
Faculty Workload Policy

Version: 3.0

Responsible University Official: Provost

Effective Date: February 01, 2025

1.0 Introduction

This policy outlines Saint Louis University's (SLU) approach to assigning and managing faculty workload. Faculty responsibilities are assigned by department chairs and/or deans (in consultation with faculty), reviewed and approved by deans, based on:

- all governing contracts
- the [Faculty Manual](#)
- academic unit policies
- University priorities (as established by the Provost)

The 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 University 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 SLU's organizational complexities and financial constraints and prioritizes SLU's commitment to serving students.

Saint Louis University is a research university in the Jesuit tradition. Accordingly, SLU 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
- clinical work
- librarianship

The policy:

- covers all individual contracts, unit 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 policy is grounded in several principles:

1. **Commitment to Excellence:** The University is committed to excellence in teaching, research, service, and, when applicable, administration and clinical work.
2. **Flexible Distribution:** Workload assignments vary based on faculty category, qualifications, level of expected contribution in different workload areas, and departmental needs. This flexibility allows academic unit leaders to develop procedures that create transparent and adaptable expectations around which they assign faculty workload.
3. **Equity and Fairness:** Workload distribution should be equitable, ensuring fair evaluation and opportunities for merit increases and promotions.
4. **Support for Diversity:** The academic unit recognizes faculty who are disproportionately involved in service roles and aims to balance this while valuing their contributions.
5. **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 in colleges, schools, centers, or libraries under the Provost's oversight, except for SLU's Madrid campus faculty.

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 herein) in a given discipline.

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

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

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. 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

Scholarship/Research-intensive: Faculty workload assignments that fairly equally distribute 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. 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

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. Deans may request exceptions to this stipulation from the Provost.

5.0 University-Wide 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.

5.1 Workload units encompass all faculty activities (i.e., teaching, research, service, and, when applicable, administration, and clinical work) and can vary by unit, discipline, and other factors.

- **Teaching:** Includes course design (except in cases where faculty freely choose to design courses outside their 24 units), instruction, grading, and student advising and mentoring.
- **Research/Scholarship:** Includes research, publications, creative works, grants, and community-based scholarship.
- **Service:** Includes contributions to the profession and/or community service, as well as contributions to the faculty member's Department, College/School, and/or the University. The level of workload contribution allocated to service should be determined by academic unit leaders as part of the workload allocation process.

***NOTE:** This definition of "Service to the University" explicitly excludes basic faculty obligations such as regular participation in faculty meetings (at multiple levels) and academic ceremonies/convocations (unit- and University-level) that are often casually referred to as "service." These are general expectations of employment for all faculty.*

- **Administration:** Includes central administrative and leadership roles (e.g., program director/coordinator, department chair, etc.).
- **Clinical Work:** Includes engagement in work within university-operated clinics (e.g., healthcare, legal clinics, etc.).
- **Librarianship:** Includes all aspects of responsibilities in operation of libraries on north, south and downtown campuses.

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

5.3 All SLU colleges and schools must establish faculty workload policies that (a) are fully consistent with this University-level policy, and (b) articulate the distinctive nature of faculty work and workload within the respective academic unit. Additional details on establishing a college/school-level or department-level workload policy are included in Appendix A.

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.
- 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 Requirement for, and Requirements of, Individual Faculty Workload Assignments

6.1 Each individual faculty annual workload assignment must be recorded and must include the following:

- a. A web link to this University *Faculty Workload Policy*, as this is the basis on which all academic unit policies and individual annual workload assignments must be developed.
- b. A web link to the governing academic unit policy (posted on the Provost's website), on which all individual work assignments must also be based.
- c. A signature line for the faculty to acknowledge the workload assignment.

6.2 In accordance with the principles of subsidiarity and shared governance, individual faculty annual workload assignments must be developed by the chair and faculty member in a collaborative effort. The nature of that involvement and input will be subject to the norms and faculty governance policies/ processes in the respective academic units. Example items for participants to consider are:

- The prior year's workload allocation with documentation of outputs as needed.
- Proposed faculty plans to increase/decrease their teaching/scholarship/service.
- Curricular needs of the department/college/school.

This review acknowledges that the workload designation for any given faculty member could change annually (either minimally or substantively), or perhaps slowly evolve to keep pace with the faculty member's own evolution as a teacher and/or scholar.

Department chairs and deans responsible for workload allocation will be reviewed annually by those persons to whom they report regarding the implementation of and compliance with all aspects of the University and their respective academic unit faculty workload policies, including equity.

7.0 Equitable Distribution of Work

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 academic unit 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 workloads meet University standards and are equitably distributed. Regular reviews are conducted within the college/school to adjust assignments based on changing needs, feedback, and evaluation data.

9.0 References

Faculty Assignment Policy [forthcoming]

Saint Louis University [Faculty Manual](#) (St. Louis Campus)

10.0 Approvals

1. Version 1.0 was developed by a Joint Faculty Senate-Provost Task Force; it was approved by the Faculty Senate on January 26, 2016; it was modified and adopted by Provost Nancy Brickhouse on February 29, 2016.
2. Version 2.0 was developed by a task force comprising representatives of the deans, department chairs, faculty, and Provost's office staff. A draft was offered for a 30-day public comment period during which feedback was obtained via a Qualtrics survey, open fora, email, and discussion with the deans.
3. Version 3.0 was developed by the University Workload Policy workgroup composed of 6 members (one dean and five faculty members) from academic units (plus two additional from the Provost office for support) spanning schools and colleges on north and south campuses. This workgroup was formed and charged, as a part of a broader university development initiative. Faculty input was gathered via a 30+-day public comment period, faculty townhalls, the Faculty Senate e-mail account, the Faculty Senate anonymous Qualtrics submission form, and discussion with deans.

Approved by CADD: January 31, 2025

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Appendix A

1.0 Requirement for, and requirements of, Academic Unit Workload Policies

1.1 All SLU colleges and schools must establish faculty workload policies that (a) are fully consistent with this University-level policy, and (b) articulate the distinctive nature of faculty work and workload within the respective academic unit.

1.2 A college/school with formally-designated departments/programs may require each of its departments to establish department-specific workload policies. Any such departmental policy must be fully consistent with the University-level policy.

1.3 Each academic unit-level faculty workload policy (per 1.1 and 1.2) must be recorded.

1.4 Each academic unit policy must include the following:

- a. A statement of governing principles upon which the policy is based including: (i) strategic directions that the workload policy is intentionally designed to help the unit achieve and (ii) reference with web link to the University *Faculty Workload Policy*
- b. Academic unit definitions for faculty work, consistent with corresponding definitions in Section 4.0 of the University Workload Policy. Examples include teaching, scholarship, research/scholarship, creative endeavors, service to the University, professional service, service to the local / regional / national / global community, administration, and clinical work
- c. The minimum work expectations for all faculty, as defined and described in Section 4.0 and Section 5.1 of the University Workload Policy.
- d. Workload equivalencies detailing credit for specific types of faculty work – *in each of the domains of faculty work referenced in Section 4.0 and Section 5.1 of the University Workload Policy.*
- e. A web link to the academic unit's promotion and tenure standards (to be posted on the Provost's website), with which the unit faculty workload policy must be consistent.
- f. A detailed description of the process (including associated timelines) by which workloads for individual faculty are established annually. *NOTE: Individual faculty workload assignments must be made available to all faculty within the academic unit. Authorized access to individual workload assignments must be password-protected or otherwise appropriately secured.*
- g. Any applicable multipliers to more equitably assign workload. Units employing multipliers must include multipliers both *below and above* the standard workload unit (e.g., 0.33, 0.5, 0.66, 1.0, 1.3, 1.5, etc.). This requires conversation between chairs, deans and the Provost.

1.5 The unit shall develop a written, internal appeals process to address disagreements between individual faculty and the person responsible for formally determining their annual workload assignment. Final determinations are made by the dean.

2.0 Academic Unit Workload Policy Development and Approval

2.1 The following sections from the current *Faculty Manual* inform academic unit workload policy development and approval:

- Per Section II.C.2.a: “Faculty workloads are proposed by the [Department] Chairpersons or comparable administrators and by the [College/School/Center/Libraries] Faculty Assembly or equivalent group and are approved by the Dean.”
- Per Section II.C.2.C: “After consultation with the appropriate faculty members, the Department Chairperson or comparable administrator makes recommendations to the Dean of the College or School for ...faculty workloads.”
- Per Section II.B.2: “The Provost is the chief academic officer of the University and reports directly to the President. The Deans of the University's Colleges, Schools (except for the School of Medicine and the Center for Advanced Dental Education) and Libraries report directly to the Provost, as do...several directors.”

2.2 Faculty should be substantively involved in the unit policy development, including but not limited to providing written and oral feedback prior to its approval. Faculty should receive acknowledgement that such feedback was considered by those approving of the unit-level policy.

Substantive faculty involvement in academic unit workload policy development shall not supersede the responsibilities for approvals and implementation of such policies per the *Faculty Manual* and Section 2.3 of this Appendix.

2.3 Accordingly, those involved in the development and approval of all academic unit workload policies are detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1. People involved in the Unit- and College-level policy development, proposition and implementation.

Policy stage	Department/Unit-level policy	College/School-level policy
1. Initial Development	Department Faculty, Department Chair	College/School faculty, Department chairs, Faculty assembly, Director/Dean
2. Formal Proposition	Department chair	Department chairs, Faculty assembly
3. Approval and Implementation	Dean/Director, Provost	Director/Dean, Provost

2.4 The dean may request from the highest faculty governance body of the department (or, if no such body exists, the faculty as a whole) substantiation of the faculty's involvement and input in that department's policy development process. If involvement is deemed by the dean to be less than substantive, the dean shall return the policy to the department for further deliberation to satisfy the dean's concerns.

- 2.5 The Provost may request from the highest faculty governance body of an academic unit (or the faculty as a whole, if no such body exists) substantiation of the faculty's involvement and input in that unit's policy development process. If involvement is deemed by the Provost to be less than substantive, the Provost shall return the policy to the academic unit via the dean for further deliberation to satisfy the Provost's concerns.
- 2.6 All academic unit faculty workload policies must include necessary approval dates.
- 2.7 All academic unit faculty workload policies must receive Provost's approval.
- 2.8 All academic unit faculty workload policies shall be reviewed every three years, with the initial review conducted at the unit level.