

**WVU Reed School of Media & Communications'**  
**Workload Policy Guidelines**

*Approved in 2022; Updated in 2025 to reflect  
changes resulting from college merger.*

Per the Provost's Office:

"West Virginia University is an R1 land grant institution that embraces the importance of rewarding excellence in teaching, research and service. As a mechanism for evaluation, the workload agreement serves as the starting point for helping to equitably distribute faculty workload and to achieve the University's larger academic mission.

"West Virginia University faculty contribute meaningfully to the teaching, research and service components of the larger mission. WVU recognizes that contributions will appropriately differ across career stages, appointment types, colleges, and reflect disciplinary differences and faculty talents. However, it is also important to ensure that faculty work is equitably distributed, evaluated and rewarded within academic units and to that end, the faculty workload agreement sets out basic principles and guidelines.

"Every College and Department/Other Equivalent Academic Unit must have a workload document approved by the Provost's Office and each document should contain the following:

1. The standard expectations for all faculty members
2. Identification of factors that differentiate workload as well as an explanation as to why and how that differentiation system works
3. Identification of research, teaching, and service equivalencies, within and across the three mission areas
4. An outline of multiple pathways for faculty to be successful

"For many reasons, the creation of faculty workload typically begins by establishing guidelines for teaching, followed by research and service. Although faculty might meet full workload effort through different pathways, all faculty who are 1.0 FTE must meet minimum standards required of WVU and their College and departments across these roles.

"Not every College will have the exact same teaching load and factors such as class sizes, number of majors, undergraduate and/or graduate programs and research engagement can affect the workload. The level and type of service activity can also affect the standard workload.

"Normally, faculty members start with a teaching load of four (4) 3-credit hour courses per semester. A reduction in the teaching load can occur using College and/or Departmental (or other academic units) approved equivalent assignments in teaching, research, and/or service. Academic leaders must approve a reduction in a faculty member's teaching load."

The College of Creative Arts and Media Workload Guidelines (2025) reinforce and further specify WVU's guidelines; the School of Media and Communications' guidelines must conform to both. Reed School specifics appear below:

**Reed School of Media and Communications Workload Expectations\***

The following information formally documents the Reed School of Media and Communications' standard workload expectations, under which the School has informally operated for many years:

The Reed School of Media and Communications conforms to the University's standard academic year teaching load as described above. Specifically:

- Teaching faculty typically are expected to devote 80% of their time (defined as a 4/4—24 credit-hour load) to teaching and 20% to service; however, they may have 10% of their workload temporarily devoted to research/creative activity, when there is a history or track record of such activity, with Director approval.
- Tenure-track faculty are expected to devote 40% of their time (defined in our school as 2/3 or 3/2—15 credit-hour course load) to teaching, 40% to research and 20% to service.\*
- Visiting professors, who are typically retained for three years and sometimes up to six years, are expected to devote 60% to 70% of their time (defined as a 3/3 or 3/4 course load); 20% to 30% to service; and sometimes 10% to 20% to research/creative activity. Any research/creative assignment depends upon faculty preference and academic or professional qualifications.
- All faculty, including adjuncts, are also required as part of their teaching load to hold no fewer than two hours of office hours for each three-credit course taught, at least 50% of which must be in person for each on-ground course. (Therefore, teaching faculty with a 4/4 load of three credit-hour on-ground classes must offer eight hours of office hours per week, at least four of which must be in person; tenure track faculty must offer four to six hours a week [depending on semester course load], of which two to three must be in person if courses are on ground; visiting professors must offer six hours a week, three of which must be in person if all courses are on-ground/in person.)
- Office hours must be included on syllabi, provided to the main office within the first week of classes and posted outside of office doors.

*\*Note that the cumulative effect of having substantially more courses (i.e., from the office hours, emails, grading, etc.) equates to the typical 4:4 TAP course load equaling 10 percent of assignment per course, instead of 8 percent of assignment per course assumed with a 3:2 tenure-track teaching load.*

From time to time, teaching workload assignments may be adjusted for specific Director and/or Dean-approved reasons, when logistically and fiscally possible. No faculty member may have all teaching reassigned if teaching remains a significant contribution area in their workplan and promotional track. Within the School of Media and Communications, a single three credit-hour course adjustment typically may be made for the following reasons when possible while still meeting our School's teaching mission:

- Having one or more administrative assignments, such as associate director or creative/innovation director
- Having a formal managerial assignment, such as managing the School's equipment inventory, equipment check-out policies and the student assistants who serve as equipment staff
- Serving as a core course curricular lead and managing the adjuncts associated with those course sections
- Serving as P.I. on and managing/overseeing a large (>\$100,000) external grant that *does not allow* funds to be used for course buy-outs\*
- Developing a wholly new course offering or major program for the College
- Wholly overhauling an existing course (for either on-ground or online delivery), typically when the course has not been taught for some time and its content is critical to the curriculum
- An assistant professor who is approaching their critical/promotion year (one-time reduction to allow additional research/creative/presentation time)\*\*
- An associate professor who has devoted significant time to service (one-time reduction to help restart/re-engage in research/creative work/presentations)

- Taking on additional duties owing to official accreditation or program certification preparation

*\*See the College's Workload Guidelines (2025) for additional information and guidance regarding course buy-outs.*

*\*\*Note that barring unusual, University-approved extensions, tenure-track faculty are required to go up for promotion and tenure at the start of their sixth year; if they are not successful in attaining promotion/tenure, they will be issued a terminal contract of one year, after which they are no longer employed as a WVU faculty member. Teaching faculty may—but are not required to—go up in their sixth year of service.*

Note that teaching courses that take considerably more time to teach than a regular three credit-hour class may, when possible, involve teaching fewer course credits than usual (e.g. courses with enrollments greater than 200 students without graduate student assistance or unique, complex experiential special project courses), while teaching courses that are less than three credit hours (i.e. one- or two-credit-hour classes) may involve teaching more courses than usual.

In rare cases, a faculty member may request a teaching reduction in exchange for high-demand professionally oriented service activities, such as serving as journal editor for a recognized publication in our field or as president or president-elect of a major professional organization such as AEJMC, or for significant service to the State that supports our University's land-grant mission, when course buy-outs are not an option.

Tenured faculty may have a higher research expectation (and subsequently lower teaching and/or service loads) to manage and conduct research when P.I. or Co-P.I. on large, externally funded research grants. Likewise, teaching and service faculty may request workload adjustments to accommodate the receipt of large teaching or service grants, typically defined as \$100,000 or more. Conversely, tenured faculty who are consistently not meeting their workload assignment of research/creative productivity will be tasked with additional teaching.

In all cases, School Directors will confer to determine College accreditation needs, student needs for progression toward graduation, faculty expertise, and other relevant factors when making course assignments. Therefore, faculty should be flexible and expect that their course assignments may vary from semester to semester and year to year.

Rationales for course adjustments beyond or less than the standard workload assignments will be documented in the faculty member's annual work plan. In the event a faculty member feels their workload is chronically inequitable and discussions with their Director have not resolved the issue, the faculty member should meet with the Dean to communicate their specific concerns, per the College's Workload Guidelines document (2025).

Note that personal or medical issues for which a faculty member desires a teaching reduction should be addressed to the Provost's Office via [the Modification of Duties form](#).

Faculty should also refer to the **WVU Workload Guidelines FAQ's**, which appear at the end of this document.

Per WVU's latest (2014–2015) *Procedures for Faculty Appointment, Annual Evaluation, Promotion, and Tenure* document, it is possible that faculty members with the same title (e.g., tenured Associate Professor) could meet 100% effort in significantly different ways, by mutual agreement, Provost approval, and when based on department/WVU needs.

Table 1: Areas of Teaching, Research, and Service that Might be Credited Toward Part of Workload – Common Examples

Teaching	Research	Service
Special Project/Capstone or other Service Heavy Course	Large External Grant	Program Chair/College Administration
Development of a new major or minor program	Journal Editor	President of National Professional Organization

The chart below lists various existing pathways for *Tenured Associate and Full Professors* within the Reed School of Media and Communications with *examples* of typical workload activities:

	Teaching <sup>1</sup>	Service	Research
<b>Pathway 1 Traditional Focus (Active in Research and Graduate Faculty)</b>	40% (5 courses per year)	20% (student organization advisor and at least one other college committee plus a university or professional committee or activity)	40% (submitting and publishing a peer reviewed article/product each year, and giving at least one national conference presentation or equivalent)
<b>Pathway 2 Traditional but Not Active in Research or Graduate Faculty</b>	60% (6 courses per year)	20% (service to the state through professional organization presentations or national-level conference reviews or office-holder, plus at least one college and university committee)	20% (two peer-reviewed conference presentations or panels)
<b>Pathway 3 Research/Grant Focus</b>	20% (2 courses per year plus research independent studies with undergrad and graduate students)	40% (service to the state through state agency collaborations, service to the university through committees and working groups and at least one College committee)	60% (major grant administration, three conference presentations or invited talks, one first or co-authored peer-reviewed journal publication)

<b>Pathway 4 Administrative Service Focus</b>	20% (2 courses per year)	70% (college administrator with significant supervisory duties and/or University- or nation-wide service obligations, eg Faculty Senate President or national professional organization division chair)	10% (one peer-reviewed conference presentation and one invited book chapter)
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At WVU, Teaching, Service, and Research faculty positions are designed to allocate faculty members' work efforts in significantly different ways by concentrating heavily *in at least one* mission area. The chart below identifies various existing pathways for *Teaching Faculty* at the rank of *Associate and Full Professor* within the Reed School of Media and Communications:

	Teaching	Service	Research
<b>Pathway for Service Faculty (Administrative)</b>	20% (2 courses per year)	80% (major administrative role within the College, involving significant supervisory duties, plus multiple University-level committees and national professional service)	0% (stay current in discipline/field)
<b>Pathway for Service Faculty (Outreach)</b>	30% (3 courses per year)	60% (director/assistant director of a center or outreach-oriented program, lead program assessment or chair two high-impact college committees and serve on two or more University or professional committees)	10% (low intensity, such as submitting a peer reviewed publication every other year, and giving a conference presentation or equivalent such as an invited speaker for professional organizations or another college.)
<b>Traditional Pathway for Teaching Faculty</b>	80% (8 classes per year)	20% (more than one College committee, plus University and/or state-level service and national-level service to the profession, eg panel organizer, judge)	0% (stay current in discipline/field)

Again, not every College at WVU will have the exact same teaching load and various factors, as discussed above, can affect the workload. The level and type of research or service activity can all affect the standard average workload and pathways for each College.

*\*This Workload Guidelines policy was formally documented in Spring 2022 and submitted to the Provost's Office for review. Approved text appeared in the 2022–2023 Reed College of Media Faculty Handbook. College administrators (directors and dean) will audit and review this document every three (3) years to ensure currency, with the first review conducted in Spring 2025 in conjunction with development of the new College of Creative Arts and Media Workload Guidelines document.*

### **WVU Workload FAQs**

**What to do with a faculty workload plan?** A faculty workload plan must be completed and uploaded into Digital Measures. [Note: The School Director provides the completed work plan to Jodie Lewis in the College of Creative Arts and Media, who uploads this document.]

**Can a faculty workload plan total up to less than 100%?** A faculty member whose percent effort does not equal 100% and does not meet the equivalent teaching credits guideline must explain in partnership

with their director and dean to the provost the exception. Exceptions will be granted only for exceptional circumstances and will be limited.

**What can be done when a course section is cancelled for being below minimum enrollment?**Options (all of which require prior discussion with the director or director's designee) include the following:

- The full-time faculty member could replace an external "per course" (i.e. adjunct instructor) assigned to another course.
- The full-time faculty member could be reassigned to a course with a mid-semester startdate (an eight-week course in the second 8-week part of term).
- The full-time faculty member could be reassigned to a course offered during a mid-session term (winter or May-mester terms).
- The full-time faculty member could teach an additional course the following semester(s).
- The full-time faculty member could have teaching load reassignment to an equivalent administrative or service assignment.

**How do overloads work?** From time to time, the director may ask a faculty member to teach a course as an overload. If the faculty member agrees to teach a course as an overload, the faculty member's teaching load may be adjusted during the following semester. An alternative may also include a payment for the overload, approved by the dean, at the adjunct rate. In no instance may a faculty member be assigned or teach an overload unless they are in compliance with their equivalent teaching credits and their previous annual evaluation is meritorious in areas of significant contribution as defined by the "University Procedures." Alternatively, the director may need to cancel a course, for example due to low enrollment. In cases where a class is cancelled, the faculty member may teach during the winter term, Maymester or an eight-week course to satisfy the adjustments in teaching.

**Are there any activities that cannot be used for teaching reassignments?** Reassignments and/or other teaching assignments shall not be requested, assigned, and/or approved for the following:

1. Any private, professional services including, but not limited to, consulting, performance/exhibits, expert witness services, contract work, or other employment where there is remuneration over and above the faculty member's University compensation.
2. Community service activity that is not consistent with a faculty member's area of teaching and/or research or creative activity expertise.
3. Instruction, workshop organization, conference planning, curriculum development, clinical work for licensing requirements, and/or creative performance for any program where there is remuneration over and above the faculty member's University compensation.

*This document was initially acknowledged by Reed College of Media full-time faculty May 6, 2022; approved 20-0, with zero abstentions and submitted to the WVU Provost's Office for final review/comment; approved June 6, 2022. It was updated to reflect the guidelines of the new College of Creative Arts and Media in June 2025.*