

Synopsis of the New Workload Model of the College of Science at Weber State University April 12, 2011

Purpose of, and Rational for, Developing a New Workload Model:

- Recognize the growing importance of undergraduate research mentoring and the significant time requirements involved.
- Recognition that active and engaged learning has been shown to be an important and effective pedagogical approach to education.
- Recognition that excellent teaching and learning is intimately connected with ongoing faculty research and scholarship, given that research and scholarship in the sciences and mathematics inform our teaching in times of rapid change, and faculty research and scholarship serves as a model for our students as to how scientific investigation takes place.
- Resolve the very different measures of teaching loads between course, laboratory, and independent study/research teaching credit hours (TCHs) and course contact hours that exist within the College of Science.
- Recognition that the American Chemical Society's new requirements for an ACS certified degree specifically state that contact hours "...*must not exceed 15 total hours per week*...Fifteen contact hours is an upper limit, and a **significantly smaller number should be the normal teaching obligation** [emphasis added]. Faculty and staff in the most effective programs usually have substantially fewer contact hours, particularly when they supervise undergraduate research." [American Chemical Society Committee on Professional Training, "Undergraduate Professional Education in Chemistry: ACS Guidelines and Evaluation Procedures for Bachelor's Degree Programs," Spring 2008]
- From an unscientific survey conducted by Dr. Thomas J. Wenzel, former president of the Council for Undergraduate Research (CUR): "The majority of respondents with fewer than twelve contact hours felt they had enough time for research. Just under fifty percent of those with twelve contact hours thought such a teaching load was acceptable. **An overwhelming majority of those with over twelve contact hours said their teaching load was too high and significantly impacted their ability to be research-active.** [emphasis added]" [Wenzel, Thomas J., "What is an Appropriate Teaching Load for a Research-active Faculty Member at a Predominantly Undergraduate Institution?" *CUR Quarterly*, March 2001, pp. 104-107.]
- Work toward consistency with Regents Policy R485; particularly, R4.1.2, R4.2.1, and R4.2.2. in which teaching activities at metropolitan/regional universities should average 13 contact hours per week, and average teaching loads reported by USHE institutions should be reported annually in terms of faculty contact hours and average weekly teaching contact hours.
- Recognition of R485.1.3: "The Presidents and faculties of USHE institutions are urged to use innovative methods to increase faculty productivity while at the same time maintaining and improving educational quality."
- Recognition of R485.2.1. "To provide standards for average teaching workloads for all full-time faculty at USHE colleges and universities that reflect differing institutional missions and roles, and that reflect appropriate national standards of teaching excellence."

- Recognition of R485.2.2. “To assure equitable distribution of responsibilities and to take maximum advantage of the talents of individual faculty.

Goals of the New Workload Model:

- The ultimate goal of the workload model is to move to a nine-contact hour load for traditional classroom and laboratory instruction for faculty that are actively engaged in undergraduate research and/or faculty research and scholarship. Three additional contact hours would be reassigned as support for mentoring undergraduate research and/or faculty scholarship.
- Provide opportunities for new tenure-track faculty to establish research agendas that support their efforts toward tenure and promotion while also recognizing that the primary mission of Weber State University is teaching and learning.

Implementation of the New Workload Model:

- Beginning with the approval of the model by the Chairs’ Council on February 8, 2010, new tenure-track hires will receive nine contact hours of traditional instructional time and three contact hours of reassigned time per semester for the first two years, assuming that the time is used effectively to establish a research agenda that may involve undergraduate research. The reassigned time will be forfeited if, in the view of the Chair and the Dean, the reassigned time is not being used effectively for the designed purpose.
- Departments are required to adopt the new workload model in order for the model to become applicable in their department for faculty after their first two years on a tenure-track employment.
- Faculty after the second year may apply on a semester-by-semester basis for three contact hours of reassigned time through their departments (as is done for sabbatical leaves) given sufficient justification of need. Departments may choose to establish a departmental committee to review and recommend approval or denial of the application; otherwise the Chair makes the recommendation to the Dean.
- The Dean of the College of Science makes the final determination of acceptance or denial of the application (this process also mirrors the sabbatical application process, except that the application does not proceed through the Provost to the Board of Trustees).
- Faculty who are awarded three hours of reassignment during a semester will have their teaching loads measured as contact hours rather than TCHs.
- Faculty who receive reassignment are required to report on the outcomes or progress made during their reassignment on their annual College of Science Faculty Review form. Faculty will also discuss their work with their department chair.
- Faculty who are not provided with three contact hours of reassigned time for the purposes outlined in this model will continue with the traditional teaching load of approximately 12 TCHs per semester. When resources become available, the goal is to have faculty not on reassignment to have teaching loads of 12 to 15 contact hours per semester. This component of the policy is essentially consistent with Weber State University’s PPM 4-6, which allows for 0.5 TCH per contact hour for laboratories and 0.25 TCH per Student Credit Hour (SCH) for directed readings, special problems, individual studies, and research studies. *[Note that the current contact hour load in the College of Science varies significantly, from 12 hours to 17 hours or more depending on laboratory and other non-classroom teaching assignments.]* Twelve to 15 contact hours per semester is not an additional teaching burden, but is in fact a reduction for most faculty members in the College of Science.