

# University Policy on Faculty Workload

**Version:** 1.0

**Responsible University Official:** Provost

**Effective Date:** March 1, 2016

## 1.0 PROLOGUE

Saint Louis University is a research university in the Jesuit tradition that includes a rich variety of undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. To ensure excellence in these programs, and to ensure equity in the evaluation of faculty, responsibilities must be allocated among faculty in an effective and equitable manner. This allocation is commonly addressed by institutions of higher education through a “faculty workload policy.”

Given the variety of programs at Saint Louis University, the specific assignment of faculty responsibilities will of necessity vary considerably across and within the respective academic units. There is nonetheless a need for clear understanding and an articulation of the performance expectations for faculty. A written workload policy for each program or department is essential to satisfy this need. It is, moreover, necessary and appropriate that these unit-level policies be consistent with general, university-wide expectations of the workload for which each faculty member is responsible. This policy addresses these needs and establishes university-wide expectations for the workload policies to be developed by the respective academic units and sets forth procedures the units will be expected to follow in meeting those expectations.

## 2.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all full-time tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track faculty University-wide; application to part-time and adjunct faculty is at the discretion of the respective dean, director, or chair.

## 3.0 DEFINITIONS

**Academic Unit:** A school, college, center, library or other organization under the leadership of a Dean, Director, or other administrator who reports directly to the Provost or to the Vice President for Medical Affairs.

**Workload unit:** A workload unit is approximately equivalent to one credit hour spent in scheduled classroom teaching. However, since classes vary according to size, level, degree of preparation and other factors, a given three credit hour class may count for more or less than three workload units. The amount of time spent in activities other than scheduled classroom teaching that is to be considered to be equivalent to one hour of scheduled classroom teaching is to be determined by the respective academic units. This includes time spent on research, service, administration, creative production, mentoring, advising and library or clinic activities. Equivalences for other teaching activities such as scheduled laboratory, field, studio, clinical, applied musical and individual instruction, supervision of theses and

dissertations must also be determined by the academic units. Faculty with job descriptions that do not lend themselves to being expressed in terms of equivalents to credit hours of teaching – for instance, library, clinical, or medical school faculty – may determine a different measure to serve as a workload unit.

**Faculty Workload:** A faculty member’s complete responsibilities for a semester or year that includes a distribution of duties relating to teaching, research, service, health care, or other specified activities that are necessary to carry out the mission of each academic program or unit.

**Standard Workload:** A statement of responsibility for a classification or classifications of faculty within a department, program, or academic unit that includes a distribution of effort among teaching, research, service, health care or other activities for which faculty will generally be responsible.

**Teaching Workload:** A faculty member’s duties related to teaching, such as in-class instruction, advising, supervision of students, and course development.

**Research:** For the purposes of this document, research refers to various forms of scholarship and publication as well as creative activities.

**Service:** Service encompasses a faculty member’s contributions to departmental, college, or university activities or to a faculty member’s academic community beyond SLU.

**Note:** *The standard categories of faculty responsibility set forth in the Faculty Manual are teaching, research, and service. Many faculty are also involved in administrative, clinical, health care, advising, mentoring or library activities. In some academic programs even these categories may not adequately capture the duties faculty must assume to ensure that the needs, goals, and strategic priorities of the academic program are addressed in an effective way, and other categories can be added.*

## 4.0 PRINCIPLES

The university-wide faculty workload policy established herein is predicated on the following guiding principles:

1. The variety of needs, goals, and strategic priorities of the respective programs, departments, and academic units in the University demand that each program, department, or academic unit bear primary responsibility for determining the workload obligations of its respective faculty members.
2. The varieties of activities that may appropriately be considered teaching, research or service preclude a university-wide definition of those terms. Accordingly, each of the respective departments, programs, schools, colleges, or other academic units must define the varieties of activities deemed to constitute teaching, research, and service, respectively, and determine general equivalencies across and within these categories – e.g., how much and what kind of research or service will be deemed to be equivalent to teaching a three credit-hour course. As noted in the definition of a workload unit, faculty with other job descriptions - for instance, library, clinical, or medical school faculty - may determine a different measure to serve as a workload unit.
3. In conformance with the principles of subsidiarity and shared governance, faculty workload policies should be developed at the program, department, or academic unit level. The faculty of the respective academic units should participate in the development of a unit’s faculty workload policy. The Deans,

in consultation with the chairs of departments, or other administrative leaders are responsible for overseeing, reviewing, and approving workload policies developed by the faculty to ensure consistency with the needs, objectives, and strategic priorities of the respective programs or departments, as well as conformity with the university-wide faculty workload policy established herein.

4. Individual faculty members are responsible for performing their assigned workload in ways that promote academic excellence and are consistent with the University’s mission. Nonetheless, faculty members differ in their interests, needs, talents, and strengths. The University embraces, values, and encourages this diversity among its faculty. Accordingly, workload policies should be sufficiently flexible to facilitate and encourage each faculty member to do what they do best, subject to the needs, objectives, and strategic priorities of the program, department, or academic unit(s) to which the faculty member is assigned. For units with variable workloads, there must be variable paths to promotion or promotion with tenure for faculty assuming various teaching, research and service obligations. In addition, workload policies must accommodate University policies related to leaves for family or medical issues and approved sabbaticals. Workload policies and workload allocations must be consistent with promotion and promotion with tenure requirements.
5. The workload policies established by the respective departments, programs and academic units must meet the following expectations:
  - a. The total number of yearly workload units for all faculty members should be proportionately equivalent – but variable, depending on annual faculty contract length – as follows:

Length of Faculty Contract	9 mo.	10 mo.	11 mo.	12 mo.
Total Yearly Workload Units	24 units	26.5 units	29 units	32 units

***Note:** For the sake of simplicity, the remainder of the policy generally references solely faculty serving on nine-month contracts and, therefore, responsible for 24 workload units. However, all policy statements apply, proportionately, to all faculty on all contract lengths, as identified in the table above.*

Departments, programs, and/or academic units that define workload units in terms different than credit hour equivalents may express the total number of workload units for each faculty in other ways.

- b. The maximum teaching workload for faculty per semester will generally be 12 workload units. Over the course of a standard two semester academic year (for those on nine-month contracts), this should include no more than six separate course preparations. This maximum teaching load, along with basic service obligations, such as participating in faculty meetings, academic ceremonies, and convocations, will be deemed to constitute 100% of the faculty workload. Faculty who are assigned the maximum teaching workload will not bear significant responsibilities for advising, mentoring, research, service, health care, or other activities. Only faculty who agree to focus their efforts exclusively on teaching will be assigned the maximum teaching load. Departments, programs, and/or academic units that define workload units in terms different than credit hour equivalents may express the maximum teaching load in other ways.

- c. The American Association of University Professors states that at universities noted for the effectiveness of their faculties in teaching and scholarship, the norm for teaching is lower. In such universities, the norm for teaching in a department with expectations appropriate for undergraduate-only programs is nine hours a week, and the norm for teaching in a department with expectations appropriate for graduate programs is six hours a week. For individuals with heavier-than-normal duties in counseling, program development, administration, research, and many other activities, the usual teaching load is still lower.
  - d. Faculty who are assigned teaching workloads of less than 12 workload units per semester must also be responsible for research, service, health care, administration and/or other obligations which, when aggregated with an assigned teaching workload, will generally be equivalent in effort to the maximum teaching workload of 12 workload units per semester. Departments, programs, and/or academic units that define workload units in terms different than credit hour equivalents may express the equivalent combination of teaching, research, and service in other ways.
  - e. Any overload beyond the maximum teaching load or its equivalent in teaching, research, and service must be recognized in the form either of additive pay or a subsequent workload reduction.
6. Faculty must be evaluated based on the agreed workload distribution. Evaluations should take into account the relative distribution of research, teaching, clinical practice (when applicable), and service.

## 5.0 POLICY STATEMENT

All SLU colleges, schools, centers, libraries, departments, programs and other academic units must establish and implement faculty workload policies that are consistent with this University-level policy. Each workload policy must include the following:

1. Standard annual faculty workloads, which may vary in the distribution of teaching, research, service, health care, and other activities according to classes of faculty (tenured and tenure-track faculty, non-tenure-track faculty, clinical faculty, etc.) and duration of contract (9-month, 12-month, etc.).
2. Provision for flexible distribution of teaching, research, service, health care, and other responsibilities for individual faculty members, so long as each individual faculty member's workload is equivalent to the maximum teaching workload or its equivalent in teaching, research, and service. For example, research-active faculty may be responsible for a lower teaching workload than faculty who are not research-active.
3. Department, program or academic unit-level general definitions of teaching, research, service, health care, and other categories of activity that may be components of a faculty workload.
4. A description of equivalencies across and within the categories of teaching, research, service, health care, advising, mentoring, and other activities – *e.g.*, the types and quantity of research or service that will be considered to be equal or equivalent to one workload unit or the type and intensity of research and service efforts *in toto* that is considered adequate with a given amount of teaching effort *in toto*.
5. The manner in which workloads will be administered for sponsored program responsibilities and assignments to other restricted sources of support, and for other special circumstances appropriate to

the unit that might reduce instructional workload. An academic unit (or department or program) approved instructional buyout policy should be referenced as appropriate.

6. A general description about the process by which workloads are established for each faculty member on an annual basis and the way information about individual workloads will be shared among faculty members within the academic unit, department or program.

## 6.0 ESTABLISHING POLICIES

The Provost will assign responsibility for developing school/college, or other academic unit level faculty workload policies to the respective Deans and Directors.

The Deans and Directors, in consultation with the faculty assembly or comparable governance institution and department chairs or other leadership, will charge department, program and unit level faculty with developing workload policies. In academic units without a departmental structure, or at the Dean's discretion, the school/college or other academic unit level policy may be applied across the school/college or other academic unit. The workload policies must be reviewed and approved by the Dean or Director.

A committee of the Faculty Senate shall be established to review each faculty workload developed at the department and academic unit level. The committee's review will determine whether the submitted policy is clear, consistent with the University policy, establishes the required equivalencies, adequately protects faculty, and was developed with sufficient faculty participation. After completing its review, the committee shall recommend to the Provost that the faculty workload policy be approved or returned to the academic unit with a specification of the revisions necessary to bring the policy into compliance with the university-wide faculty workload policy established herein.

The Provost shall review each department and academic unit level workload policy and the corresponding recommendation of the committee of the Faculty Senate. The Provost may approve the committee's recommendation or may reject it. If the Provost rejects the recommendation of the committee, the Provost will provide the committee with a statement of reasons for the decision.

## 7.0 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

As part of annual strategic planning efforts, all deans, directors, and department chairs, in consultation with faculty, are charged with determining and explicating the specific, collective expectations for their faculty's teaching, research, service or other activities in their respective units for the coming year; typically, those expectations are established as multi-year expectations with little variation on a year-to-year basis.

From those expectations, the department chair (or, in some cases, dean or director) will develop, in consultation with each individual faculty member, a written workload plan for each year. The workload plan must articulate the distribution of workload expectations for the faculty member across the categories of teaching, research, service or whatever other categories are applicable and must be equivalent in effort to the standard faculty workload for the appropriate classification of faculty.

In any given department (or college/school/center), annually differentiated workloads may be established by the chair or director (in consultation with the respective faculty) to leverage individual and collective faculty expertise, strengths, and interests for the attainment of established and articulated departmental (or

college/school/center/ program) needs, objectives, or strategic priorities. Individual faculty workloads are to be reviewed annually by the chair (or dean/director), in consultation with the respective faculty members, and modified as needed to ensure that distributed workload expectations align with annual reviews of faculty performance.

## 8.0 REVIEW SCHEDULE

This policy will be reviewed by the Faculty Senate in 2019.

## 9.0 APPROVALS

**This policy was:**

1. Approved by the Faculty Senate: *January 26, 2016*
2. Modified and Adopted by Provost Nancy Brickhouse: *February 29, 2016*