

**Department of Biology  
Workload Guidelines**

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## Department of Biology Workload Guidelines

### Purpose

The workload policy for the Department of Biology at West Virginia University is intended to:

- Ensure a fair and equitable distribution of the workload among faculty members, such that all faculty are making important contributions to the productivity of the department, the college, and the university.
- Ensure that Biology faculty meet or exceed the performance levels at peer institutions, as defined by the university, by setting comparable workload expectations in the areas of teaching, research, and service.
- Ensure that meritorious performance is properly weighted with respect to an individual's teaching, research or service expectations.
- Affirm that a faculty member's significant contributions to the department are acknowledged and valued, whether they are in a teaching, research, or service.

In recognition of the changing needs of the faculty, department, and University, these workload guidelines should be reviewed at least once every five years - or sooner if needed - by the Chair and the Chair's Advisory Committee (or the equivalent elected faculty body).

### 1. STANDARD EXPECTATIONS FOR FACULTY MEMBERS IN BIOLOGY

Faculty in the Department of Biology contribute to the institutional mission in research, teaching, and service in the following ways:

#### *Tenured & Tenure-track Faculty*

Normally, Tenured and Tenure-track faculty are expected to devote 40% of their effort to teaching, 40% to scientific research, and 20% to service.

- Teaching - Tenured and tenure-track faculty must make a significant contribution in teaching. The Department of Biology assumes 10% effort for each teaching equivalent. Therefore, the teaching load for tenured and tenure-track faculty will normally be four courses or equivalents per year for faculty that are active and engaged in the PhD program (see Table 2). Tenured and tenure-track faculty will teach both undergraduate and graduate courses.
- Research - Tenured and tenure-track faculty must make significant contributions in research. Tenured and tenure-track faculty are expected to: 1) be members of the graduate faculty; 2) produce research publications of high quality and impact; 3) obtain funding to support their research from internal and external sources; and 4) contribute to undergraduate and graduate training in research.
- Service - Tenured and tenure-track faculty normally make reasonable contributions to the service needs of the department, college, university, and scientific community. This may include activities such as serving on departmental committees and student advisory committees, providing manuscript and grant reviews, directing shared facilities, and providing outreach activities to the community, or the assumption of leadership roles in these activities.

### ***Teaching-Track Faculty***

Faculty in the teaching-track category make an essential contribution to the mission of the university and department by having a workload which emphasizes undergraduate teaching. Individuals in this category normally devote 80% of their effort to teaching, and 20% to service. Research efforts may be permitted with Chair's approval.

Teaching - Teaching-Track Faculty must make significant contributions in teaching. Normally, the teaching load will be eight courses (80% effort). The courses offered will primarily support undergraduate education. Teaching-track faculty performing non-classroom academic duties that enhance the teaching/learning process are also eligible for course reductions or course equivalencies.

Service - In addition to teaching, faculty in this category normally make reasonable contributions to the service needs of the department, college, university, and/or community. This could include a number of relevant service-related activities and/or the assumption of leadership roles in these activities.

### ***Service-Track Faculty***

Faculty in the service-track category make an essential contribution to the mission of the university and our department by having a workload which emphasizes service. Individuals in this category are expected to devote at least 50% of their effort to service with the remaining percentage distributed across teaching and research.

Teaching - The teaching load will be one course or course equivalent per 10% effort assigned (minimum of two courses per year). If a Service-Track Faculty has at least 30% of their load in teaching, this is considered a significant area of workload distribution. Anything less than 30% is considered reasonable.

Research - Faculty in this category may be expected to participate in scholarly research. These faculty often provide important support for the scholarly efforts of other researchers, both within and outside of the unit, and this support can fulfill their research expectations. If a Service-Track Faculty has at least 30% of their load in research, this is considered a significant area of workload distribution. Anything less than 30% is considered reasonable.

Service - Service-Track Faculty must make a significant contribution in service. Faculty in this category are expected to direct their efforts in service towards activities that draw on a faculty member's professional expertise, and which have some relation to the department, Eberly College, University, and/or profession.

The workload category of each faculty member will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Chair of the Department. If adjustments in an individual's workload are recommended or requested, they can only be implemented at the Chair's discretion and after the Chair consults with the faculty member being affected. Adjustments of greater than 10% can only be implemented in consultation with the Dean's office of the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences and the Provost.

## **2. FACTORS THAT DIFFERENTIATE WORKLOAD**

Several factors differentiate annual workload assignments among faculty, including the type of appointment, the extent to which expectations are met in prior years, and research intensity (Section 3, Table 2). The Chair will consult with each faculty member when establishing appropriate teaching assignments. Together, the Chair and each faculty member will operationally define which courses will constitute the appropriate number of course equivalents required for the faculty member’s workload category in accordance with the factors that differentiate workload assignments (*Table 1*).

*Table 1.* Approved reasons to vary a faculty member’s workload.

<b>Research</b>	<b>Teaching</b>	<b>Service</b>
Externally Funded Research, Service, and Teaching Activities. Funds from these activities can be used to support the re-assignment of a faculty member’s workload and the proportionate replacement of their salary.	3 or 4 Credit Course (in-person, online, or hybrid) and other non-classroom teaching activities equivalent to a three-credit course ( <b>see Annex A</b> ).	Administrative Duties for the Academic Unit. Based on the scope of the administrative responsibilities as well as the size of the unit, these types of duties (e.g., Chair, Associate Chair, Directorships, Special departmental projects, etc.) can warrant a shift in one or two areas of the workload.  Outreach activities to the community, and significant university service can warrant a shift in workload.

The following list includes examples of activities that **may** result in a workload shift of 10%, as negotiated between the faculty member and the Chair.

- Exceptionally high research activity, quantitatively defined as twice the number of points needed to be rated as “excellent” in research on annual performance reviews, when workload flexibility exists.
- Associate Chair duties (if not financially compensated)
- Directorship of Shared Facilities
- Major curricular programmatic development and implementation (e.g., new majors, minors, etc.)

## **3. EXAMPLE PATHWAYS FOR FACULTY SUCCESS**

Faculty may contribute to the institutional mission in various ways. These contributions may evolve over the course of a faculty member’s career and can be reflected in the annual workload as approved by the Department Chair and the Eberly College. Due to the breadth of disciplines in Biology, it is impossible to assign numerical metrics for differing levels of research activity in a manner that can be applied equitably throughout the department. Therefore, the department will rely on the Chair and the Faculty Evaluation Committee (FEC) to fairly evaluate research productivity annually in relation to each faculty member’s research subfield. The Chair and the FEC will evaluate a researcher’s productivity annually and determine the level of research activity in relation to their research subfield using the following descriptors: Research-active

(Pathway 1), Research-reduced (Pathway 2), and Research-intensive (Pathway 3). Research intensive faculty will be assigned to teach two three-credit courses per academic year and the remainder of their teaching assignment will be fulfilled through their mentoring and advising of graduate students in research. The table below outlines example pathways for faculty success (Table 2).

**Table 2. Example pathways for faculty success.**<sup>1,2</sup>

	Teaching <sup>1</sup>	Service	Research
	40%	20%	40%
<p><b><u>Pathway 1</u></b></p> <p><b>Research-active pathway for tenured and tenure-track faculty</b></p> <p><b>Faculty in this category earn between 20 and 59 points during annual evaluation of productivity</b></p>	<p>*Teach four courses or equivalents per year (see Annex A).</p>	<p>*Participate in faculty meetings and contribute to strategic planning and implementation.</p> <p>*Committee participation, including committee leadership, as assigned by the Chair.</p> <p>*Evidence of service to the profession.</p>	<p>*Demonstrate a self-sustaining research program via two of the following: 1) obtain and manage significant external funding for the subfield; 2) recruit, mentor, and train graduate students, ensuring degree progression; 3) create and maintain external visibility through the dissemination of research products (both written and oral), particularly through the publication of high-quality scholarly products.</p>
	60%	10%	30%
<p><b><u>Pathway 2</u></b></p> <p><b>Research-reduced pathway for tenured faculty</b></p> <p><b>Faculty in this category earn &lt;20 points during annual evaluation of productivity</b></p>	<p>*Teach six courses or equivalents per year (see Annex A).</p>	<p>*Participate in faculty meetings.</p> <p>*Committee participation as assigned by the Chair.</p> <p>*Evidence of service to the profession.</p>	<p>*Disseminate research products in both written and oral format.</p> <p>*Recruit, mentor, and train graduate and/or undergraduate students, ensuring degree progression.</p> <p>*Engage in scholarly activities including those that provide support for the scholarly efforts of other researchers.</p> <p>*Serve on at least 4 MS and PhD committees.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Every time “courses” are listed this also includes activities approved as course equivalents by the proper authority.

<sup>2</sup> See Annex A for expectations and/or reductions for faculty members within their first three years.

<b>Pathway 3</b>  <b>Research-intensive pathway for tenured and tenure-track faculty</b>  <b>Faculty in this category earn &gt;60 points during annual evaluation of productivity</b>	30%	20%	50%
	<p>*Teach three courses or equivalents and mentor/advise students in research (see Annex A).</p>	<p>*Participate in faculty meetings and contribute to strategic planning and implementation</p> <p>*Committee participation, including committee leadership, as assigned by the Chair.</p> <p>*Evidence of service to the profession.</p>	<p>*Demonstrate a self-sustaining research program via all of the following: 1) obtain and manage significant external funding for the subfield; 2) recruit, mentor, and train graduate students, ensuring degree progression; 3) create and maintain external visibility through the dissemination of research products (both written and oral), particularly through the publication of high-quality scholarly products.</p>
<b>Pathway 4</b>  <b>Teaching-track pathway</b>	80%	20%	0%
	<p>*Teach 8 courses or equivalents per year (see Annex A).</p>	<p>*Participate in faculty meetings and contribute to strategic planning.</p> <p>*Committee participation as assigned by the Chair.</p> <p>*Evidence of service to the profession.</p>	<p>*Stay current in their field/discipline.</p>
<b>Pathway 5</b>  <b>Service-track pathway</b>	30%	60%	10%
	<p>*Teach three courses or equivalents per year (see Annex A).</p>	<p>*Significant service to the unit, university, and broader community as appropriate and assigned by the Chair and the Office of the Dean.</p> <p>*Participate in faculty meetings and contribute to strategic planning and implementation.</p> <p>*Committee participation, including committee leadership, as assigned by the Chair.</p> <p>*Evidence of service to the profession and the broader local and regional community.</p>	<p>*Engage in scholarly activities including those that provide support for the scholarly efforts of other researchers. This includes, but is not limited to, providing access to field sites, specimens, and logistical support through the Arboretum, Campus Food Garden, Life Sciences Greenhouse, WVU Genomics Core Facility, and/or WVU Herbarium.</p>

	20%	70%	10%
<b>Pathway 6</b>	*Teach two courses or equivalents per year (see Annex A).	*Leadership in and service to the unit, university, and community as assigned by the Office of the Dean. *Service on university and college committees as appropriate and requested.	*Engage in scholarly activities including those that provide support for the scholarly efforts of other researchers.
<b>Administrative Focus</b>			

#### 4. CHANGES TO WORKLOAD

##### *Transition Between Categories*

The workload document is intentionally structured to ensure that a faculty member can make and be recognized for valuable contributions to the programmatic needs of the department, regardless of workload category. In the ideal case, the Chair and faculty member will reach mutual agreement on (a) the need for a change in workload category, and (b) the process of making a transition among categories, both in terms of what transitions are to be made and over what time frame. The chair, in consultation with the faculty member, can assign up to 10 percent of additional effort and the resulting reassignment in areas of research, teaching, or service without approval of the Dean.

As per College guidelines, if the minimum enrollment targets are not met for a given course, a faculty member will be assigned to teach an alternative course in the same or next regular semester to ensure the minimum workload requirements are met.

Teaching overloads are defined as courses that are beyond the regular course load assigned. Faculty will receive teaching overload compensation based on the rates established by the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences. A maximum of one overload per semester may be granted per faculty member.

The Department of Biology recognized the following common categories for modified teaching assignments: formal or family leave, sabbatical, administrative assignment, and course buyouts related to sponsored research. Requests for such releases must include a documented justification and must be approved in advance by the Chair and the Dean.

## ANNEX A. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EQUIVALENCIES IN RESEARCH, TEACHING, AND SERVICE

The following guidelines will be used to determine course equivalent activities in research, teaching, and service. **With the exception of the first year, at least 50% of the teaching workload must be fulfilled via regular course assignment.** All equivalents must be pre-approved by the Chair and documented in the faculty P&T File. Equivalents must also fall within College and University guidelines.

### *Research*

The Department of Biology is composed of research faculty from various disciplines, and as such, a diversity of research-related activities can be considered equivalent to teaching a full course. These activities primarily include managing external awards and conducting student training in research. To facilitate the establishment and staffing of new research labs, research faculty receive additional equivalents in their first three years of employment as outlined in their appointment letters and in the Department of Biology AFPR guidelines.

### *Teaching*

In the Department of Biology, undergraduate student advising, and GTA training for multi-section service courses can be considered equivalent to teaching a full course. Furthermore, many courses do not carry the same workload as a typical lecture course; some courses require less effort than a typical lecture course and others require greater effort.

### *Service*

Some service activities require significant effort that is equivalent to teaching a course. In the Department of Biology, serving as an Associate Chair or providing major contributions to recruitment through the development of materials and initiatives and/or the organization and implementation of recruitment events may be considered equivalent to teaching a course.

**Table 1. Regular Course Assignments in the Department of Biology**

<b>Units</b>	<b>Courses</b>	<b>Examples (subject to approval)</b>
0.5	1CR course meeting 50 minutes per week (freshman seminar, honors add-on, journal club)	113, 191, 298, 327, 387, 422, 487, tutoring, graduate colloquium, graduate seminar.
0.5	Teaching a lab with a graduate assistant (1CR lab course meeting 3 hours per week)	316L, 324L, 450L, 464L, 476L
1	3CR or 4CR lecture course (meeting 3 or 4 hours per week)	101, 102, 115, 117, 219, etc...
1	Teaching a lab without a graduate assistant (1CR lab course meeting 3 hours per week)	344L, 423L
1	GTA training/practicum (6 or more lab sections). Most often used for coordination of 101L, 102L, 105L, 115L, 117L, 219L, etc.	690, 790



**Table 2. Course Equivalent Teaching, Research, and Service Activities**

*Where 1 unit = 3 or 4 credit course*

<b>Research</b>	<b>Teaching</b>	<b>Service</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Managing an external grant (1 unit per year)</li> <li>- Chair of <math>\geq 3</math> graduate student committees and/or undergraduate capstone research trainee committees with evidence of degree progression and timely submission of annual evaluations of graduate student performance (1 unit per year)</li> <li>- Setting up a new lab (1 unit per year, first two years only)</li> <li>- Staffing a new lab (1 unit per year, first year only)</li> <li>- Research faculty in 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year (1 unit per year)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New faculty in first semester (1 unit per year, first year only)</li> <li>- Advising <math>\geq 50</math> undergraduate students (1 unit per semester)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Serving as Associate Chair (1 unit per year) unless receiving a stipend</li> <li>- Substantial contributions to recruitment (1 unit per year, in consultation with chair)</li> </ul>