

**The Smeal College of Business**  
**Teaching Load Policy: Implementation Guidelines for Tenure Track Faculty**  
**Version: January 14, 2011**

## **1.0 Objectives**

The purpose of the teaching load policy is to find ways to use existing and future faculty resources optimally in pursuit of the college's strategic goals of research with impact, extraordinary education in undergraduate, MBA, and Ph.D. programs, dialogue with society, and community with distinction. The teaching load policy is intended to

- Promote research excellence.
- Help the College retain key faculty members.
- Provide teaching loads that are at least at competitive parity with peer schools, if not superior to those of our peer schools.
- Address workload concerns of provost and university administrators.
- Provide a rational process for teaching-load assignment, instead of the somewhat ad-hoc process currently in place.
- Have more equitable distribution of teaching loads based on the specific contributions of individual faculty members.
- Help the College manage its tight faculty resources more efficiently.

The implementation process should be transparent, fair (i.e., consistent with the overall contributions of a faculty member), applied uniformly to all tenured-track faculty, and reversible (i.e., enabling tenure track faculty members to get back into the research track).

## **2.0 Who is subject to the policy?**

All tenure track faculty members are subject to this policy. In the case of endowed professors, their contractual arrangements regarding teaching loads (if any) take precedence in determining their normal course load. Any further reductions below the contracted teaching loads are then subject to this policy.

Department chairs and administrators are also subject to this policy. A part of the AD-14 (Academic Administrative Evaluation) review policy includes the research and teaching contributions of administrators, which will be used as a basis for assigning teaching loads in these cases.

## **3.0 Teaching load expectations**

The standard (not average) teaching load is 12-credit hours. The "standard" defines the expectational baseline. The maximum teaching load for a tenure-track faculty member is 18 credit-hours.

The course load for faculty members making substantial research contributions is 9-credit hours. Teaching load reductions below 9 credits will be determined on a case-by-case basis, based on an assessment of that individual's overall contribution to the department/school, and the nature of his/her teaching assignment. There will be no mechanical or automatic method for teaching load reductions.

Faculty members who are not making significant contributions to the scholarship of their fields are expected to contribute more substantially toward the college's teaching mission, and they will see a gradual increase in their teaching loads over time, assuming they do not enhance their research contributions.

The actual average of tenure-track faculty may be higher than 9, depending on the extent to which some tenure-track faculty are less research productive. The overall departmental targets, which include the teaching loads of tenure track, and non tenure-track faculty, will be at least 12 credit-hours.

#### **4.0 Guidelines for assessing research contributions**

Research active tenure track faculty members are expected to consistently make significant contributions to the scholarship of their field(s). Publications in top journals, writing influential books, serving on editorial boards of leading journals, participating as an advisor in prominent policy setting bodies of the Government, are all indications of significant scholarly contributions/leadership in a field. The following criteria are used for evaluating research productivity:

Quality of publications (e.g., whether publications are in top journals)

Impact of publications (e.g., citations)

Visibility of faculty member in academia and/or practice (e.g., editorial memberships)

Number of publications

The research contributions of a faculty member will primarily be evaluated at the department level, which assures that local knowledge of the scholarship in a given discipline will be the basis for determining the research productivity status of that faculty member. Ideally, each department will establish a peer committee for this purpose, although the actual process is left to the discretion of each department. To ensure comparability and equity across departments in the assessment of scholarship, there will be one or more meetings of the College Executive Committee to evaluate the recommendations of the department, and make a final assessment of whether the research contributions of each tenure-track faculty member are in accordance with the expectations of performance in a top research school. The departmental and Executive Committee assessments will consider the research programs, publications, and other tangible scholarly contributions of each individual faculty member in a defined period of time (e.g., previous 3 years). Such assessments will typically be made on a multi-year basis (e.g., every 2 years) for every faculty member. For junior faculty members, their record of progress toward tenure, as documented in the periodic reviews, would be the primary basis for assessing their research productivity status.

In case a faculty member does not agree with the assessment of the Executive Committee, s/he can appeal to the college Faculty Advisory Committee.

### **5.0 Process for establishing overall departmental teaching load**

The process will proceed as follows:

1. A department committee or department chair makes recommendations for adjustments to teaching loads of specific tenure-track faculty members, based on his/her research productive status and any unique circumstances (e.g., administrative roles; endowed chairs and their contractual obligations), or the nature of expected teaching assignment (e.g., large class size, MBA class, number of preps). The department chair will consult with the Dean's office in making these adjustments.
2. The department chair determines the overall credit-hours of teaching required to meet all departmental curricular offerings for the following academic year.
3. Based on (1) and (2), the department chair proposes to the Dean's office an overall target for average course load across tenure track and non-tenure track members in that department, excluding any courses taught by PhD students, visitors, etc.
4. The Dean's office and the department chair come to an agreement about the overall average course load target for the department for the academic year.

In all likelihood, departmental targets will differ across departments, depending on such factors as the proportion of faculty members in the department who make substantial research contributions, the availability of fixed-term/clinical professors in the department, and the administrative load of its faculty members.

The department chair is authorized to meet the overall target using both tenure track and non-tenure track faculty. The courses taught by doctoral students and visitors will be excluded from the set of courses considered for computing the overall department average.

Approved by Faculty Advisory Committee, January 20, 2011