

Teaching Assignment Implementation Guidance

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Drafted by Dean Kamphaus in July 2017, followed by three rounds each of review, comment, and revision by academic Department Heads, and members of the Faculty Advisory Committee. Version submitted for review and comment to the Office of Academic Affairs November, 2017. Latest version released January, 2018. This guidance will be reviewed annually, and/or in conjunction with any changes or updates to the NTTF and TTF workload policies. Latest version updated February 2020 by Dean Kamphaus and academic Department Heads.

Rationale

The overarching goal of this document is to provide additional principles to help academic department heads, working in concert with their faculty, apply the approved faculty workload policies to the assignment of teaching loads (please refer to the posted TTF / NTTF Professional Responsibilities policies). This guidance is needed because faculty workload policies are silent on topics such as, minimum class sizes, frequency of new course preparations, and distribution of faculty teaching across an academic year, all of which are important considerations for ensuring equitable application of the workload policies. Although not exhaustive, this document is intended to address some of the most frequent teaching assignment considerations likely to be encountered by faculty and their academic department heads.

The primary goals of this guidance are to: 1) ensure delivery of high quality educational experiences for students, 2) promote fairness of teaching assignments across faculty members (i.e., not equivalence), and 3) ensure that students have the access they seek to the esteemed faculty that originally attracted them to our academic programs, college, and university. In the interest of providing an unparalleled student academic experience, faculty are encouraged to regularly teach a mixture of class sizes and instructional formats, which may include first year undergraduate, advanced graduate, synchronous or asynchronous online courses, practicum/internship/supervision sections, and a balance of small and large class sizes.

This guidance document must be read in conjunction with the College's professional responsibilities policies and the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). To the extent there is a conflict between this guidance and those documents, the College's policies and/or the CBA control.

Timeline of Activities

In consultation with faculty, staff, the office of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, academic department heads will:

1. In collaboration with academic program coordinators and faculty, use plans/schedules from the current year to prepare a one academic year instructional plan/course schedule for the upcoming academic year, which includes preliminary faculty and anticipated graduate employee teaching assignments, by November 1 of the prior academic year.
2. Compare and coordinate course offerings, faculty workload and course coverage across academic departments to produce a second draft of the course schedule by February 1, and
3. Consult with academic program coordinators and faculty to create a final course schedule for approval by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or another Dean designee by April 1.

Reduction of Teaching Load For Grant Writing and Scholarly Work

The standard teaching workload for tenure-related faculty is five courses, and for career-track faculty, eight courses. Tenure-related faculty, however, may receive a reduction from a five-course to a four-course load for a given academic year (See B.1. of the TTF workload / Professional Responsibilities policy).

To be eligible, faculty must take a leadership role (e.g., principal investigator, co-investigator) in directing or applying for major competitive external funding for research, instruction, or service. External funding must include support for any required personnel and research infrastructure at the University of Oregon. Upon recommendation of the department head, and with approval of the dean, faculty may also be eligible for a four-course load for one academic year to complete a major scholarly book, provided it is currently under contract.

In order to invoke the teaching load reduction for grant submissions and scholarly work, academic department heads will forward a brief rationale describing the qualifying activities (1 page or less) on behalf of each faculty member seeking the reduction to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs by March 15 for the upcoming academic year. This rationale will be submitted by faculty and will include the following:

1. The grant notice that the faculty intends to apply for (RFA, PA number, specific federal grant competition)
2. Draft of specific aims or abstract
3. Key personnel including, PI, or Co-I
4. Draft budget

In the case of completion of a scholarly book, the rationale will include:

1. Book contract with a major publisher
2. Book chapter outline with indication of chapters completed
3. Anticipated completion date

Faculty may provide other information, for example, letter of intent (LOI) to apply for or

research grant competition, that indicates the need to devote additional research FTE to finish a book during the upcoming year.

Multiple chapter technical reports, web site creations, or software programs will not qualify as a “major scholarly book.” Similarly, state or local contracts not accompanied by funds for “required personnel and research infrastructure,” contracts or grants that are not “competitive” or subjected to rigorous peer review, internal small grants, and professional society small grants do not qualify as “major competitive external funding.” Revisions to a previously submitted grant do not qualify for a second course reduction. Only one course reduction is allowed under this policy (e.g., multiple grant submissions qualify for one reduction).

Pursuit of highly competitive external foundation grants may also qualify for a course reduction. Current examples of foundations that employ rigorous peer review include the W. K. Kellogg Foundation (<https://www.wkcf.org/grants>), Spencer Foundation (<https://www.spencer.org/>), or W.T. Grant Foundation (<http://wtgrantfoundation.org/grants>).

A course reduction for preparing a grant application or writing a scholarly book can only be granted for a single project. Requests for course reduction must be submitted by March 15th of a given year, to be submitted with workload decisions in time to take effect the upcoming academic year (i.e., September of the same year). Projects proposed after the March 15th deadline will be considered for the following year’s March 15th deadline. Revisions of an unsuccessful grant proposal or completion that extends beyond the teaching reduction year are expected to be completed as part of a TTFs assigned research time. Minor implementation variations related to course reductions may occur by department following Department Head consultation with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Academic Year Distribution of Teaching Assignments

Assuming either a four- or five-course load, tenured-related faculty (TTF) who do not have a course release, or buyout due to external research funding, are assigned a teaching load that is balanced across the academic year (e.g., the number of courses distributed across successive quarters could be, for example, 1+2+1, 2+2+1, or 2 + 1+ 1 for Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters). However, to provide some flexibility for departments and members of the faculty to most effectively balance their teaching obligations with their research and service activities, the College will allow departures from a balanced fall/winter/spring teaching assignment to concentrate teaching assignments into two quarters. When an unbalanced assignment is invoked, be sure to consider the following:

- a) In cases of joint appointments, both academic department heads must agree on the consolidation of teaching assignments into two quarters instead of three.

- b) In the absence of a sabbatical or other approved leave, faculty are expected to be available to their students on campus to participate fully in student mentoring and advising, and university, college, and departmental service activities during all three academic quarters.

The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs must approve all unbalanced department / program teaching plans before they can be adopted.

Career-track (NTTF) instructional faculty with a .90 or greater instructional appointment are expected to teach during each of the Fall, Winter, and Spring terms. Graduate employees serving in instructional roles are also expected to have work assignments that are balanced across the academic year.

Class Sizes

Minimum class enrollments are 12 students in undergraduate courses and 6 students in graduate courses. These minima do not apply to independent study classes. Reassignment of faculty workload due to cancellation of low enrollment classes is addressed in the faculty workload policies.

Large classes (greater than 50 students) should receive priority when assigning graduate employees to support faculty instruction.

Priorities for Teaching Assignments

All other considerations being equal:

- a) A faculty member who has taught a class previously because of having relevant research expertise should have priority for that course assignment in the future.
- b) Assignments of teaching across faculty members should reflect a similar balance of new course preparations (e.g., if the majority of faculty in a department do not have a new course preparation it would be unfair to burden a single faculty member with three new course preparations).
- c) Attention to consistency and equity of faculty assignments should be maintained in terms of the type of class (e.g., practicum/supervision versus regular format classes) and student enrollment in classes.
- d) Coursework should align with faculty teaching and research expertise as documented in their CV, a copy of which is kept on file in COE Faculty Services.

Balancing Faculty Teaching and Service

Faculty are encouraged to work collaboratively with their colleagues and Department Heads to create effective and equitable teaching assignments and balance these with their

research and service responsibilities. Temporary adjustments to faculty service responsibilities, for example, may be used to help a faculty member engage in ad hoc or unusual academic program responsibilities such as: a) preparing an accreditation report, or for an accreditor team site visit, b) coordinating a developing program with small enrollments, or deactivating an academic program, or c) serving as an external reviewer for an ad hoc academic program review committee. These activities may require, for example, temporary reductions in ongoing service activities such as multiple committee assignments at departmental, college, or university levels.

As provided for in the College's professional responsibilities policies and Article 17 of the CBA, before assigning professional responsibilities, faculty members shall have the opportunity to meet with their Department Heads to discuss their work assignment preferences.

Sample Course Assignments

A faculty-member's workload can be reduced in three general ways: Course Reduction, Course Release, Course Buyout:

Course reduction – As noted, TTF can reduce their expected workload from 5 to 4 courses if they provide documentation showing they are “taking a leadership role in directing or applying for major competitive external funding for research, instruction, or service, a major scholarly book or equivalent research project.”

Course release – These are rare, and must be initiated and approved by the DH and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Course releases are typically awarded to faculty to provide capacity for a temporary administrative assignment.

Course buyout – A faculty member receiving external funding towards their FTE for a research assignment may consult with their Department Head to “buy themselves out” of one or more of their anticipated courses. The buyout rate is currently .15 for all courses.

The following examples are provided to describe how course assignments are made in a manner consistent with approved workload policies. **These examples are by no means exhaustive given the diversity of faculty work.**

Career-track faculty (i.e., greater than .90 instructional FTE) sample scenarios for academic year instructional assignments may include:

- Eight courses – teaching 8 graduate, undergraduate courses, or mixture of the two
- Seven courses – teaching 7 courses in addition to using one course release in conjunction with allocated service time to coordinate an established graduate or undergraduate program.
- Eight courses – teaching 2 regular graduate or undergraduate classes of at least three credits in addition to 6 practicum/supervision/internship/clinical training courses.

- Five courses – teaching 5 courses in addition to having the equivalent of three classes of external research grant buyout.

Tenure-related faculty sample scenarios for academic year instructional assignments may include:

- Five courses – teaching 5 graduate, undergraduate courses, or mixture of the two.
- Three classes – teaching 3 courses in addition to using one course release to coordinate an established undergraduate or graduate program (on a previously approved four-course workload).
- One course minimum per B.1. of policy – teaching 1 course in addition to having the equivalent of three classes of external research grant buyout (on a previously approved four-course workload).