

College of Arts and Sciences
Statement Regarding Teaching Workload

Created by

Faculty Teaching Load Task Force

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Faculty have three related areas of responsibility within the university: they conduct and publish research, and create scholarship, public works, or performances in their disciplines; they provide service necessary for the governance and functioning of their department, college, university, and professional organizations and journals/presses; and they teach undergraduate and graduate students. These three areas are related, and they reinforce and inform performance and practice in each of the others. Also, they are not static, but ebb and flow in relation to one another according to a variety of factors, including the needs of their department, school, college, and university, and the awarding of grants and contracts to publish. In addition, all three have natural times of intense focus, often followed by less attention for a period of reflection or planning.

Given these characteristics of faculty work and the great variation across the CAS, the following general principles should guide more specific department and college decisions.

PRINCIPLE 1: Faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences are expected to, and expect of themselves, commitment to and productivity in scholarship, teaching, and service. A faculty member's teaching load should be of a level that permits that faculty member sufficient time to perform all three activities except in the most extreme and temporary circumstances.

PRINCIPLE 2: Curricular needs of the department, school, college, and university take precedence over time for research or service in any given semester, but it is harmful to students, faculty and the health of the university when insufficient resources are devoted to programs, departments, and schools that result in too little time available for faculty to conduct research and perform service.

PRINCIPLE 3: Scholarly productivity enhances teaching, and indeed is necessary to offer our students access to the latest developments in our respective fields, the kinds of "experiential learning," mentoring and contacts important for their professional and academic success, and the prestige of degree which enhances the university and the degrees our students carry into the world. The production and dissemination of scholarship by its faculty is a critical mark that distinguishes a university from other institutions of higher education. Our expectation to be active scholars is reflected in the College's requirements for promotion (to associate professor) and tenure and for promotion to full professor.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Teaching in the many disciplines and departments in the ISU College of Arts and Sciences varies dramatically in terms of class size, contact hours, and the intensity of many courses (e.g., graduate seminars, one-on-one instruction, laboratories, and so forth). Within the broad guidelines established below, and as stated in the ISU Faculty Handbook, Department Chairpersons have primary responsibility for the specific distribution of teaching assignments within their Departments.
2. While the ISU Faculty Handbook states that tenure-track and tenured faculty will teach 12 credit hours per semester, comparison with our peer institutions as well as decades of practice and policy at ISU suggest that the equivalent of a 9-hour teaching load (three classes per semester) is the greatest level of teaching that allows for faculty to devote sufficient time to their other areas of responsibility. For departments within the College of Arts and Sciences, analogous departments at peer institutions normally have a 9-hour teaching load, frequently with fewer students (a lower Student Credit Hour average) and equal or lesser expectations for scholarly or creative productivity. (See attached materials from peer institutions.) Faculty members who teach an equivalent 3-3 load must maintain an active and productive scholarly agenda, as defined and evaluated within their departments.

3. The 3-3 equivalent load (9 hours per semester) is best determined by some measure of contact hours, which varies from department to department, rather than simple student credit hour measures. Counting of SCH measures may be useful to compare a department, for example History, to another History department at a peer institution that has a similar mission and faculty policies (such as a graduate program or promotion and tenure requirements). It is not likely to be useful, except in very limited cases, to compare different departments at the same institution.
4. Faculty time reassigned for reasons other than scholarship are justified in some cases. We list below two levels of consideration: (1) College standard and (2) Department recommended.

The College Standard reductions reflect primarily situations in which a faculty member takes on administrative tasks, since the normal responsibilities of a faculty member do not include administration. This type of responsibility should always receive reassigned time compensation. These will be reviewed and approved by chairs/directors and the dean, but considered standard across the CAS.

The Department Recommended reductions reflect situations in which faculty are going above and beyond in their time commitments to an aspect of their normal work responsibilities, in a way that could hinder their ability to perform effectively in all three areas. The reassigned time for these responsibilities is in recognition of the need for balance and the university's commitment to those tasks and activities. These circumstances will normally be decided at the Department level (and will be based on the mission and nature of each Department) and reviewed and approved by the dean.

College Standard:

- Chair of department or director of school: reduction to 1-1 teaching load (or 2 courses per academic year).
- Directors of programs that have both research and curricular components (e.g., Interdisciplinary Programs): generally reduction to 1-1 teaching load, but negotiated on case-by-case basis.
- Directors of disciplinary or interdisciplinary programs having either major research or curricular components (e.g., director of undergraduate studies in a single program, director of a research institute, science lab coordinator): level of reduction varies based on size, complexity, available funds (negotiated between faculty member, department chair or school director, and dean).
- Major administrative tasks (e.g., Chair of Institutional Review Board, Chair of the Faculty Senate): level of reduction varies based on size, complexity, available funds (negotiated between faculty member, department chair or school director, and dean).
- Extraordinary tasks required for the health of the university, college, or department/school (e.g., taking full responsibility for writing a department's/school's re-accreditation or review document): level of reduction varies based on size, complexity, available funds (negotiated between faculty member, department chair or school director, and dean).
- Single sections of 125 or more students are counted as two sections.

Department Recommended:

- Teaching courses that exceed by a substantial amount the norm in that department/school or best practices in the field. Examples of characteristics suggesting intensity include size of class, quantity of writing, substantial experiential learning, fieldwork, lab sections, graduate seminars, and on-line courses. Many courses that have one or more of these characteristics are part of the University's Foundational Studies Program.
- Supervision of graduate students as chair of a committee or of undergraduate students in programs that offer a senior thesis or creative project option at that level.
- Undergraduate advising, if a faculty member has responsibility for a large portion of a department's advising burden.
- Specific research or creative projects (e.g., to complete a book manuscript to meet a contract deadline or to devote time to crafting a major grant application).
- Specific professional service assignment or responsibility (e.g., editing a peer-reviewed journal)

Submitted by the CAS Teaching Load Taskforce