

College of Arts and Sciences Workload Policy

I. Preamble

The core value within the College of Arts and Sciences is academic excellence.

Academic excellence for students consists in mastery of disciplinary material and methods, personal development, and timely receipt of degree. It is achieved, in part, through effective instruction, advising, and mentoring by dedicated and well-prepared disciplinary practitioners. Academic excellence for faculty consists in fostering academic excellence for students, the sustenance of a productive, high-quality research agenda, and meaningful contribution to the university's operation and community interests through service. It is achieved through professional preparation, time on task, and collaborative support from individuals and the institution.

Since both aspects of academic excellence are determined in large part by the day-to-day activities of our faculty, the conditions that structure these activities play a significant role in the pursuit and preservation of our core value. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the administration and faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences to articulate and endorse principles governing the assignment of workload relating to teaching, research, and service activities.

That is the purpose of this policy.

II. The Principle of Local Optimality

The activities that support academic excellence for faculty and students overlap, but they are not identical. In particular, certain forms of service and research require dedication of effort that does not obviously contribute to student excellence in any straightforward manner. Therefore, decisions concerning workload assignment where student and faculty excellence diverge will be necessary, and they ought to be made in a principled way.

The College of Arts and Sciences embraces a Principle of Local Optimality: the distribution of assigned duties to a set of departmental faculty ought to be such that it promotes (Pareto) optimality for the faculty and students involved, within the constraints imposed by local conditions.

If such optimality is achieved or approximated at the department level, similar optimality will likely emerge at the college and university level as a consequence. This is a highly desirable consequence. Moreover, the principle respects the effectiveness of local autonomy and expertise in addressing local challenges.

III. Required Elements of Department-Level Workload Policies

Each department in the College of Arts and Sciences is required to have a written department-level workload policy that is consistent with this policy and with University Policy 4560.

Each department-level workload policy shall include the following elements:

1. A statement that the policy applies uniformly to all full-time faculty in the department;
2. A statement of the standard teaching load for full-time faculty in the department;
3. A description of conditions that justify deviation from the departmental standard teaching load;
4. A statement of the standard expectations regarding research activity;
5. A description of the process by means of which individual faculty members and department chair jointly develop an annual workload assignment;
6. A description of how the annual performance evaluation process is informed by workload assignment;
7. A description of the process by means of which annual workload assignment can be modified and recorded during the academic year.

IV. Teaching

The term 'teaching' applies to a broad spectrum of activities. Paradigmatic examples of teaching include instruction and mentoring of students in the classroom, field, laboratory, and studio. These forms of teaching and others are essential contributing factors to academic excellence for students, and as such are highly valued in the College of Arts and Sciences.

As stated in §III, each department-level workload policy shall specify the standard teaching load for full-time faculty in the department. Policy 4560 requires that: "Unless otherwise defined in college or department-specific workload policies, the standard teaching assignment is three 3-credit courses per semester (3-3 load), which is generally equivalent to 60% of the total faculty workload." If the departmental standard teaching load differs from the standard stated in Policy 4560, whether in terms of course load or percentage of total workload, justification must be provided.

Deviation from the departmental standard teaching load for any given faculty member is permissible when justified by pursuit of local optimality. Any instance of such deviation must be documented in the faculty member's written workload assignment and must be approved by the Dean, as required by Policy 4560.

V. Research

Excellence in research – which includes scholarly and creative activity, as they are recognized at the department level and by professional organizations – is highly valued in the College of Arts and Sciences, and research activity is (defeasibly) expected of all tenured and tenure-track faculty. A vibrant and diverse research profile is one of the hallmarks of the College, so its preservation and enhancement is a high priority.

In addition to the direct value that high-quality research possesses, both intrinsically and with respect to its products, research activity also contributes to excellence in teaching. Faculty who successfully integrate their research and teaching bring added richness and relevance into the class room, and they are better situated to inspire and support student research than are their research-inactive counterparts. Thus, research activity also contributes to academic excellence for students.

The College of Arts and Sciences is committed to the academic excellence of all of the students it serves. Therefore, the College is committed to recognizing, supporting, and rewarding research in all of the disciplinary areas within the College.

As stated in in §III, department-level workload policies shall include a statement of the standard expectations regarding research activity for full-time faculty in the department, commensurate with the departmental standard teaching load.

Deviation from these standard expectations for any given faculty member is permissible when justified by pursuit of local optimality. Any instance of such deviation must be documented in the faculty member's written workload assignment.

VI. Service

The effective operation of the University and the pursuit of its external interests (community and professional) require substantial commitments of faculty time and attention. Department-level workload policies shall recognize the necessity and value of such activities by indicating standard workload percentages for standing administrative or service roles. Common examples include:

- Department Chair
- Associate Department Chair
- Graduate Coordinator
- Program Director
- Advising Coordinator

Any department that has other standing service roles should assign standard workload percentages to them in its workload policy. Because such administrative roles typically place significant and predictable demands on a faculty member's time, they will likely be associated with a heightened service load and therefore be complimented by a reduced teaching or research load (or both).

Less common or less predictable service commitments are to be addressed on a case-by-case basis, considered against the background of departmental teaching and research needs, weighted in light of the standard workload percentages associated with standing service roles.

Some level of service is expected of every full-time faculty member in the College. While it might not be practical to state a minimum level of service activity, department-level workload policies shall state that participation on department-, college-, or university-level committees is a standard expectation of any faculty member.