

College of Agricultural Sciences Instructional Workload Guidelines

The College of Agricultural Sciences prides itself on providing rich educational experiences to its students. The vast majority of classes are taught by College tenure-track faculty, academic advising of students is a teaching faculty responsibility, and College faculty offer students a range of learning opportunities outside the classroom. Examples include engagement of students in experiential learning (e.g., international and domestic study experiences), undergraduate research that often includes one-on-one but also small-team instruction, and internship supervision. The College considers this multi-dimensional richness to be a hallmark of our educational programs. These guidelines, which represent a broad outline of teaching expectations, provide for fair and equitable instructional loads among tenure-track faculty in the College. Academic unit leaders are responsible for implementation of these guidelines.

1. Faculty in the College of Agricultural Sciences generally have blended appointments among Resident Instruction, Research, and Cooperative Extension. A faculty member with, for example, a 50% Resident Instruction appointment is expected to carry a 2+2 (typically 6 credits per semester) teaching load, while the common 25% appointment Resident Instruction appointment would be expected to maintain a 1+1 (typically 3 credits per semester) load. Resident Instruction appointments falling outside these common benchmarks would be adjusted on a proportional basis guided by the appropriate academic unit leader. Faculty who are not research-active can expect to take on additional course duties.
2. All faculty members on any portion of a teaching assignment should teach at least one formal course (or equivalent in team-taught courses) per academic year. In this context, X94, X95, X96, and 600 level courses are not considered formal courses. Foreign studies courses (X99) would be considered as formal courses if the offering is used to designate a regularly-scheduled class that meets minimum enrollment criteria. The work represented in these common-number courses – independent study and mentoring student research projects – is considered an important indicator of faculty productivity and should be considered in annual performance evaluations and promotion and tenure decisions. Faculty participation in advising and mentoring of student organizations should likewise receive consideration in annual performance evaluations and promotion and tenure decisions, as they represent our College's commitment to the highest quality educational experience for our students.
3. Faculty who are team-teaching courses should be credited proportionately for their percent of contribution to the course.
4. Under-enrolled courses will not count toward fulfilling faculty Resident Instruction expectations, unless specifically approved by the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education. Courses with multiple sections where enrollment is constrained by space, access to equipment, or other resources will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Under-enrollment and exceptional circumstances are defined by university policy (<http://www.psu.edu/oue/aappm/> Section C-3).

January, 2011

B.A. McPheron, Dean

Input from College of Agricultural Sciences Associate Deans, Academic Unit Leaders, & Faculty Advisory Committee to the Dean

5. Courses taught under experimental numbers will count for two semesters toward workload requirements. Experimental courses must be submitted for permanent course numbers after two offerings. Requests for exception to the two-semester policy will be resolved by the academic unit leader and the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education.
6. Faculty should ensure that courses are evaluated using appropriate assessment instruments and acceptable assessment procedures. Both student and peer evaluations are expected.

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