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Workload policy motion

Northeastern University - Faculty Senate

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**Workload Policy Motion
Passed by Senate 3/10/04**

WHEREAS it is vital that Northeastern University establish competitive workloads and teaching loads in its quest for top-100 research university status,

AND WHEREAS the goal of such workloads and teaching loads must be to ensure equity while recognizing and supporting faculty members' diverse strengths, talents and contributions to the University,

BE IT RESOLVED that the following Workload Policy be implemented University-wide in the 2005-06 academic year, providing all resources necessary have been made available to the units concerned:

1. Matchmate Workloads

A normal workload for faculty at research universities includes instruction, research/scholarship/creative activities, and service. An equitable workload policy must emphasize equity of total workloads, rather than equity in one or two components of the workload.

Academic units vary in their contributions to the University mission ranging from units that focus primarily on undergraduate education to those with substantial graduate and research programs, and so it is understood that the components of the workload policy will vary from one unit to another.

The faculty of each department, school or similar unit, in consultation with the Dean of the College and the Provost, will designate matchmates for the academic unit and will establish the metrics of its own workload policy based on these matchmate comparisons. At the very least, the matchmate data must identify the mode, range, and average for the teaching load of each matchmate unit.

2. Teaching Loads

Each academic unit may define its teaching loads based upon the number of courses, the number of credit hours taught, or classroom contact time, as appropriate. Either way, academic units should allow for adjustments in teaching load for very large classes, writing-intensive courses, supervision of doctoral theses, research/scholarship/creative activity, high service loads, and the like.

3. Tenure-Track Faculty Workloads

Tenure-track faculty must meet the expectations of teaching, research, and service as articulated in the policy on promotion and tenure in the Faculty Handbook. Therefore, newly hired tenure-track assistant professors will be assigned a teaching load reduced by at least one four-credit course (or its equivalent in the unit) in each of their first two years at the University to provide the opportunity for developing their teaching and scholarly efforts. Furthermore, service expectations will be more limited than for tenured faculty.

4. Time Purchase

Faculty members with grants or contracts may purchase course or credit hour releases. The buyout, whether in terms of courses or credit hours, will be proportional to the normal teaching load of the unit and the weight placed on teaching relative to service and research/scholarship/creative activities and will be based on the faculty member's salary (including fringe benefits). This rate of purchase assumes that the faculty member will carry his/her normal service responsibilities. The rate of purchase will be set at a proportionately higher level for faculty seeking to purchase released time from both teaching and service. A complete buyout of teaching responsibilities is not normally possible for more than one academic year at a time. The funds used by a faculty member for time purchase will remain in the faculty member's

department or equivalent unit. All time purchases are subject to the approval of the Dean of the School or College.

5. Merit and Equity Raises

The specific weighting of the components of a faculty member's workload must be followed in the determination of a merit or equity salary increase for the faculty member.

6. Workload Evaluation Committee

Every department or similar unit will establish in its bylaws a performance evaluation committee consisting of at least two members of the tenured faculty plus the department chair or unit head. The committee members will be chosen by a method agreed to by the unit. On a periodic basis of no more than five years, as determined by the bylaws of the department or equivalent unit, the Workload Evaluation Committee will review the contributions and effectiveness of each faculty member in teaching, research/scholarship/creative activities and service based on the matchmate data for workloads or teaching loads from comparable units and on information for each faculty member such as annual reviews, curriculum vitae, teaching evaluations, publication records, service activities and the like. After completing these reviews, the Workload Evaluation Committee will establish workloads for the faculty within the unit with respect to research/scholarship/creative activities, teaching and service. In making these individual determinations, the committee shall also take into account the cumulative impact of the individual assignments on the ability of the unit to fulfill its responsibilities to students and to the University, and identify any additional resources needed under the proposed assignments to carry out the unit's responsibilities. Each determination shall be made after consulting with the individual faculty member involved. Normally, this assignment shall be made with the consent of the faculty member. Each unit will also establish an appeals mechanism for faculty members who disagree with the workload profile established by the committee. Although the particular workloads may vary from person to person or from time to time, each faculty member is expected to contribute to some extent to each of the three areas. The individual workload assignment is formally made upon approval of the unit head and/or Dean of the College or School to which the individual is assigned. (27-0-0)

Action by President: Approved 5/12/04: "Subject to commitment by Provost and Deans that this policy will increase rather than decrease coverage of sections by full-time faculty and that we will continue progress toward achieving agreed-upon percentage of section coverage by full-time faculty as part of implementing Academic Investment Plan." Approved by Trustees 6/04/04.

Subsequent and Final Approval: Approved by President, and by Trustees on 1/28/05, with the following, revised commentary: "Subject to commitment by Provost and Deans that, in implementing this policy, course coverage by full-time faculty in any department will not be reduced. Rather, in any department, where match-mate data and review of offerings indicate a need to reduce the average teaching load, that such reduction will occur only through the addition of full-time faculty, contingent on budgetary availability and priorities. Furthermore, implementation of this policy should not negatively impact progress toward achieving agreed-upon percentage of overall section coverage by full-time faculty as part of implementing Academic Investment Plan."