
Academic Unit Faculty Workload Policy

Academic Unit: Department of Communication

Responsible Official: Department Chair

Version: 1.0

Policy Effective Date: 6/5/26 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 Communication, a unit 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 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 of Communication 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 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, the Department 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 and College are 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 department chairs 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 and College expect 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 and College recognize 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 Department of Communication under the CAS Dean’s oversight.

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 the discipline of Communication.

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. Teaching-Intensive faculty may have up to 3 workload units assigned to research to maintain currency in the field (with a proportional expectation for scholarly output).

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

In the Communication department, a faculty member in the Teaching and Scholarship category produces scholarship that is a proportional fraction of the Scholarship/Research-Intensive expectation. Given that the standard Scholarship/Research-Intensive research workload is 10, this means that research expectations would be roughly 40% or 60% of those standards, depending on the number of workload units assigned to research.

Teaching and Scholarship/Research faculty should demonstrate progress in research/creative activity in their annual review. In addition to published work, faculty members may demonstrate research/creative activity through work in progress. This includes journal articles or creative work under review, creative work in production, data collected and/or analyzed as part of long-term research projects (e.g. ethnographic fieldwork, longitudinal studies), external grant applications, and book manuscript development. Because different types of projects may follow a different timeline for completion, a rolling three-year average of research productivity will be used to evaluate scholarship; work in progress that is moving toward publication as well as the quality of the work will be taken into consideration. This timeline ensures appropriate flexibility for the completion of projects.

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/clinical/administrative activities

Scholarship/Research-Intensive faculty in Communication typically have a 2/2 teaching load per academic year on a 9-month contract.

Our research workload expectations are modeled after our Rank and Tenure Procedures and Criteria. For Scholarship/Research-Intensive faculty, this might be 1) five peer-reviewed articles and two other pieces of scholarly work, 2) three completed and distributed creative works, or 3) a quality book from a prestigious outlet. We define research intensiveness as meaningful yearly progress toward those five-year standards. The simplest expression of this is

- 1 peer-reviewed article and .5 other piece of scholarly work per year

These other pieces of scholarly work include:

- Articles in non-refereed journals or professional journals
- Encyclopedia articles
- Chapters in scholarly books
- Edited collections of scholarly essays
- Public scholarship (e.g., op-eds, blogs)

The above numbers assume projects of typical length and complexity. We recognize that certain projects require different forms of labor and therefore carry additional weight. For instance, a creative work could count as two or more peer-reviewed articles, depending on the quality of the work and the reputation and selectivity of the venues in which it is exhibited. Likewise, in light of the Jesuit call to pursue truth in service to humanity, we embrace the reality that some truths take longer to discover, co-create, and articulate. We recognize that certain forms of scholarship require extended timelines (e.g., ethnographies, books, longitudinal or community-based studies). Such projects may justify lower numerical output expectations, proportional to their scope and complexity.

Scholarship/Research-Intensive faculty should demonstrate progress in research/creative activity in their annual review. In addition to published work, faculty members may demonstrate research/creative activity through work in progress. This includes journal articles or creative work under review, creative work in production, data collected and/or analyzed as part of long-term research projects (e.g. ethnographic fieldwork, longitudinal studies), external grant applications, and book manuscript development. Because different types of projects may follow a different timeline for completion, a rolling three-year average of research productivity will be used to evaluate scholarship; work in progress that is moving toward publication as well as the quality of the work will be taken into consideration. This timeline ensures appropriate flexibility for the completion of projects.

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 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 (i.e., teaching, research, service, and, when applicable, administration) and can vary by unit, discipline, and other factors.

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).

Department-specific Equivalencies:

- **The University News Advisor:** Advising *The University News* counts as 1.5 workload units of teaching each semester.
- **Internship course:** Typically 1.5 workload units of teaching each semester. This teaching assignment, restricted to the department's internship coordinator, includes additional work beyond internship supervision to build and maintain the department internship program. That work includes, among other things, managing the department's internship website, connecting with employers, and assisting communication students with resume and cover letter writing and interview preparation. Internship coordination also involves supervising students enrolled in summer internships. The workload of this assignment can vary depending on enrollment.
- **Chairing graduate student theses and applied project committees:** Chairing a graduate thesis or applied project committee counts as 0.25 workload units per student.

Research/Scholarship

Research/scholarship Activities: Typically includes research, publications, creative works, grants, and community-based scholarship.

Service

Service Activities: Typically includes contributions to the profession, discipline, community, Department, College, and University.

Administration

Administration Workload Allocation: Faculty holding significant administrative appointments will have adjusted workloads to accommodate their administrative duties. The CAS Administrative and Extraordinary Service Roles policy governs workload expectations for such positions. The specific workload units assigned to administrative positions are determined by CAS and applied within the Department. The Department Chair ensures that these roles are documented, workload adjustments are transparent, and assignments are shared with all faculty through the secure distribution process outlined in Section 6.

Typical Roles with Administrative Allocation: The following roles have typically had Administrative Allocations in the Department:

- Program Coordinators (e.g., Graduate and Undergraduate)
- Coordinators of Centers and Labs (such as the Communication Media Center or the Communication Skills Lab)

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 Communication.

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 Communication 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. As the University workload policy mandates, individual annual workload assignments will be made available on a shared site accessible by all full-time faculty in the Department of Communication.

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

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 November 24, 2025 and approved by the provost on June 5, 2026.