

Document XXI

THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE FACULTY WORK LOAD POLICY

The work done by university faculty is manifold, varying not only by types of tasks, but also by academic discipline and mission. It includes not only the several activities associated with scheduled instruction—preparation, classroom presentation, and evaluation of student work—but also scholarship, research, grant competition, creative endeavors, and other responsibilities to both the institution and the profession. Codifying the multifaceted endeavors in which faculty are and should be engaged is therefore a difficult but necessary undertaking.

This workload policy document attempts to be structured enough to serve as a management tool to assist administrators at the department and college levels in setting faculty loads and responsibilities, but flexible enough to allow description of the myriad activities of different faculty and departments. While it does not specifically prescribe workloads, it does provide detailed guidance as to the University's expectations of its faculty. This policy and the Projected and Reported Workload Forms linked to it are essential components by which the University accounts for the work efforts of its faculty to its management boards. Equally importantly, these documents ensure consistency in the construal of work efforts from one department to the next and from one faculty member to the next.

Faculty Workload Tracks

The University takes its primary responsibilities to be the advancement of knowledge through research and the extension of knowledge through teaching. These are, therefore, the primary components of the workload of all faculty members and the main descriptors of the University's expectations of faculty.

All regular, continuing faculty will follow one of four workload tracks. A faculty member's track will be determined in consultation with his/her department head and dean.

The primary factor determining the track to which faculty are assigned is the mission of the department and/or college in which they reside. While special circumstances may allow a modification of this general principle in the case of some faculty, faculty work within the context of the goals and purposes of the department and college in which they reside. Thus, faculty who staff departments which offer undergraduate degrees should expect to direct more of their effort to scheduled instruction than those in departments offering graduate degrees. Faculty in graduate degree-granting areas will be held to a higher expectation of *visible* research and scholarly productivity. It is quite possible that faculty in a department with multiple roles (e.g., teaching a large contingent of undergraduate majors, teaching general education "service" courses, engaging in significant externally-funded research, and/or preparing doctoral candidates) will be assigned to different workload tracks.

The workload tracks described below reflect the relative weight ascribed to the two major components of faculty work, research and teaching. These tracks conceptually assume that a person's total workload equals 100%, and that as a general principle teaching a single, three-credit course equates to 20% of one's total workload. Again as a general principle, the baseline teaching load for faculty at a professorial rank is assumed to be twelve credit hours per semester (a 4/4 class load for the academic year). A twelve credit hour per semester teaching load would, therefore, constitute approximately 80% of one's total workload, with 20% attributed to research and/or service. As a further example, a faculty member with a significant research agenda might teach six credit hours per semester (approximately 40% of the total workload) and allocate 60% of his/her workload to research and/or service.

It is important to note that descriptions of workload expectations do not equate to subsequent performance evaluation; performance evaluation is driven by the quality of one's work, not the fact that it meets the percentage expectations of the workload track to which one is assigned.

Following are the four workload tracks, with general defining features of each:

Track 1

- 12 - 15 credit hours per semester

- 4/4, 5/4, or 5/5 class load per year, the latter two loads usually taught by Instructors
- teaching load predominantly undergraduate courses
- research appropriate to faculty rank and departmental expectations
- teaching constitutes 75 - 90% of total workload; research and service constitute 10 - 25%
- advising and/or other departmental/university service

Track 2

- 9 credit hours per semester or equivalent
- 3/3 class load per year
- teaching load predominantly undergraduate courses, often intermixed with occasional graduate level courses; faculty in this track expected to hold Graduate Faculty status
- moderate research/creative/grant/contract productivity, with some engagement in thesis and/or dissertation direction
- teaching constitutes 55 - 65 % of total workload
- advising and/or other departmental/university service

Track 3

- 6 or 9 credit hours per semester, usually totaling 15 credit hours per academic year
- 3/2 or 2/2 class load per year
- teaching load consistently includes some courses at the graduate level, with at least one course per year at the 500+ level or a minimum enrollment of five graduate students in the course if it is at the 400(G) level; faculty in this track expected to hold Graduate Faculty status
- significant visible research/creative/grant/contract productivity, with regular engagement in thesis and/or dissertation direction
- teaching constitutes 35 - 55 % of total workload
- advising and/or other departmental/university service

Track 4

- 3 to 6 credit hours per semester
- 1/1 or 1/2 class load per year
- teaching load virtually all graduate courses; faculty in this track expected to hold Graduate Faculty status and be actively involved in teaching and directing doctoral students
- evidence of heavy research/creative/grant/contract productivity, with heavy engagement in thesis and/or dissertation direction
- teaching constitutes 20 - 30% of total workload
- advising and/or other departmental/university service

Assigned course loads, expressed above in terms of traditional format lecture course credit hours, may be expressed in other terms in the case of a faculty member engaged in teaching non-traditional courses, e.g., web-based and other distance learning courses, clinicals, studios, internships, labs, directed field work, practicums, etc. Generally speaking, an independent study or special projects course is not considered equivalent to a traditional three-credit lecture course. Cross-listed courses that meet at the same hour count as a single course. Equivalencies will ultimately be determined in consultation with the faculty member's dean and department head.

A faculty member directing a student's dissertation may carry that student as part of the workload for a maximum of four semesters; anything beyond that must be justified to the dean. A faculty member directing a Master's or Honor's thesis may carry that student as part of his/her workload for a maximum of two semesters; anything beyond that must be justified to the dean.

Student Contact

In that the University's primary institutional responsibility lies in directing student learning, every faculty member's work effort should reflect that purpose. A commitment to student contact is customarily

reflected in aggregate student-credit-hour production, which should meet the standards typical in the faculty member's discipline. However, engagement with student learning may also be evidenced, for example, in mentoring students' formal research and scholarship.

Academic Advising and Other Service

A critical component of collegiality within the University lies in each faculty member's commitment to citizenship in the institution and the profession. Such citizenship entails service to others, variously manifested in academic advising and support of student organizations, in University, college, and departmental committee work, and in assuming leadership roles on campus and in professional societies. Each faculty member is expected to engage in such service.

Workload Forms

Annually, at the beginning of each calendar year, continuing faculty members will complete two workload forms: the *Projected Faculty Workload* form and the *Report of Faculty Workload*. The forms and instructions for completing them are available on the web site of the Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development.

Projected Faculty Workload

The *Projected Faculty Workload* form is completed by the faculty member in January of each year after consultation with the faculty member's department head. After approving it, the department head sends it on to the college dean. This form is designed to allow faculty members to list their anticipated teaching schedules, student enrollment, research and/or creative endeavors, and service for the calendar year just commencing.

Report of Faculty Workload and Annual Performance Evaluation

The *Report of Faculty Workload* form is submitted in January of each year to the faculty member's department head. The form, a modified version of the *Projected Faculty Workload* form, is designed to allow a faculty member to report work and activities actually completed during the preceding calendar year. A faculty member may submit a single page cover letter with the form which highlights those accomplishments the faculty member feels are most noteworthy.

This report of activities and accomplishments is the basis for the faculty member's **annual performance evaluation** on which merit raises are based. The report will include the faculty member's assessment of the percent of his/her work effort during the preceding year that was spent in each of the four major categories of faculty activity: teaching, research, service, and administration, if applicable. The work effort earmarked for each type of activity is not dictated explicitly by the faculty member's workload track; for example, a faculty member may have expended more effort in research and scholarship than the general profile of his/her assigned track might indicate should be expected. Evaluation of a faculty member's performance is holistic and is not tied inflexibly to the workload track descriptions.

The *Report of Faculty Workload* form is evaluated by the department head, who uses it as the basis for a faculty member's recommended merit raise category. The form, the faculty member's cover letter, and the department head's evaluation are routed to the dean of the college, who also evaluates the materials and makes his/her own recommendation regarding the faculty member's raise. After the dean's evaluation is completed, the materials are sent to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and the University President, who make a determination regarding merit raises for all continuing faculty.