

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

WORKLOAD POLICY

(Approved by Department of Political Science, April 8, 2016; Amended September 9, 2016)

Purpose

The purpose of the Department of Political Science Workload Policy is:

- to insure a fair and transparent distribution of workload among individual members of the Department,
- to facilitate the Department's transition to a workload distribution consistent with the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley's goal of becoming an emerging research institution, and,
- to facilitate the on-going introduction of faculty research findings into the classroom and to incorporate undergraduate and graduate students into faculty research projects, and
- to operationalize and implement *UTRGV Handbook of Operating Procedures* Section ADM 06-106, par. 5 in the Department of Political Science, which identifies the primary duties of faculty members to include the following:
 - Faculty members are required to provide students with a syllabus, and to post it online, and this syllabus must include "the faculty member's office number and office hours, email, and other contact information" (ADM 06-106 5.a.i.1).
 - "Faculty are expected to be accessible to their students outside the classroom (physical or virtual) via email, telephone and office hours" (ADM 06-106 5.a.iii.1).
 - "The teaching schedule and office hours shall be posted outside each faculty office or in the Learning Management System and be available in the department office. Faculty members are to be available to students during the posted office hours" (ADM 06-106 5.a.iii.2).

Form A Workload Substitution

The faculty workload at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley is established by the [Texas Education Code Section 51.402](#) and defined by University of Texas System Rule 31006.¹ The UT RGV legacy institutions operationalized the required minimum faculty workload as:

¹ Minimum faculty workloads are established by the Texas Education Code Section 51.402 – Report of Institutional and Academic Duties and defined by University of Texas System Rule 31006: Academic Workload Requirements as follows:

Sec. 1 Statutory Requirement. State law requires the Board of Regents to adopt rules concerning faculty academic workloads. *Texas Education Code* Section 51.402 recognizes that important elements of workload include classroom teaching, basic and applied research, and professional development. Workload for the faculty members of the institutions of The University of Texas System is expressed in terms of classroom teaching, teaching equivalencies, and presidential credits [Form A] for assigned activities.

Sec. 2 Minimum Workload.

Each person paid full time from the appropriations item "Faculty Salaries" shall be assigned a minimum workload equivalent to 18 semester credit hours of instruction in organized undergraduate classes each nine-month academic year, or fiscal year at an institution's option, in accordance with guidelines listed below.

- Teaching 60% (3-3 course load)
- Scholarship 20%
- Service 20%

As mandated by the [Texas Education Code Section 51.402](#) and University of Texas System Rule 31006, the transition to emerging research institution status cannot entail a reduction of the faculty workload, but it does allow a redistribution of faculty workload to:

- Teaching 40% (2-2 course load)
- Scholarship 40%
- Service 20%

It is understood that any reduction in teaching workload, as measured by the number of course sections offered by a faculty member each semester, must be justified by a corresponding increase in expected scholarly production and documentation that such expectations have been realized in a reasonable amount of time. Form A Workload Substitutions will be authorized by the Department Chair, to the extent possible, if a faculty member is engaged in at least one of the following activities:

- Paper accepted for presentation at a regional, national, or international scholarly conference²
- Writing a grant proposal of at least \$20,000
- Grant-funded external research project that will result in scholarly papers and articles³
- Manuscript has received a revise and resubmit or conditional acceptance from a scholarly journal⁴
- Invitation to contribute a chapter to an edited book to be published by a bona fide university press or commercial press⁵
- Original book project, preferably under contract with a bona fide university press or commercial publisher⁶
- Edited book project, preferably under contract with a bona fide university press or commercial publisher⁷
- Externally funded applied or translational research project that will result in a white paper, policy report, or other publicly available format (e.g., poll results).⁸
- Exceptionally demanding service activities, such as chairing a curriculum committee, search and screen committee, or other comparable department service activity.
- New course development, especially the development of new online courses or course sections to be approved by the Center for OnLine Teaching (COLT) within six months and to be offered to students within one year.

² Must provide copy of acceptance letter to department chair.

³ Must provide copy of grant award letter to department chair.

⁴ Must provide copy of revise and resubmit or conditional acceptance letter to department chair.

⁵ Must provide copy of invitation letter from publisher or editor to department chair.

⁶ Must provide copy of contract to department chair and/or produce evidence of at least one completed chapter per semester and preferably evidence that these chapters are also being presented as conference papers on an on-going basis.

⁷ Must provide copy of contract to department chair and/or produce evidence of progress toward completion each semester.

⁸ Must provide copy of funding letter from project sponsor to department chair.

It is understood and agreed that workload substitutions cannot interfere with the Department's ability to deliver its undergraduate and graduate degrees and that the availability of Form A workload substitutions, in particular, will require the Department to offer multiple large (120+) sections of POLS 2301/02 each semester (see Appendix A).

Reconfiguration of Teaching Workload

This goal can also be realized by reconfiguring an instructor's teaching load through a combination of large (120+) undergraduate sections and graduate sections, with support from teaching coaches or graduate assistants (see Appendix A).

Faculty on Teaching Track

University policy allows tenured faculty members to the option of being evaluated on a Teaching Track, rather than a Research Track as long as they teach a 4-4 course load (12 credit hours per semester).⁹

Office Hours

Faculty members in the Department of Political Science shall be physically and/or virtually available and accessible to students for a minimum of one (1) office hour for every 3 credit hours taught per semester.

For face-to-face courses, and for reduced seating or blended courses, the faculty member shall be physically available and accessible to students in their assigned office during posted office hours for their face-to-face and reduced seating/blended courses. The faculty member shall also be available and accessible to students by electronic mail and telephone during posted office hours for face-to-face and reduced seating/blended courses.

For online courses, the faculty member shall be available and accessible to students by electronic mail, telephone, Skype or other videoconferencing systems during their posted office hours for their online courses.

Faculty members are expected to answer course-related electronic mail received from students via a UTRGV email address, and respond to telephone messages received from students on their UTRGV telephone number within 48 hours under normal circumstances, excluding weekends.

Faculty should submit their posted office hours to the Department of Political Science Administrative Assistant(s) no later than the first day of class each semester.

⁹ Teaching Track faculty are still evaluated in Professional Achievement with the minimum weighting (20%) and can therefore meet expectations for purpose of merit evaluations by accumulating the required number (20) of Activity Points from the list of Professional Achievement activities. However, an individual cannot meet expectations for purposes of promotion to Full Professor without the minimum number of scholarly publications required by the department's evaluation standards.

APPENDIX A

University of Texas System Rule 31006

Sec. 6 Equivalencies.

The following equivalencies are available to meet workload requirements:

6.1 Graduate Instructions.

One semester credit hour of graduate instruction will be considered the equivalent of one and one-half semester credit hours of undergraduate instruction.

6.2 Labs.

One and one-half contact hours of instruction of regularly scheduled laboratory and clinical courses, physical activity courses, studio art, studio music instruction, and primary music performance organizations, such as ensembles and marching bands, for each week of a long-term semester will be considered the equivalent of one semester credit hour of undergraduate instruction.

6.3 Supervision.

Supervision of student teachers, clinical supervision, and intern supervision shall be credited such that 12 total student semester credit hours taught will be considered the equivalent of one semester credit hour.

6.4 Honors Program or Individual Research Projects.

Supervision of student practicum and individual instruction courses, such as honors programs and individual research projects, shall provide equivalency at the rate of one-tenth semester credit hour for each student semester hour of undergraduate instruction and one-fifth semester hour for each student semester hour of graduate instruction per long-term semester. In no case will individual instruction in a single course generate more semester credit hour equivalence than if the course were taught as a regularly scheduled, organized course.

6.5 Thesis or Dissertation Supervision.

Graduate thesis or dissertation supervision shall provide equivalent credit hours only to the chairperson of the thesis or dissertation committee at the rate of one semester credit hour for each six total student semester hours of thesis research credit and at the rate of one semester credit hour for each three total student semester hours of dissertation credit.

6.6 Coordination of Courses.

A faculty member who coordinates several sections of a single course shall be given one semester hour of workload credit for each six sections coordinated up to a maximum of three semester hours of credit per semester.

6.7 Large Classes.

Workload credit may be proportionally increased for teaching a large class that requires extensive grading or evaluation of students' work by the faculty member according to the following weighing factors:

Weighing		Class	SizeFactor
59	or	less	1.0
60	-	69	1.1
70	-	79	1.2
80	-	89	1.3
90	-	99	1.4
100	-	124	1.5
125	-	149	1.6
150	-	174	1.7
175	-	199	1.8
200	-	249	1.9
250 or more			2.0

6.8 Proportional Credit.

When more than one teacher participates in the instruction of a single course, the credit is proportioned according to the effort expended.

6.9 Insufficient Enrollment.

A reduced workload may be granted temporarily if assigned classes do not materialize because of insufficient enrollment and when additional classes or other academic duties cannot be assigned to the faculty member. This exception may be granted for two consecutive long-term semesters only for any particular faculty member.

6.10 Administrative Services.

Workload credit may be granted for a faculty member who is head of a department or head of a comparable administrative unit up to a maximum of six semester hours of workload credit per semester. When justified by the department/unit head and approved by the institutional head, three hours of credit may be given to faculty members who provide non-teaching academic services to the department/unit head. In no case will the total for departmental administration, including the head, exceed nine workload credits per semester unless the institution's organizational structure includes academic units composed of more than one academic discipline.

6.11 New Faculty Members.

At the recommendation of the head of the department or comparable unit and upon approval of the institutional head, up to three semester hours of workload credit for each of two semesters may be given to a newly-appointed faculty member during the first year of employment for the purpose of developing instructional materials for the courses he or she will teach.

6.12 Course Development.

At the recommendation of the departmental chair and upon approval of the institutional head, workload credit may be granted to a faculty member involved in the creation of a new course, new course format, or new course materials.

6.13 Credit Granted by Institution Head.

Academic workload credit granted by the head of the institution for all other purposes is limited to 1% of the total semester credit hours taught at the institution during the comparable (fall or spring) semester in the previous year. With the approval of the institutional head, limited faculty workload credit (within the 1% limit above) may be granted for major academic advising responsibilities, for basic and applied research following a research work plan approved pursuant to institutional policy, for preparing major documents in the fulfillment of programmatic needs or accreditation requirements, or for duties performed in the best interest of the institution's instructional programs as determined by the head of the institution.