

## **Faculty Workload Guidelines**

### **College of Liberal Arts**

The University System of Maryland "Policy on Faculty Workload and Responsibilities (II-1.25) provides that "Each institution's policy shall include standard expectations for faculty workload." The policy goes on to establish guidelines for the "general standard expectation in the categories of instruction, research/scholarship and service." For Towson University, those guidelines call for teaching to constitute 65% to 75% of total effort and to include 7 to 8 course units per year; for research/scholarship to constitute 15% to 25% of total effort; and for service to constitute 5% to 15% of total effort. Although a faculty member's balance across categories may change from year to year within these guidelines, the total of the three categories must always add up to 100%.

Projected annual workload for Towson faculty is recorded before the beginning of the academic year on the Annual Review form, Part II. Work completed and projects accomplished are reported at the end of the academic year on the Annual Review form, Part I. As provided for in the Towson University Appointment, Rank, and Tenure (ART) policy, faculty evaluation relies in significant part on these projections and reports of faculty work. Departments are expected to establish standards and procedures that recognize the variable distribution of faculty workloads and evaluate faculty performance in relation to those distributions.

Guidelines and definitions for what may count as a workload unit may be found both in USM II-1.21 and, more specifically, in the document "Towson University Comprehensive Faculty Workload Guidelines"(2005). Please note that most statements of guidelines provide frameworks that may be applied, often subject to the approval of the Dean or in some cases the provost or President.

The guidelines below for the College of Liberal Arts provide a framework for implementing within the College the policies and guidelines of the University System of Maryland and of Towson University.

#### **I. Fulltime Faculty Categories and Workload**

- A. Towson University contractual policy assigns faculty hired as lecturers, clinical faculty, or visiting faculty to a workload including eight instructional units per year. Other responsibilities for lecturers or clinical faculty may be distributed within total effort according the guidelines established in policies governing those categories of faculty.
- B. Towson University has established an exception to the standard workload for tenure-line faculty in their first year of service at Towson. Those faculty are assigned to

six instructional units per year. As provided for in USM II-1.25, this adjustment must be "balanced by compensating changes in one or both of the other basic workload elements." For faculty in their first year, the adjustment will generally provide additional time for teaching preparation (one unit) and for research/scholarship (one unit) at the beginning of the faculty member's career.

C. The standard workload for tenure line faculty members who are beyond the first year of service will include seven or eight instructional units per year. Exceptions to this standard must be approved through the processes outlined below.

D. Department chairs by policy will have a minimum of 50% of their time assigned to administration of the department. By USM policy, all chairs shall also be involved in the instructional program. The balance of administrative responsibility and instructional responsibility within the workload of chairs must be agreed upon between the chair and the dean.

## II. Departmental Responsibility

USM policy II 1.25 holds that "The focus of external accountability (to the Regents and to the State) will be the department or academic unit, not the individual faculty member. The primary measure of departmental accountability should be the total number of course units produced on load by the department or academic unit's tenured/tenure track faculty (excluding the department chair) divided by the number of fulltime equivalent faculty adjusted for sabbaticals." Thus, whatever the pattern of exceptions made to standard faculty workload for individuals within a department, tenured/tenure track faculty workloads taken collectively must meet established standards for instructional units when the departmental total is divided by fulltime equivalent tenure line faculty. Departments thus have a degree of internal flexibility combined with a firm collective responsibility.

## III. Standard Workload Expectations for Tenure Line Faculty

### A. Instruction:

(1) As indicated in USM policy, the general standard expectation is that instruction shall take up 65% to 75% of total effort and include seven to eight course units as part of a tenure line faculty member's workload.

(2) In the College of Liberal Arts, each faculty member should develop annual workload within a framework of eight instructional units. Tenure line faculty members beyond the first three years of service may be assigned one of the eight

units for research if they are maintaining an active scholarly program. An active scholarly program may be further defined at the departmental level but shall include at least (a) scholarly and research activity proportionate to the workload assignment, reported on each Annual Review, (b) periodic submission of scholarly materials for peer evaluation in oral or written form, and (c) occasional dissemination of scholarly work through publication or equivalent peer-reviewed outlet appropriate to professional work in the discipline and field of the faculty member's employment. A faculty member's scholarship may include any or all of the forms of scholarship identified in Towson's Appointment, Rank, and Tenure policy. The College standard is faculty member must normally produce at least one scholarly article or its equivalent in any 5 year period to remain eligible for a seven course unit workload. Recognizing that there may be disciplinary differences in access to or frequency of publication, departments may choose to establish a different period than that of the College, although it may not be a longer period than 5 years.

(3) A tenure line faculty member in the College of Liberal Arts who chooses to emphasize teaching in his or her workload, or who is not eligible for a research unit through maintenance of an active scholarly program, will normally be assigned an eight course unit workload. When a faculty member who has been teaching eight units per year for a time demonstrates substantive interest in renewing research and scholarly activity, that faculty member may be assigned a seven course unit workload at the discretion of the chair and with the approval of the dean to provide reasonable opportunity to advance a scholarly project and demonstrate ongoing scholarly activity.

(4) Department tenure line faculty beyond the first year of service and excluding the chair must together average no fewer than seven course units per FTE faculty member in each academic year. This average must be established based upon the instructional units entered each year for departmental tenure line faculty on Annual Review forms, Part II.

**B. Research/Scholarship:**

(1) Scholarly activity is expected of all tenure line faculty throughout their careers. Research and scholarship will normally take up from 15% to 25% of a faculty member's total effort. A report on past expenditure of scholarly time and plans for the future expenditure of time, consistent with workload distributions of total effort, are a part of the Annual Review reporting process.

(2) Research/scholarship may involve regular engagement with disciplinary activities, demonstrable attention to ongoing scholarly developments in the

faculty member's field, and other pertinent projects associated with the application of a minimum of 15% of the faculty member's total effort, even if that effort does not meet the standard of an active scholarly program defined above.

(3) Research/scholarship for a faculty member allocating 20-25% of total effort to this sphere of work should demonstrate annual commitment to, and regular advancement of, scholarly work that has the potential for dissemination to peers within the scholarly community or a community of shared professional practice.

(4) Faculty who may be assigned six instructional units through an exception as below and whose expanded commitment is to research/scholarship rather than service may have 30-35% of their total effort devoted to scholarship and should be expected to demonstrate substantial accomplishment of work consistent with the project for which the workload unit was assigned.

C. Service:

(1) Service is expected of all tenure-line faculty throughout their careers. Service should normally constitute between 5% and 15% of a faculty member's total effort. When consistent with their needs, departments may limit service for faculty beginning their careers at Towson. However, a plan for service to the department, the College of Liberal Arts, the University, the community, or the profession, and the first steps in that pattern of service, should be part of every tenure line faculty member's record before the third year review.

(2) Service expectations for the coming year should be identified to the extent possible on the Annual Review form, Part II. Because opportunities for service and commitment to specific roles may only arise as a year unfolds, it is especially important that the report of service activities in the Annual Review, Part I, be full and complete, as there may be no other systematic record of a faculty member's involvements.

(3) Faculty assigned a reduced number of instructional units as an exception because of their commitment to service or administration--including those whose assignments include work as graduate program director, assistant chair, or other administrative role-- may have 20-25% of their total effort assigned to service and administration. Given that one course unit normally represents no more than 10% of total effort, a faculty member receiving one assigned unit for designated administrative work would have additional service responsibilities consistent with the percentage of total effort claimed for service that exceeds 10%.

#### IV. Standard Instructional Workload for Departments

A. Faculty workload for departments in the College of Liberal Arts will be calculated based on a framework of eight instructional units, with the proviso that one of these units may be assigned for scholarship for research-active faculty (as in III, A, 2). The measure of departmental accountability under USM policy, as described in section II, is a minimum of seven instructional units per fulltime equivalent tenure line faculty member, excluding those in their first year and not including the chair. When the departmental total of instructional units is divided by fulltime equivalent tenure line faculty (beyond the first year and not including the chair), the result must equal or exceed 7.0.

B. As indicated in USM policy, the number of fulltime equivalent faculty members may be adjusted for sabbaticals, meaning that a faculty member taking one semester of sabbatical leave during the academic year would be counted as a .5 FTE faculty member in calculating the average. If a faculty member's instructional responsibilities are reduced because a unit or more of instructional time has been funded through an external grant or contract at a level proportionate to salary (the unit has been "bought out"), the FTE calculation for that faculty member should also reflect a reduction for the funded time of .125 per unit.

C. An instructional unit most commonly consists of a three credit hour academic course. A four credit hour course would count as 1.33 units. Other forms of faculty work including advising a requisite number of students, supervising internships or independent studies in specified numbers, supervision of graduate theses, and the like may also constitute instructional units. The document "Towson University Comprehensive Faculty Workload Guidelines" provides discussion and definitions for instructional units that may be credited, when approved as appropriate.

D. Workload units assigned for the administration of curricular and academic programs, consistent with Towson University guidelines, may be included in the calculation of instructional units to meet the standard expectation.

E. A faculty member awarded sabbatical leave for one semester of an academic year should normally provide four instructional units during the semester in residence unless that faculty member is granted an exception within the departmental framework described below. Departments with atypical patterns of assignment (including those with other than three credit hour courses) may accept scheduled commitments equaling at least half of the expected full-year workload, so long as departmental accountability is maintained.

#### V. Exceptions to Standard Faculty Workload

USM policy provides for exceptions to standard workload expectations in instruction, research/scholarship, and service, with the proviso that "the department is responsible for making the necessary adjustments in the total faculty workload so that departmental expectations in each of these areas are fulfilled." The policy goes on to say that "These expectations will be determined by student and curricular needs, shall be consistent with the resources available to the department, and shall be approved by the president. Institutions shall make the minimum number of exceptions necessary for fulfillment of its institutional mission."

Within the proviso that they shall be kept to a minimum and shall not interfere with standard expectations of the department, exceptions to standard workload may be granted under USM policy based on commitments related to instruction (course needs, development, accreditation), departmental administration (chair, assistant chair, program director, special projects), externally funded research or service (with reduction in workload reflective of "externally-funded salary support"), departmentally supported research, or departmentally supported service ("to make major professional contributions-e.g., to work in partnership with the public schools or with business or industry").

A. When a department's calculation of average instructional workload per FTE tenure line faculty (beyond the first year and not including the chair) would produce an average higher than seven units, the department may have room to make an exception to standard workload for individual faculty while maintaining the standard expectation for the department. In no case may exceptions granted by the department reduce the average commitment below seven.

B. Department's may establish policies and procedures for consideration of workload exceptions, even as they recognize that assignment of workload remains a fundamental responsibility of the chair. Departments that establish written policies or procedures for the assignment of workload must submit those documents to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts for review and approval. The Dean's primary purpose in reviewing the documents will be to ensure consistency with USM, Towson, and College policies and guidelines.

C. Departmental decisions on granting workload exceptions must adhere to the following guidelines:

(1.) Because an exception will be part of the workload agreement recorded in the Annual Review, Part II, for the coming year, an exception may only be granted for defined work to be accomplished in that year for which the exception is granted. A statement of the work to be accomplished, involving a time commitment equivalent to that for teaching a three credit course, must be attached

to the Annual Review for the faculty member in question. The work should be reported on explicitly in the Annual Review, Part I, in the subsequent year.

(2.) Consistent with USM policy, departments considering workload exceptions should evaluate proposed projects or responsibilities in all areas of faculty evaluation: teaching, scholarship/research, and service. No one area should be regarded as superior to the others in providing a possible rationale for an exception. Departments and individuals should also keep in mind that all exceptions involve an adjustment to the distribution of total effort (normally an adjustment of 10%), with concomitant expectations for accomplishment at the time of review.

(3.) As a matter of equity, a pattern of exceptions should not be granted to the same faculty member across a number of years. Normally, a faculty member who receives an exception in one year should not receive an exception in the following year. If a department chooses under special circumstances to grant an exception for a second contiguous year, that exception must be the last until two additional years have passed during which the faculty member meets the standard expectation.

(4.) Decisions to grant an exception should be openly shared within the department, with a description of the work to be done with the portion of total effort assigned through the exception.

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