

BACKGROUND

At the request of the Provost, the Schar School has developed the following workload standards for tenured and tenure-track faculty. We note that these are general guidelines and that the dean may determine, after consulting with associate dean(s) and COO, that different guidelines may be appropriate for specific individual faculty member(s).

TENURED AND TENURE-TRACK FACULTY

This section identifies general criteria and standards to define and evaluate research productivity for tenured and tenure-track faculty in all programs of the two divisions with the Schar School.

Setting teaching loads linked to research productivity. Faculty teaching loads have been and will continue to be based on research productivity primarily. Therefore, release time for scholarly activities is linked with an expectation of greater research productivity. As faculty members vary in skills, interests, and responsibilities, different individuals may have different assignments in terms of teaching, research/creative activity, and service. These differences in expectations shall be recognized, valued, and respected at all levels during the review of faculty performance.

Exhibit 1 outlines in broad terms the level of research productivity and service obligation associated with various teaching loads. Each program may articulate more specific standards for *Minimal Research*, *Standard University Research*, and *Advanced University Research* based on the standards and vehicles available for research and creative/scholarly contribution in their field, but they will not be less than those listed in the exhibit.

Exhibit 1: Research Productivity Standards

Teaching Load*	Activity	Expectations of Research and Service Productivity
4-4	Teaching only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No service/outreach obligation; no obligation for research productivity
4-3	Teaching and service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Normal service/outreach obligation No obligation for research productivity
3-3	Teaching, service, minimal research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Papers submitted for presentation at professional meetings Normal service/outreach obligation Evidence of minimal research activity, e.g. professional growth related to research (seminars, conferences, etc)
3-2	Teaching, service, standard research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Papers accepted or published in journals that are not major refereed professional journals Books or chapters accepted or published by publishing firms of lesser reputation or with limited circulation potential Normal service/outreach obligation Evidence of on-going standard research activity, e.g. papers have been accepted or presented at professional meetings Papers, chapters, or books have been submitted for publication
2-2	Teaching, service, advanced research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Books have been accepted or published by major publishing firms Awards and funding for research Normal service/outreach obligation Evidence of on-going advanced research activity, e.g. Papers accepted or published by major refereed professional journals Chapters have been refereed and appear in books that have been accepted or published by major publishing firms (high quality)

*Teaching load is based on university didactic hours and assumes 3 hours per course

Definitions. According to the *Mason Faculty Handbook*, teaching evaluation must include “data from both peers and students” that provides for students’ “anonymous participation in course evaluations and comparisons among faculty teaching similar courses” while peer evaluation includes, “at a minimum, data on the development and implementation of new courses and programs, the appropriateness of course materials currently used, the level and quality of student advising, and learning outcomes” (p 29). Normal service/outreach obligations may include

- internal service at the division, school, or university level on committees;
- supervising graduate students on thesis or dissertation committees; and
- external service in professional and community organizations at the local, state, regional, national, and international levels that are uncompensated and related to the faculty member’s professional training and competence.

The *Mason Faculty Handbook* defines research and scholarship as follows: “Scholarly achievement is demonstrated by original publications and peer reviewed contributions to the advancement of the discipline/field of study or the integration of the discipline with other fields; by original research, artistic work, software and media, exhibitions, and performance; and by the application of discipline- or field-based knowledge to the practice of a profession” (p 28).

Using the standards. The standards listed in Exhibit 1 will be used in the performance evaluation process. This may include, for example:

- the pertinence of research project(s) to faculty member’s field of expertise;
- the degree to which scholarly work(s) advance the faculty member’s discipline or profession demonstrated by the effect of the work on the field at local, state, regional, national, and international levels;
- the quality and quantity of the research products over a set period of time (e.g., the July 1-June 30 year or a rolling two-year period);
- the extent to which a faculty member collaborates and mentors other faculty member(s) within the program or division or within the school; and
- whether the timeline needed to move projects from conception to publication is reasonable.

IMPLEMENTATION

Beginning in academic year 2017-18, the School will implement an opt-in program whereby current tenured and tenure-track faculty members elect an appropriate teaching load with its associated research expectations. New tenure and tenure-track hires will enter the department at the 2-2 teaching level with Advanced University Research. After their first year with the School, they may opt for a different teaching level after discussions with their program faculty (PF) director¹ and approval of the dean.

Each division will determine the process by which individual faculty members adopt their teaching loads and linked research expectations. The final decision may be a negotiation between the PF division chair and each faculty member or another method defined within the PF division and agreed upon by a majority of the tenure and tenure-track faculty members. All processes must include the following:

- Consideration of a faculty member’s previous professional performance in research/creative activity as well as future professional interests;
- Assignment in a specific category typically is chosen for at least three years for purposes of performance evaluation and raise review;
- Documentation of the elected teaching load for each faculty member; and
- The process will be documented, tied to the annual faculty performance evaluation process, and submitted to the dean.

¹ Note that the School differentiates between the “program faculty (PF) director[s]” and the “program directors.”

COURSE REDUCTIONS FROM EXPECTED TEACHING LOAD

While Exhibit 1 provides overall guidelines for the expected teaching loads, there are specific reasons for lowering those teaching loads. The most common of these reasons are described in this section; those wishing to suggest other reason(s) should discuss with their PF director prior to making any request of the School's COO or Dean.

Administrative reductions. Course reductions for administrative positions will be based on the teaching load/research expectation of the faculty member and the size and complexity of the administrative office. Each PF director will provide a list of program directors within the division to the COO and the dean, including term faculty appointments (with no change in course reductions), for documentation purposes. The dean must approve in advance any administrative position for which any workload reduction or compensation is suggested.

Typically, the following administrative faculty will receive workload reductions.

- Program faculty directors will serve as associate deans with the School. They will teach a 1-1 load with a stipend or a 1-1 load with a 12-month contract.
- Faculty members who direct a major office (e.g., the School's research support office) will teach a 1-1 load with a stipend or a 1-1 load with a summer contract.
- Program chairs will have a teaching load of 2-1; they will not receive a stipend.

Large class guidelines. Assigning double teaching credit for large sections of a class should be unusual; however, they may be offered when it makes good pedagogical sense. When a large class requires extensive grading or evaluation by the instructor, teaching credit may be proportionately increased or a graduate assistant may be assigned to assist. General guidelines are as follows:

- A minimum seat enrollment should be agreed upon in advance in order to consider a section for double credit (usually between 1.6 – 2.0 times seat enrollment of a full regular section). If the minimum enrollment is not achieved, the instructor should teach an extra course the following semester.
- A double section generally is expected to have 2.5 times as many seats as a regular section. For example, if a single section offers 45 seats, a double section should offer 112 seats, with at least 72 seats filled to be identified as a double section. Classroom size and availability may lead to variance in these norms.
- No faculty member will teach more than one such course per year.

Faculty effort on grants as it relates to teaching load. Faculty charging labor to grants and contracts will provide 20% of academic year salary plus benefits to buy-out the first course in each semester of an academic year. Buying-out more than one course per semester is unusual and must be approved by both the PF chair and the dean. Only under extraordinary circumstances will a faculty member's teaching obligation in an academic year be reduced to zero. Such an arrangement must be negotiated with the PF chair and the dean prior to submission of the grant proposal. Any other financial arrangement must be supported by the PF director and agreed to in advance by the dean.

Courses more than 4-hours. Faculty on 2-2 loads who are teaching two 4-credit courses one semester should teach one 4-credit course the other semester of the same academic year. Faculty may not reduce teaching to zero in a semester by "banking" extra credits. Faculty on 3-2 loads who are teaching two 4-credit courses each semester are considered to be teaching a normal load and are not considered to be teaching "extra" courses. For other course distributions that are analogous, arrangements will be negotiated with the associate dean for academic affairs, supported by the PF director, and approved in advance by the dean.

Graduate theses/dissertations. PF directors and program directors should attempt to distribute thesis supervision and all graduate and undergraduate individualized section duties equitably. Supervision of students does not provide credit toward course reduction.

Journal editorship. There is no standard course reduction for journal editorship(s). Any reduction needs to be negotiated individually with the dean and will be considered based on the significance of the publication(s).

Uneven load with semester of leave. A faculty member with an uneven teaching load (for example: 3-2 or 2-1) who is on leave status during one semester of an academic year will take leave in the semester with the lower load.

Other. PF directors may reduce individual faculty teaching load on a temporary basis with explanation to the dean. (The dean may or may not provide part-time replacement budget depending on the circumstances.)