

School of Nursing Guidelines for Teaching Responsibilities for Tenure-Track Faculty

Tenured or tenure-track faculty members in the School of Nursing contribute in many different ways to the mission of the School and University, resulting in considerable variance among faculty in their teaching loads and research responsibilities. While we embrace the diversity of career emphases pursued by School of Nursing faculty, we also recognize the need to maintain equitable expectations. The following School of Nursing guidelines ensure fair and equitable teaching loads for tenure line faculty. These guidelines provide the broad outline; details of implementation (e.g., course release policies) may vary.

1. All School of Nursing faculty, regardless of course releases, must teach at least one course each academic year.
2. Tenured and tenure-track 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. Tenured or tenure-track faculty members who are not engaged in a productive line of research or scholarship will be expected to teach a 3-3 load.
3. Although supervising independent study courses and mentoring student research projects are important parts of the faculty role, they do not count as part of the normal 2-2 course teaching load. These activities are, however, essential indicators of faculty productivity and should be included in annual performance reviews and decisions about promotion and tenure.
4. Course releases are provided in consultation with the School of Nursing Dean. Course releases can be obtained for a variety of reasons, most typically the administration of an externally funded grant or contract that includes salary release, substantial involvement in academic unit administrative duties (e.g., Associate Dean or Professor-in-Charge of the Undergraduate or Graduate Program), or, as the result of a demanding special assignment (e.g., Chair of the University Faculty Senate or chairing the University Institutional Review Board). In addition, it may be deemed desirable for recruitment or faculty development purposes to provide faculty members with a lighter load during their transition to Penn State or at a pivotal point in the pre-tenure period. Course releases are typically not provided for committee responsibilities or for coordinating lecture series. External funding of at least 15% salary support is required for one unit of course release.
5. When a faculty member is released from one or more courses, the decision about which courses are reassigned to other people and which ones are taught by the faculty member is the prerogative of the PIC for Graduate Programs and the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs.
6. Courses must enroll the minimum number of students as stipulated by University policy on under-enrolled courses, shown on page 2 (from www.psu.edu/oue/aappm Section C-3). 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 or a required course in a degree program). If the course is dropped too late to assign the faculty member a different course, the faculty member should construct a plan with the academic administrator to teach another course as soon as is feasible.

7. Special topics courses are to be offered a maximum of two times in keeping with University Faculty Senate legislation. A special topics course should be developed into a regular offering if the faculty and the academic administrator determine that the course should be offered routinely.

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C-3: UNDER-ENROLLED SECTIONS

1. Under-enrolled sections are defined as:

- 001 through 399-level course with an enrollment of fewer than fifteen students;
- 400-level course with an enrollment of fewer than eight students;
- 500-level or 800-level course with an enrollment of fewer than five students.

Under-enrolled criteria do not apply to the following courses:

- 600-level courses (graduate thesis, supervised teaching, foreign experience);
- 700-level courses (medical);
- 900-level courses (law);
- honors courses (i.e. courses numbered 001-499 with an "H", "M", "T", or "U" suffix);
- individualized instruction courses (i.e. courses numbered 001-499 with a "J" suffix);
- courses numbered X94 (research topic), X95 (internship), X96 (independent study), X99 (foreign studies);
- Continuing Education courses (courses with a delivery code of C);
- World Campus courses (courses with location code of WD);
- courses offered through the eLearning Cooperative;

2. Under-enrolled sections should not be offered except under exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances that permit the offering of an under-enrolled section include:

- the section is essential for normal degree progress for specifically identified students.
- learning space in essential classrooms or laboratories for a section is limited.

3. To assist academic units in identifying under-enrolled sections, the campus Registrar will provide appropriate informational reports.
4. Sections that are to be dropped because of under-enrollment should be dropped in a timely manner such that registered students have sufficient time to register for other appropriate courses. Academic units should carefully analyze the section offerings each semester and annually review the causes for under-enrolled section offerings. Patterns should be monitored and appropriate steps taken to minimize the number of under-enrolled sections.

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