

Quantification of Non-Relative Value Unit (“non-RVU”) Generating Activities Performed by Academic Radiologists: Added Value & Excess Waste

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Purpose

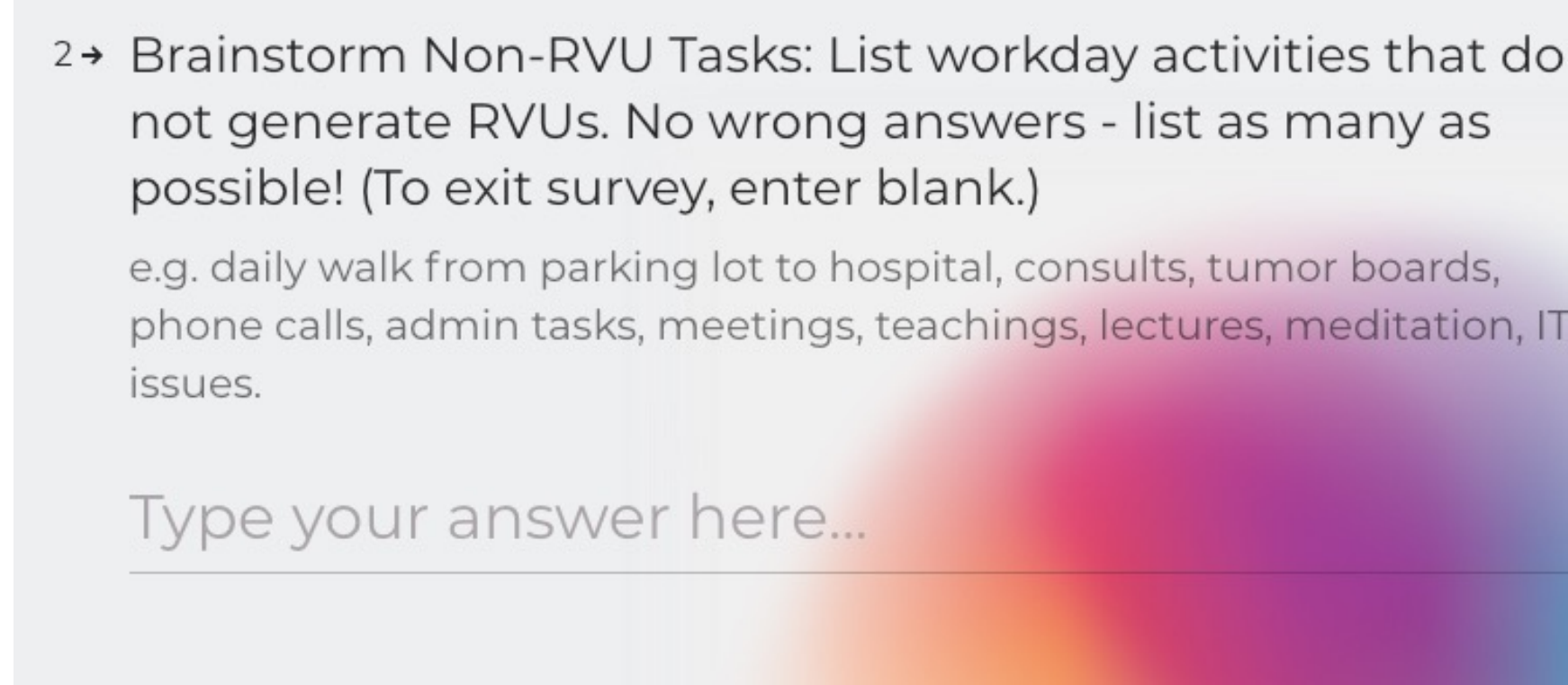
Relative Value Units (RVUs) are a financial compensation measurement used by the US healthcare system to quantify services provided by physicians for reimbursement. While RVUs are directly associated with patient care activities and often used to quantify productivity of radiologists, **they do not account for overlooked and time-consuming tasks which do not directly generate revenue.**

Examples of valuable “non-RVU” tasks include providing education and participating in tumor boards. Wasteful non-RVU activities, such as troubleshooting IT issues, can delay patient care and degrade job satisfaction.

Currently, no studies have been published that accurately capture how academic radiologists spend their time. Our project bridges this knowledge gap by directly surveying, observing, and time-logging academic radiologists throughout their working hours.

Methodology

The project was conducted in two phases. Phase I ran from August 2023 to September 2023 and consisted of **surveying** academic radiologists across 9 sub-specialties on what they believe to be time-consuming and non-valuable tasks.



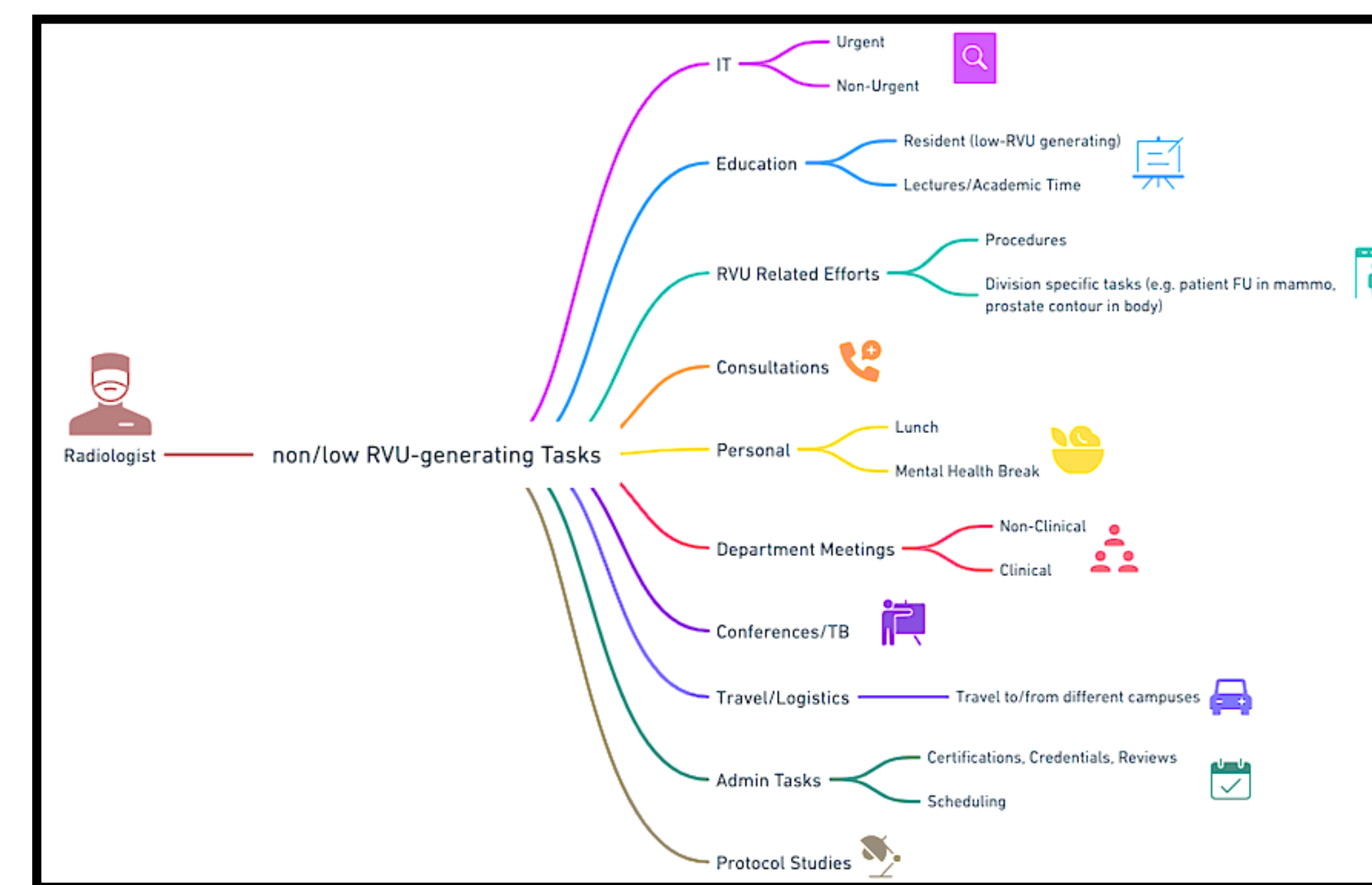
Phase II ran from September 2023 to December 2023 and consisted of **direct observation** sessions with continuous time-logging of daily tasks utilizing a home-grown time-tracking method. **100 total hours were observed, divided among 16 radiologists across 9 subspecialties.**

ID	Category of Activity	Tags	Notes	Activity Done	Start	End	Activity Duration
1	Set up/Admin	Admin		✓	7/20/2023 8:02am	7/20/2023 8:10am	0:07
2	Pre-procedure work up 1	RVU-related Effort	Notes in Epic + consent f...	✓	7/20/2023 8:10am	7/20/2023 8:45am	0:35
3	Procedure 1	RVU-related Effort		✓	7/20/2023 8:17am	7/20/2023 9:46am	1:29
4	Meeting	Department Meeting	9am - 10am: only caught ...	✓	7/20/2023 10:25am	7/20/2023 10:39am	0:14
5	Post procedure Note/...	RVU-related Effort	10am - start time	✓	7/20/2023 10:25am	7/20/2023 10:38am	0:13
6	Education/Resident Train...	Education		✓	7/20/2023 10:39am	7/20/2023 11:40am	1:01
7	Protocol issue phone call	Protocol Studies/Rad T...	on the phone with provid...	✓	7/20/2023 11:14am	7/20/2023 11:28am	0:15
8	Lunch	Personal	12 - 12:30	✓	7/20/2023 1:09pm	7/20/2023 1:11pm	0:02

Results

Phase I: Brainstorming

Categorizing reading productivity distractions (“non-RVU” tasks).



BY THE NUMBERS:

261 RESPONSES

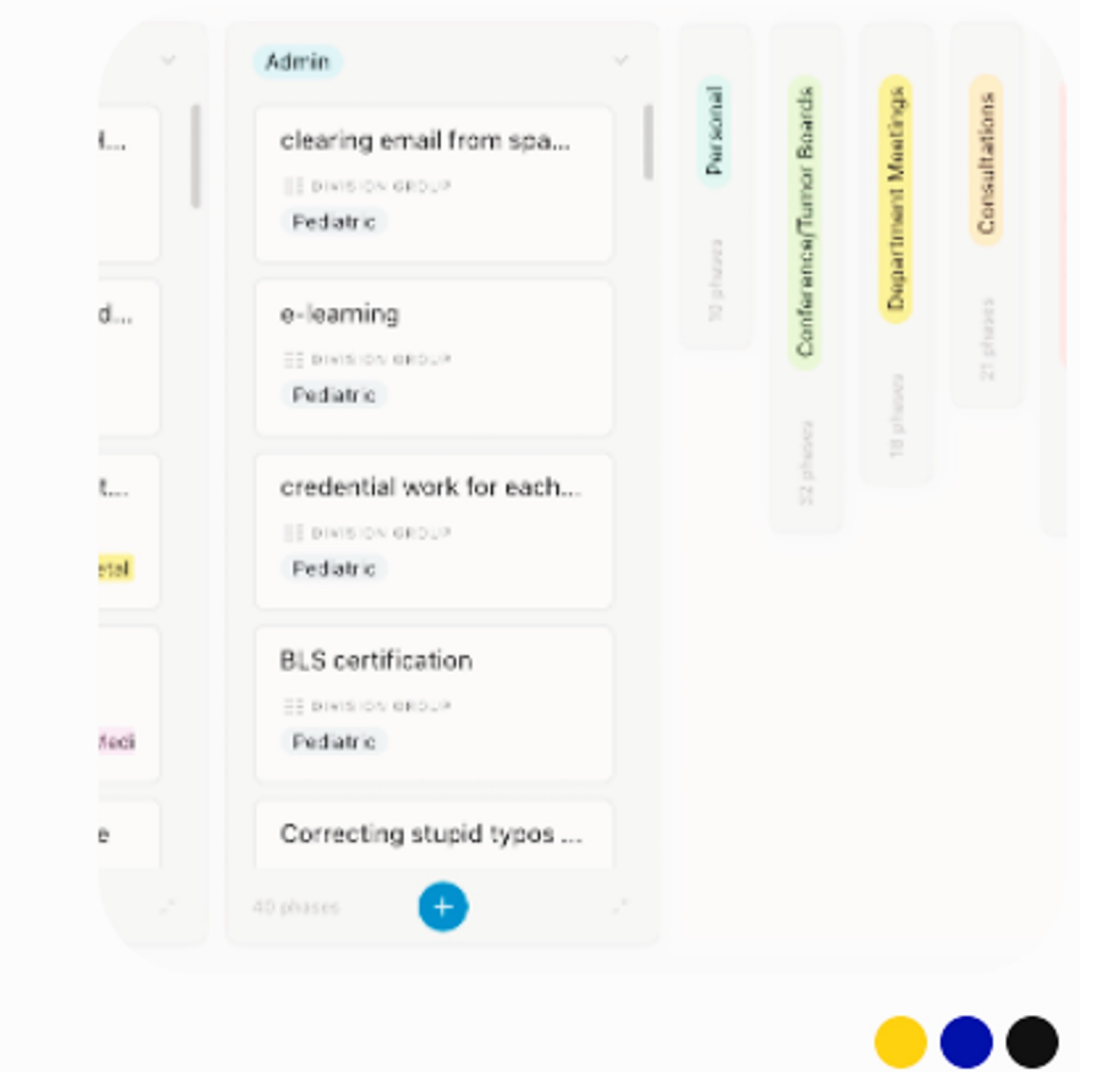
IT: 11.49%

ADMIN: 15.33%

CONFERENCES/TB: 12.26%

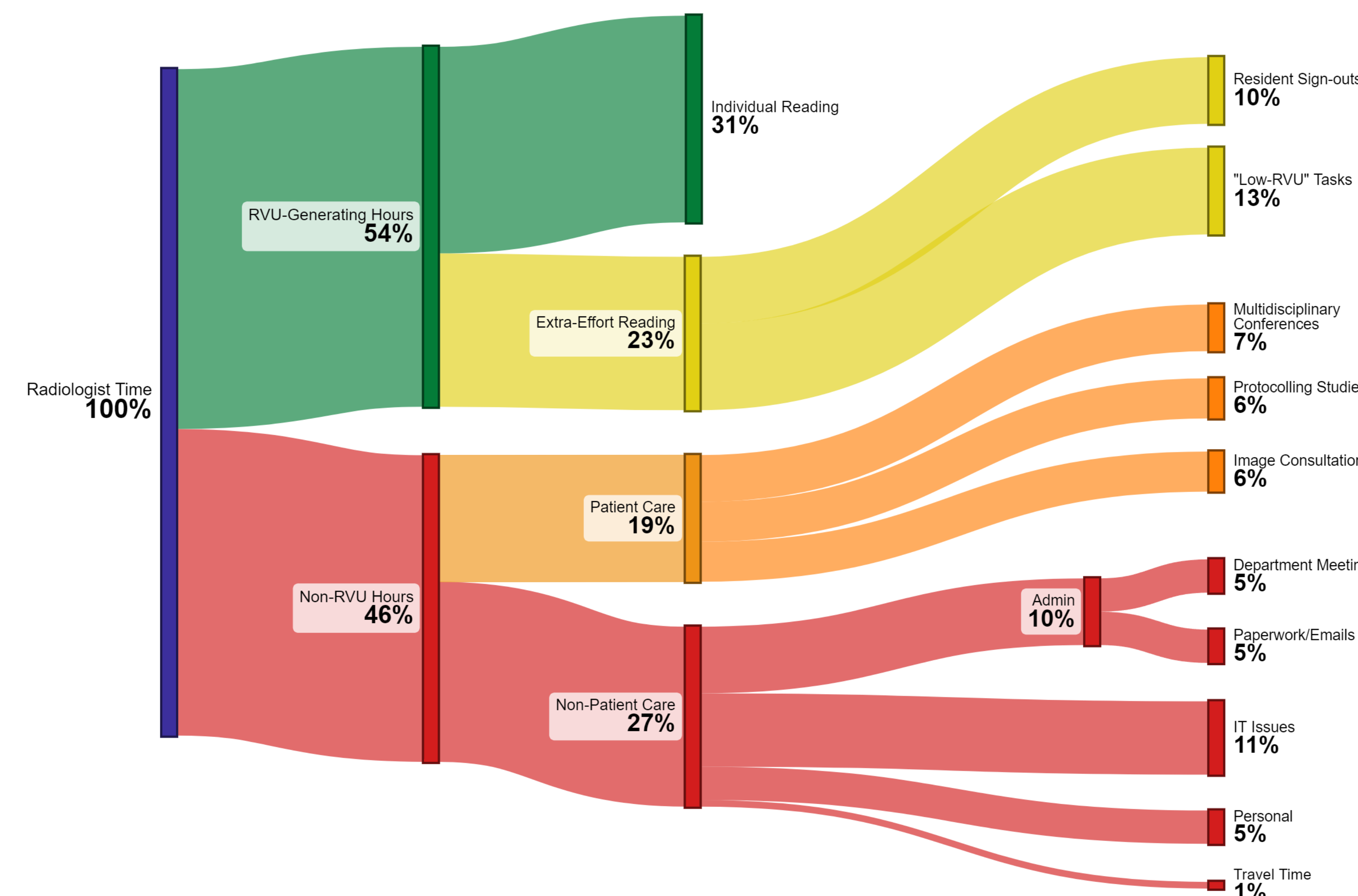
PROTOCOLS: 11.49%

EDUCATION: 15.33%



Phase II: Time Study

How UMass radiologists spend their time.



Time spent on RVU-generating activities **54%**

11% Average daily time spent on IT Issues!

Non-RVU Patient Care **19%**

13% “Low-RVU” tasks
(Extra effort attached to generating a report: 3-D imaging processing, procedure prep, biopsy concordance, undervalued procedures)

Conclusion/ Future Direction

Phase III: Improvement

This study highlighted areas of productivity improvement potential in the UMass Radiology Department. The gathered data is an essential tool towards gaining support for interdepartmental improvement projects, many of which are already underway.

IT Issues (11%) - Improving incident response time through a direct Radiology/PACS support structure.

Low-RVU tasks (13%) - Engaging APPs and administrators to improve procedure preparations, image processing, and biopsy data entry.

Non-RVU patient care (19%) - Bolstering Reading Room Coordinator program to streamline protocol requests, coordinate consultations, and prepare items for multidisciplinary conferences.