Faculty Workload and Peformance Assessment
at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa
Summary for the Board of Regents, July 2015

Background

At the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, there are seven different types of classification for faculty\(^1\), of these classifications, Instructional faculty (which include Law and Medicine faculty) have direct responsibility for classroom instruction.\(^2\) (Graduate assistants and lecturers are also considered to be in the Instructional category, but they are not considered in this summary.)

Regent’s Policy 9.214 articulates the scope of the instructional responsibility for faculty. The standard teaching assignment for full time instructional faculty is 24 semester credit hours. While the policy also states that the Chancellor is authorized to develop appropriate equivalencies, given the immense complexities of Mānoa and variation among departments and disciplines, the commitment to shared governance, and adherence to Collective Bargaining, the establishments of these equivalencies is best articulated by each department/unit.

Executive Policy 5.221, Classification of Faculty and the Mānoa Criteria and Guidelines articulate a more encompassing role of faculty, with Mānoa addressing the requirements at the Research Intensive, Flagship campus. All tenure and tenure-leading faculty in the Instructional classification, are required to teach courses. The level, breadth, and complexity of the instruction vary depending upon the rank of the faculty. In addition, faculty must demonstrate a scholarly level of achievement that is commensurate with their rank. Scholarship and research vary widely depending upon the academic field, however at a minimum, Mānoa requires that tenure and tenure leading faculty achieve a level of stature in their area of expertise that is reviewed and assessed by peers at other research institutions. Finally, Instructional faculty are required to provide service to their professional community, the local community, their department/college and the University. “Service” often is understood to include assigned quasi-administrative positions (department chair, undergraduate program director, for example). Executive Policy E5.219 deals with the department chair’s responsibility in workload assignment.

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\(^1\) The categories are I (instruction), J (law), M (clinical medicine), S (specialist), R (research), B (librarian), and A (agricultural extension agent). The term “instructional” is used as a cover term for I, J, and M. In practice, teaching is sometimes done by faculty in other categories.

\(^2\) The I-faculty category itself is complex. There are “regular nine-month” I-faculty members with an academic-year duty period (I9). There are also faculty members serving in special capacities and often with special-length terms of appointment. And, among faculty, some are tenured/tenure-track and some are not. (Tenure-line I-faculty are in ranks I3, I4, and I5: assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor; however, some of these I-faculty are not tenure-eligible). “Instructors” (category I2) are not tenure-eligible. (Category I1 does not exist.) Tenure is not restricted to instructional (I, J, M) categories.
This summary concentrates on regular tenure-line 9-month faculty in the I classification ("I9 faculty"); it also touches briefly on the workload of other categories. The concepts are applicable more generally.

**Basic Concepts of Workload**

**Full-time workload in terms of credit-hour equivalents.** A full-time faculty member at Mānoa has an annual workload of 24 credit-hour equivalents.

**Classroom workload and total workload.** Non-tenure-track faculty at rank I2 (with the title “instructor”) may actually teach 24 credits per year (four classes per semester if 3-credit classes). For tenure-line faculty, ranks I3 and above, workload is not solely fulfilled by teaching regular classes. In addition to class-room teaching, all tenured and tenure-line faculty are required to do significant research and professional/administrative service, as well as instructional activity that is not measured in credit hours. As a result, these faculty members seldom teach more than 18 credit hours per year (more than three 3-credit classes a semester). Commonly, one-third to two-thirds of a faculty member’s time will be spent on research, service, and instructional activities not measured by credit hours. So, for example, a faculty member might be teaching the equivalent of 15 credit hours per year, and spending the equivalent of 9 credit hours per year fulfilling such other responsibilities. Such a person is said to have a "course workload" or “course load” of 15 credits per year, but still has a total work assignment of 24 credit-hour equivalents (9+15).

**Credit-hour equivalents and courses.** Many courses are assigned three credit hours. So, informally, we often say that someone who teaches classes for 15 credit hours per year has a course workload of 5-classes per year. Since these are usually split more-or-less evenly across semesters, we say that the course workload in this case would be 3-2 or 2-3. In the summary tables that accompany this document, course workload is often given as numbers (hypothetical 3-credit) courses.

**Workload and percentage effort: the concept of Class-Teaching-FTE.** A faculty member with a 2-2 teaching load (12 of 24 total credit-hour equivalents) may be said to have a class-teaching-FTE of 0.50, or 50%, (with the remaining 0.50 FTE devoted to research, service, and other assigned duties). A “3-2” load would correspond to a class-teaching-FTE of 0.625. A department chair (commonly teaching 1-1) might be said to be assigned 0.25 FTE to teaching classes, and 0.75 FTE to administration/research/service. Some research faculty work full-time on research. Such faculty are usually in the R (not I) category, and are supported all or in part on externally funded grants and contracts.\(^3\)

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\(^3\) Manoa does not presently use the concept of fractional FTE related to particular types of faculty duties. Some universities do so, and a faculty member, upon appointment, might be explicitly told that, for example, that the work is, say, “40% teaching.” If the distribution of duties is thought of as fractional FTE,
Variation among courses. While we may say that someone teaching, say, two classes per semester has a class-teaching-FTE of 0.50, there is in fact, no simple relationship between credit hours and percentage effort required in a particular case. These numbers are convenient averages. Some 4-credit courses may be “easier” to teach than some 3-credit courses; some courses are largely student-led; some courses require entirely new syllabi each semester to keep up with a rapidly changing field; some can remain stable for long periods. Some courses have large enrollment; some small. In some cases, an assistant may be assigned to the instructor. Department-level course workload policies may sometimes take course-by-course variation into account explicitly, by tweaking the equivalencies, or varying the number of courses required. In all cases, department chairs have a special responsibility to ensure an equitable distribution of courses to faculty, both within and across semesters.

Variations and research, scholarship, and creative activity across disciplines. There are substantial differences among disciplines and departments in the kind of teaching and sorts of courses offered, the kinds of research or creative activity required, the service or administrative work needed, and in the overall mission of the unit. For example, a department that primarily does doctoral-level instruction, and where Hawai‘i is expected to lead the field in research, there will usually be a expectation for important research productivity; and, much of the instructional work (doctoral supervision, for example) may not be measured in credit hours; classes may often be small, but preparation may be very time-consuming. Other departments may have large undergraduate classes, with many sections, so coordination across sections and supervision of lecturers and teaching assistants may be necessary duties. Some departments need to offer many small classes. Some larger departments have in-house advising staff (APTs or S-faculty); others put more of the responsibility on instructional faculty members. The kind of research and creative activity expected, and the appropriate measures of performance differ greatly across field. History is different from literary translation; and these are different from nursing, or music performance, or peace studies, or physics, or medicine, or law. For these and other reasons, workload policies are appropriately developed and implemented at the department level.

Departmental Workload Policies

Development and approval of department workload policies. Every department has a governing workload policy. These policies are then reviewed by the dean, and by the vice chancellor, and by UHPA. This is typically an iterative process: a draft will be sent to the dean, reviewed and commented on, then returned to the department for

then that number could in principle be used in measures of productivity, efficiency, and cost assignment.

The categorization system, with seven different types of positions in the faculty class, as well as the differing extent of teaching responsibilities (teaching FTE), make derived measures, such as faculty/student ratio, very difficult to interpret at the university level, and comparisons across institutions are even more problematic.
revision; the revised version then sent to the vice chancellor, who will usually also comment and ask for clarification or recommendation changes; it may then go back to the dean, or to the department. UHPA will also be involved in this discussion as appropriate. There may be several iterations before the workload policy reaches its approved final form. The vice chancellor keeps records of these policies, and for any policy in the process of revision, tracks the state of the process and the next steps. A spreadsheet is kept summarizing the basic features of these policies.

Elements of a departmental course workload policy. Typically, the departmental policy will define a basic course load, sometimes in terms of credit hours; sometimes in terms of 3-credit courses. The most common basic departmental course loads are 2-2, 3-2, and 3-3. Then, for significant departmental duties (department chair, graduate chair, lower-division coordinator, or the like), a teaching load (or a reduction from the basic load) is specified. The department chair almost always teaches 1-1. Some departments have more elaborate systems, taking into account the nature of the class, for example, or providing reductions for certain kinds of special service or research. Courses may also be “bought out” by grants and contracts. In general, exceptions to the departmental policies in particular cases require the approval of the dean. “Escalators” can increase the course workload in particular cases.

Teaching assignments. By executive policy E5.219, the chair is responsible for the assignment of courses and proper departmental balance of teaching load. In making course assignments, the department chair takes into account performance of individual faculty members in all areas, not just teaching. This is normally done annually, often adjusted semester-by-semester.

Responsibility and accountability.

Accountability chain.

The chair is responsible to the dean for implementation of the department’s workload policy, the assignment of courses, and the monitoring of faculty performance. Chair appointments are typically for a total of three years, and they are reviewed for renewal annually within this term. An important responsibility of the dean in deciding whether to renew a chair is to make sure that the chair is doing a good job in the implementation of workload policy.

The dean is responsible to the vice chancellor. Deans are subject to annual performance assessment and rating by the vice chancellor. In making this assessment, the vice chancellor considers whether departmental workload policies are up-to-date and consistently implemented.

Monitoring of faculty performance.
The university has multiple formal methods for evaluating total faculty performance, including not only the portion of workload devoted to credit-hour-measured instruction.

**Annual duty assignment.** The chair, usually annually, sometimes every semester, assigns courses and other departmental responsibilities. This is an opportunity to review the faculty member’s work holistically, in terms of teaching, scholarship, creative activity, departmental duties, and service to the profession and the community, and other relevant factors. Consistent with workload policy, a faculty member’s teaching load can be adjusted up or down, depending on expectations and performance in other areas of responsibility, especially in research and other creative/scholarly activity.

Some departments or colleges have found it useful to formalize the collection of information for workload assignment, using a standard template or form, which can be updated annually and used in annual duty assignments or for other purposes. Such a template or form is sometimes called a bio-bib (biography-bibliography).

**Contract renewal of probationary faculty.** For purposes of contract renewal during the probationary period, tenure-track faculty are subject to regular formal performance evaluation, including all aspects of their work. (See UHPA Agreement, Article XII, Section E.) In addition, department chairs will often meet regularly with probationary faculty members, in order to discuss performance as it relates to the tenure system.

**Tenure.** At the end of the probationary period, faculty undergo extensive review as part of the tenure system. (See UHPA Agreement, Article XII, Section G).

**Promotion.** A similarly extensive review of performance is undertaken for promotion to a higher rank. (See UHPA Agreement, Article XIV.)

**Contract renewal of non-tenure-track faculty.** Instructional faculty at rank I2 typically undergo performance evaluation for contract renewal at least every year during the initial five years of employment, and every three years thereafter. (For details, see UHPA Agreement, Article XIII.)

**Periodic review of tenured faculty.** In addition, the performance of tenured faculty is reviewed at least every five years.

**General Use of Bio-bibs.**

We are exploring, in consultation with the faculty union, the possibility of mandating a bio-bib. All faculty members would be required to keep a bio-bib in the standard form, updated probably annually. This bio-bib could be used in all faculty assessment processes described above. It is an open question whether exactly the same form could be used for all faculty in all departments and disciplines. Some degree of customization of a general template might be appropriate.