Department of Geosciences

Policy Title: Workload Policy
Department of Geosciences Policy #: GEOS-02
Approval notes:
Approved by unanimous vote in the Department of Geosciences on Nov 29, 2017. Pending approval by Dean Roark
Effective Date: January 1, 2018
Revised:

Purpose:

To establish policy that describes how faculty workloads in the Department of Geosciences should be apportioned among teaching, scholarship, and service and professional development.

I. Preamble
This workload policy defines how University policy 4560 is adapted and modified to accommodate the mission of the Department of Geosciences. The Department of Geosciences is expected to provide high quality educational opportunities for students seeking PhD, MS, and BS degrees in core strength areas within Geosciences, while contributing to the general education mission of the university. Additionally, the Department of Geosciences is expected to sustain externally funded research programs that will advance the scientific understanding of various fields of inquiry within the Geosciences. Providing research opportunities and training for graduate and undergraduate students is a critical component of the mission of the Department of Geosciences. This policy applies uniformly to all full-time faculty.

II. Deviation from and modifications to University and College policies
The Department of Geoscience workload policy deviates from the university policy in the following ways:

A. Modified workload distribution for tenure-track faculty
University policy 4560 states that “unless otherwise defined in college or department policies, the standard teaching assignment is three 3 credit courses per semester (3-3 load), which is equivalent to 60% of the faculty workload. The remaining workload is allotted to scholarship and service.”

The Department of Geoscience is charged with implementing research-intensive graduate programs, while also delivering high quality undergraduate programs. Additionally, we believe that ongoing professional development and critical self-examination are important aspects of expertise in the professoriate. Accordingly, the standard workload distribution shall be 40% teaching, 40% scholarship, and 20% service and professional development, based on a 30 unit academic year. The value of units for each activity are described in Section III.

B. Credit for Graduate Student mentoring
Policy 4560 states that “effort expended by a faculty member on graduate culminating activities (e.g., thesis, project, dissertation) is included as part of the annual teaching assignment, but only to the extent the culminating activities are represented by registered academic credits. The course load value assigned to a graduate culminating activity shall be outlined in the department or college workload policy.”

Faculty in the Department of Geosciences work closely with graduate students throughout the student’s tenure. This policy describes a mechanism by which faculty members get credit towards teaching for each graduate student each semester, as opposed to only the final semester in which the culminating activity is completed. By involving students in research, faculty members receive direct credit towards their teaching workload as well as assistance in meeting research obligations.

C. Credit for mentoring undergraduate research
The Department of Geosciences encourages faculty to involve undergraduates in research. Policy 4560 does not describe how faculty members receive workload credit for mentoring undergraduate research. This policy describes how faculty members receive teaching credit for supervising undergraduate research.

III. Workload Categories and Expectations

Although professional activities are categorized as teaching, scholarship, or service, the creative integration of all three is a hallmark of an impactful faculty member. Achieving excellence requires more than simply meeting the quantitative benchmarks described in the sections below. Professional growth guided by critical self-assessment and active engagement in professional development activities is essential to sustain long-term excellence in the profession. Accordingly, faculty members should

- Strive to sustain mastery of their chosen academic discipline
- Seek opportunities for professional development
- Implement evidence-based best practices in teaching
- Conduct scholarly pursuits with integrity
- Carry out all duties of the job in a professional manner
- Recognize that they are part of a community of scholars with a shared mission, and prioritize their activities with this shared mission in mind
- Strive to have significant positive impacts in their integrated professional activities
- Strive to be good citizens of the department, college, university, and community.

A. Tenure-Track Faculty. The workload of faculty members in the Department of Geosciences shall be apportioned into activities related to teaching (40%), scholarship (40%) and service (20%). Deviations from the standard can be negotiated with the Chair of the Department of Geosciences.

1. Teaching:
   i. General Guidelines Teaching includes design, preparation, grading and other administrative duties required in the delivery of coursework, and activities related to directed student learning.
1. **Coursework**: Faculty members should develop and deliver rigorous courses that are justified by the department teaching mission and incorporate evidence-based best teaching practices. The Chair of the Department of Geosciences is responsible for assigning instructors for all courses that are required for degrees, certificates and other academic programs, as well as courses required by other programs in the University. However, the department curriculum is crafted around the expertise of the faculty. Ideally, each faculty member teaches courses within specific area of expertise, particularly in graduate course offerings, but all faculty members should be receptive to teaching assignments that are needed to fulfill curricular obligations. Because mastery of research methods is central to the learning outcomes for all programs in Geosciences, faculty members should actively seek ways to incorporate methods of scientific inquiry into their teaching.

2. **Directed student learning**: Faculty members should provide research opportunities and serve as a mentor for graduate and undergraduate students. Such activities could include supervising independent study, mentoring undergraduate research activity and supervising graduate student research. Supervising graduate students involves active participation in thesis/dissertation research, and completing administrative requirements as set the by the Graduate Program Committee. All directed student learning activities must be reflected in student registrations.

ii. **Specific Requirements**: The Geoscience standard teaching workload is 40% of a 30 unit academic year, which equates to 12 units per year. The teaching workload occurs during the nine-month academic year unless negotiated otherwise. Teaching units can be earned as follows:

1. Teach credit-based classroom or online courses. The following conditions apply:
   a. 1 credit of lecture/lab based coursework equals 1 teaching unit
   b. Courses that are cross-listed can only be counted once
   c. Credits for team-taught courses will be negotiated with the Chair
   d. Extra credit may be negotiated for lab or field intensive classes
   e. A minimum of 6 units per year must be earned by teaching credit-based courses
   f. Courses must meet minimum enrollments established by the Department of Geosciences. If a scheduled course fails to meet the minimum enrollment standard prior to the beginning of the course, the course is subject to cancellation pending review by the Chair. If a course is
cancelled, the instructor must determine, in consultation with the Chair, how the annual workload obligation will be met.

2. Serve as primary advisor to a graduate student in a thesis-based MS or PhD program, or advise undergraduate directed learning activities
   a. 0.75 teaching units are given per graduate student per semester. Students must be full-time status or in their final semester. Lesser units may be granted for part-time students in consultation with the Chair.
   b. 0.6 units are given per undergraduate student per semester registered in 3 cr. of directed research, independent study, or equivalent courses. Credit for students enrolled in fewer credits are scaled accordingly
   c. No more than 6 teaching units per year can be earned by mentoring graduate or undergraduate students.

3. Other. A faculty member may identify specific factors affecting workload such as new course preparation. Workload equivalencies will be negotiated with the Chair.

Example teaching workload configurations are presented in Table 1. In all of these configurations the faculty member meets the standard 40% research obligation described in Section III.

Table 1: Example annual teaching workload configurations in a standard 40% teaching, 40% scholarship, 40% service workload.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Course Credits per year</th>
<th>Graduate Student advisee population per semester</th>
<th>Undergraduate directed studies credits per semester</th>
<th>Teaching units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Scholarship:
i. **General Guidelines:** Faculty members are expected to establish and sustain externally funded research programs that produce high impact products and support student research. Although, workload distributions are typically posed as percentages of effort, scholarly impact is typically measured in products. The traditional measure of scholarly impact is publication of peer-reviewed manuscripts in academic journals. Activities such as writing grant proposals, attending research conferences, and conducting field/lab work are essential components of a successful research career that ultimately must lead to final scholarly products. It is recognized however, that effort and productivity are not always aligned. That is, field-based, or computationally intensive research may require months or years of labor to yield publishable results, while the rapid expansion of publically available data in some disciplines can lead to multiple publications with lesser effort. Accordingly, research productivity metrics presented below are guidelines that can be modified in consultation with the Chair. In all cases, faculty members should let scientific inquiry and integrity, rather than high publication counts, guide their scholarly pursuits, while acknowledging that dissemination of results through peer-reviewed outlets is a responsibility of the profession.

The Department of Geoscience follows the University adaptation of the Boyer model of scholarship, which recognizes four distinct types of scholarship.

- The scholarship of discovery and creation, by means of which products are produced and published
- The scholarship of synthesis and integration, by means of which extant disciplinary methods or products are brought together in novel ways, resulting in peer-reviewed publication
- The scholarship of application and engagement, by means of which disciplinary expertise is brought to bear on issues that extend beyond the traditionally narrow academic sphere, with results amenable to peer-reviewed publication
- The scholarship of teaching and learning, by means of which disciplinary expertise is brought to bear on educational issues, with results amenable to peer-reviewed publication, or widespread implementation of ideas.

Because student research is central to the teaching mission of the department, faculty should actively seek funding to support student research in the form of stipends, tuition waivers, and research expenses. Credit for mentoring student research is given in the teaching component of the workload distribution. However, peer-reviewed products of student research can be counted as faculty research productivity.

ii. **Specific requirements:** The Geoscience standard research workload is 40% of a faculty members time, which should lead to a minimum of 2
peer-reviewed scholarly products per year averaged over a three year period. Peer-reviewed products include journal publications, and other products that demonstrate high scientific impact. Submission of grant proposals or other time-intensive efforts may count towards research productivity in consultation with the Chair, but ultimately faculty members should strive to complete final dissemination products. Additional consideration will be given for faculty members who lead large, multi-investigator proposals or initiatives that involve considerable management, supervision of postdoctoral scientists, or administrative duties.

3. **Service and Professional Development**: Faculty are expected to engage in service activities that support the operations of the university, college, department, and their professional community including, but not limited to departmental administrative committees or assignments (e.g., GPC, TPC, seminar coordinator), graduate committee membership, student academic advising assignments, college and university administrative committees (e.g., COAS TPC, Curriculum, Senate), community outreach, and professional service (e.g., NSF panel participant, journal editor, journal reviewer). Professional development refers to activities that help us become better professors. Examples of professional development activities include attending workshops focused on improving pedagogy, engaging in training activities that lead to new skills in scholarship, and pursuing opportunities to improve outreach potential. Although it is difficult to quantify service time into workload, a 20% workload in a 40 hour work week equates to 8 hours per week. Faculty members should strive to be good citizens of the department, college, university, and community.

B. **Non-Tenure-Track Faculty**. The teaching load of non-tenure-line faculty is defined by BSU policy 4560 as 24 credits per academic year. This teaching load accounts for approximately 80% of the total workload. Service and professional development account for the remaining 20% of effort.

1. **Teaching**. Teaching workload units are earned as described for tenure-track faculty in Section III.A.1. Deviations from this standard teaching load can be negotiated with the Chair.

2. **Scholarship**. Scholarship is not a standard workload for Lecturers, Clinical Professors, or other non-tenure track teaching faculty. However, exceptions can be negotiated with the Chair.

3. **Service and Professional Development**: refers to activities that support the operations of the university, college, and department, and professional community service as well as service to the profession locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. Professional development to keep abreast of one’s field may take the form of attending or participating in a conference or workshop, completing or delivering a course or training session relevant to one’s job description at the university. Teaching personnel who have management or administrative duties beyond a typical service load may negotiate for a reduced teaching.
IV. Workload Distribution Exceptions

1. **Buyouts:** Faculty members may use grant dollars or other funding sources to buyout portions of their teaching or service workloads according to BSU policy 4560. Buyout of research time during the academic year is described by the Faculty Incentive Pay Program (FIPP).

2. **Labor intensive courses:** Because of the lab and field intensive nature of many Geosciences classes, some classes may be eligible for more workload units than their course credits. Normally, the workload credited to the faculty member will be the credit hours for the course, with TA assistance provided for courses with labs. The specific number of units assigned to teaching in each academic year will be negotiated annually on an individual basis with the Chair.

3. **New Faculty:** In addition, a new tenure-track faculty member is expected to build a vibrant research program; hence, their initial workload will typically be no greater than six credits in their first year with the expectation that they will seek external support for their research, and that they begin to recruit and mentor graduate students.

4. **Heightened Research Load:** Teaching loads may be reduced to no lower than six credits per year (20% effort), subject to approval by the dean, for faculty who have large, externally funded research obligations involving multiple personnel. However, this reduction in teaching load is best accommodated by mentoring student research (see Section III.A.1.ii). Exceptions for heightened research loads to reduce teaching should only be sought in cases where managing a large research program, or other extenuating circumstances, restricts student mentoring. A heightened research load status will be evaluated each semester. Heightened scholarship productivity will be expected to accompany any reduced teaching load.

5. **Heightened Service Load:** Faculty with administrative appointments may have their teaching load reduced to no lower than six credits (20% effort) per year. The unit value of heightened service obligations will be negotiated with the Chair or Dean. Standing heightened service load appointments include:
   
   i. Department Chair (6 units)
   ii. Department Curriculum Coordinator/Advisor (6 units)
   iii. Associate Dean (6 units)

6. **Heightened Teaching Load:** A faculty member may, in negotiation with the Chair, carry an increased teaching load with a corresponding decrease in research or service expectations.
7. **Other:** Faculty may present customized workload distributions to the Chair for consideration in order to account for situations not outlined in this document. Approval of custom workload distributions are subject to the approval by the Chair and Dean.

V. **Process**
- December 15: Faculty member completes Department Teaching Plan spreadsheet with PROPOSED 2-year teaching plan beginning the following academic year.
- January 15: Faculty member submits Faculty Workload Plan (FWP) to the Chair describing how obligations in each workload category will be met.
- February 1: Chair completes Department Teaching Plan for next academic year.
- Mid-February: Faculty members complete self-evaluation for previous calendar year using the system that is currently in place for COAS.
- March-April: The Chair completes an annual evaluation for each faculty member. Evaluations will be based on agreed upon workloads as described in this policy. Although the systems used for evaluation may change, each system generally includes ratings in each of the three workload categories. Faculty members who meet the workload metrics outlined in this document will typically receive a “meets expectations” or equivalent rating. Higher ratings are reserved for faculty members who perform beyond expectations outlined in this document. This information will form the basis of the negotiation of the workload assignment for the next year.
- March-April: Faculty members meet individually with Chair to discuss annual evaluation for previous calendar year and to determine final workload distribution for next academic year. These workload assignments will be recorded in the current evaluation system, with final approval given by the Chair and the Dean.

V. **Modification of Workload**
Circumstances may arise during the academic year that require redistribution of workload assignments. Such modifications may be initiated by either the faculty member or the department, and will be determined via negotiation between the faculty member and the Chair. Modification of workload is subject to approval by the Dean.

This policy is in accordance with University Policy #4560 and the College of Arts and Sciences Workload Policy.

Adopted by the Department of Geosciences on January 1, 2018.

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Chair, Department of Geosciences

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Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

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Date

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Date