

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs)
University of Arizona
Cardon Academy for Teaching Excellence (CATE)

RECOMMENDATION:

POLICY ON INSTRUCTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

PREAMBLE

A primary mission of CALS is excellence in its academic programs. High quality student experiences both inside and outside the classroom require the coordinated efforts of all faculty, staff, and administrators. Academic program excellence requires **exceptional teaching** in the classroom coupled, where appropriate, with rigorous practical, applied laboratory experiences that consist of both individual and group learning. In addition, students must receive **professional, ongoing individual mentoring** to help them set academic goals, navigate the academic environment and take advantage of opportunities to further their academic and life careers. Students must be encouraged to participate in clubs and civic organizations that offer **opportunities to learn in other venues** and to acquire additional professional skills.

Although academic program excellence in CALS requires the full engagement of all faculty, staff, and administrators, it is faculty who administer and execute programs, teach courses, and provide oversight of the individual learning environment for disciplinary education and training in research for undergraduates, graduate students, and research associates. Faculty also participate in curriculum review and development, assess program requirements, oversee the use of program resources, and provide assessments for successful national program reviews and accreditations.

The CALS instructional accountability policy recognizes and reflects the academic mission as noted above. This policy is intended to guide equitable agreements between faculty members and their unit heads regarding their teaching assignments, while not imposing inflexible or rigid formulas. CALS faculty typically have budgeted appointments involving instruction, research, and/or extension. All tenure-track faculty are expected to contribute to instruction, research, outreach, and service regardless of the funding source for their position.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Formal Courses

All faculty with a budgeted teaching appointment, regardless of percentage, should teach or co-teach at least one formal classroom/laboratory/online/study abroad course per academic year. With the exception of courses taught as Special Topics, a minimum course enrollment of 15 in a lower-division undergraduate course, 8 in an upper-division undergraduate course, and 5 in a graduate course is expected. Special Topics courses intended to become part of the departmental curriculum should seek permanent course numbers after two successful offerings. Courses that combine sections of undergraduate and graduate students are considered one course.

A general guideline for teaching assignments is that 1 semester credit = 5% of the annual teaching FTE for in-person and on-line classes, for both 9-month and 12-month appointments.* Given the explicit or implicit service component (10%) in the appointments of all faculty, this guideline implies that a full (100%) workload for instruction consists of six, three-unit courses per contract year.

Adjustments to Course Workload

Unit heads, in collaboration with the faculty member, may choose to adjust the instructional workload downward for the following considerations:

- Formal courses
 - Course size
 - Online or Honors courses
 - Graduate courses
 - Laboratory and field-based courses or sections
 - New course development and first year teaching
- Other academic activities
 - Chair of journal club
 - Guest lecture or seminar
 - Independent Study
 - Internship Supervision
 - Graduate Student Advising
 - Undergraduate Student Advising
 - Graduate Student Major Advising
 - TA Training
 - Post-doctoral mentoring
 - Faculty mentoring (teaching blog, Faculty Learning Community facilitator)
- Instructional Support Activities
 - Curriculum/Course Development (1-3 credit hours/semester)
 - New Course Development
 - Taking an existing course to distance learning
 - Textbook development (or writing a chapter for a textbook)
 - Mentoring (1-3 credit hours/semester)
 - Honors students
 - Undergraduate research students
 - Graduate laboratory rotations
 - MARC advising/underrepresented minorities
 - Professional club advising
 - Administration (chair only; 1-3 credit hours)
 - Undergraduate or Graduate Program
 - Curriculum Committees
 - National Instructional Committees
 - CALS or University Instructional Committees
 - Peer Teaching Assessment Committees
 - Recruiting
 - Materials development
 - High School and Junior College visits

This policy (1) does **not** recommend a specific formula or weighting scheme for making these adjustments to the teaching load but expects that unit heads will make these decisions in a manner that serves unit needs **and** is fair and equitable across instructional faculty, and (2) encourages annual evaluation of instructional assignments and recognizes the need for unit heads and faculty to **adjust these responsibilities** according to changing teaching, research, and service demands and opportunities. Faculty may appeal their instructional assignments to the Associate Dean for Career and Academic Services in CALS (or their appointee).

*Recommendation regarding 9-month vs. 12-month contracts

Faculty on 12-month appointments who have teaching components to their position pose an additional challenge to defining a full (100%) workload. A 12-month appointment encompasses summer session terms and could accommodate additional course offerings beyond the normal academic year. Many CALS units offer courses during the summer and need faculty to teach them. These courses are often covered by Professors of Practice. However, CALS units vary significantly with respect to whether POPs are hired on 9-month vs. 12-month appointments, as well as on the number of courses such faculty are expected to teach during their contract period. Some units hire POPs on 9-month contracts and offer summer teaching as a supplemental contract for extra compensation. Other units hire POPs on a 12-month basis, and expect extra courses (beyond the full load of 6 courses during the academic year) to be taught during the summer for no additional compensation. Salary data suggest that POP salaries for 12-month contracts are rarely, if ever, adjusted proportionately upward relative to 9-month salaries. This creates serious inequities for those POPs on 12-month contracts who must teach 7 or 8 courses, but for basically the same salary as POPs on 9-month contracts who teach a maximum of 6 courses.

To prevent these inequities, we recommend that CALS adopt a policy of 9-month contracts for POPs, with the option for supplemental compensation in the summer for additional instruction or course development activities. Supplemental contracts would carry their own, explicit workload expectations.