

**COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH (CPH) GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**  
**INSTRUCTIONAL FACULTY WORKLOAD POLICY**  
**March 29, 2021**

**INTRODUCTION**

Faculty are central to the mission of an R1 research university. Collectively, the role of faculty is to teach, conduct research in a setting where knowledge is generated and shared, and engage in university governance and professional service. While the balance of these three pillars of academic work varies between faculty, they are intertwined.

Faculty are among the most important and consequential resources of any university. To this end, it is essential that the university and CPH academic units ensure accountability and workload equity, while also maximizing the efficient use of faculty time in fulfilling university expected roles and contributions by type of appointment and rank.

Although CPH comprises different academic disciplines within and across units, the workload policy herein has been developed to support the mission of CPH and more broadly the mission of the University. This document applies to all CPH full-time instructional faculty members, and is consistent with the Mason Faculty Handbook, University Policy #3008 - Faculty Teaching Loads, and University Policy Number #4012 – Principal Investigators (PIs), Mason's Supplemental Pay procedures, and state and federal guidelines. This CPH Faculty Workload Policy does not apply to adjunct, clinical, research, affiliate, or administrative/professional faculty members.

All CPH instructional faculty members shall have an individual faculty workload assignment that is consistent with their appointment as (term) and (tenure-track/tenured) faculty. The CPH workload policy will be reviewed by CPH Faculty Council and CPH Administrative Council at least every two years.

**WORKLOAD EXPECTATIONS AND ASSIGNMENT**

**General Workload Guidelines:** Faculty workloads in CPH comprise teaching and service responsibilities for term faculty and teaching, service and research responsibilities for tenure-track and tenured faculty. The base faculty workload is determined as a percentage of faculty effort spent on each activity, depending upon the type of faculty appointment, as illustrated in Table 1.

<b>Table 1: Base Workload Activity and Level of Effort (% of Time) by Faculty Appointment</b>		
<b><i>Workload Activity</i></b>	<b><i>Tenure-Track &amp; Tenured</i></b>	<b><i>Term</i></b>
Teaching	40	80
Research	40	not required
Service	20	20
Total	100	100

Although faculty have discretion in use of their time for each workload activity, the base workload allocation for these core functions applies to faculty responsibilities by type of appointment. For example, during an average 5-day, 40-hour work week a tenured or tenure-track faculty member should expect to spend two full days dedicated to teaching (including preparation, office hours/emails, and class time), two full days dedicated to research activities, and one full day dedicated to service. Similarly, a term Instructional faculty member should expect to spend an average of four full days on teaching activities, and one full day on service activities each week.

## **BASE TEACHING WORKLOAD**

Given the different teaching and research expectations for term and tenure-track/tenured faculty, there are two base teaching loads for full-time instructional faculty per 9-month academic year:

- **Term faculty:** 4, 3-credit courses per semester (a 4:4 load)
- **Tenured and tenure-track faculty:** 2, 3-credit courses per semester (a 2:2 load)

For 12-month instructional faculty, the base teaching workload per term is 2:2:2 (tenured and tenure-track) or 4:4:2 (term).

New faculty hires may have a reduced teaching assignment consistent with their start-up contracts. A chair shall consider a reduction in any faculty's teaching load for labor intensive administrative assignments, an exceptionally large class (>60 students), exceptionally labor-intensive clinical teaching, substantial student research supervision, and other situational or special assignments essential to fulfilling the mission of the unit, CPH, or the University, with the approval of the Dean.

## BASE RESEARCH WORKLOAD

All tenure-track and tenured faculty are expected to spend 40% of their time conducting research and engaging in scholarly activities appropriate to individual discipline and rank. Faculty research activities comprise a combination of two or more of the following interdependent functions (Table 2):

<b>Table 2: Tenure-track and Tenured Faculty Research Functions</b>
(1) Publishing research that appears in peer-reviewed academic journals or premier peer-reviewed proceedings for specific discipline norms
(2) Submitting grant or contract proposals for external research funding
(3) Conducting research that has been funded by grants, contracts, or sub-contract awards <sup>1</sup>

**Workload Assignment:** The department chair or nursing school director in collaboration with faculty input determines each faculty member's teaching, service and research workload assignments annually based on the type of faculty appointment held (per Table 1). The chairs should develop and follow a formal evaluation process that documents workload productivity, and that is consistent with College expectations as expressed in these guidelines.

## BASE WORKLOAD ASSIGNMENT EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to the base workload distribution may be assigned to support funded research and situational department and College needs. Approval of exceptions to a faculty's workload assignment below the base assignment for non-research purposes will only be granted on occasion and for a limited number of reasons. If a reduction is granted, the reason for the reduction must be documented in department and CPH budget files and the faculty member's annual workload plan. Workload assignment exceptions must be pre-approved by the department chair or nursing school director and must be funded by available budget resources.

**Course Teaching Buyouts:** One common reason for reducing the base workload is when significant effort is required by a funded grant. When such funding is obtained, with prior approval of the department chair or nursing school director, it may be used to reduce a base teaching load on the presumption that it directly supports the project funded and increases the individual's research productivity or the productivity specifically related to the funded grant. Buyout requests must be approved in advance by the department chair or school

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<sup>1</sup>CPH expects faculty on tenure and tenure-track appointments to apply for funding to cover a minimum of 10% of their effort from external funding for research. Funding students, postdoctoral fellows, colleagues or staff involved in the research is also generally expected. Tenured faculty should also consider supporting their junior colleagues.

director. The percent of salary support that must be received by CPH to buy out courses for full-time 9-month faculty with a full teaching baseload are:

- 15% of AY year salary plus benefits to buy out of one course in an academic year
- 30% of AY year salary plus benefits to buy out of two courses in an academic year

Workload buy-outs will be capped at 50% of the primary workload for all faculty in a given AY. Exceptions to this need to be discussed with the department chair/school director and the Dean.

If the period of funding for a course release occurs mid-semester or too close to the beginning of a semester to arrange for a faculty replacement, the course release will apply to the following semester. If external funding is less than that required for a course release, credit for externally funded faculty effort may be accumulated (banked) and applied toward a future course release within 2 years.

### **Faculty Holding Administrative Assignments:**

CPH chairs and school directors hold 12-month faculty appointments. In accordance with university policy, faculty who serve as the head of a local academic unit shall receive a reduction in teaching load of at least one course per semester (e.g., 1:1:0) and are expected to maintain their research productivity.

### **CHANGES TO BASE TEACHING WORKLOAD**

Changes to the base workload may be assigned if faculty research and service productivity does not meet productivity expectations as defined by the annual evaluation and workplan developed between the faculty member and their chair or director. For example, the department chair or school director may increase teaching or service workloads with the approval of the Dean, for the following:

- Insufficient research productivity<sup>2</sup>
- Loss of research funding following a teaching load reduction
- Insufficient service activities
  - If the department chair determines that tenure-track, tenured and term faculty are not fully participating in service activities, the teaching load may be increased. The number of additional courses assigned to a faculty's workload shall be based on the extent to which productivity is lacking.

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<sup>2</sup> When tenure-track and tenured faculty are evaluated each year by the department chair/school director, an assessment of research productivity shall be documented. If research productivity is deemed to have been below average for more than two consecutive years, the faculty teaching load or service load (or both) may be increased.

- If classes are cancelled:
  - The faculty member may be asked to take on a class for which they are qualified to teach that had been assigned to an adjunct faculty
  - The faculty member may be asked to increase their service to the department
  - The faculty member may be asked to teach a different course or in a different modality or
  - The faculty member may be asked to take on an additional course in the semester that follows a cancelled course to address the reduced teaching load in the prior semester.

## BASE SERVICE WORKLOAD

**Institutional Service:** To achieve its mission, it is the responsibility of each full-time instructional faculty member to engage in academic and professional service activities for the department/school, College and University, as is appropriate for faculty rank. Generally, tenure-track and term faculty provide service to their department or school and profession. In addition to service to the department and College, tenured faculty are routinely expected to be involved with university and professional service. Institutional service has a range of roles such as those supporting admissions, curriculum, faculty, or student related matters. Institutional service includes, but is not limited to:

- Leading or serving actively on department/school, college, university and professional organization committees, search committees, workgroups, and task forces
- Serving as a faculty sponsor or adviser to student organizations
- Substantive participation in self-study or accreditation processes or program evaluation activities
- Serving as a mentor to students and other faculty in a structured mentorship program

Faculty citizenship, as reflected by full engagement and collegiality, is an expectation of all faculty members in the College. All faculty are expected to participate in faculty meetings and seminars, support faculty searches, and engage in curriculum or accreditation requirements including student and faculty enrichment and faculty governance activities.

**Professional Service:** Professional service is the use of a faculty member's scholarly expertise in support of his/her discipline external to the institution. Such service is important for networking and professional stature, particularly for elected positions. Professional service may include, but is not limited to:

- Elected leadership and other appointed or voluntary roles in professional organizations
- Advisory boards, expert panels, editorial review boards for refereed scientific journals, study sections and grant reviews, as well as external peer reviews for tenure
- Volunteer faculty practice (providing professional care and services)

In addition, the College recognizes the importance of community service, or faculty involvement in community groups for which they may have interest or expertise. It does not replace professional service expectations unless directly relevant to appointment title or accreditation requirements.

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Approved by Administrative Council: 2/8/06

Reviewed and Revised by Administrative Council: 3/17/09, 4/20/10, 5/3/11, 10/1/13, 5/3/16, 8/7/18, 3/29/21

Edits made due to the transition to the College of Public Health (CHHS to CPH) on 4.24.2023