careers

Twenty-eight percent of respondents (60/214) indicated that they had either worked in paid positions since retiring from UBC or report they have been self-employed. These “encore careers” are varied: people returned to work at UBC (21) or another academic institution (11), worked in a business or organization (19), or were self-employed (29). For 60%, their work was related to their previous academic/professional career. Others used their professional skills and experience but in a different setting (37%), and for 2 people, their new career was unrelated to their previous academic/professional career.

Fundraising

Forty people indicated they had been involved in fundraising or promotions to support UBC since retirement: 62% in support of their faculty or department, 32%, a UBC campaign, and 32% the Emeritus College. Most respondents were aware of UBC Giving Day, and 109/197 (55%) indicated they would consider contributing to UBC Giving Day in support of the College next year.



50% (133)

Authored written works
in last 3 years



28% (60)

Have “Encore Careers”



15% (40)

Fundraising for UBC



Community Volunteering

114 respondents (43%) indicated they were engaged in community volunteer work with a broad geographical scope (94 people, local; 32, provincial; 24, national and 25, international) and all ages, including children, youth, adults, and older people. There is a considerable range of causes for which people volunteer, the nature of their activity and services provided (Side bar). Volunteering occupied up to 10 hours/week for 48%, and 11-24 hours/week for 39%. Nineteen individuals reported on awards and recognition they had received for their work, and 83 individuals provided information about the organizations with which they were involved.

A further 101 individuals indicated they were currently not engaged but interested in getting involved, with most saying they hadn't figured out what would be the best fit (23), were too busy with other activities (17), or unaware of volunteering opportunities (12).

A majority of survey respondents indicated they would like the College to facilitate connections between prospective volunteers and organizations that need volunteers, through provision of information on the website regarding volunteer opportunities (95 responses), vignettes by college members on their volunteering experiences (49), and through a speaker series on what opportunities are available (38).

CATEGORIES OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

- 45% Community/Civic
- 26% Education
- 22% Faith-based
- 21% Health Care
- 15% NGO
- 15% Arts/Cultural
- 15% Environment
- 13% Political

NATURE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY

- 44% Service provision
- 41% Consult/Advise
- 38% Board member
- 22% Coach/mentor
- 21% Leadership/Admin
- 17% Fundraising

SERVICES PROVIDED

- 48% General labour
- 33% Communications
- 13% Tech/Engineering
- 13% Health Care
- 4% Performing Arts
- 4% Legal/Financial

Leisure Activities

209 individuals responded to a question on the leisure activities they enjoy on a regular basis. The picklist of 18 options elicited a total of 1490 responses, indicating a great diversity of interests including spending time with people, enjoying exercise and the outdoors, life-long learning, creative activity, and religious/spiritual. Crafts included woodworking, pottery, knitting, and sewing. Additional activities were reported, including competitive ballroom dancing, leading a jazz trio, software development, beekeeping, online and in-person bridge, study of finance and investing, languages, and astronomy and astrophotography.

Caring for others

112 individuals indicated they had provided care for another person since January 2021, as indicated in the sidebar. We also received reminders that our members need care too.

Comments

I am so glad to still be alive and retired!

The Emeritus College has been an important part of my retirement.

Preserving good health is the most important thing for anyone over eighty.

I have been recuperating from a very serious 'accident' that has taken two years to be well enough to again continue my various personal and public activities.

You never value health until you are restricted.

I bless every day as I survived very serious physical damage. It took time to turn things around and it is with great joy that at my age I have before me the ability to go forward.

23 years since retirement have been the most enjoyable and technically productive of my career. Thank goodness for mandatory retirement!

LEISURE ACTIVITIES



CONNECTING

86% Time with family & friends

48% Grandparenting

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

65% Fitness/Sports

63% Travel

52% Outdoor/Nature

46% Gardening

LIFELONG LEARNING

86% Reading

44% Lectures/Workshops

19% On-line games/chats

CREATIVITY

42% Writing

40% Cooking

28% Performing Arts

20% Film

18% Video/Photography

18% Crafts

16% Remodeling/Home décor

8% Visual Arts

RELIGIOUS/SPIRITUAL 13%



CAREGIVING

52% Spouse/Partner

29% Grandchild

17% Friend

16% Child

16% Other family

8% Parent

Feedback to the College

Programs

The College provides a variety of programs to enrich the intellectual focus and continued intellectual involvement of its members within a welcoming social environment. The General Meetings with invited speakers continue to be well-received and were considered “valuable” by 56% of respondents, comparable to 2021. There was less interest in the Ad hoc programs, considered valuable by 35%, Green College series (32%), and Philosophers Café (18%).

During the 2020-22 COVID pandemic the General Meetings with invited speakers were held entirely on-line. For 2023/24, a decision was made to revert to the pre-pandemic practice of holding these meetings in-person only, understanding that this restricted access for those with mobility issues, UBCO emeriti, and others living outside the Lower Mainland. 75% of the 2024 survey respondents wanted to have the on-line option available.

181 respondents (68%) indicated interest in a proposed program with an enhanced focus on aging and health issues and provided input into topics of interest to them.

Communications

Various channels are used to convey information about the College, its members, and activities. In 2023 we welcomed Valerie White as Newsletter editor. Overall, 76% of respondents found value in the Newsletter, and provided feedback on the overall value to them of the Newsletter sections. Nineteen provided further written comments.

I think it's doing a fine job. Bravo.

Keep up the good work on timely news of special interest group activities.

56% (118)

Value speaker programs

75% (160)

Would like the on-line option to attend programs

68% (181)

Interested in a proposed program on aging & health

76%

Value the Newsletter

There has been a concerted effort to build the College website resources and utility, and a strong commitment to provide timely information via email alerts; 86% of respondents indicated a preference to receiving information from the College by email compared to the College website (40%) or announcements at General Meetings (17%). Most people visit the website “a few times a year” (55%) or “once a month” (24%), and mostly to look for news and events (57%). As in the 2017 and 2021 surveys there was little use of social media to follow or get information about the College (2%). However, 117 people indicated they regularly used social media channels.

Final Comments

The Emeritus College is a wonderful thing, and I hope it will continue to grow and flourish. Many of us depend on it for continuity after a lifetime at UBC, for social activities, and for new opportunities.

I'm very pleased to see that the College is proactive in many areas and giving emeriti lots of opportunities to stay active and involved.

I find the Emeritus College very interesting and am planning to get involved with the UBCO chapter.

I wasn't sure if having a college would really be worth the effort of setting it up, but I now think it was a good idea. Note that I received funding from the Emeritus Fund for Research expenses every year through to 2022-23. Thank You!

Yes. My heartfelt thanks and appreciation for what the College is doing to make retired faculty feel part of the ongoing activities of the University.

Keep our great programs in place and well supported. Thanks to everyone!

Sincere thanks to UBC and to the Emeritus College for the supportive roles they play!

86% (117)

Prefer to get College info by email

117 respondents

Regularly use social media channels