



FACULTY WORKLOAD

Principles for Teaching and Teaching-Related Workload¹

Transparent and equitable policies for teaching and teaching-related workload are founded on principles aimed at supporting learning by our students. The Faculty Council of Penn State's College of Education therefore endorses the following principles to guide, clarify, and integrate any existing policies. Excellence in teaching is the overarching motive of stating these principles.

What types of work are "teaching?"

The jobs of tenure-line faculty comprise: teaching and advising; research scholarship; and service plus administrative work. Non-tenure-line faculty, including Teaching Professors and Research Professors, are contracted for specific teaching or research duties that may have other distributions of responsibility that are negotiated with the university.

The work of teaching clearly includes resident and non-resident instruction, i.e. classroom and virtual synchronous or asynchronous teaching, sometimes under the World Campus system. Less visibly, this work extends to the development and revision of classes, including through submission (and peer evaluation) of changes to the curriculum and to a program's degree requirements. Faculty are also responsible for the creation of new programs. In addition, "teaching" includes hosting office hours, filling out Early Progress and Mid-Semester Progress Reports, and other student-focused engagements or referrals (such as to Counseling and Psychological Services [CAPS] or Title IX).

In a College of Education, teaching includes creating and maintaining school-district partnerships, providing professional development for practicing teachers, organizing outreach activities, supporting accreditation, and completing Pennsylvania licensing tasks. Relatedly, this faculty work naturally includes supervision of student teaching (involving travel and maintaining relationships with mentors and school staff), internships, counseling clinics, and assessment for the PDE.

The work of teaching at the graduate level includes time reading and commenting on master's theses and doctoral dissertations as an advisor or committee member, as well as mentoring Graduate Assistants. Even though the bulk of undergraduate advising is now done by a professional staff, many faculty still help advise undergraduate as well as graduate students in their programs of study as part of the work of teaching. Teaching also includes assisting students who seek academic or research positions, through their academic job search, including conference preparation and writing letters of recommendation.

Teaching Workload Assignments

Tenure-line faculty should be responsible for two classes each Fall and Spring, with the expectation that they will supervise independent studies, internships, portfolios, dissertations, or theses as well as offer office hours, supervise students' research, and serve on committees as part of their general teaching responsibilities. Tenure-line professors should inform their program and department head of any potential grant buyouts of courses when the draft course schedule is being created. All buyouts should be approved by the Department after conferring with the Principal Investigator and the Dean's

¹ Approved by the College of Education Faculty Council on April 28, 2022.

Office. Each course release that is to be supported by an external grant should require funding for 15 percent of the faculty member's annual 9-month salary in addition to the associated and fringe benefits. Any releases without full 15 percent external grant buyout must be approved by the Department Head and the Dean's Office. Faculty may also be released from teaching for administrative assignments, and the Faculty Council Chair should receive a release from one class.

Non-tenure-line track teaching faculty should teach a minimum of three classes each semester during Fall and Spring, plus one or two program-related assignments (e.g., advising, admissions, program administration). If the faculty member is on a 48-week contract, a minimum of two courses in the summer should be required, plus one or two program-related assignments. If a non-tenure-line track faculty member is assigned to teach four courses in one semester, every effort should be made for at least two of the teaching assignments to be sections of the same course and there should also be consideration of the equitable generation of Student Credit Hours across faculty.

Teaching Workload Considerations

For a class to be offered and counted toward a teaching load, it should have a minimum number of students as either a resident-instruction or World Campus course. The minimum is 15 students at the 100, 200, and 300 level; a minimum of 8 students at the 400- level; and a minimum of 5 students at 500 level or above. There should also be transparent and equitable enrollment maximums, which should be discussed within each department and consider the nature of the courses and relevant support needs. It is important that decision-making about maximums be discussed by all faculty, including non-tenure line faculty. Faculty Council supports the ultimate goal of developing of a College-wide policy on maximum class sizes, with different "caps" based on the level of the class (i.e., 100-, 200-, 300-, 400-, 500-). Council will revisit this issue and make recommendations in a future revision to this document. Each department should have a clear policy on how graduate teaching assistants are allocated to support large classes, and teaching assistance should be allotted according to this departmental policy.

Although most instruction occurs within the Fall or Spring semester (when faculty are typically compensated), many Penn State professors devote time during their summers to uncompensated tasks that support student needs (e.g., dissertations, letters of recommendations). However, summer class instruction should be compensated additionally for faculty members who are on 36-week contracts.

All faculty should be mindful of organizational citizenship for the good of students. In this sense, it is important for the sake of equity to acknowledge "invisible" work, done especially by faculty of color and women, who may engage in extra service work and provide additional mentoring to students. In making teaching assignments, due consideration also should be made within programs for the balance and equity of class sizes across ranks of professors. Consideration should be made to the time required for necessary pedagogical approaches and assessments used in courses. Care should be given to ensure that junior faculty are not unfairly expected to teach larger classes.

Tenure-Line Faculty Teaching Expectations²

Tenure-line faculty members within the College of Education have expertise in a wide range of specialties and contribute to the mission of the College and University by fulfilling their teaching, research, and service responsibilities. These guidelines are intended to help establish equity in the distribution of teaching responsibilities.

² Endorsed by the College of Education Faculty Council on January 18, 2007. Hyperlink in #2 updated in June 2023.

1. Tenure-line faculty members with active and successful research programs are expected to carry a 2-2 course teaching load (typically 6 credits per semester) or the equivalent along with a complement of advising, supervision, and independent study responsibilities. Course releases may be provided in consultation with the relevant Department Head. Grounds for course releases include the receipt of an externally funded grant or contract providing salary savings, a special assignment like being elected Chair of the University Faculty Senate, or the existence of responsibilities to another unit (e.g., a joint appointment or a jointly funded position with the Children, Youth, and Families Consortium).
2. The courses faculty members teach should enroll at least the minimum number of students as stipulated by University policy (see [Academic Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual](#)). If a course does not attract a sufficient number of students, the course may or may not be offered but will not be counted as part of the faculty member's teaching load unless there are extenuating circumstances (e.g., a first time offering). Faculty members who teach an under-enrolled course should feel some obligation to provide alternative teaching or other suitable service within the same or some subsequent semester to his/her faculty colleagues for the sake of maintaining equity in the distribution of workload within the Department. It shall be appropriate for Department Heads to initiate conversations about how best to provide this alternative service.
3. Low enrollment practica at the 400 or 500 level (i.e., those with fewer than 8 or 5 students, respectively) and independent study courses will not count as part of the normal 2-2 course teaching load.
4. Courses with a history of being under-enrolled are particularly problematic and curricula should be periodically reviewed to identify instances of persisting low enrollment courses. Efforts should be made to keep the incidence of such low enrollment courses to a minimum in keeping with a commitment to high quality.
5. Special topics courses are to be offered a maximum of two times in keeping with University Faculty Senate legislation.
6. Department Heads will monitor compliance with these guidelines.

Guidelines for Non-Tenure-Line Faculty Members' Workload Assignments³

Full time non-tenure-line faculty members within the College of Education have expertise in a wide range of specialties and contribute to the mission of the College and University by fulfilling a variety of teaching, research, administrative, and service responsibilities. These guidelines are intended to help establish equity in the distribution of the number of workload assignments across non-tenure-line faculty in the College.

Non-tenure-line faculty hired into 36-week positions have responsibility for fulfilling a total of 8 instances of workload assignments selected from the options below. Those with 48-week appointments have responsibility for fulfilling 11 of the workload assignments listed below.

While the precise magnitude and scope of an "assignment" will vary within as well as across departments and programs, one "assignment" generally corresponds to the equivalent of having instructional responsibility for a 3-credit course. Department heads have responsibility for monitoring and ensuring

³ Endorsed by the College of Education Faculty Council on June 11, 2018. Language updated to reflect changes in standard terminology, per [AC21](#), from "fixed term" to "non-tenure-line" in June 2023.

equity in the allocation of workload assignments across the non-tenure-line faculty members in their respective departments. The Dean's Office has responsibility for monitoring and ensuring equity in the allocation of workload assignments across departments.

It is important to note that any reduction in the number of assignments could pose a threat to the affected employee's benefits package and should be reviewed carefully with human resource personnel prior to finalizing the modification.

Types of Assignments for Non-Tenure-Line Faculty Members:

1. Instruction
 - a. Being the instructor for a 3-credit course or its equivalent with responsibility for the development, refinement, and delivery of instruction.
 - b. Developing and delivering outreach programs.
2. Curriculum Development

Significant involvement in the revision or development of a curriculum involving multiple courses/components can count as one or more workload assignments as determined by the Department Head. In contrast, an instructor is responsible for the development/revision/refinement of an individual course as part of the assignment for teaching that course.
3. Professional Engagement

It is permissible for workload assignments to be designed to explore and strengthen connections between research and professional practice. These assignments must be reviewed and approved by the Department Head.
4. Administration and Program Support

Programs sometimes require a faculty member to act as a point person for managing enrollment, scheduling courses, answering student questions, organizing admissions, establishing internship sites, assisting with marketing and recruitment, and other duties relating to students in the program. Such work may be packaged into one or more workload assignments, as determined by the Department Head.
5. Student Advising

Significant responsibilities related to student advising at the undergraduate or graduate levels may count as one or more workload assignments, as determined by the Department Head.

Procedures Related to Faculty Members' Workload Assignments⁴

1. Department heads are responsible to ensure that faculty members' workload assignments align with the expectations of their roles and ranks.
 - a. Tenure-line faculty members are expected to have a 2-2 teaching load (12 credits per academic year), along with advising, supervision, and independent study responsibilities.
 - b. Non-tenure-line faculty members with 36-week appointments should fulfill 8 total workload assignments. Six of the 8 assignments will be for course instruction, with 1 or 2 additional program-related assignments (curriculum development, administration/support, or advising). During a semester of 4 course assignments, 2 assignments will be sections of the same course, when feasible.

⁴ Developed and adopted by College Academic Council (Dean, Associate Deans, Department Heads, Human Resources Partner) during the 2021-22 academic year.

2. Departments will provide a complete record of faculty members' workload assignments to the Dean's Office in advance of each semester. It is expected that, if any changes to faculty assignments are made, the record will be updated.
 - a. Each unit of a faculty member's instructional assignments will be accounted for. Any deviations from general workload expectations will be agreed upon by the Department Head and the Dean's Office and documented.
 - b. A faculty member with an approved non-instructional assignment is expected to spend time equivalent to teaching a 3-credit hour course on the assignment.
3. Course buyouts may occur when a faculty member is fully supported in the cost of one unit of workload through a grant, endowment, or other fund.
 - a. When funds are available but do not cover the entire cost of one unit of workload, a partial buyout may be possible. Requests for this type of assignment will be reviewed by the Department Head and College Academic Council.
 - b. Documentation of course buyouts or partial buyouts (when approved) will be expected.
4. Department Heads, together with Directors and Professors-in-Charge, are responsible to schedule courses thoughtfully and monitor student enrollments in order to minimize the need to cancel courses.
 - a. If a course is canceled due to low enrollments, an alternate assignment will be made by the Department Head, following a review of a proposed assignment by College Academic Council.
 - b. Faculty members will complete the alternate work during the semester in which it is assigned. They are responsible to demonstrate completion of the work to the Department Head.