

Division of Academic Affairs

UTRGV Workload Policy

1. General Principles

- a. **Purpose:** The purpose of the UTRGV general workload policy for faculty is to set forth guidelines that permit each 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 adequately accounts for the total professional effort of faculty, including research and clinical practice, as well as instruction. The outcome of the policy should be:
- To ensure fair and equitable treatment of faculty members,
 - To enable chairs to optimize assignments of faculty to meet unit goals,
 - To maximize the long-term effectiveness of the University's instructional resources,
 - To facilitate effective shared governance by providing standardized information about the use of the University's instructional resources,
 - To provide resources for revenue sharing with faculty and academic units and for creating a teaching and research investment fund, and
 - To establish pre-determined and transparent limits on administrative expenses.
- b. **Importance of Faculty:** Faculty play a fundamental role in advancing an institution of higher education and in fostering student success. The quality and value of a university education are in large part defined by the faculty. The curricula the faculty design, the programs they offer, the learning environment they create, the instructional methods they employ, the research they conduct, the creative works they produce, the service they provide, and their professional engagement with students inside and outside of the classroom, including advising, are important components of the educational experience. As such, institutions of higher education supported by public funds have the responsibility to fully utilize their faculty resources in ways that achieve the greatest possible educational benefit.

2. Definitions

- a. Unit: The term "unit," when used in this document, shall refer to an academic unit such as a department, school, or college at which decisions are made regarding individual faculty workload distributions.
- b. Chair: The term "chair," when used in this document, includes the individual or group within each unit responsible the preparation of memoranda of appointment for the members of that unit. This may include department chairs, program directors, or executive councils that serve in the place of the chair.

- c. Workload: Unless otherwise specified, “workload” refers to the total effort given by a full-time faculty member (i.e., 1 FTE). As employees who are exempt from federal wage and hour laws, faculty are compensated for completing the work expected of them per their department’s evaluative standards.
 - d. Workload Weights or Equivalencies: Teaching workload may be weighted based on a variety of factors including: high enrollment courses (see 4.a.iii. below); supervision; lab courses; level (i.e., graduate or undergraduate); ITV and cross-campus courses; and other factors. Teaching workload weights, beyond high enrollment courses, will be determined at the department/program level in collaboration with program faculty and approved at the dean and EVP level.
3. General Policies:
- a. The Office of Strategic Analysis and Institutional Reporting in collaboration with the Office of Planning and Analysis will provide each dean with historical data on weighted student credit hours and formula funding as determined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board that is generated by each unit by year, as well as the average for the three prior years. Chairs will evaluate the data and student demand to determine minimum unit targets for the upcoming year, and work with their college dean to determine the distribution of course sections to optimize the average WSCH per faculty for the whole unit. Unit chairs will then use this distribution of course sections when assigning workload to all faculty, including workload weights as determined by unit workload policy.
 - b. In consultation with and subject to the approval of the College/School dean, unit chairs shall establish the minimum number of seats (seat capacity) that each unit must make available in the subsequent academic year to meet expected enrollment demand at all levels of instruction. The unit’s teaching load shall be distributed in a manner that ensures that the unit will meet expected enrollment demand at all levels of instruction, consistent with the principle of fair and equitable treatment of faculty members.
 - c. A chair may assign differential teaching loads to individual faculty that take into account factors such as graduate instruction, research activities, time bought out by external grants, administrative assignments, large class sizes, team-taught courses, clinical teaching, clinical service, significant advising responsibilities, community engagement, or other activities aligned with the institution’s mission and/or critical to student success.
 - d. A unit’s faculty workload distribution shall recognize that teaching, research, service, student advising, administrative service, clinical service, and professional development are important elements of faculty workloads by giving appropriate weight to each activity when determining the standards for faculty workload, in accordance with unit guidelines.
 - e. A chair will develop annual workloads in consultation with individual faculty members that take into account the unit’s expectations for tenured and tenure-track faculty who have active and productive research/scholarly/creative programs and the expectations for tenured faculty who are less active in research/scholarly/ creative work, and non-tenure-track faculty, per unit policies as discussed in 3.h., below.

- f. For the purposes of establishing workload weights or equivalencies, each unit, following its established shared governance processes, and in consultation with and subject to the approval of the College dean, shall determine the characteristics and minimum and maximum number of seats for a reference course (three semester credit hours [SCH]) at the lower- and upper-division levels. Factors that may be taken into account include things such as the degree of writing intensity, amount and intensity of individual instruction, amount of preparation required, or other factors that may be identified by the unit. One reference course (3 SCH) shall be considered to account for 10% of a full-time faculty member's annual workload. The actual workload weight of any particular course may vary depending on various workload weights and equivalencies (see Section 4, below).
 - g. A full-time faculty's total (100%) workload is based on efforts in teaching, research, and service. If the faculty member assumes additional teaching responsibilities due to department needs that results in a total workload in excess of 100%, he or she will be eligible for an overload per institutional guidelines. A determination of overload will be based on course enrollment on the census taken on the 20th day of instruction.
 - h. In consultation with the college deans and subject to approval by the EVPAA/EVPHA/EVPRGSNPS, units shall establish policies that specify expectations for purposes of annual evaluation, promotion, tenure and post-tenure review for faculty with differential workloads, including teaching-, research-, and service-intensive workloads, in addition to the unit's standard workload.
 - i. In their review of unit policies, college deans and the EVPAA/EVPHA/EVPRGSNPS will seek to ensure equity within and among all units in their colleges and across the university.
4. **Instructional Workload Weights/Equivalencies:** Units may develop workload weights/ equivalencies, subject to approval by the college dean and EVPs, in order to account for idiosyncratic faculty demands that require workload assignments that deviate from the following guidelines. In the absence of college/unit approved workload weights/equivalencies, the following guidelines will be used as the institutional standard for determining faculty teaching workloads.
- a. The following are factors to consider when determining the weight of a course to workload.
 - i. Graduate Level Instruction: One semester credit hour of graduate level instruction will be considered the equivalent of one and one-half semester credit hours of undergraduate instruction.
 - ii. Laboratory Instruction: 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.

- iii. 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 Size	Factor
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

- b. The following are instructional activities that carry equivalency to teaching courses and should be considered when determining faculty teaching workload:
- i. 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.
 - ii. Honors Program, Individual Course Instruction, and Individual Undergraduate 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 was taught as a regularly scheduled, organized course.
 - iii. 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.
 - iv. 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.