Load Planning Policy/Principles

Overview. The Curry School has operated with an assumption of a 4-course load teaching policy for tenure-track faculty members that had been applied somewhat inconsistently across the school. Within the former policy, for example, there was not clear agreement about how to factor supervision and advising into teaching loads. As we move more clearly in a direction of rebalancing priorities for increased research and scholarship, improved mentoring of doctoral students, and an enriched curriculum with greater cross-program and cross-school course offerings, these shifts must also be taken into consideration in load policies and planning. At the same time, we anticipate a University shift to activity-based budgeting in which course enrollments and faculty-generated credit hour production will directly generate our budget. All of these support the need for a re-examination of our load policy.

The purpose of this proposal is to suggest a pathway forward for policies and procedures about load that will allow us to plan pro-actively in areas of strength and excellence while supporting the mission of the school and University. For example, we need a load policy that acknowledges the greater effort required in team teaching and online instruction. We could also use a load policy to create mechanisms for faculty to generate sabbatical/leave periods and for 12-month funding of salaries. And we should create policies that apply equitably across several categories of faculty, all of whom contribute to the mission of the school.

With these issues in mind, a prior version of this document was drafted after reviewing the load policies of other schools in the University (with an eye toward consistency and variations of relevance to our situation). This draft was reviewed by faculty Council and presented at a faculty meeting. The resulting guidelines that follow will be used as faculty and department chairs meet in Spring 2010 for their annual planning for the 2010-2011 year, and, as always, modified if needed as we learn from implementation. One result of that meeting should be the department chair and faculty member identifying an agreed-upon load for 2010 (and spring 2011), with the 2010 agreed-upon load being the basis of the faculty annual report for 2010.

A key aim should be to ensure equity across faculty and programs, even when load is to some extent individualized or course enrollments are quite variable.

I. Basic policy:

Assuming 100% is full load, this total is divided into 6 units of roughly 17% each that can then be allocated across various activities, from teaching to supervision to service. Recognizing this is a starting point for discussions with each faculty member that would tailor load-planning in relation to strengths, interests, and needs; some typical allocations are described below for various faculty types and responsibilities. It is important to note that these are intended to provide a framework for planning that is individualized, yet based on common assumptions about what a “unit” means. It is quite possible that 17% is somewhat elastic as people approach planning around service or research, but for the purposes of this document, 17% is the unit applied to a course (assuming enrollment of at least 6 students??).

Another important element of these guidelines is to reflect that our different faculty types (tenure-track, general/teaching, research) often serve overlapping functions (e.g., some
general/teaching faculty members do research while some research faculty teach or mentor. Therefore an aim of this document is to move closer toward a model in which all the efforts of a range of faculty types are appropriately acknowledged and worked into various Curry programs and efforts.

A. Tenure track faculty (assumption of time allocated to 3 areas of teaching, research, service)

3 units (50%) teaching. Teaching consists of courses and direct supervision of field experiences (mentoring doctoral students is acknowledged in research load).

Courses. From a coursework standpoint, load would be composed of 3 courses. Attention would need to be paid to course enrollments – for example it seems important to establish, for equity, that enrollments should at least be equal to 6 students for full credit for that as a course in relation to load. It may be that some balancing could occur across lower enrollment and larger enrollment courses.

Team-taught courses (enrollment a least 15) would count as a full course for both the faculty members involved.

Supervision of clinical and field activities. For supervision of field experiences it is assumed that students are enrolled for credit, that enrollments meet some minimum level (e.g., 6), that there is dedicated time each week to supervision, and that the instruction/supervision is evaluated as a teaching assignment.

NOTE: For tenure-track faculty not engaged in mentoring doctoral students or not involved in regular research activity (e.g. publication, etc. as specified on the annual performance benchmarking guide) it is expected that time allotted to teaching (defined above) would be greater than 3 units with the amount to be determined in faculty annual review meetings with department chairs.

2 units (33%) research (includes faculty’s scholarly activities, publishing, grant-writing, mentoring doc students). This time is dedicated to faculty programmatic research activities that support scholarship and provide opportunities for doctoral and other students. Mentoring of students’ involvement in research falls into this category of load. A “standard” load of mentoring could be pegged at a total of 4-6 doctoral students who are actively progressing in their work.

1 unit (17 %) service (inclusive of all typical service activities, recognizing this may vary)

B. Faculty with a primary assignment to teaching (general faculty or tenure-line faculty not active in a research program or with mentoring assignments)

5 units teaching Includes courses, supervision and advising assignments.
1 unit service (inclusive of all typical service activities)

NOTE: It is possible that someone may actually teach more than 5 “courses” if those units are small, the person has little to no service responsibilities, or has planned to do so with their chair. Moreover, general faculty may also teach fewer than 5 courses as a
standard load because they are engaged in heavy service or have a research program or mentoring responsibilities. In this way, general faculty load-planning, while predicated on the assumption of a primary assignment to teaching or supervision, will follow the guidelines as established above and could in some cases reflect a load that is very similar to that of a tenure track faculty. Similarly, tenure-track faculty may not be actively engaged in research and so their load may be primarily aimed to teaching courses and supervision.

C. Research faculty (faculty with primary funding derived from research grants; i.e. primarily “soft money”)

Research faculty (e.g., holding rank as Research Professors, Research Assistant or Associate Professors, or Senior/Principal Scientists), and supported by funding from research grants but also often teach or mentor students. Generally speaking they would not be solely responsible for more than one course or mentoring a cluster of doctoral students, but they could be. These elements of load will be counted/credited as they would be for any other Curry faculty member.

1 unit (17 %) teaching when mentoring 5 doc students;
1 unit (17 %) teaching when instructor for a course (as per above).
II. Banking load for leave:

All else being equal (e.g. active, quality service, teaching, and/or research), if a faculty member teaches more than the expected amount, this “overage” can be “banked” and applied to subsequent years. Thus on a 3-course load, a tenure-track faculty member could teach 4 courses (and remain active in the other ways specified) in a given year and “bank” the extra course toward the following year in which they could arrange to have the banked course cover for their semester in which they would typically teach one course, thus creating a semester of leave from teaching. Banked teaching could also apply to other assignments. For example, a faculty member with a primary teaching assignment could teach extra courses over time to accumulate summer salary or leave. Over the course of a few years this could result in as much as a complete half-time or even full-time leave. *A critical feature of whether one could back or not would be high levels of engagement and performance in the other areas of negotiated load, all of which would be discussed with department chair or Center Director or PI, in the case of research faculty.*

For now, banking would apply to easily identified, discrete units of teaching assignments and not to service, supervising, advising or mentoring.

Any “banking” would need to be carefully planned over a multi-year horizon with the department chair and program coordinator to ensure smooth, equitable, and adequate coverage for courses and student/program needs.

III. Buy out policy:

Faculty may buy out of teaching assignments (e.g. courses, supervision) with the following:

1) A discrete, school-wide or university-wide leadership role (e.g., FC chair) estimated at 1 unit  
2) Grants. When buying out of teaching units using grants, the following principles apply.  
   - Buy-out occurs in units of 17% FTE  
   - Increments of 17% can be applied to: summer salary, in-load course teaching, or any combination, assuming fully engaged in other elements of load (e.g. research and service), otherwise no buy-out. See Appendix A below.

IV. 12 months salary basis

An additional benefit of revising our load policy is the possibility of moving greater numbers of faculty to 12-month salaries. With greater clarity about our load components and expectations, more faculty may be eligible for summer funds based on both buy-outs and “banked” courses. Tenure-track faculty and faculty with expectations of continuing employment are guaranteed 9 months; the 12 month basis can make it easier to account for time and money when people move on/off or for part of the summer. With the move to a new budgeting system in which enrollments return funds to the school, more and more we could plan for faculty to move to 12 months as a function not only of research grants but also teaching.
Faculty can apply various sources of self-generated funds to summer funding: over-load teaching, research grant FTE, returns on clinical work/supervision, conference income. See Appendix A below.

**V. Research faculty**

Research faculty can bank FTE through ‘overload’ assignments as per above – teaching, mentoring. A research faculty member might bank in 17% increments and then apply such incremental support to time in subsequent years.

Research faculty could also “bank” supported FTE through multiple years of 100% funding. That is, for research faculty who fund themselves completely from grants for a period of 4 years, some increment of FTE would be supported in a 5th year.

**APPENDIX A: Details on 12 month conversion**

The following document details how grant and other salary support (e.g. from summer teaching or overload teaching) can be used to adjust a faculty member’s teaching load or to provide summer salary through a conversion to a 12-month contract. It is intended as a guide for load-planning and salary conversion.

In order to determine how additional support can be used, it is necessary to define two variables, **Base**, which represents the faculty member’s base salary and fringe benefits and **AS**, which represents the additional support that a faculty member has available in a given fiscal year. One of the challenges to understanding how this works is aligning our academic-year frame of reference with an annualized fiscal year frame.

**Base**: Full-time 9-month salary and fringe benefits, which is currently 127.5% of the 9-month salary. Base represents the total financial compensation to faculty for a 9 month academic year period.

**Example**: A full-time faculty member making $60,000 per year on a 9-month contract would have a Base of $60,000 x 1.275 = $76,500.

**AS**: This is the total amount of salary and benefit support generated by activities linked to faculty effort that could be applied to a 12-month conversion or reduced teaching load. Sources can include grant support (salary and fringe benefits), summer session pay (salary only), and up to one month of endowed chair funds (salary and fringe benefits). **AS** is calculated as the total additional salary/benefit support in dollars in a July 1 – June 30 fiscal year. The dollar total of **AS** should include fringe benefits amounts paid by grants and endowed chairs.

The ratio of **AS/Base** is an index of the amount of additional dollar support generated by the faculty member’s activities above and beyond the nine month base. As this ratio increases, it reflects an increasing amount of resources generated by that faculty member that can then be applied to conversion to 12 months, course buy-out, or other arrangements in relation to load-planning.
For example, if AS/Base >= 0.33, the additional support can allow the faculty member to convert to a 12-month contract. However, each dollar of AS can only be used once. In other words, if AS/Base = 0.33, one can either convert to 12-month status or be released from two courses, but not both. A faculty member with AS/Base >= 0.50 is eligible for conversion to 12-month status (using 0.33) and release from one course (using the remaining 0.17).

The following table indicates how additional support can be used in salary conversion and load planning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If AS/Base is between… How AS can be used (all else equal)…</th>
<th>0.00 and 0.17</th>
<th>no adjustment to salary or course-buy-out</th>
<th>0.17 and 0.33</th>
<th>one course release is possible</th>
<th>0.33 and 0.50</th>
<th>convert to 12-month contract</th>
<th>0.50 and 0.67</th>
<th>convert to 12-month contract, one course release</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

NOTE: for AS/Base increments below 0.17 it is possible that department chairs and faculty members could negotiate release from some modest responsibility, but this increment is not sufficient for buy-out of teaching. Also, for someone on 9 or 12 months who could buy out of teaching but does not, or who teaches/supervises more than expected, this person could “bank” teaching proportional to the AS/Base ratio or could return financial support to OTPS accounts, research accounts, or student support.

**Example 1:** An endowed chair with a 9-month salary of $100,000 who received 10% grant support during the academic year and taught one summer course with a summer salary of $8,882 would calculate his/her total additional salary/benefit support as follows:

Endowed Chair: One month salary/benefits = $100,000/9 x 1.275 = $14,167
Grant Support: 10% of 9-month salary/benefits = 0.10 x 100,000 x 1.275 = $12,750
Summer Salary: $8,882 (no fringe benefits are paid on summer salary)
**AS = $14,167 + $12,750 + $8,880 = $35,799**

The ratio of additional support (AS) to base salary/benefits (Base) determines eligibility for summer support and course release. In the case above the AS/Base ratio is above 0.33 so that this faculty member could: a) convert to 12 months; b) stay on a 9-month contract but buy-out of up to two courses; c) stay at 9 months with no buy-out but “bank” course release for use at a later time.

**Example 2:** An assistant professor making $60,000 for 9 months of service is written onto a grant at 25% for the entire 9 months. Furthermore, this individual also has one month of summer support remaining from her faculty start-up package.

Grant Support: 25% of nine months: 0.25 x $60,000 x 1.275 = $19,125
Summer Salary: one month of salary/benefits: $60,000/9 x 1.275 = $8,500
**AS = $19,125 + $8,500 = $27,625**
**Base = $60,000 x 1.275 = $76,500**
**AS/Base = $27,625/$76,500 = 0.36**
This faculty member would be eligible for conversion to 12-months.