

March 29, 2016

DEANS

RE: Call for Updates to Departmental Instructional Workload Policies

Dear Colleagues:

Last year's [Joint Senate/Administrative Task Force on Graduate Growth Report](#) looked at our campus' efforts to grow graduate enrollments, and it made a number of recommendations. I am writing to implement one of these recommendations:

The VPAA should put out a call for departments to update their workload policies to recognize the importance of graduate education (including participation in committees outside the department and generating resources to support those students), as well as consider differential workloads associated with graduate student supervision. Some variability in the details of the policy from department to department is expected to recognize different stages of development of graduate programs. However, there should be an expectation that, as new programs are launched and the nascent ones mature, all faculty must regularly contribute to graduate advising and education.

Thus I am requesting that all departments review their instructional workload policies and update these policies to address graduate education and graduate student supervision, if they do not already do so. Departments are requested to explicitly recognize the workload of graduate supervision.

The campus policy on instructional workload states that ladder faculty who are active in research/creative activity will have an instructional workload of five course equivalencies. It is recommended that a substantial portion of the non-classroom course equivalency/ies relate to graduate student mentoring. Mentoring activities can be interpreted broadly, beyond serving as primary advisor. Possible examples include, but are not limited to: serving on dissertation committees, exam committees, graduate admissions committees, or Graduate Council, obtaining funding to support graduate students, working on professional development, facilitating or improving the placement of graduates, and other such efforts. While most faculty should be advising graduate students, in rare cases, a particular faculty member's research focus may not align with the graduate program in their home department; in such cases, faculty can still contribute to graduate education through participation on student committees or administrative service related to graduate education. The department should define an appropriate level of engagement to qualify for graduate student mentoring equivalency. Faculty who are not engaged in graduate mentoring should not receive this equivalency, and therefore should be expected to teach more classroom courses as part of their instructional workload of five course equivalencies.

Following existing practice, the remaining equivalencies may be formal classes, or may include other instructional-related activities, such as acting as graduate director or supervising a significant number of undergraduate independent studies. Departments must have realistic workload policies that cover curricular needs for both departmental and interdepartmental programs. Deans have purview for approval and enforcement of workload policies.

Systemwide policy (e.g., APM 005) notes that faculty are expected to maintain a variety of activities, including research, teaching, and service, and that “members of the Senate who are not engaged in certain of these activities will naturally have more time for others.” Thus our campus expects ladder faculty who are not engaged in any research/creative activity to have additional time for teaching, resulting in a workload of six course equivalencies. The department workload policy should define these equivalencies, which could include other instructional activities.

Faculty are expected to teach across the curriculum regularly, as appropriate for the curriculum of the department or commitments to interdepartmental programs. This generally means that over the span of several years, each faculty member will teach a mix of graduate, upper-division, and lower-division or large-lecture courses. Some departments may have more specific curricular needs, and some departments may have faculty whose specialties are not conducive to these teaching patterns within the existing curriculum; therefore, instructional workload policies should address the specific expectations within the department.

The workload policy sets expectations for faculty performance and should be taken into account in the personnel review process. The department letter should evaluate the faculty member’s performance relative to the expectations set in their workload policy, as per APM 210.1.d. Deans should also take into account whether expectations have been met.

We ask that departments submit updated instructional workload policies to their Dean’s office by June 30, 2016, and that the Dean’s office forward these to the VPAA by September 1, 2016. These will be available to the Senate for review. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



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Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

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