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## Academic Unit Faculty Workload Policy

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**Academic Unit:** American Studies

**Responsible Official:** Department Chair

**Version:** 1

**Policy Effective Date:** 6/4/26 pending stage II  
(research buyout and production policies being approved)

### 1.0 Introduction

This policy outlines the approach to assigning and managing faculty workload in Department of American Studies and has been developed in accordance with the [Saint Louis University Faculty Workload Policy](#) and the [College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Workload Policy](#).

Faculty responsibilities and workloads are assigned by the department chair (in consultation with faculty) and reviewed and approved by the dean. This policy emphasizes equitable distributions aiming to avoid biases in workload assignments related to gender, race, and other aspects of identity.

The professional goals of faculty members are diverse, which the Department embraces, values, and encourages as fundamental drivers of faculty hiring and professional well-being. The diversity of faculty members' professional goals shall inform the distribution of work for individual faculty, as determined by academic unit leaders in consultation with each faculty member, but shall not guarantee that faculty professional goals or input on workload will be manifested in all workload assignments. The broader needs/priorities of the academic unit(s) to which each faculty member is assigned (as determined by the department chair and/or dean), as well as those of the University as a whole (as determined by the Provost), shall take precedence. This policy recognizes the College's organizational complexities and financial constraints and prioritizes its commitment to serving students. We also recognize the unique structure of the Department of American Studies, the diversity of its student needs, and strength of faculty commitment.

As a core contributing member of this Jesuit Research I university, the Department of American Studies is committed to faculty excellence in

- teaching
- scholarship, research, and creative endeavor
- graduate student mentorship
- departmental administration and mutual support to serve our students
- service to the University
- public service to local/regional/national/global communities
- professional service

The policy:

- covers all individual contracts, College policies, and workload assignments.
- promotes a diverse distribution of workloads while maintaining fairness, helping to prevent faculty from becoming overburdened.
- is not prescriptive about the amount of work but provides guidelines for the fair distribution of work.

## 2.0 Governing Principles

The Department of American Studies strives to be a collaborative unit while recognizing individual faculty goals, needs, limitations, and passions.

Our mission is to provide an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the diverse cultures of the United States. We foreground the ways culture—including beliefs, ideas, and practices; formations like race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability; and media or artistic expression—influences social, political, legal, and economic realities. In support of our mission, we endeavor to produce leading-edge publications, exhibitions, projects, and creative work that speak to academic and public audiences. We aim to provide inclusive, meaningful, equitable education for all students, where we train them to apply humanities and social science methods to literary, historical, visual, digital, and material culture sources while cultivating skills in critical thinking, clear writing, and persuasive speaking. Through collaborating with a variety of community institutions, we engage with the world around us as we reflect ethically on the stubborn problems and emancipatory possibilities posed by American cultural life.

With our mission in mind, the following criteria are *guidelines* that will be followed by the Department Chair when recommending annual faculty workload; they do not—and cannot—reflect every aspect of our work. Nonetheless, the workload policy aims to ensure the transparent, just, and equitable distribution of faculty labor as it keeps faculty on pace for tenure and promotion.

Across the categories listed above where we strive for excellence, we are committed to

- **Flexible Distribution:** Workload assignments vary based on faculty category, qualifications, level of expected contribution in different workload areas, and departmental/program needs.
- **Equity and Fairness:** Workload distributions should be equitable, ensuring fair evaluation and opportunities for merit increases and promotions.
- **Support for Diversity:** The department recognizes faculty who are disproportionately involved in service roles and aims to balance this while valuing their contributions.
- **Engagement:** Maintaining a culture of mutual support and regular engagement (through faculty meetings at multiple levels, departmental, college, and university events, ceremonies, and cross-disciplinary collaborations).
- **Respect for Faculty Work Evolution:** Faculty workload assignments should reflect the evolution of faculty interests and abilities driving their various work commitments (teaching, research, service, etc.)
- **American Studies Methods and Core Analytics**
  - Recognition of research, teaching, and service that serves the departmental and university mission of promoting social justice, standing with and for others, and highlighting the diversity of American cultures.
  - Interdisciplinarity in research and teaching.

## 3.0 Scope

This policy applies to all faculty assigned to the Department of American Studies under the CAS Dean's oversight.

## 4.0 Definitions

A single workload unit represents the amount of work required for the successful conduct of one credit hour of teaching in American Studies, consistent with the University Faculty Workload Policy definition.

### **Scholarship/Research Intensive:**

Scholarship/Research-Intensive Faculty workload designations comprise roughly equally distributed responsibilities for teaching and scholarship/research/creative endeavor; however, this designation contemplates a level of sustained, peer-reviewed scholarship/research/creative endeavor (including associated outcomes/impact) consistent with professional- or discipline-specific R1 standards. Under University policy, American Studies faculty under this designation *typically* are assigned workloads featuring:

- 10-14 workload units of teaching
- 10-13 workload units of research/scholarship/creative endeavor
- 0-3 workload units of service

To maintain Research-Intensive status, tenured faculty are expected to show evidence of ongoing scholarship by accomplishing at least 3 of the following items or equivalent in the 3 years prior to their annual workload meeting (items may come from the same category and involve the same project, except where noted below):

- A peer-reviewed journal article or anthology chapter published
- Demonstrated substantial data collection or progress toward a peer-reviewed article, peer-reviewed book chapter, or peer-reviewed edited collection or toward a monograph
- A chapter of a book manuscript drafted
- A peer-reviewed book proposed, submitted, accepted, or published
- An edited anthology or journal special issue proposed, submitted, accepted, or published
- A significant portion of a public or digital humanities project accomplished
- A public or digital humanities project delivered
- A research presentation delivered (only one per three-year term may count)
- A major grant proposal submission, receipt
- Substantial public facing writing drawing on academic research (only one per three-year term)
- Major award for a book, article, or other academic project
- Standing editorial work for a book series or journal (only one per three-year term)

For faculty members meeting the above criteria, 5-7 workload units per semester will typically be assigned to teaching unless there are also qualifying administrative assignments or other extenuating circumstances.

Given the College's high expectations that faculty participate in regular and sustained service activities, assignment of 1 to 2 workload units of service for Scholarship/Research-Intensive Faculty is typical. Exceptions to this would be faculty who take on significant service obligations to the University, the profession, or the community. Such exceptions have been routine for American Studies faculty given the high ratio of PhD students to faculty. Although the balance of teaching, research/creative endeavor, and service will vary from week to week, one workload unit of service would be consistent with an average of 1.7 hours spent on service in a work week.

Given the Department's need for faculty directing PhD dissertations to be Scholarship/Research-Intensive, every effort is made to maintain research/workload units at 10 or above when crucial service and administrative responsibilities require it. The chair will clearly note in Annual Workload assignments if departmental need has forced a temporary reduction in research unit allocation.

Note: All faculty (a) on the tenure track and (b) maintaining satisfactory progress toward the earning of tenure must be assigned workload consistent with the Scholarship/Research-Intensive designation above until tenure status has been finalized. The CAS Dean may request exceptions to this stipulation from the Provost.

**Teaching and Scholarship/Research:** Teaching and Scholarship/Research Faculty workload designations are those comprised primarily of teaching but affording substantive work time for an active pattern of engaged scholarship/research/creative endeavor. Under University policy, faculty under this designation *typically* are assigned workloads featuring:

- 15-20 workload units of teaching
- 4-7 workload units of research/scholarship/creative endeavor
- 0-3 workload units of service/clinical/administrative activities

To maintain Teaching and Scholarship status, tenured faculty are expected to show evidence of ongoing scholarship by accomplishing at least 2 of the above items or equivalent in the 3 years prior to their annual workload meeting (items may come from the same category and involve the same project, except where noted above).

For faculty members meeting the above criteria, 2-4 workload units per semester will typically be assigned to research.

Given the College's high expectations that faculty participate in regular and sustained service activities, assignment of 1 to 3 workload units of service for Scholarship/Research-Intensive Faculty is typical. Exceptions to this would be faculty who take on significant service obligations to the University, the profession, or the community. Although the balance of teaching, research/creative endeavor, and service will vary from week to week, one workload unit of service would be consistent with an average of 1.7 hours spent on service in a work week.

**Teaching-Intensive:** Teaching-Intensive Faculty workloads are those comprised either exclusively or nearly exclusively of responsibility for teaching. Under University policy, faculty under this designation *typically* are assigned workloads featuring:

- 21-24 workload units of teaching
- 0 workload units of research/scholarship/creative endeavor
- 0-3 workload units of service/clinical/administrative activities

Given the College's high expectations that faculty participate in regular and sustained service activities, assignment of 1 to 3 workload units of service for Teaching-Intensive Faculty is typical. Exceptions to this would be faculty who take on significant service obligations to the University, the profession, or the community. Although the balance of teaching, research/creative endeavor, and service will vary from week to week, one workload unit of service would be consistent with an average of 1.7 hours spent on service in a work week.

## 5.0 Faculty Workload Requirements

Faculty workload is measured in workload units, with a standard of 24 units per academic year for a 9-month contract. Longer contracts have proportional requirements. The level of workload contribution should be determined by the department chair in consultation with the faculty member (and reviewed and approved by the dean) as part of the workload allocation process.

5.1 Workload units encompass all faculty activities teaching, research, service, and, when applicable, administration

- **Teaching:** Teaching workload units typically include the development and implementation of interdisciplinary courses that reflect American Studies methodologies and analytics, instruction and grading, as well as student advising and mentoring, and supervising teaching assistants in multi-section classes and lectures. Where faculty freely choose to plan and teach courses outside their departmental assignments (e.g. in summer and winter sessions), these are not included in workload. Additionally, the department sets the following equivalencies:
  - Supervision of a chair-authorized independent study is .25 workload units.
  - Chairing a graduate student's Ph.D. or MA thesis amounts to .25 workload units per active student per semester.
- **Research/Scholarship/Creative Endeavor:** American Studies recognizes that scholarship takes multiple forms including, but not exclusively, peer-reviewed publications, grant activities, conference presentations, community-based scholarship, and interdisciplinary scholarship that draws upon multiple academic disciplines and methodological approaches characteristic of the field of American Studies. Community-Engaged Scholarship includes academic work that connects faculty expertise with community needs through partnerships that are mutually beneficial and that strengthen the university's teaching and research mission while addressing societal issues.
- **Service:** Like all small departments, routine service in American Studies is heavy: faculty meet regularly and collectively serve as curriculum committees, awards committees, admissions and funding committees, policy committees, search committees, and much more. Most faculty also have assigned College and University committee work, as well as professional service including journal editing, manuscript review, and professional organizations; community engagement and public scholarship aligned with social justice missions.
- **Administration:** Faculty activities encompassed in administration workload units include department chair responsibilities and program coordination. The CAS Administrative and Extraordinary Service Roles document outlines workload expectations for administrative positions.

5.2 Any assignment exceeding the required workload units is considered an **overload**, requiring dean and provost approval and compensated either through additional pay or current or future workload reduction.

5.3 This policy (a) is fully consistent with college- and university-level policies, and (b) articulates the distinctive nature of faculty work and workload within the Department of American Studies.

5.4 The workload assigned to each faculty member must be consistent with the faculty member's contract and employment status, as well as with the governing promotion and tenure requirements, which are available [here](#).

- a. Annual faculty workloads for all full-time faculty must ensure that the faculty member's successful fulfillment will keep the faculty member "on pace" with approved promotion and/or tenure requirements.

- b. All annual faculty evaluations must be based on each faculty member's formally assigned workload, in accordance with each faculty contract and the Faculty Manual.

## 6.0 Faculty Workload Processes

### Annual Faculty Workload Assignment

The distribution of workload units for faculty for each academic year will be determined annually by the department chair after consultation with the faculty member and taking into consideration the needs of the department, existing commitments, and the strengths and goals of the individual faculty member. Ultimately, workload is assigned by the department chair and approved by the dean in conjunction with discipline-specific calibrations outlined in the department workload policy. Individual faculty workload expectations can be recalibrated each year, taking into consideration teaching, research/creative endeavor, and service activities in recent years and plans for teaching, research/creative endeavor, and service in the upcoming academic year. Workload expectations can be modified mid-cycle with approval of the dean.

Faculty will submit annual reports by the end of each calendar year, as required by the College of Arts and Sciences. The department chair will then with individual faculty each January to discuss their past work activities and future plans. The department chair will record the workload expectations for the next academic year on the Individual Faculty Annual Workload Assignment template. This document will be shared with each faculty member, signed by them to acknowledge receipt, and then passed on to the dean's office for approval. Faculty members who disagree with their workload expectations can submit a written appeal to the dean's office.

Individual faculty workload assignments will be recorded in a manner consistent with section 6.0 of the [University Faculty Workload Policy](#). Individual Faculty Workload assignments will be available in a department Teams folder only accessible to department faculty.

## 7.0 Equitable Distribution of Work

The Department of American Studies is committed to the equitable distribution of work among faculty members. Workload assignments consider faculty expertise and career development goals, departmental needs and strategic priorities, available resources and course enrollment patterns, promotion and tenure timeline requirements, the interdisciplinary nature of American Studies scholarship, the importance of community-engaged work and public scholarship, and attention to preventing disproportionate service burdens on faculty from underrepresented groups. The department recognizes that equity may not always mean identical workloads but rather fair distribution that accounts for different career stages, specializations, and contributions to the department's mission.

## 8.0 Accountability for Administrative Oversight of Faculty Workload

Deans and department chairs are responsible for ensuring that workloads meet university standards and are equitably distributed. Regular reviews are conducted within the College to adjust assignments based on changing needs, feedback, and evaluation data.

## 9.0 Approvals

9.1 This version was approved by the dean on February 2, 2026, and approved by the provost on 6/4/2026.