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## Academic Unit Faculty Workload Policy

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**Academic Unit:** Department of Biology

**Responsible Official:** Department Chair

**Version:** 1.0

**Provost Approval Date:** 6/1/26 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 the Department of Biology in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) at Saint Louis University (SLU). This policy aims to be consistent with SLU's [Faculty Workload Policy](#) and the [CAS 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 the department chair 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 department (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.

As a key contributing member of SLU, a Jesuit research university, CAS is committed to faculty excellence in:

- teaching
- scholarship, research, and creative endeavor
- service to the University
- professional service
- public service to local/regional/national/global communities
- administration

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

This policy is grounded in the following principles:

- **Commitment to Excellence:** The Department is committed to excellence in teaching, research/scholarship/creative endeavor, service, and when applicable, administration, and community-engaged work.
- **Flexible Distribution:** Workload assignments vary based on faculty category, qualifications, level of expected contribution in different workload areas, and departmental/program needs. This flexibility allows the department chair to develop procedures that create transparent and adaptable expectations around which they assign faculty workload.
- **Equity and Fairness:** Workload distributions should be equitable, ensuring fair evaluation and opportunities for merit increases and promotions.
- **Commitment to Service:** The Department expects its faculty to participate in service and actively work to support the academic environment for students and faculty. This work should show consistent and sustained dedication.
- **Support for Diversity:** The Department recognizes faculty who are disproportionately involved in service roles and aims to balance this while valuing their contributions.
- **Engagement:** All faculty are expected to be engaged in the life of the University by participating regularly in faculty meetings (at multiple levels), academic ceremonies, and convocations (college- and university-level). These are expectations of employment (not service) for all faculty.
- **Respect for “Faculty Lifecycle” Evolution:** Faculty workload assignments should reflect the evolution of faculty interests and abilities driving their various work commitments (teaching, research, service, etc.).

## 3.0 Scope

This policy applies to all faculty assigned to the Department of Biology under the oversight of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

## 4.0 Definitions

**Workload Unit:** A single workload unit represents the amount of work required for the successful conduct of one credit hour of teaching (as defined in the [University Faculty Workload policy](#)) in a given discipline.

**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/administrative activities

Given the Department'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.

**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/ administrative activities

Faculty in this category typically publish at least 1 peer-reviewed article over a three-year time period and/or submit a grant proposal or manuscript.

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 and Scholarship/Research 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.

**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, 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/administrative activities

Faculty in this category typically have a research expenditure of at least \$50,000 per year and/or publish at least 2-3 peer-reviewed articles in a three-year period and/or have 2 external grant submissions per year.

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. 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.

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.

## 5.0 Department of Biology Faculty Workload Requirements

Faculty workload is measured in **workload units**, with a standard of 24 units per academic year for a 9month contract. Longer contracts have proportional requirements. The level of workload contribution should be determined by the department chair/program director 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 (i.e., teaching, research, service, and, when applicable, administration).

- **Teaching:** Typically includes student advising and mentoring, course design, instruction, and grading, except in cases where faculty freely choose to plan and teach courses outside their 24 units (e.g., in summer and/or winter terms). It may also include coordination of multi-section courses.

The Department of Biology employs the following multipliers in calculating workload units:

Type of Course	WU & Multipliers
Enrollment < 50	X 1.0
Enrollment > 50	X 1.5
Enrollment > 100	X 2.0

In the College of Arts and Sciences, courses below enrollment thresholds (typically 12 students for an undergraduate course or 5 students for a graduate seminar) are normally cancelled. However, in the event that a low-enrolled course must continue to be offered, the faculty member teaching that course will be assigned reduced workload units in the following graduated manner:	
Undergraduate Course with 2-11 students	X 0.5
Undergraduate course with 1 student = .25 unit (same as independent study)	0.25 WU
Graduate course with 2-4 students	X 0.5
Graduate course with 1 student (same as graduate reading course or dissertation supervision)	0.25 WU
1 credit lab course (3 contact hours plus lab procedure development, trouble shooting and optimization)	X 3.0
1 hour graduate recitation section with duallisted 4000/5000 course	0.25 WU for recitation section
BIOL5990 & BIOL6990 thesis and dissertation research, BIOL3970 Independent Research, BIOL4980 Advanced Independent Study, BIOL4970 Advanced Independent Research	0.25 WU each (with a maximum of 2 WU per semester)
Advising/mentoring	0.03 WU per 5 students per semester

- **Research/Scholarship/Creative Endeavor:** Typically includes research, publications, creative works, grants, and community-based scholarship.
- **Service:** Typically includes contributions to professional and/or community service, as well as contributions to the faculty member's department, the College, and/or the University.
- **Administration:** Consists of primary leadership roles (e.g., program director/coordinator, department chair, etc.). 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 department-level workload policy is (a) fully consistent with college- and university-level policies, and (b) articulates the distinctive nature of faculty work and workload within our academic unit.

- 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.
- 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, which are available [here](#).
  - 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

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 Department workload policies. 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 potentially be modified mid-cycle with approval of the Dean.

The Department Chair will have an annual meeting with individual faculty 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 workload assignments are available to all faculty within the Department of Biology. They are housed securely in the Department of Biology Sharepoint site.

## 7.0 Equitable Distribution of Work

Consistent with the [University Faculty Workload Policy](#), workloads should be assigned based on faculty expertise, departmental needs and goals, available resources, promotion and tenure guidelines, career development plans, and institutional priorities. Distribution of tasks must align with university standards while accommodating specific department and college needs. While institutional needs take precedence, faculty professional goals are considered.

## **8.0 Accountability for Administrative Oversight of Faculty Workload**

The Dean and department chair 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 October 29, 2025, and approved by the provost on 6/1/2026.