MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

Policy and Procedure

ACADEMIC OPERATING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

MEMORANDUM TO:	All Holders of Mississippi State University Academic Operating Policy and Procedure Manual
DATE:	October 25, 2003
SUBJECT:	AOP 13.23 – Faculty Workload

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Academic Operating Policy and Procedure (AOP) is to establish the responsibility and general guidelines for the assignment of workloads for the following faculty members: tenure-track faculty, tenured faculty, and instructors. Furthermore, it will serve to ensure communication and mutual understanding of responsibilities between faculty and their department heads and also provide institutional accountability for the use of university resources. This policy does not apply to faculty with specific research professor, extension professor, or clinical professor appointments.

REVIEW

This AOP will be reviewed every four years or whenever circumstances require an earlier review by the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs with recommendations for revision presented to the Provost and Executive Vice President.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

Faculty workload can consist of a combination of three activities: teaching/instruction; research/creative achievements; and service. These occur in varying proportions depending on such factors as faculty talents and interests, unit and institutional needs and strategic plans, and IHL requirements. The workload assignments are the responsibility of the department head in consultation with the faculty member, with the concurrence of the college dean and the provost. Similar workloads within each of the academic missions should be recorded and evaluated in a consistent manner. In this consideration are the needs of the students and the quality of the individual academic degree programs. Faculty time distribution must be consistent with the policy outlined in this AOP, although deviations from the policy may occur in times of exigency.

In assigning individual teaching loads for faculty on a single budget, a department head usually relies upon what has become the nationally accepted norm for universities with primarily a baccalaureate mission. Teaching workload is based on the equivalent of eight courses (about 24 hours) per academic year. As a general rule, in disciplines that offer only an undergraduate degree, the average teaching load of a faculty member with an active research agenda is usually equivalent to six courses (about 18 hours) per academic year. In disciplines that offer a master's degree, the average teaching load of a faculty member with an active research agenda is usually equivalent to five courses (about 15 credit hours) per academic year, and for faculty with an active research agenda in most disciplines that offer a doctoral degree, the average teaching load is usually equivalent to four courses (about 12 credit hours) per academic year. The teaching load for an instructor with a full-time appointment is usually equivalent to eight courses (about 24 credit hours) per academic year. The assigned number of courses and corresponding credit hours, however, may be reduced, depending upon a number of factors that include the nature of the course (e.g., studio courses), size of the classes being taught, rank of a faculty member, experience of a faculty member, number of course preparations, number of graduate students, number of directed studies, development of new courses or other curricula, demands of the individual faculty member's research agenda, and level of university, professional, and/or public service. Adjustments to the teaching load of any individual faculty member may be made in any semester depending upon the activity of that faculty member and/or the needs of the program at that time.

The previous descriptions of teaching loads assume that a faculty member is funded solely from E&G funds. When the workload is funded by more than one budget, as in many of the agricultural units, it is necessary to differentiate among those funds. The proportion of the workload will be determined by the proportion of the individual salary funded by these designated budgets. Service activities may be funded by any of these budgets.

Service is operationally different among departments. Qualitative and quantitative components of service must be defined by colleges and departments and, when relevant, will include critical professional service responsibilities provided to citizens of the state of Mississippi. A distinction must clearly be described for profession-related service activities compared to committee-type service responsibilities. Graduate committee type service contributions are considered to be part of the teaching and scholarly activities. Equivalent workload assignments for profession-related service should be reported and recognized in a relatively equivalent manner for all faculty across an entire department. Typically, the faculty workload assignments must be partitioned so that service and teaching combined do not exceed 80% of the total FTE assignment in order to ensure that tenure track faculty have an opportunity to make scholarly contributions to the academic missions of research and/or creative activities in accord with traditional job descriptions and job titles approved by the Office of the Provost for tenure track faculty. Significant service contributions to the department, college, or university may result in the allocation of release (from class or research) time.

Deciding the sufficiency of an active research and/or service and/or teaching agenda is the responsibility of the department head with input from the individual faculty member.

The specific scholarly/creative achievement/outcome expectations during a specified period of time must be prescribed in the annual review. In situations where a faculty member is awarded external grant funds for research, or service or teaching/instruction, adjustments may be made in teaching and/or research and/or service responsibilities proportional to the level of funding received. In addition to the quantitative assessment of funding, faculty scholarly achievements and productivity in the form of published peer-reviewed research, the generation of intellectual property, and other types of creative activity may also be utilized as parameters for modifying the partitioning of faculty workload assignments within the academic missions of teaching/instruction and/or research and/or service.

Each year, during the annual review process, the department head will address each faculty member's teaching load relative to productivity in research and/or service activities, as well as the teaching needs of the department. A written record of this discussion should be made for subsequent reviews where an assessment again will be made of any differences between expectations and realizations.

Departments should reach an agreement with their deans on overall average teaching loads expected for their department, and the deans and the Provost should reach a similar agreement at the college level. Comparisons of workload data with peer institutions are desirable in establishing standards. In some cases, the development of 'departmental' peers may go beyond the MSU peer group to include institutions with programs that best compare with a department's particular program, goals and objectives.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Position	Section	Year
Associate Provost for Academic Affairs	Review	2018

APPROVED:

/s/ Peter L. Ryan — 09/28/2014
Associate Provost for Academic Affairs — Date

/s/ Jerome A. Gilbert — 09/29/2014
Provost and Executive Vice President — Date

/s/ Randolph F. Follett — 10/14/2014
President, Robert Holland Faculty Senate — Date

REVIEWED:

/s/ Timothy N. Chamblee — 10/29/2014
Assistant Vice President & Director — Date
Institutional Research & Effectiveness

/s/ Joan Lucas — 11/13/2014
General Counsel — Date

APPROVED:

/s/ Mark Keenum — 12/12/2014
President — Date