

Proposed Workload Policy for Faculty 2025-2026

1. Purpose and Scope

The University has adopted this policy to establish guidelines for calculating the statutory workload of faculty members employed at the University of Houston Clear-Lake in order to comply with Sections 51.402 of the Texas Education Code. This policy is a mechanism for ensuring that each faculty member meets the statutory teaching load minimum.

Pursuant to Texas Education Code, Section 51.402 and University of Houston System (UHS) Board of Regents Policy 21.05, this MAAP establishes the general workload policy for all full-time faculty and is designed to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of faculty workload in meeting the mission and operational needs of academic units.

This policy also establishes the annual reporting requirements to the UHS Board of Regents concerning faculty workload. As part of those requirements, each Department Chair and College Dean must certify that the duties of each faculty member constitute an appropriate workload responsibility in accordance with the following requirements.

2. Definitions

- Academic Unit: A College, Department or Program
- Faculty: Tenure-track, tenured and non-tenure-track full time employees
- Program lead: Program Director / Coordinator / Chair (or as defined by the College)
- RSA – Research, Scholarly, or Artistic Activities as defined in the UHCL Promotion and Tenure policy
- Teaching unit: A teaching unit is equivalent to 3-credit-hour course of standard enrollment. Standard enrollment is established in this policy in sections 5.B and 5.D
- Teaching credit: Various teaching activities accrue as teaching credits in fractional increments as outlined in this policy

3. Policy Statement

The University requires that every faculty member fulfill a certain minimum teaching load in accordance with the following standards.

In order to achieve maximum effectiveness, the standard workload for tenure-track faculty members at UHCL is three classes per long semester plus RSA and service, as defined by the College. The percentages of each type of work expected for faculty in standard workload assignment are as follows:

- Assistant professors: 60% teaching, 30% RSA, 10% service
- Tenured faculty: 60% teaching, 20% RSA, 20% service.
- Non-tenure-track (NTT) full-time faculty: for a standard Lecturer position, 80% teaching, 20% service. Department chairs/Deans may choose to recognize RSA conducted by NTT faculty as part of their workload.

These percentages can be modified in accordance with this policy (See section 8.0 Modified Workload).

Faculty may accumulate teaching credit over time and may aggregate fractional teaching credits in various categories. Faculty should request to use teaching credit for a course release as soon as a full teaching unit is reached. The course release is to be used when the Dean/Department Chair is able to schedule it, within two years following the request. If a release is not possible during those two years, a Dean may offer remuneration as an alternative, using the normal course overload rate (see 5.H). Alternatively, earned teaching credit may be paid immediately as a proportion of the normal rate for a course overload, with the agreement of the faculty and the Dean. A teaching underload of less than one course equivalent over a fall/spring academic year will not be carried over to subsequent summer or fall/spring semesters and will not count against any previously aggregated teaching credit.

This workload policy sets forth guidelines that permit each Department Chair, under the supervision of a Dean, to best engage faculty to foster student and faculty success and advance the unit's mission. The goal of this policy is to implement a mechanism that equitably divides and accounts for the total professional effort of faculty, including instruction, research and clinical practice, and service to the university and professional community.

4. Responsibilities

Workload assignments must be primarily the responsibility of an academic unit and its Department Chair and the College Dean. These administrators are responsible for individual compliance with institutional rules and accreditation compliance, and for distributing the duties of their academic unit so that each faculty member contributes maximally to the department/program according to their capabilities and experience. Department Chairs and Deans are responsible for assuring that individual faculty members' workloads comply with the university workload policy. Chairs and Deans are also responsible for ensuring that faculty obligations are distributed fairly among faculty members within the academic unit. While this policy provides explicit guidance regarding teaching responsibilities, each College must develop and publish expectations for faculty RSA and service workload.

The Provost shall be responsible for implementing the institution's workload policy, reviewing College and department assignment patterns, tracking faculty workload, and monitoring compliance with institutional regulations.

5. Guiding Principles for Teaching Workload Alignment

The normal teaching workload for a tenure-track or tenured faculty member is three courses

(teaching units) per long semester plus associated teaching activities, as defined by the College. The normal teaching workload for NTT faculty is four courses (teaching units) per long semester plus associated teaching activities, as defined by the College.

5.1 Courses Where Contact Hours Exceed Credit Hours

For laboratory, nursing clinical, physical activity, studio art, and other courses in which contact hours with direct faculty involvement are greater than credit hours, additional workload credit shall be rewarded by multiplying the number of weekly contact hours exceeding credit hours by 0.5 and adding that to the credit hour value of the course.

$$\text{Course Equivalent} = \frac{\text{Credit Hour Value} + 0.5 \times (\text{Contact Hours} - \text{Credit Hour Value})}{3}$$

For example, a one (1) credit hour science laboratory course that meets for three (3) contact hours each week will count as 2/3 of a teaching unit.

For classes where the additional contact time may serve as advising/mentoring time for students, as in many studio classes, the additional contact time may also be compensated by a ½-unit reduction in required office hours for each excess contact hour.

5.2 Large Classes

Course caps should be set by Departments in collaboration with the Dean based on pedagogical best practices, facility space, enrollment demands and accreditation requirements. UHCL values the learning experiences of a small class. However, enrollment demands sometimes require larger classes. A class over 50 undergraduate students (or 40 graduate students) at UHCL is classified as a “large class.” To ensure that students maintain quality engagement with an instructor, a TA/IA or embedded tutor may be provided for classes scheduled as a large class (i.e., cap of greater than 50), pending the availability of funding and a qualified TA/IA/tutor.

Additionally, to acknowledge the added faculty workload large classes entail, supplemental workload credit will be allocated to a faculty member teaching a large class, according to the formula below (using census data to determine student count).

$$\text{Course Equivalent} = 1 + \frac{2}{3} \times \frac{\text{Excess Enrollment}}{\text{Maximum Enrollment}}$$

Reference examples:

$$100 \text{ UG Students: } 1 + \frac{2}{3} \times (100 - 50)/50 = 1.67 \text{ course equivalent}$$

$$80 \text{ UG Students: } 1 + \frac{2}{3} \times (80 - 50)/50 = 1.36 \text{ course equivalent}$$

$$60 \text{ UG Students: } 1 + \frac{2}{3} \times (60 - 50)/50 = 1.13 \text{ course equivalent}$$

$$60 \text{ Grad Students: } 1 + \frac{2}{3} \times (60 - 40)/40 = 1.33 \text{ course equivalent}$$

If a large course is taught by adjunct faculty, the TA rule applies, and the formula above should be used to adjust compensation for the adjunct faculty on the same sliding scale that workload credit is assigned for full-time faculty.

5.3 Time-intensive classes

Time-intensive classes (e.g., writing-intensive classes, practicum classes, study abroad classes, or field experience courses where faculty members must coordinate with off-site partners and travel to those sites for grading) should be formally designated as such, and have an appropriate cap determined, through discussion among faculty and Dean with approval from the Provost. The multiplier for exceeding the appropriate cap should use the formula in 5.B, with the determined cap as the “maximum enrollment.”

5.4 Classes with Less than Minimum Enrollment

The number of students normally required for a course to meet enrollment minimums is set by the Colleges. If a faculty member is required to teach a course with below minimum enrollment, the teaching credit will be that of a standard teaching unit. A faculty member may voluntarily teach a course at a reduced amount of workload credit to be agreed upon with their Dean.

5.5 Thesis/Dissertation/Exhibition supervision

Graduate thesis, dissertation, and exhibition supervision shall provide teaching credit to the chairperson of the thesis, dissertation, or exhibition committee as follows:

- One course release for every 24 credit hours of thesis research, or exhibition preparation completed. A faculty member cannot count one student for more than six (6) credit hours of credit for the purpose of this policy.
- One course release for every 12 credit hours of dissertation research completed. A faculty member cannot count one student for more than 12 credit hours of dissertation research for the purpose of this policy.
- If a faculty member has five or more students enrolled in dissertation hours in one term, that course counts as one of the faculty member’s semester courses. This cannot be used in conjunction with the 12-credit hour course release described above.

This course load credit *may* be divided among committee members by agreement. Default divisions of teaching credit for dissertation/thesis committees may be standardized at the College level by a vote of their respective faculty.

Supervision of other capstones, if requiring the intensive involvement of a faculty member, may be eligible for the same teaching credit, under discussion with the College Dean.

5.6 Independent Study, Problems Courses, Project Courses, Practica, Cooperative Education, Service Learning

In cases in which individualized teaching, tutorials, or consultive supervision takes place (unless students are grouped into an organized class) teaching credit is awarded to the faculty member on the basis of 1/30 course equivalent per SCH for each undergraduate, and 1/15 course equivalence per SCH for each graduate (with approval by Dean, since these cases may vary from College to College).

Reference examples:

10 undergraduate students in these capacities = 1 course equivalent

5 graduate students in these capacities = 1 course equivalent

5.7 Supervision of interns / student teachers

Teaching credit is awarded for supervision of an intern or student teacher at a rate of 3 credit hours of internship supervision = 1/12 course equivalent. Thus, supervision of six student interns (at 6 credit hours each) is equated to one full teaching unit credit.

Faculty may submit a request to change this established course equivalence multiplier to their Dean. The Dean and program faculty will agree upon any alternative based upon relevant facts such as commute time, documentation and evaluation of student teaching or intern performance, and meeting times with student teachers and teaching supervisors or internship managers.

If a program is supervising a high volume of internships and they can be organized into a course as a part of a normal teaching load, the course equivalence multiplier does not apply.

5.8 Teaching overload

A faculty member, with agreement of their Dean, may teach a course/courses beyond their defined teaching workload in each long semester, which is often but not always 60% (three reference courses) for a tenure-track faculty or 80% (four reference courses) for NTT faculty.

Overloads are always optional and faculty may decline administrative requests to teach beyond their assigned workload.

If this additional teaching is voluntary and adds up to the equivalent of a teaching unit, the faculty member will be compensated, at the discretion of their Dean, with a course release to be taken in the following four long semesters or additional overload remuneration. This overload remuneration is determined by the College, should be consistent in absolute or percentage terms across the Colleges, must exceed the amount that would be paid to a similarly credentialed and experienced adjunct, but be no greater than 10% of the faculty member's 9-month salary.

If this additional teaching is voluntary and adds up to less than the equivalent of a teaching unit (e.g., taking over a course partway through a semester), the Dean may pay the faculty member proportionally to the College overload rate or allow the faculty member to bank it as fractional

teaching credit.

If a faculty member is directed by the Accessibility Support Center to create a version of a course in a different modality (e.g., online) to meet student accommodation needs, it will count as a course overload in discussion with the department chair and approval by the dean. Other instances of additional modalities and adaptations to meet accommodation needs may be considered as an overload, in discussion with the department chair and approval by the dean.

6. Guiding Principles for Research, Scholarly and Artistic Activity (RSA) Workload Assignments

Each faculty member is expected to engage in RSA with resulting products that meet the College requirements for tenure, promotion, and post-tenure review for tenure-track and tenured faculty.

Each College will have policies that meet academic standards and accreditation needs while allowing the flexibility that supports innovative research and the potential to reach and impact a broad audience.

Each College must develop and publish expectations for faculty RSA workload. Each College should recognize that different disciplines have different products of RSA, that the tangible products of RSA are not always immediate, allow the faculty the flexibility needed for innovative RSA and recognize work that reaches both a typical scholarly audience and the broader public.

7. Guiding Principles for Service Workload Assignments

Each faculty member is expected to do service work towards the needs of the University and discipline in accordance with the policy of their College. Each College will determine how a service workload unit is constituted. This work consists not only of committee work, but rather a range of activities that support the goals of the institution.

Each College must develop and publish expectations for a service workload unit. Each College is encouraged to eliminate or streamline any service obligations that do not contribute to the smooth functioning of the university. For the service that remains, each College should recognize that different activities require different amounts of time and effort, weight them accordingly, and distribute them equitably.

8. Modified Workload

The workload percentages listed in Section III constitute a standard workload for full-time faculty. However, flexibility is possible based on the needs of the Academic Unit and the faculty member, in agreement by both. For example, certain positions such as Program Directors and the Faculty Council Presiding Officer, require faculty members to take on a service load that exceeds the norm. In such cases, short-term modifications to the faculty workload will be made, for example through course releases. Course releases should be calculated and granted in such a way that offsets the work. For example, program directors supervising larger programs earn additional course releases. In the event that course releases are not available due to budget constraints, these roles may be compensated with a temporary reduction in research expectations.

Short-term modifications to any of the three components of workload may be made through discussions between faculty and Department Chair, and approval by the Dean. In no instance should the percentage of faculty workload dedicated to service be reduced to zero, since that places an undue burden on other faculty.

In the event that annual review feedback indicates a faculty member has a pattern of not meeting minimum workload expectations as delineated in their college annual review policy and criteria, the Department Chair may recommend a modified workload that better meets the needs of the college or university. For example, a faculty member may teach an additional course each semester in lieu of research (e.g. 80% teaching, 20% service) or serve administrative duties, or devote more time to research with less teaching, while maintaining tenure and academic rank (Associate or Full Professor). This may not be available to all programs due to accreditation standards.

Any modifications of faculty workload should be in writing and include the reasoning for the modification and the timeframe that the modification will be in effect. The faculty member should be notified of the modification within 10 business days after the Dean's approval. The Chair, Dean, faculty member, and Provost should receive/maintain a copy of the modification. All modifications should be reflected in the college's annual workload report.

9. Disputing Workload Assignments

Although not required in order to file a university level grievance, faculty members may discuss any concerns regarding their workload assignment with their Department Chair and subsequently with their Dean if concerns are not addressed.

If unresolved, Faculty members may dispute their assigned workload by initiating a university level grievance as provided in the UHCL Faculty Grievance Policy (UHCL MAAP 6.A.17). Until any dispute has been fully resolved, the terms of the original workload assignment being disputed will remain in effect.

10. Workload Certification Procedures

Each College will report the past year's annual faculty workload assignments, as well as the plan for the upcoming year, to the Provost, within 30 days of the end of spring semester. The Provost will provide a summary report of the previous year's workload assignments and modifications to the faculty at the start of the fall semester.

The University shall file with the Board of Regents a report, by department, of the academic duties and services performed by each member of the faculty during the nine-month academic year, showing evidence of compliance with requirements established by the governing board. Teaching responsibilities in each workload standard shall be in proportion to the portion of salary paid from funds appropriated for instructional purposes.

11. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITY

This policy will be reviewed by the Faculty Affairs Committee of Faculty Council every 5 years unless an interim need for substantive review or revisions is needed.