

MEMORANDUM

February 1, 2008

To: E.G.Sander, Executive Vice President and Provost

Re: Defining Teaching Loads in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

In response to your request for an instructional load baseline for a faculty member with a 100% teaching appointment and equivalent assignments to meet that teaching appointment, we provide the following information.

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs) faculty have many diverse responsibilities across teaching, research, Extension and service. In addition, an array of disciplinary expertise across broad classifications of biological sciences, social sciences, and physical sciences exist in CALs. In an effort to involve shared governance in this, I appointed a faculty committee to review teaching loads across the college to determine an equivalent teaching load for a hypothetical faculty member who would hold a 100% teaching appointment. Given the diverse responsibilities of CALs faculty and our long history in the use of Position Descriptions, the CALs Instructional Accountability and Responsibility Committee turned to a long-standing document in the College for guidance in identifying criteria for a 100% teaching load.

*"In the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs), each faculty member's position description reflects the relative responsibilities assigned to teaching, research, extension and service activities in relationship to the unit's mission and strategic plan. This position description provides the context for evaluating a candidate's success in meeting performance expectations for promotion and/or tenure. Both formal and non-formal instruction are defined as teaching by CALs, including classroom sessions, demonstrations, workshops and distributed learning."*

from: College of Agriculture and Life Sciences - Guidelines and Criteria for Promotion and Tenure; Revised February 2001/ Abstracted February 2001.

This diversity makes definition of a standard teaching load problematic particularly due to the varying definitions across and within units of CALs. The Committee thought that examination of duties by individuals in CALs with 100% teaching appointments might provide valuable models for crafting a definition. The Committee identified 11 personnel with 100% teaching appointments in 7 academic units. Most CALs personnel with 100% instructional appointments have additional responsibility for non-classroom aspects of instruction (e.g., advising, mentoring, recruitment, outreach) which are equivalent to fulfilling a portion of the assignment. This is due, at least in part, because CALs has emphasized assignment of ranked faculty to academic courses at all levels in response to



long-standing University and Regents' policies to do so. Recognizing the importance of mixed appointments and the placement of ranked faculty in lower-division courses, CALS administrators have rarely hired personnel with 100% teaching assignments, and the few personnel so assigned rarely spend 100% of their time in classroom-related tasks.

An analysis of tenure and tenure eligible (T/TE) faculty appointments revealed the expected range of teaching load as measured by semester credit hours (units). Using the past academic year data for teaching loads of T/TE faculty, Lecturers, and Senior Lecturers to convert the split appointments to 1.0 FTE in instruction revealed a mean number of units of 24 per academic year. Assuming most courses are 3 units, this equates to 8 courses per faculty member per academic year.


While more analysis could certainly be made, it is clear that CALS faculty with 1.0 FTE in instruction have responsibilities equivalent to and including instruction, advising and recruitment. In doing so, they teach, on average, 6-8 courses per year. It is vital to maintain the flexibility for a department head to assess the needs and assign teaching loads across faculty based upon those needs.

In checking with peer institutions across the west, for those who use a modified formulaic basis, the range in credits per academic year was 18-30. Assuming 3 units per course, the range in number of courses shows a low of 6 and a high of 10. However, in every case, no individual faculty member with a 1.0 FTE Instruction appointment taught that number of courses due to other equivalent assignments such as advising and recruitment.

Based upon data from other colleges of agriculture in the region which responded, the 6-8 courses per year in CALS is within the range. When other equivalent instruction responsibilities are considered, it appears that a 1.0 FTE Instructional appointment is consistent across CALS departments as well as among our western region colleagues.

With respect to the second question of the types and amounts of teaching equivalencies, undergraduate advising and recruitment, supervision of internships and preceptors, graduate student mentoring, and supervision of individual studies courses are used by department heads in allocating teaching responsibilities. Quantifying these activities on an equitable basis is extremely difficult.

CALS needs to solicit additional departmental input, but in order to provide this information for the two questions by the date requested, I am sending it to you in this format. We will continue to analyze instructional loads as we address the remainder of the questions you asked.



Colin Kaltenbach  
Dean and Director

c: D. Cox, E. Marchello, Committee