

Academic Affairs

May 13, 1998

University of Missouri-St. Louis Faculty Work Load Policy

Assumptions

- The responsibilities of tenured and tenure track faculty members (regular faculty) include teaching, research, and service. The expectation is that these activities will generally be interrelated and mutually supportive.
- An undergraduate education delivered at a university with research active faculty, full access to the latest research facilities and extensive library holdings is thereby substantially enriched. The quality of an undergraduate education is directly related to the participation of these research trained and active faculty in the delivery of the curriculum and to their involvement of undergraduates in research activities.
- Throughout their careers regular faculty members are expected to be active in all three areas, research, teaching, and service. The relative weight given to research and teaching is likely to vary, not just by individual, but with the stages of a single faculty member's career. While at all stages we expect a reasonable level of service, at no point in her or his career should a faculty member (other than a full-time administrator) devote their primary effort to service.
- The responsibilities of non-regular faculty are generally limited to teaching and service.
- What constitutes the most appropriate mode of instruction varies both by discipline and by course level.

The guidelines laid out below are general guidelines. Allowances will have to be made for variations in mode of instruction. For example, it might be appropriate to reduce the teaching load of a faculty member who would normally have a three/two load because this faculty member is teaching a course that requires substantially more effort than is normal, e.g., an especially large section with no support from graduate assistants or other faculty, or an experimental section of a new or restructured course.

Department, school and college, and campus mechanisms for rewarding faculty will be consistent with and supportive of this work load policy.

The responsibility for assigning teaching loads to individual faculty members rests with deans, working with department chairs/division leaders.

Goals

- Insure that our most valuable resource, our tenured and tenure track faculty, is used in ways that best contribute to fulfillment of our mission of research, teaching, and service.
- Protect and improve the quality of undergraduate education by bringing more tenured and tenure track faculty into more frequent contact with undergraduates.
- Provide an understanding of workload against which faculty can be assessed and merit increases awarded.
- Provide one measure of the need for tenured and tenure track faculty.

Measures

- Within two years (by the fall of 2000) this work load policy will be fully implemented.
- Within five years 80% of undergraduate credit hours will be delivered by full-time

faculty, and 60% by full-time regular faculty.⁽¹⁾

- Unit based average student credit hours per undergraduate and graduate section: we will continue campus wide discussions during the fall of 1998, the outcome of which will be the establishment, for each unit, of target average student credit hours to be generated by undergraduate and graduate sections
- Reductions in teaching load for administrative service.
- Every academic administrator below the level of dean will normally teach at least one course per semester. Teaching loads for deans will be set in consultation with, and with the approval of, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.
- Department chairs will normally receive a one course reduction per semester for their administrative services. Reductions greater than this will normally be granted only for chairs of large departments, and will be granted only upon the recommendation of the cognizant dean and with the approval of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.
- Other administrative assignments will carry at most a one course per year reduction in teaching load unless otherwise approved by the cognizant dean and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.
- Faculty who have a teaching load reduction (for research or for administrative service) will not normally be allowed to teach a course as an overload.

Starting assumptions for balancing research, teaching, and service:

1. A regular faculty member who is doing a modest amount of research or creative activity, and showing modest productivity, and a normal amount of service,

- should teach three sections per semester.
2. A regular faculty member engaged in a significant amount of research or creative work and whose productivity is substantial and steady will have a two/three teaching load (two courses one semester, three the other).
 3. A regular faculty member who is heavily involved in research or creative activity, and is highly productive, will have a two/two teaching load (two courses per semester).
 4. What constitutes "modest" and "significant" amounts of research, and being "highly productive" in research must be explicated at the discipline level, through comparisons with peer institutions and in conversations with deans. All evaluations of research must address issues of quality as well as quantity.
 5. Reductions in teaching loads below two/two will normally be given only when faculty have substantial external funding and are able to "buy out", at an appropriate rate, one or more courses.
 6. During their probationary periods, tenure track faculty should have only modest service obligations and at least two years of substantially reduced teaching responsibility (two/three or two/two) so as to allow them to develop the research/creative activity portfolios required for tenure.
 7. In those disciplines in which external funding is deemed an important measure of research activity, significantly reduced teaching loads will normally be given only for research that is supported by external funding commensurate with the load reduction.

Other General Principles

- Reductions in teaching loads below two/two will be given, in the absence of external funding and on the basis of research productivity, only in extraordinary cases. Such reductions must be recommended by the department chair, endorsed by the cognizant, dean and approved (in advance) by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.
- Faculty members who cease to be research active and perform normal amount of service may be assigned a four/three or a four/four teaching load.
- Faculty members who are more heavily involved in teaching than in research or creative activity will be eligible for merit increases based on their teaching activities.
- Full-time (100%) non-regular faculty who have standard service obligations will normally be assigned a four/four teaching load.
- Work load assignments (teaching/research/service) will be reviewed and revised as appropriate on an annual (and where appropriate semester) basis by deans, chairs, and other unit heads.

Obviously, many issues are not addressed by the above, including how supervising dissertations should be figured into workload, how we should accommodate the difference between teaching two distinct courses and two sections of the same course, how market forces can appropriately be taken into account, and whether and how discipline specific factors should be factored in. We will also have to take into account CBHE and system policies concerning workload.

Related Policies

If we are to meet the goals specified above we will have to maintain reasonable section sizes. We can accomplish this by setting minimum section sizes by course level.

Drawing upon the "Grobman Document" of 1979, I suggest the following minima:

Course Level Minimum Enrollment

Lower Division undergraduate 12

Upper Division undergraduate 9

Graduate Courses 5

The policy I am suggesting is that no course with an enrollment less than that specified above will run without the prior approval of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.⁽²⁾

1. Elementary language skills courses, elementary math courses, elementary writing courses, and clinically based courses may need to be exempted from the base when determining what percent of student credit hours are delivered by regular faculty.
2. There will be standing exceptions for some types of courses, e.g., some honors courses and some graduate courses in some disciplines.