

# **THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGY WORKLOAD POLICY**

(Approved by Geology Department Faculty 3/31/04)

## **INTRODUCTION**

The goal of this workload policy is a flexibility that can accommodate the self-motivated, diverse professional activities of individual faculty members with the overall teaching, research/scholarship, and service goals of the Department of Geology. The responsibility to reconcile these needs and interests is that of the Department Chairperson, who has the responsibility to know all the professional activities of department members. However, it is in the interests of each faculty member to communicate frequently with the Department Chairperson regarding changing professional obligations, interests, and activities in order to ensure that these efforts do not result in over-commitments or conflicts with Departmental goals.

The workload policy proposed here emphasizes frequent planning and communication between faculty and chair, and a formal (but negotiable) structure in which this planning and communication can take place. Workloads must be planned and assigned in a manner such that all faculty members are given equal opportunity to meet the Departmental Promotion and Tenure criteria in a timely manner. These criteria serve as general guidelines for Departmental (and University) expectations of professional accomplishments. It is up to the Department Chairperson to evaluate and assign individual workloads.

Modifications to this workload policy must be approved by a majority vote of the faculty in accordance with the departmental by-laws, the Dean, the AAUP and the Provost. This document will be provided to all new faculty members upon their appointment.

## **POLICIES FOR QUANTIFICATION OF WORKLOAD EFFORT**

All full-time tenured and tenure track faculty members in the Department of Geology are expected to engage in teaching, research/scholarship and service. However, during any given semester, individual faculty members may have assigned workload distributions that emphasize any of these three categories. Consequently, workload planning should accommodate wide ranges in the distributions of individual workload efforts.

Although members of the faculty are normally required to teach only during the spring and fall semester, as the Faculty Handbook makes clear, responsibilities of faculty members do not cease at other times during the year. In particular, it is expected that the summer months will be used “for reading, study, research, and travel related to the professional development of the faculty member as well as for providing a reasonable period for relaxation.”

### A. Teaching

Faculty members with active research programs in the Department of Geology (see discussion under “B. Research/Scholarship” for clarification) typically have a teaching load that averages 6 credit contact hours per week per semester. Regular courses typically have 3 or 4 credit contact hours per week, so this is a teaching load that is equivalent to an average of 2 courses per term. Teaching duties also include advisement, supervision of graduate teaching assistants, supervision of graduate students during their terminal semesters, and independent study courses (formalized as GEOL x66 special problem courses or as GEOL 405 Introduction to Research). Refer to Section XI.9, footnote 3 of the current collective bargaining agreement for details.

Faculty members active in all three areas of teaching, research/scholarship and service will generally not be expected to teach more than one new course per semester as part of their assigned teaching workload. The workloads of beginning assistant professors will be administered in such a way as to provide every opportunity to meet the criteria for promotion and tenure. This may include some additional reduction in teaching when a lab or field research program is being started, though it is also important to ensure that individuals have sufficient opportunity to demonstrate high quality teaching in a range of courses during the probationary period.

Many courses in Geology require extensive travel and out-of-class time for field trips, often on weekends or holidays. Graduate student research often requires field supervision at locations substantial distances from campus. These factors must be considered in the quantitative evaluation of workload, if such consideration is allowed by the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Experienced faculty members with limited research programs will be assigned above-average teaching loads (see "B. Research/Scholarship" for clarification).

Section III of the Faculty Handbook states: "The posting of office and teaching hours by faculty members is a courtesy as well as a necessary convenience for students. It is anticipated that faculty members will post and keep a reasonable number of office hours each week." Because teaching and learning are a fundamental objective of the Department, each faculty member is expected to keep at least a minimum of several office hours per week.

Each faculty member is also expected to undertake such other teaching-related activities as are normally expected of a faculty member at a major American university, such as attendance at department functions, participation in curricular planning, student recruitment, safety training, and so forth.

## B. Research/Scholarship

To support their research effort, all faculty members in the Department are expected to pursue and to obtain extramural funding. If a faculty member's research effort is, or becomes, unfunded, it is expected that a minimum of at least two proposals per year will be submitted in an attempt to obtain extramural funding. Proposal preparation and subsequent submission is considered a fundamental component of the research/scholarship workload of the Department.

The production of original scholarship and its publication or presentation in scholarly journals, monographs, and books and through professional presentations is also a fundamental component of the research/scholarship workload. Each faculty member is expected to engage in scholarly research that leads to publication on a regular basis. A normal level of publication will be considered to consist of 1-2 publications per year in refereed journals and 1-2 presentations per year at regional, national, or international meetings.

The activities described above are the basic research and scholarship that are expected of all faculty members. Pursuing these activities as described above constitutes the portion of faculty members' workload in the areas of research/scholarship, and allows faculty members to qualify for the reduced ("administered") teaching load of 6 credit contact hours per semester. Faculty members whose research activities are consistently below the levels described above will be assigned additional teaching responsibilities. Faculty members without any research activities, for example, could be assigned a 100% teaching load of 12 credit contact hours per semester.

Faculty members with significant external funding may also qualify for a reduction of three credit-contact hours. Extramural support of graduate students is particularly encouraged as a demonstration of significant research activity. Normally the support will be obtained from

external funds that pay overhead to the University of Delaware, though exceptions to this may be considered by the Chair. Additional reductions in teaching responsibilities are also possible, subject to approval by the Chairperson and the Dean, and will typically be achieved according to the College's course buy-out policy.

Other normal components of research/scholarship include supervision of research assistants and post-doctoral fellows (usually funded externally), and direction and maintenance of various departmental laboratory operations.

### C. Service

Each member of the faculty is expected to serve the Department, College, University, and broader community in ways best suited to the faculty member's talents and the needs of the Department, College and University. In the Department of Geology, service activities typically constitute 10% of a faculty member's assigned workload. Such assigned service activities are above and beyond general service obligations expected of a faculty member at a major research university, including participation in faculty governance and in the development and effective conduct of the Department's academic and research program. Typical assigned service activities might include, but are not limited to, proposal reviews, journal reviews, external committees, and editorial responsibilities.

The percentage of workload for service in the Department of Geology may be higher than many other Departments in the College of Arts and Science. The Department has a relatively small faculty, yet its graduate and undergraduate degree programs and other functions require similar levels of administrative service as in larger departments. Because this effort is spread out among relatively few faculty members, service workload percentages are likely to be

relatively high in the Department, sometimes representing up to 20% of a faculty member's workload.

## **VARIATIONS FROM STANDARD ASSIGNMENTS**

The discussion above defines typical assigned workloads in the Department of Geology for research active faculty as 6 credit contact hours per week per semester of teaching (a 50 % teaching load according to the Collective Bargaining Agreement), 10% workload dedicated to service, leaving 40% for research. As defined above, faculty members with significant external funding may qualify for a lower teaching load. By continuing to maintain the components of an active research program, including graduate student support, faculty members may qualify for a lower teaching load that averages 4.5 credit contact hours per week per semester (a 37.5% teaching load), leaving a 10% service load and a 52.5% load for research. These percentages are, of course, approximations due to additional components of research and teaching, including graduate student supervision during the terminal semester, and so on. As outlined above, further reductions in teaching are also possible according to the College course buy-out policy.

The Department Chairperson may consider requests and assign non-standard workloads that otherwise are consistent with the Collective Bargaining Agreement and University policies and procedures. Because course schedules are established many months prior to the beginning of a semester, it may not always be possible to adjust teaching loads in phase with a faculty member's research or service workload. However, it is in the interests of all faculty members and the Department to make these adjustments as soon as possible, so that faculty members do not become over-committed, thereby compromising the quality of their work. In some cases it may be absolutely essential to respond to short-term workload changes: for example, if a grant is

funded and extensive field or shipboard research is required at a particular time, then the Department will need to respond.

The nature of individual research workload varies greatly depending on the level and source of funding and the history of prior research activity. Externally-funded research projects carry with them various responsibilities regarding deadlines for accomplishment of work. Therefore the magnitude and nature of these external responsibilities should be the primary factor in determining how much time a faculty member needs to devote to a particular project. Initiation of new research programs and the continuation of well-established externally-funded research programs are important aspects of professional life for many faculty members and also may play an important role in the Department's academic program.

Service is usually the smallest part of a faculty member's assigned workload but can often become a major responsibility on short notice. Workloads related to committee duties and University-administered, consultative, and organized activities cannot always be planned and often are intense for short intervals of the academic year. Chairing of either internal (i.e., University, College, or Departmental) or external (government or professional organization) committees requires a certain flexibility that should not be constrained any more than necessary by other aspects of the Faculty member's workload. As in other aspects of workload planning, it is up to each faculty member to plan his or her service obligations and to inform the Department Chairperson of these responsibilities.

The Chair may also assign nonstandard workloads as long as such assignments are otherwise consistent with the Collective Bargaining Agreement and University policies and procedures. Examples of such nonstandard workloads for tenured and tenure-track faculty are summarized below.

a. Emphasis on Teaching. A tenured faculty member may ask to emphasize teaching and de-emphasize research/scholarship in his or her workload and thereby ask to teach additional courses during the year. If the chair accepts this proposal, the faculty member will be assigned additional courses and will have his or her teaching workload percentage increased accordingly.

b. Low Research/Scholarship Productivity. The chair will assign one or more extra courses (i.e., courses beyond the typical administered teaching load of approximately 6 credit contact hours per week per semester) to faculty members whose research/scholarship productivity over a two-year period has been below the norms cited above in “B. Research/Scholarship”.

c. Extraordinary Service. In exceptional circumstances, a faculty member who undertakes an extraordinary service role may request a teaching load or research effort reduction. If granted, the faculty member’s workload percentages will be adjusted accordingly. Normal committee assignments at either the Department, College, or University level, or regular professional service (reviews of articles or proposals, appointments as journal editors, NSF panel memberships, and so on) will generally NOT qualify as extraordinary service.

d. Other modifications. As long as he or she acts in ways that are otherwise consistent with the Collective Bargaining Agreement and University policies and procedures, the chair retains the flexibility to average workloads over semesters or years. This most likely will occur when it is necessary to assign courses to cover for faculty members who are on sabbatical or other leave, to account for co- or team-taught courses, or to take into consideration courses whose time requirements are substantially more (or less) than the Department's normal number of contact hours per semester. In no case, will the chair assign a workload that exceeds the limitations specified by the Collective Bargaining Agreement without the informed written consent of the

faculty member. If a teaching assignment results in an overload, extra compensation will be given at the prevailing rate.

### **SUMMER RESEARCH OPTION**

As outlined in the Faculty Handbook (Section III, F4), Department of Geology faculty members on 9-month academic appointments may request that their performance in a summer program of sponsored or unsponsored scholarship and research be included in their annual faculty evaluation. The faculty member must make the request for inclusion of such a program to the Department Chairperson on an annual basis during the workload planning process. The chair may turn down the faculty member's proposal on substantive grounds related to the content of the proposal, the appropriateness of the proposed program as part of the assigned workload for the faculty member, or the Department's needs and priorities. If the request is granted, the agreement must be documented as part of the individual's workload plan for the subsequent year. Documentation must include a statement of the summer program of scholarship and research, and the expected products of that program, and it must stipulate the duration of the summer program up to three months. When it has been an agreed part of the faculty member's annual workload plan, the summer program of scholarship and research must be considered in computing the overall percentage distribution of faculty effort in teaching, research/scholarship, and service for the year, with a weighting appropriate to the agreed duration of the summer program.

### **REASSIGNMENT OF WORKLOAD**

When any faculty member, tenured, tenure-track, or continuing non-tenure track, is unable to perform the work that has been assigned during the annual planning process, the chair is responsible for assigning alternative work that in his or her judgment is appropriate to ensure

that faculty member meets his or her full obligation to the Department. Such reassignment may occur, for instance, when a scheduled course fails to enroll a sufficient number of students. The chair may, in these circumstances, assign the faculty member to teach a new section of an oversubscribed course for which he or she is qualified or assign the faculty member additional teaching in a subsequent semester. Reassignment to alternative work can occur whenever it becomes clear to the chair that a faculty member has proved unable or incapable of discharging any element, teaching, research/scholarship or service, of the original workload plan and there has been consultation with the faculty member.

## **PLANNING AND MECHANICS**

The Department Chairperson will confer with each faculty member at least once per year. A workload planning form, hereafter referred to as the Departmental Workload Planning Form (DWPF), will be completed by each faculty member. The DWPF will provide the structure for this planning discussion. Once all forms are received, the chair will evaluate the various planned activities within the framework of Departmental teaching, research/scholarship and service needs. The Department Chairperson will then discuss these individual workload plans and assigned workload with each faculty member.

The following calendar serves as a general guideline for faculty and chair planning and reporting responsibilities:

### **January**

- Chair determines course sequence for the next academic year.
- Faculty member prepares DWPF for the next academic year. Form includes a short written statement summarizing and explaining workload plans.

- Faculty member prepares a summary of activities for the previous calendar year for the annual evaluation. Summary will include quantitative information and a narrative that is written in a manner that will be useful for the preparation of the Department's annual newsletter.
- Faculty member submits DWPF and summary of activities to the chair by February 1.

### **February - March**

- Chair prepares annual evaluations and meets with each faculty member to review evaluation and planning forms. Discussion and sign-off on planning forms for both the current and next academic year will be conducted as part of this meeting. [signature 1 on next year's planning form, signature 3 on previous year's planning form]

### **April**

- Chair completes annual evaluations and prepares summary of next year's assigned workload plans.
- Preparation of Department's annual newsletter. Faculty input in the form of paragraphs submitted in January plus additional material as desired.

### **May**

- If requested by faculty or chair, open discussion of workload planning summaries prepared by faculty.
- Chair completes merit pay calculations.

### **September - October**

Faculty member and chair review planning form prepared in previous spring semester [signature 2 on planning form]; discussion of budget needs for the academic year.